

Web-Based Google Translate Inconsistencies in Bahasa-Arabic Translations from the Arabic Thesis Writer's Perspective

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Abstract:

This research aims to reveal the inconsistencies of machine translation from the perspective of students who use web-based Google Translate in their Arabic thesis. This research has an impact on translation machine users from Arabic teachers and researchers to be more careful in using Google Translate when translating from Bahasa to Arabic, especially in inconsistent aspects. The researcher used a mixed method with an Explanatory Sequential Design because after distributing questionnaires in collecting quantitative data to collect patterns of inconsistencies that occurred, it was important to explain the initial findings from the quantitative data qualitatively through interviews. Quantitative data is analyzed using simple percentage statistics, then qualitative data is analyzed through four steps, namely data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion. The results of this research found that inconsistencies in web-based Google Translate translation results were found in four patterns. First, Google Translate is very inconsistent in translating terms that have the same meaning (*mutarodifat*), but the terms that appear in the translation results are often different, even within the same paragraph. Second, inconsistencies very often also occur in the aspects of *mufrad*, *mutsanna* and *jamak*, the Google translation machine cannot differentiate between the singularity and plurality aspects of the object being translated, so translation errors often occur where a singular word that should be translated as *mufrad* will instead become plural or on the contrary. Third, the translation machine does not recognize the gender of the subject in the translated sentence, so translation inconsistencies in the *mudzakkar* and *mu'annats* aspects occur very often. Inconsistencies in the gender aspect, as well as the *mufrad*, *mutsanna*, and *jamak* aspects, have an impact on the fourth error pattern, namely grammatical inconsistencies, namely errors in using the verb (*fi'il*) in a sentence. Of the four patterns of inconsistency, the term inconsistency is a new thing that has not been revealed much. The grammatical aspect is closely related to aspects of the singular or plural form as well as the masculine or feminine form which is the subject of the translated sentence and needs to be discussed further by other researchers. **Keywords:** Arabic; Google Translate; inconsistencies; Machine; Translation;

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Inkonsistensi Google Terjemahan Berbasis Web pada terjemahan Indonesia-Arab dari sudut pandang penulis skripsi berbahasa Arab

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Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap inkonsistensi terjemahan mesin dari sudut pandang mahasiswa yang menggunakan Google Translate pada skripsi bahasa Arabnya. Dengan tujuan tersebut, maka Penelitian ini berdampak bagi pengguna mesin terjemahan dari kalangan guru dan peneliti bahasa Arab agar lebih berhati-hati dalam menggunakan mesin terjemahan Google berbasis web ketika melakukan penerjemahan dari bahasa Indonesia ke bahasa Arab, khususnya pada aspek yang sering inkonsisten. Peneliti menggunakan jenis penelitian campuran dengan desain explanatory sekuensial karena setelah menyebarkan kuesioner dalam pengumpulan data kuantitatif guna menghimpun pola inkonsistensi yang terjadi, penting untuk menjelaskan temuan awal dari data kuantitatif tersebut secara kualitatif. Data kuantitatif dianalisis dengan statistik persentase sederhana, kemudian data kualitatif dianalisis melalui empat langkah, yaitu pengumpulan data, reduksi, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa ketidakkonsistenan hasil terjemahan Google Translate ditemukan pada empat pola. Pertama, Google Translate sangat tidak konsisten dalam menerjemahkan istilah-istilah yang memiliki arti sama, namun istilah-istilah yang muncul pada hasil terjemahan seringkali berbeda, bahkan dalam satu paragraf. Kedua, inkonsistensi sangat sering juga terjadi pada aspek mufrad, mutsanna dan jamak, mesin penerjemah Google tidak dapat membedakan aspek singularitas dan pluralitas dari objek yang diterjemahkan, sehingga sering terjadi kesalahan penerjemahan dimana satu kata yang singular harusnya diterjemahkan menjadi *mufrad* akan tetapi malah menjadi *jamak* atau sebaliknya. Ketiga, mesin penerjemah tidak mengenal jenis kelamin subjek dalam kalimat yang diterjemahkan, sehingga inkonsistensi penerjemahan pada aspek mudzakkar dan mu'annats sangat sering terjadi. Ketidak konsistenan dalam aspek jenis kelamin, serta aspek *mufrad, mutsanna* dan jamak berdampak pada pola kesalahan keempat yaitu inkonsistensi tata bahasa, yaitu kesalahan penggunaan kata kerja (fi'il) dalam sebuah kalimat. Dari keempat pola inkonsistensi, istilah inkonsistensi merupakan hal baru yang belum banyak terungkap. Aspek gramatika erat kaitannya dengan aspek bentuk mufrad, mutsanna atau jamak serta bentuk mudzakkar atau mu'annats yang menjadi subjek kalimat yang diterjemahkan yang perlu dibahas lebih lanjut oleh peneliti lain.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Arab; Google; inkonsistensi; Mesin; Terjemahan;

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INTRODUCTION

Recent developments in digital technology, namely the ability of machine translation (MT) to translate with grammatical and lexical accuracy, have now improved, and are also increasingly accessible to students majoring in languages for academic purposes. As with other developments in digital technology for teaching and learning, it is likely that machine translation will become a tool that students will rely on to complete their assignments in a second language. This will have implications for the language teaching practice community in the academic field (Groves & Mundt, 2015). This indicates that the presence of information technology is a breath of fresh air which is expected to be able to overcome language learning problems, including Arabic (Haniah, 2014).

This statement is supported by research from Muftah which states that there is no statistically significant difference between human and machine translation and machine translation is the correct translation. The relationship between humans and machines is mutually beneficial (Muftah, 2022). But machine translation will never be completely reliable, and machine translation still faces many challenges that make it incomparable to human translation. This shows that all types of machine translation must be supported by human translation. Because machine translation systems are built primarily from human translations (Munkova dkk., 2021).

The global phenomenon related to the use of translation machines shows a very significant increase. Research related to machine translation and its comparison with human translation has been widely carried out (Muftah, 2022; Munkova dkk., 2021; Prates dkk., 2020; Shaikhli, 2022). From several studies it can be drawn that machine translation is superior in the aspect of speed, but has shortcomings in the aspects that are used to evaluate the translation based on the concept brought by Larson (1984), namely aspects of accuracy, clarity and fairness. This concept was then developed by Hijriah (2012) into 5 translation assessment techniques, namely accuracy test, readability test, fairness test, understandability test, back translation, and consistency test. The aspect that is the focus of this research is the consistency aspect, so the translation results assessment technique used is the consistency test.

One of the most popular machine translations today is Google Translate. As we all know, Google Translate has 500 million users and translates 143 billion words per day from more than 100 languages. The application can translate 37 languages via photos, 32 languages via voice talk, and 27 languages via real-time video using augmented reality mode. (Pertiwi, 2018). According to (Yordan, 2017) Indonesia is one of the Top 10 Most Google Translate Users. This shows that currently Google Translate is a favourite for many people in all fields, including language academics who study second languages (Alasmari dkk., 2016; Alsalem, 2019; Bin Dahmash, 2020). The phenomenon of a surge in Google Translate users also occurs among students of Foreign Language Study Programs, especially Arabic Language Education Study Programs who are required to write their theses or other scientific works in Arabic.

Based on research from (Arifatun, 2012) that Arabic language papers are considered very difficult and a difficult task for students. Therefore, students often take the route of translating Indonesian papers into Arabic via access to Google



Translate. This is also confirmed by research (Nurman, 2019) where Arabic education study program students writing papers in Arabic have difficulty completing their papers, and the average student completes their degree in a minimum of 10 semesters, the process will take time. According to (Bahri & Mahadi, 2016; Ghasemi & Hashemian, 2016), lack of time and the need to translate texts for various reasons brought about an increase in the study of machine translation. Another opinion also states that we live in a fast-paced world, where time is scarce and where we want to be highly productive in a short time, computers are often seen as life savers, time or deadlines (Precup-Stiegelbauer, 2013). Google translate, as *statistical machine translation (SMT)*, is the center of attention because it supports 90 languages.

In line with the description above, the same problem is also felt by PBA students at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. Based on initial observations made by researchers which are also related to previous research (Dinata dkk., 2023) Regarding The Gaps of Students' Writing Skills in Arabic Thesis Writing, in the translation aspect there is a gap between Target Situation Analysis (TSA) and Present Situation Analysis (PSA). Students who should be able to translate texts into the Target Language (TL), namely Arabic, actually have great difficulty in translating, so that most (86%) students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang use Google Translate to translate their theses. The proportion of use of Google Translate itself varies, between 50%-90% of the translation process is carried out using only Google Translate.

The data about the tools used by Arabic education study program of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang students in translating Arabic theses. As many as 86% of Arabic Language Education Study Program students at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang used webbased Google Translate to translate their thesis. However, despite the convenience offered, the use of webb based Google Translate itself raises new problems in translation, especially in non-English translations. As stated by (Bahri & Mahadi, 2016; Groves & Mundt, 2015; Maulidiyah, 2018; Van Rensburg dkk., 2012), that machine translation is far from capable of producing error-free text. Research (Jackson dkk., 2019) assesses that Google Translate for translating non-English studies recommends caution in its use. Other research shows that Google Translate shows a strong tendency towards a male default, especially for fields that are usually associated with an unequal gender distribution or stereotypes such as work. Webbased Google translate returns a male default much more often than expected from demographic data (Prates dkk., 2020).

From the relevant research described previously, it appears that the inconsistency aspects that exist in the web-based Google Translate translation results have not been discussed in depth, especially regarding the views of the thesis writers who translated their theses into Arabic. This research aims to reveal what forms of inconsistencies in Google Translate results in Arabic theses are from the perspective of the thesis writer through testing the level of consistency of terms and grammar. Previous relevant research also only used survey methods or error analysis to see the weaknesses of web-based Google Translate, while researcher will use mixed methods, researchers who can also find patterns of inconsistencies in Google Translate translation results from the perspective of the thesis writers. May also dig deeper through interviews regarding the implications that thesis writers feel from existing inconsistencies, as well as how thesis writers who use Google



Translate correct errors resulting from the inconsistencies that occur. From this explanation, it is clear that the novel aspect of this research is that it seeks to find patterns of inconsistencies found in web-based Google translation results in translating from Indonesian to Arabic and what implications the author feels regarding the existing inconsistencies, as well as how the efforts were made by the authors to overcome existing inconsistencies.

METHOD

The research in this article uses mixed methods with the Explanatory Sequential Design because after distributing questionnaires in collecting quantitative data to collect patterns of inconsistencies that occurred, it was important to explain the initial findings from the quantitative data qualitatively by interviews. In accordance with what Cresswell stated in several other studies (Acquah dkk., 2021; Chen & Assefa, 2021; Creswell, 2016; Draucker dkk., 2020; Mertens, 2019; Subedi, 2016) which states that in this design, there are 2 interactive sequential phases. In the first stage, quantitative data collection and analysis is carried out, which has priority for answering research questions. The next stage, the qualitative data collection phase, is carried out following the previous phase. Researchers generally interpret qualitative data to help explain (explain) the results obtained in the quantitative phase.

The Explanatory Sequential Design



The research began with document analysis relating to indicators of the quality of the translation results. After that, the researcher carried out a consistency test on the results of the Google Translate translation of the Arabic thesis to determine what aspects contained inconsistencies. In accordance with the chosen research design, after document study the researcher will take data from the questionnaire instrument or questionnaire by containing questions which are the results of the document study. Questionnaires were distributed to 39 students who had written their theses in Arabic. After the quantitative data was obtained, the researcher deepened the quantitative findings qualitatively which will be carried out through interviews in the form of FGD with selected informants, namely 14 students who were selected purposively, namely students who completed their thesis in more than 8 semesters.

In the data collection process through FGD, source triangulation is used (Bachri, 2010; Rahardjo, 2010) so that data collected from one informant is corroborated with other informants. (Hamzah, 2021). Data from the questionnaire instruments distributed to 39 respondents were analyzed using descriptive percentage analysis techniques. Then the quantitative data from the results of the questionnaire regarding Google Translate translations in Arabic thesis writing will



be deepened with qualitative data so that it can verify and validate what students convey and can explore aspects that are not covered by quantitative data. The data obtained from the FGD is presented descriptively, descriptive means describing what is the situation in the field (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Mahardika dkk., 2020). Meanwhile, there are 2 data analysis techniques used in this research, the first is quantitative data analysis, descriptive percentages and qualitative analysis from Miles and Huberman. (Al-Amer dkk., 2015; Creswell, 2016; Huberman & Miles, 2002) which has four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation and the final step is drawing conclusions and verification (Jogiyanto Hartono, 2018; Majid, 2017; Sarosa, 2021; Wijaya, 2020) The data that will be discussed using qualitative data analysis consists of the results of an FGD with 14 PBA students regarding what errors they encountered in the Google Translate translation of Arabic thesis writing related to the rules of *nahwu* and *sharf* or grammatical aspects in Arabic.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pattern of inconsistencies in Google translate translation results

The results of the document analysis carried out by the researchers were by looking at the results of the translation of 14 student theses and measuring the errors contained in these theses. The two sub-indicators of the consistency test are aspects of key term consistency and grammatical consistency. (Hijriyah, 2012). The test results show that the error score for the consistency aspect of key terms is very high, resulting in a very low assessment. then in the aspect of grammatical consistency the error score is still quite high so it gets a fairly low score. The details of the error score and its conversion to an assessment scale are as follows:

	Document	Test for consistency			
		Consistency of key		Grammatical consistency	
Number		terms			
		Error	Convert	Error	Convert
		Score	Value	Score	Value
1	theses 1	22	2	21	2
2	theses 2	25	1	23	2
3	theses 3	23	2	18	3
4	theses 4	25	1	30	1
5	theses 5	23	2	19	2
6	theses 6	19	2	18	3
7	theses 7	23	2	22	2
8	theses 8	25	1	18	3
9	theses 9	26	1	22	2
10	theses 10	25	1	26	1
11	theses 11	23	2	13	3
12	theses 12	22	2	21	2
13	theses 13	24	2	26	1
14	theses 14	21	2	18	3
Ave	erage	23,29	1,64286	21,07	2,14286

Table 1. Consistency Test Results for Google Translate translations of Arabic theses



Description:		
Error Score	Value Scale	Description
<6	5	Very Low Error or very high consistency
7-12	4	Moderately Low Error or moderately high consistency
13-18	3	Medium error or moderate consistency
19-24	2	Moderately High Error or moderately low consistency
>24	1	Very High Error or very low consistency

Source: Results of document analysis using consistency test indicators (Hijriyah, 2012) on Google Translate translations of Arabic theses

From table 1 above, data is obtained that the average error score in the aspect of consistency in the use of terms is quite high, namely 23.29 and gets a value scale of 2, which can be interpreted as meaning that errors in the use of key terms are quite high, so it can be interpreted as consistency in use of the term is quite low. Likewise, the aspect of grammatical errors is also quite high, namely an average of 21.07 and gets a scale value of 2, which can be interpreted as meaning that grammatical errors are quite high, so it can be interpreted as that grammatical consistency is also quite low.

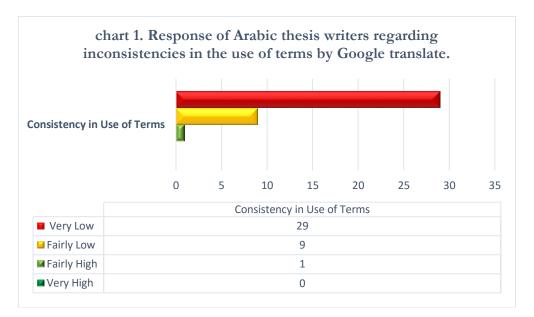
From the results of this consistency test, researchers found repeated patterns of errors or inconsistencies. This pattern includes; 1) Inconsistency in the use of key terms, or terms that are the same and are guite often used in Arabic theses. As an example; The word "Siswa" is translated using many terms, namely these three terms have the same meaning, namely student, but طالب/ تلميذ/ متعلم inconsistent pronunciation will confuse the reader when reading the translation. 2) Inconsistencies in the form of singular words or *mufrad*, *mutsanna* and *jamak*, namely the translation of Google Translate results often inconsistently translating singular Arabic words into plural or vice versa. For example, the word "student" is gendered words, both inconsistencies in translating masculine to feminine words or vice versa. For example, the word "researcher" (male) is translated with the term and the word "researcher" (female) is translated with the term الباحة . This in the Arabic as we فعل in the Arabic as we described at number fout. 4) Inconsistencies in garamatics (*nahwu* and *sharf*). This pattern of inconsistency is what the researcher proposed to the Arabic-speaking thesis writers as respondents to ask for their responses regarding the inconsistencies in the Google Translate translation results. This also confirms the research results from (Arifatun, 2012) which divides errors into 7 categories, including: *Nakirah ma'rifat* errors, mudzakar muannats errors, use of meaningful harf, errors in the use of dhomir, *mufrad*, *mutsanna*, *jama'* errors, *i'rob* errors and errors in the use of *fi'il*. If we compare the findings of the researcher and previous researchers, it appears that all the errors classified fall into the four categories of inconsistency found by the researcher, however, there is an additional aspect of



inconsistency in the use of terms that have the same meaning and intent, but are translated with different terms.

Google translate inconsistencies in Arabic translation from the thesis writer's perspective

Patterns of errors or inconsistencies that researchers formulate through document studies include; 1) Inconsistency in the use of key terms, or terms that are the same and quite often used in Arabic theses. 2) Inconsistency in the form of singular words or *mufrad*, *mutsanna* and *jamak*, namely the translation of Google Translate results which often inconsistently translates singular Arabic words into plural or vice versa. 3) Inconsistencies in the translation of gender words, whether inconsistencies in translating masculine to feminine words or vice versa. 4) Gramatical Inconsistencies (*nahwu* and *sharf*). This pattern of inconsistency is what the researcher proposed to Arabic-speaking thesis writers as respondents to ask for their responses regarding inconsistencies in the Google Translate translation results, and obtained results as in the following Chart:

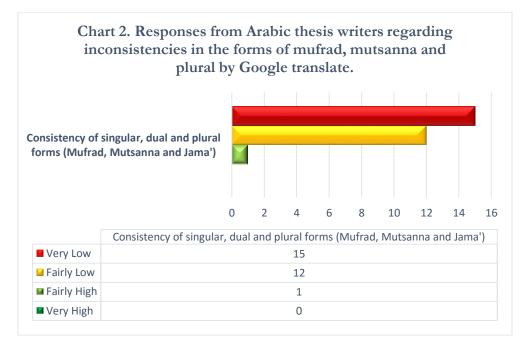


In chart 1 above, the researcher found that the first form of inconsistency was inconsistency in the use of terms. Of the 39 respondents who were selected based on criteria, the results showed that 29 respondents (74.35%) stated that the consistency of Google Translate was very low in the use of terms, then 9 respondents (23.07%) stated that the consistency was quite low and only 1 respondent (2.56%) stated that the consistency was quite high. When linked to global research, discussions about machine translation have been widely discussed by academics, including (Al-Shalabi, 2022; Muftah, 2022; Munkova dkk., 2021; Prates dkk., 2020; Shaikhli, 2022) which states that machine translation has weaknesses that must be supported by reliable tools or methods. This statement is in line with researchers' findings that the translation results of Google Translate as the most popular translation machine have many weaknesses, including the aspect of consistency in the use of key terms, or terms that are often used, the translation machine is not



consistent in using terms that have meaning. The same thing, but translated with different terms.

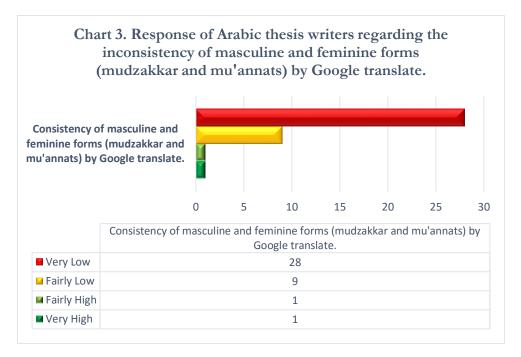
This finding refutes the statement from (Shaikhli, 2022) which states that machine translation is more consistent than human translation. The consistency that Shaikhli means is that machine translation is consistent in speed, however, in terms of consistency in the use of terms, machine translation, especially Google Translate, is very low, at least from the perspective of Arabic thesis writers. In accordance with the type of mixed research chosen, the researcher tried to explain the data from the questionnaire with the data from the interviews. Results were obtained from several informants that this inconsistency caused ambiguity in the reader's understanding of the translation results. As an example; The word *"Siswa"* is translated using many terms, namely معالب/ تلميذ/ متعلم these three terms have the same meaning, namely student, but inconsistent pronunciation will confuse the reader when reading the translation, or the word *"Peneliti"* which is translated with the term in the translation results.



In chart 2 above, the second form or pattern of inconsistency is the inconsistency of *mufrad, mutsanna and jamak* forms. In the previous diagram 1, data was obtained that out of 39 respondents, 15 respondents (38.46%) stated that the consistency of *mufrad, mutsanna* and *jamak* aspects in the Google Translate translation results was very low, 12 respondents (30.76%) stated that it was sufficient low and only 1 respondent (2.56%) stated that the consistency was quite high. Research from (Arifatun, 2012; Haniah, 2018) stated that machine translation is inconsistent in terms of rules and use of verbs, this research found that another aspect which is also a weakness of machine translation is that machine translation is inconsistent regarding singular and plural words, often when translating words, machine translation translate in singular and plural, even in the same paragraph.



For example, the word "student" is translated with the term طالب/طلاب/طلاب (مالب/طلاب) or the word "researcher" is translated with the term الباحث الباحث معلمون or the word 'teacher' is translated or the meaning of the translation can also be wrong or difficult to understand, especially in Arabic where each word will have an impact on other words, such as the subject affecting the verb. In other words, the grammatical aspect of Arabic will be disturbed by errors in choosing the singularity and plurality of the subject before the verb.

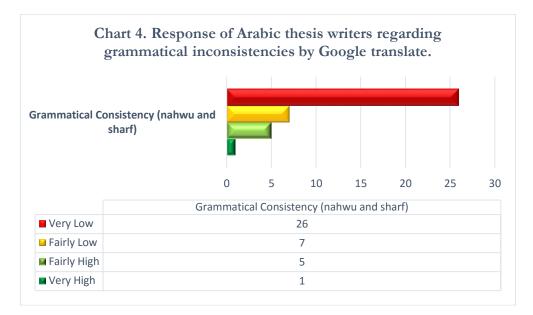


In chart 3 above, the third form or pattern of inconsistency is gender translation inconsistency, Indonesian words associated with masculine are translated in feminine form or vice versa, in Arabic they are called *mudzakkar* and *muannats*. Of the 39 respondents, 28 respondents (71.79%) stated that consistency in halal *mudzakkar* and *muannats* was very low, 9 respondents (23.07%) stated that consistency in halal *mudzakkar* and *muannats* was quite low, 1 respondent (2.56%) stated that consistency in halal *mudzakkar* and *muannats* was quite low, 1 respondent (2.56%) stated that consistency in halal *mudzakkar* and *muannats* was quite high and 1 respondent (2.56%) stated that consistency in halal *mudzakkar* and *muannats* was very high. Through interviews, according to the informants, the translation machine does not recognize gender, so it is not consistent in translating a term which should be *mudzakkar* or *muannats*. For example, the word "researcher" (male) is translated with the term

This error will also influence the choice of the wrong verb or لغعل in the Arabic. These findings actually strengthen and enrich the research results of other researchers (Arifatun, 2012; Ilmi, 2019; Muftah, 2022; Naeem, 2020; Syam dkk., 2023) which states that machine translation has weaknesses of this machine translation must be perfected with human or user translation by using a dictionary manually. However, these findings also refute the results of research from (Shaikhli, 2022) which states that machine translation is more consistent than conventional



translation or manual translation by humans. This is refuted in the aspect of consistency in the choice of terms, singular and plural sentences, as well as in the aspect of distinguishing between *mudzakkar* and *muannats* or in the translation of male and female subjects.



In chart 4 above, the fourth form of inconsistency is inconsistency in grammar or *qowaid*, whether *nahwu* or *sharf*. Of the 39 respondents, 26 respondents (66.67%) stated that consistency in terms of gowaid, both *nahwu* and *sharf*, was very low, 7 respondents (17.94%) stated that consistency in terms of gowaid, both nahwu and sharf, was quite low, 5 respondents (12.82%) stated that consistency in terms of *gowaid*, both *nahwu* and *sharf*, was quite high and 1 respondent (2.56%) stated that consistency in terms of *qowaid*, both *nahwu* and *sharf*, was very high. Furthermore, through interviews, researchers also obtained information from informants that there were many grammatical errors in the Google Translate translation results. As an example put forward by one of the informants, when translating the sentence "researchers found" it was translated as وجدت الباحث where the word bahits, which is a masculine word, was given a feminine verb or fi'il, so that grammatically an error occurred. The results of this research also confirm the results of research from (He, 2021; Nurbayan dkk., 2020; Solyman, 2022) who also found grammatical errors, the specific grammatical errors that the researcher found were caused by inconsistencies in previous patterns, errors in mufrad and plural forms would result in errors in the form of the verb or *fi'il*, be *it fi'il mudhari'* or *fi'il madhi*. Likewise, errors or inconsistencies in the forms of masculine and feminine gender (mudzakkar and muannats) will also result in the same grammatical errors in the verb or *fi'il* aspects. Meanwhile, the error pattern that the researchers found was that these grammatical errors or inconsistencies occurred in the form of sentences, not words.



CONCLUSION

The conclusion obtained in this article is that web-based Google Translate does offer many conveniences in translating, including Indonesian-Arabic translation, but it has many weaknesses which researchers call patterns of inconsistency. After analyzing the data obtained from questionnaires and interviews with thesis writers, the researcher concluded that according to students who wrote theses in Arabic, web-based Google Translate was very inconsistent in translating terms that had the same meaning, but the terms that appeared in the translation results were very frequent. different. Inconsistencies also very often occur in the aspects of *mufrad*, mutsanna and jamak, because the web-based Google translation engine cannot differentiate between the singularity and plurality aspects of the translated object. Apart from that, translation inconsistencies in aspects of mudzakkar and mu'annats also occur very often. This and the aspects of *mufrad*, *mutsanna* and *jamak* have an impact on grammatical inconsistencies, namely the use of the wrong verb (*fi'il*) in a sentence. Of the four patterns of inconsistency, term inconsistency is a new thing that has not been widely discussed, and grammatical aspects which are also closely related to aspects of the singular or plural form as well as the masculine or feminine form of *mufradat* which is the subject of a translated sentence need to be discussed further by subsequent researchers.

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