# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

In this study, the researcher tries to elaborate on the effectiveness of using Google Translate to train the 9th-grade students' pronunciation at MTsN 4 Tulungagung. It contained a background of study, research problem, research objective, formulation of hypothesis, scope and limitation, and operational definition of key terms.

## A. Background of Study

Pronunciation is an important aspect in language learning that deals with how to pronounce words correctly according to the sounds accepted in the language. Pronunciation is a necessary component for English language because mispronouncing the words can make misunderstanding. The correct pronunciation affects to the  process of delivering message (Dewi et. al., 2020).

Pronunciation is more than just pronouncing sounds or words correctly; teachers/lecturers should see it as an important part of communication integrated into classroom activities. Therefore, pronunciation is an important element of oral communication in second language learning. Baran-Lucarz (2016) notes that when students feel embarrassed or perceive negative reactions from listeners, they tend to be less confident in trying to speak. Therefore, utilizing digital tools to practice pronunciation can help students improve their English communication.

Good pronunciation ability is key to one's ability to speak in every language. As everybody knows that pronunciation is one of the important aspects that will support communication with other people. When words are pronounced

well, it will be easier to the other people to understand the meaning, but when words are pronounced incorrectly, it will change the meaning or even there is no meaning (Dewi et. al. 2020). If students are familiar with speaking, they don't want to provide explicit information. Speech is very important in the development of concepts because it involves distinguishing between sounds that are combined to form words and concepts. To know good and correct speech, requires regular and structured training regular and structure training is the key to the success of any skill, including the ability to pronounce words correctly and accurately (Andi et. al., 2022).

Pardede (2018) stated "For some reasons, pronunciation instruction is often neglected in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. As a result, many EFL learners always find it difficult to speak confidently because of their poor pronunciation." The ability to speak any language effectively depends on good pronunciation skills. A number of elements must be produced correctly for speech to be intelligent, including phonemes, stress, connection, rhythm, and intonation. Pronunciation is one of the mechanical components of speaking ability, along with grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, communicating clearly depends on good pronunciation skills. A number of elements must be produced correctly for speech to be intelligent, including phonemes, stress, connection, rhythm, and intonation. Even if someone is fluent in grammar rules and has a large vocabulary, poor pronunciation can hinder effective communication.

In learning English, technology is one of learning helpful tool to support the learning process of the students. Technology has driven innovation in

education, leading to the development of a number of theories aimed at achieving learning goals, such as in English language learning. English language learning dominates all aspects of international communication and is essential to face the increasingly advanced order of life. English is widely used in various fields, such as technology, education, economics, politics, and culture. With the introduction of products such as computers and smartphones that use English, technology has become increasingly advanced. Today we cannot live without technology in our daily lives, it is undeniable that English also has an influence on human life. One of the technological issues is computers, which have given rise to instruments that can help people learn other languages, including English, which is one of them. Computerization, which can support and facilitate social contact, has now penetrated almost every element of social life.

This study focuses on pronunciation ability as part of speaking skills that can be improved through the use of technology, namely Google Translate, in the learning process. When the researcher conducted the first observation at MTsN 4 Tulungagung, the researcher found a problem in the form of students' pronunciation ability that were not good and correct. The problem comes from students, who don't know how to pronounce the words correctly when the teacher asks them to read several words. For example, at that time the word "notice" should have been pronounced /'nou.tis/, he pronounced it /notais/.

Teachers in the learning process often provide direction on correct pronunciation to students, but students still pronounce it in the wrong and inappropriate way. Researcher in this case assume that it can be improved by

implementing media such as Google Translate as a reference for students in pronouncing words or sentences in English. Google Translate has a feature that is often forgotten when used for translation, namely, there is a feature to produce sounds according to the desired language. That way, researcher have the desire to use this media to help solve problems in learning, namely students' poor pronunciation ability. Researcher hope that implementing Google Translate Voice media in the learning process can change the way of learning and at the same time improve students' pronunciation ability in report text learning materials. Researcher assessed that by using technology such as Google Translate, the learning process was faster and easier for students to understand good and correct pronunciation. In the learning process, students can directly hear the correct pronunciation of words or sentences in English through the sound produced by Google Translate.

One relevant study to this research was conducted by Wongsuriya (2020) entitled "Improving the Thai students' ability in English pronunciation through mobile application". The study utilized Google Translate to assist Thai university students in pronouncing difficult English words. The results showed a significant improvement in students' pronunciation after using the application. However, there are several differences from the current research. First, the participants in Wongsuriya's study were university students, while this study involved ninth-grade junior high school students. Second, the pronunciation assessment in Wongsuriya's research was conducted by three human raters, while this study used the speech recognition feature in Google Translate to

automatically assess pronunciation. Third, this research focused on vocabulary from report text materials based on the school curriculum, not just commonly mispronounced words.

Based on the above phenomenon, the researcher was interested in conducting research in this place with the title "The Effectiveness of Using Google Translate on the 9th-Grade Students' Word Pronunciation Ability at MtsN 4 Tulungagung".

## B. Research Problem

The researcher aimed to find answer to the following question based on the context of the research:

Is there any significant difference of ninth-grade students word pronunciation ability after being taught using Google Translate?

## C. Research Objective

This study aims to determine the differences in ninth-grade students' word pronunciation ability before and after being taught using Google Translate.

## D. Formulation of Hypothesis

Based on the research problem "Is there any significant difference of ninth-grade students word pronunciation ability after being taught using Google Translate?". The researcher formulates a hypothesis as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference of ninth-grade students' word pronunciation ability at MTsN 4 Tulungagung after being taught using Google Translate.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is a significant difference of ninth-grade students' word pronunciation ability at MTsN 4 Tulungagung after being taught using Google Translate.

## E. Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation, specifically focusing on stress, intonation, and rhythm as observed in students' word-level pronunciation at MTsN 4 Tulungagung.

## F. Operational Definition of Key Terms

The researcher offers many definitions of the key terminology in this study to prevent misunderstanding. Google Translate is a translation service developed by Google. It helps students practice pronunciation with text-to-speech and speech-recognition features. With this feature, students can hear how words are pronounced in the target language and imitate them.

Pronunciation is the way words or language are spoken, including the specific sounds, stress patterns, and intonation used when saying words or phrases. This study focused on suprasegmental pronunciation refers to the prosodic features of speech, such as stress, intonation, and rhythm, that extend over individual sounds or segments. These features play a crucial role in conveying meaning, emotion, and naturalness in spoken language.

Students of Nitnth-grade were in the final year of the MTsN 4 Tulungagung. They were the subject of this study to measure the effectiveness of using Google Translate in training their pronunciation.

## CHAPTER II

## THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provided a review of relevant literature related to the study. It discussed the definition of Google Translate, the advantages of Google Translate, the concept of pronunciation, and previous studies related to the effectiveness of using Google Translate to train students' pronunciation.

## A. Definition of Google Translate

Google Translate is a technology-based translation service developed by Google, which allows users to automatically translate text, documents, and websites from one language into another (Fatkhurozi and Hidayat, 2024). Google Translate is a free machine translation service provided by the Google Corporation for translating texts and messages between languages. It is currently available via a web interface, as well as mobile apps/interfaces and application programming interfaces (APIs) that can be integrated into new applications (Fransisca and Yunus, 2020).

Google Translate is a digital website that can be used to help practice pronunciation. According to Nguyen Minh Trang and Duong (2019), using the microphone that Google Translate provides, students can talk and then check their pronunciation to see whether it is correct or not. Google Translate is a free multilingual machine translation service that allows users to translate text, speech, images, websites, and videos in real time. The service provides a web interface, iOS and Android applications for mobile devices, and an application that assists in the creation of browser add-ons and software applications by developers. In

Google Translate there is a microphone feature that can check the meaning of the words we say, if the word we say is not detected, then the pronunciation is wrong, and we can also check how to pronounce each word correctly using the same feature.

There are several steps in using the Google Translate Application to learn pronunciation:

1.  Open the Google Translate Application (from a smartphone/laptop).

2.  Click the Google Translate microphone.

3.  Say the desired word (example: learn).

4.  If the student's pronunciation is correct, the correct word will appear "learn".

5.  Meanwhile, if the student's pronunciation is not correct, the wrong word will appear with a different translation meaning.

6.  If this kind of case occurs, the learner must repeat the pronunciation until the correct word appears.

This method can train students' patience and make students learning pronunciation more difficult but also fun. Students will feel challenged and try to pronounce words correctly. When they succeed, they will feel satisfied because the words that appear are as desired. This can increase students' motivation in learning pronunciation with this method (Fransisca and Yunus, 2020).

**B. Advantages of Google Translate**

There are several advantages that Google Translate has, namely:

1. Provide Many Languages

   Translate has many language options that can be used by its users. In fact, it also provides several regional languages such as Javanese and Sundanese in Indonesia. In addition, there is an automatic feature that can predict the language of sentences that we do not know. The next thing to use is the auto-detect language feature in Google Translate. This feature allows users to detect the language of an unknown sentence, so that users can translate directly without needing to know the original language.

2. Translate Via Link

   An online document or article on the internet can be translated easily by using a link to a blog or article that you want to translate. Its use does not need to bother typing each word, just copy and paste the link from the article or document you want to translate, or directly change the settings from Google Chrome.

3. Voice or Audio Support

   Google Translate can activate the spelling mode by clicking the voice speaker image in the bottom column of Google Translate. Then, the text written will automatically be heard and spelled from the Google Translate speaker. This feature also makes it easier for users who want to learn how to pronounce foreign languages correctly.

4. Provide Many Features

There are 4 features of the Google Translate Application as assumed by Aidi (2021) online dictionary, an online thesaurus, a spelling checker, and a pronunciation tool. The pronunciation tool feature can help students learn pronunciation as they pronounce the word, then the tool translates and provides the correct way to pronounce the word.

## C. Pronunciation

Nowadays, almost everyone learns English as a necessity for business, education, entertainment, etc. The process of acquiring English can sometimes be a challenge for language learners. In learning English, pronunciation skills need to be considered. With good pronunciation, the meaning conveyed becomes clear. According to Gilakjani (2016), pronunciation is learnt by repeating sounds and correcting them when produced inaccurately. When learners start learning pronunciation, they make new habits and overcome the difficulties resulting from their first language.

Pronunciation can vary across languages and even across regions or dialects of the same language. Pronunciation involves the understanding and production of individual sounds (phonemes), as well as the rules and patterns that govern the combination of sounds in a particular language. Accurate pronunciation can improve comprehension and fluency, as it ensures that your words are easily understood by others. In language learning, studying and

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practicing pronunciation is a common way to improve one's ability to speak a language naturally and effectively. This can involve learning the specific sounds and rhythms of a language, as well as rules for stress, intonation, and word boundaries.

According to Wongsuriya (2020), pronunciation is the act or result of sound production in speech and pronunciation, accent, and intonation. This section to mention about the theories of pronunciation, factors of pronunciation, and consonants and vowels. Speech is very important in the development of concepts because it involves distinguishing between sounds that are combined to form words and concepts (Andi et. al., 2022). To know good and correct speech, requires regular and structured training regular and structure training is the key to the success of any skill, including the ability to pronounce words correctly and accurately.

Backley (2016) says that good pronunciation does not equate to "native-like" pronunciation; in fact, an English learner will quickly be let down if he attempt to sound like a native English speaker because this is not a necessary nor a realistic goal. Rather, the goal should be to learn a "listener-friendly" pronunciation that is easy for listeners to grasp and that can be utilized to facilitate meaningful discourse. Listeners will just stop listening if the task requires too much work.

**D. Theoretical Framework**

In this study, two main theories are the basis for explaining the pronunciation learning process using Google Translate. These theories include

Behaviorism Theory and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). These theories complement each other in explaining how students can learn effectively with the help of technology.

1.  **Behaviorism Theory**

    Behaviorism is a learning theory that emphasizes observable changes in behavior, the result of stimulus and response, and is reinforced through repetition and reinforcement. This theory was first developed by John B. Watson (1913) and further developed by B.F. Skinner (1957) used the concept of operant conditioning.

    In the context of language learning, Skinner (1957), explains that language is learned through imitation and positive reinforcement. When students imitate pronunciation from Google Translate and receive correct feedback, this reinforces the habit of correct pronunciation. Skinner (1957), also states that a child learns to speak by imitating the sounds they hear and receiving reinforcement when the imitation is correct. (Skinner, 1957). Thus, the use of Google Translate allows for a behavioristic process to occur, because students can practice repeatedly by listening to and imitating the voice from the application

2.  **Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)**

    CALL is an approach to language learning that utilizes computer or digital technology as an aid. According to Beatty (2003), CALL includes various forms of technology use, including software, applications, and the internet in language learning.

In this study, Google Translate acts as a CALL media, because it helps students learn pronunciation independently, interactively, and easily accessible. The text-to-speech and speech recognition features support more realistic and practical pronunciation practice.

## E.  Previous Studies

Studies regarding improving students' pronunciation in English have been carried out in global and Indonesian contexts. Several studies have proven that there are applications that can improve students' abilities in English pronunciation, such as the ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) application, mobile application, and Lost Twin Game. In the Thai context Wongsuriya (2020),  mobile  applications are  used  to  test  students' pronunciation. Participants must practice using the Google Translate application and ask questions about how to use the application for 3-4 weeks. Three experts assessed the pronunciation, and finally, the pre-test scores were compared with the post-test after using the Google Translate application.

Rabi'ah et. al., (2020) and Aswaty & Indari (2022) have researched applications that can improve students' pronunciation skills, namely the Lost Twin game and the ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) application. These two studies have the same case where thereare various obstacles in learning pronunciation at the school level. The results of the research prove that this application can make students' pronunciation better. Wongsuriya (2020) also proves that there is an application that can improve pronunciation skills,

namely a mobile application, more precisely Google Translate. Twenty four students who experienced learning incorporated in the mobile application were selected through a purposive sampling process. Pre- and post-pronunciation tests were obtained, along with semi-structured interviews. These findings show that all students' pronunciation improved significantly.

Something different happened to the implementation of students' habits of listeningto English songs to their pronunciation abilities. This research was conducted by Dewi et. al., (2020). In this study, researchers described the influence of students' habits of listening to English songs on the pronunciation abilities of 26 second-semester students. The results of this study did not show a significant relationship between students' habits of listening to English songs and their pronunciation abilities, which was only 3.4% and the remaining 97% was influenced by other factors.

The teaching of pronunciation is often neglected in English as a foreign language classes. Research conducted by Pardede (2018) carried out 3 cycles to improve students' English pronunciation by using an explicit teaching approach. A total of 2 are provided with special training in pronunciation, including watching videos or listening to English expressions that contain elements of English pronunciation that are difficult for them, practicing these elements, recording and transcribing their speech, and comparing the transcription with the transcription of native speakers collected through tests and questionnaires. The findings from this study by Pardede (2018) show strong evidence that explicit pronunciation instruction was successful in improving the participants'

pronunciation skills. This is due to their high motivation and use of interesting activities and media to facilitate clear pronunciation instruction.

Several previous studies related to improving students' English pronunciation have been conducted in the Indonesian context (Rabi'ah et. al., 2020; Aswaty and Indari, 2022; Dewi et. al., 2020; Pardede, 2018) and in a global context (Wongsuriya, 2020). This research shows success in improving students' English pronunciation skills, except for research by Dewi et. al., (2020) where listening to English songs did not provide significant results in improving students' English pronunciation.