

ORIGINAL

Self-Efficacy and Perception in the Use of GAI Tools in the Translation Classroom

Autoeficacia y percepción del uso de las herramientas de IA generativa en el aula de traducción

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ABSTRACT

The rise of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools in translation has sparked interest in their impact on translator training. This study examines the relationship between perception and self-efficacy in the use of GAI, specifically ChatGPT, within a specialized academic setting. The qualitative and exploratory research involved 30 final-year students from the Bachelor's Degree in Translation at the Autonomous University of Baja California (UABC). Over the course of a semester, participants applied ChatGPT in pre-translation, translation, and post-editing tasks for specialized texts. To assess perception and self-efficacy in using these tools, a 15-item questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions was used. The results indicate that a positive perception of ChatGPT is associated with greater confidence and performance in translation. However, challenges were identified, such as a lack of terminological accuracy and the need for specific training in post-editing. The findings suggest that the pedagogical integration of generative AI tools can strengthen translation competencies, reduce technological anxiety, and optimize the translation process. It is recommended to balance the use of these tools with teaching strategies that foster critical and creative skills. In conclusion, GAI presents both opportunities and challenges in translator training, highlighting the importance of proper implementation to maximize its benefits in professional practice.

Keywords: GAI; Translator Training; Self-Efficacy.

RESUMEN

El auge de las herramientas de inteligencia artificial generativa en traducción ha generado interés en su impacto en la formación de traductores. Este estudio analiza la relación entre percepción y autoeficacia en el uso de GAI, específicamente ChatGPT, dentro de un entorno académico especializado. La investigación, de enfoque cualitativo y exploratorio, involucró a 30 estudiantes de último año de la Licenciatura en Traducción en la Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC). Durante un semestre, los participantes aplicaron ChatGPT en tareas de pretraducción, traducción y posedición de textos especializados. Para evaluar la percepción y autoeficacia en el uso de estas herramientas, se utilizó un cuestionario de 15 ítems con preguntas cerradas y abiertas. Los resultados indican que una percepción positiva de ChatGPT se asocia con una mayor confianza y desempeño en la traducción. No obstante, se identificaron desafíos como la falta de precisión terminológica y la necesidad de formación específica en posedición. Los hallazgos sugieren que la integración pedagógica de las herramientas de IA generativas puede fortalecer las competencias traductológicas, reduciendo la ansiedad tecnológica y optimizando el proceso de traducción. Se recomienda equilibrar el uso de estas herramientas con estrategias de enseñanza que fomenten habilidades críticas y creativas. En conclusión, las GAI representan tanto oportunidades como retos en la formación de traductores, destacando la importancia

de una implementación adecuada para maximizar su beneficio en la práctica profesional

Palabras clave: IA Generativa; Formación de Traductores; Autoeficacia.

INTRODUCTION

The rise of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools in the field of translation has sparked growing interest in understanding their impact on the professional training of translators. These tools, represented in this study by ChatGPT, have demonstrated potential to optimize translation, pre-translation, and post-editing processes for specialized texts.^(1,2,3,4,5) However, their integration into the classroom raises fundamental questions about how students perceive their usefulness and how they develop self-efficacy in their use. In this context, self-efficacy is defined as students' confidence in their abilities to carry out specific tasks using these technologies.^(6,7,8,9,10,11,12)

The main objective of this study is to analyze the relationship between perception and self-efficacy in the use of GAI tools, with a specific focus on ChatGPT, to understand its impact on the development of translation competencies within an academic environment specialized in translation. To this end, a qualitative, exploratory, and empirical-experimental research was conducted, aligned with translation studies, involving 15 final-year students from the Bachelor's Degree in Translation program at the Language School of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC). During a semester-long course, students participated in classroom practices designed to apply GAI tools at various stages of the translation process. These practices included pre-translation, translation, and post-editing activities for specialized texts, complemented by a structured 15-item questionnaire designed to assess perception and self-efficacy in the use of these tools.⁽¹³⁾

The research question guiding this study is: What is the relationship between perception and self-efficacy in the use of GAI tools, specifically ChatGPT, in the academic training of final-year translation students? Based on this, the hypothesis is that a positive perception of the usefulness of GAI tools is associated with higher levels of self-efficacy in their use, leading to more efficient performance in translation and post-editing tasks for specialized texts.

This study aims to provide empirical evidence on the role that GAI tools play in building translation competencies, as well as on the attitudes, confidence, and practical skills that future professionals develop when using these technologies in the classroom. The expected findings aim not only to enrich the understanding of translation training processes but also to offer recommendations for the effective pedagogical implementation of GAI tools in academic translation programs.⁽¹⁴⁾

Self-Efficacy and Perception in Translation

Self-efficacy, defined as the belief in one's own abilities to organize and execute the necessary actions to handle specific situations,^(15,16,17) has proven to be a critical factor in learning and adopting new technologies. In the context of translation, this perception becomes even more relevant given the increasing integration of AI-driven technological tools, such as neural machine translation systems.

Recent studies highlight that translators with high levels of self-efficacy tend to approach technological tools with greater confidence, improving their performance and accuracy in complex tasks.⁽⁵⁾ Conversely, those with low self-efficacy may experience resistance or technological anxiety, limiting their potential to explore the advanced capabilities of AI-based systems.^(18,19,20,21,22)

Translators' perception of GAI tools also plays a crucial role in their acceptance and use. Translators who view these technologies as complementary to their skills tend to show a greater willingness to use them in the translation process.⁽⁷⁾ However, a negative perception or the idea that these tools threaten the profession may inhibit their integration.^(23,25,26,26,27,28)

The combination of high self-efficacy and a positive perception of AI contributes to the development of stronger translation competencies, especially in instrumental subcompetence. According to Wang and Gao,^(29,30,31) self-efficacy enhances a translator's ability to perform more efficient post-editing, while a positive perception of AI encourages critical interaction with the tools, maximizing their utility.

In summary, self-efficacy and perception play interrelated roles in the adoption and effective use of technology in translation. Understanding these variables is essential for designing pedagogical strategies that promote the competent use of GAI tools, fostering a symbiosis between human skills and technological capabilities.

GAI in Translator Training and Professional Practice

GAI has revolutionized professional translation practice and its teaching in classrooms, especially in regions like Mexico and Latin America. These technological tools, including advanced machine translation systems such as SDL Trados, Wordfast, and ChatGPT, have opened new possibilities and challenges for translators and

students.

In the professional field, GAI has improved the speed and consistency of translations, enabling translators to handle larger workloads with higher standards of terminological quality.^(32,33,34,35,36,37) Tools like ChatGPT have proven particularly useful for generating translation drafts that facilitate processes such as post-editing and stylistic adaptation, optimizing the time spent on specialized projects.^(38,39,40,41) However, this advancement raises concerns about the potential loss of creativity and the risk of over-reliance on these technologies, which could limit critical translation skills.^(42,43,44,45,46)

In Mexico and Latin America, GAI adoption has been uneven due to factors such as the digital divide and the lack of specific professional training.^(47,48,49,50,51) According to Andrade Preciado *et al.*⁽¹⁰⁾, while these tools have the potential to reduce costs and time, their successful implementation requires the development of specific post-editing competencies, and a pedagogical approach tailored to local market needs.

In classrooms, GAI offers students the opportunity to interact with technological tools that are already essential in the labor market. According to García and Díaz-Molina,⁽¹³⁾ students working with machine translation and post-editing develop practical skills in text revision and optimization, strengthening their instrumental competence. Andrade Preciado *et al.*⁽¹⁰⁾ highlight that integrating ChatGPT into translator training allows students to tackle specialized translations more effectively by providing drafts that facilitate post-editing and encourage the development of terminological glossaries.

However, the use of GAI in educational settings also has limitations. Common criticisms include the lack of creativity in AI-generated translations and the potential reduction of critical thinking among students who become overly dependent on these tools.^(52,53,54,55,56,57) Additionally, implementing these technologies requires adequate technological infrastructure, which not all educational institutions in Latin America can provide.

Despite the challenges, the benefits of integrating GAI into translator training are significant. AI-based tools allow students to experiment with preliminary translations, post-editing, and terminological glossary creation, essential skills for today's market.^(58,59,60,61) They also foster a deeper understanding of the translation process by allowing comparisons between human and AI-generated work. Andrade Preciado *et al.*⁽¹⁰⁾ emphasize that these experiences also help students improve their critical analysis skills and identify common errors generated by GAI systems, such as stylistic inconsistencies or contextual inaccuracies.

Furthermore, integrating GAI into education can bridge the gap between academic training and labor market demands, ensuring that future translators are prepared to collaborate effectively with these technologies.^(62,63,64,65) To maximize these benefits, educational institutions must design pedagogical strategies that balance the use of these tools with the development of critical and creative skills.

The inclusion of GAI in translator training in Mexico and Latin America offers opportunities to modernize educational programs and enhance professional efficiency. However, its implementation requires addressing challenges such as technical training, access to resources, and promoting balanced use that combines human and technological skills. With the right approach, GAI can positively transform translation practice and teaching in the region.

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach with an exploratory and empirical-experimental design, aligned with contemporary trends in translation studies.^(66,67,69) This approach allowed for a detailed and contextualized examination of the relationship between perception and self-efficacy in the use of GAI tools, with particular emphasis on ChatGPT, in translator training.

Participants

The sample consisted of 30 final-year students from the Bachelor's Degree in Translation program at the Language School of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC), enrolled in the course *AI Applications in Translation* within the current undergraduate curriculum. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, as they met specific criteria: previous experience in translation practice and initial exposure to translation support technologies (commonly known as CAT tools). It is worth noting that students had translation experience in Spanish and English, in both direct and inverse directions, which were the working languages for their translation projects in the course.

Context and Procedure

The study was conducted during a semester-long course in the Translation Bachelor's program, designed to integrate GAI tools into practical classroom activities. Students participated in in-person workshop sessions that included:

1. Pre-translation: Initial exploration and analysis of the source text using ChatGPT as a support tool for generating drafts and initial translation proposals.
2. Translation: Adaptation of the drafts generated by ChatGPT, considering contextual, stylistic, and

terminological aspects.

3. Post-editing: Review and refinement of the generated translations, focusing on correcting lexical, grammatical, and stylistic errors, as well as adapting them to the specific needs of the target text.

These practices were carried out over 16 weeks, with weekly three-hour sessions in a laboratory equipped with access to ChatGPT and other machine translation tools such as SDL Trados Studio 2024, Wordfast Pro 5, OmegaT, among others.

Data Collection Instruments

A structured questionnaire consisting of 15 items was used to assess participants' perception and self-efficacy in using AI-assisted translation (AIG) tools. The items addressed three main dimensions:

1. Perception: Opinions and attitudes toward the usefulness, ease of use, and relevance of ChatGPT in the translation process.
2. Self-efficacy: Confidence in the ability to use ChatGPT for specific tasks in pre-translation, translation, and post-editing.
3. Pedagogical integration: Perception of the impact of AIG tools on their professional training.

The items included closed-ended questions with Likert scale responses (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) and open-ended questions to capture qualitative opinions.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the Likert scale responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify general trends in participants' perception and self-efficacy. Qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic coding⁽⁶⁶⁾ to identify emerging patterns and categories related to students' experiences and attitudes.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical guidelines established by UABC for research involving human subjects. Participant confidentiality was ensured through data anonymization and secure storage of the collected information. Additionally, participants were given the option to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

This methodology provided a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions and self-efficacy when interacting with AI-assisted translation (AIG) tools in an academic setting, contributing to a better understanding of their impact on translation competence development. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that these methodologies belong to empirical experimental studies in the field of Translation Studies, as proposed by Hurtado-Albir et al.⁽¹⁸⁾

RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the analysis of the collected data, organized around the main dimensions studied: perception, self-efficacy, and the pedagogical integration of AIG tools in the translation classroom. The results reflect students' attitudes and opinions regarding the usefulness, ease of use, and relevance of ChatGPT in the stages of the translation process, as well as their confidence in their ability to use this tool for specific tasks in pre-translation, translation, and post-editing. Additionally, perceptions regarding the impact of these tools on the development of translation competencies are highlighted, identifying strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement.

The information is presented in a structured manner, combining quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under study. Quantitative results are illustrated through descriptive tables and graphs that summarize general trends, while qualitative responses are analyzed using representative examples that offer deeper insight into students' experiences. This organization facilitates a detailed and contextualized understanding of the impact of AIG tools on participants' learning and professional development.

Perception of AIG Tools

It is essential to analyze students' perception of the use of generative artificial intelligence (AIG) tools in translation. Survey results indicate that 46,67 % (n=7) of participants consider themselves proficient in using these tools and find them easy to incorporate into their training. Meanwhile, 40,00 % (n=6) perceive them as accessible but acknowledge some difficulties that could be resolved with more practice. Finally, 13,33 % (n=2) report no issues with integration and have a positive perception of their use in translation exercises.

Additionally, when students were asked whether the incorporation of these technological tools has contributed to improving the quality and efficiency of translation products, their responses are presented in

figure 1.

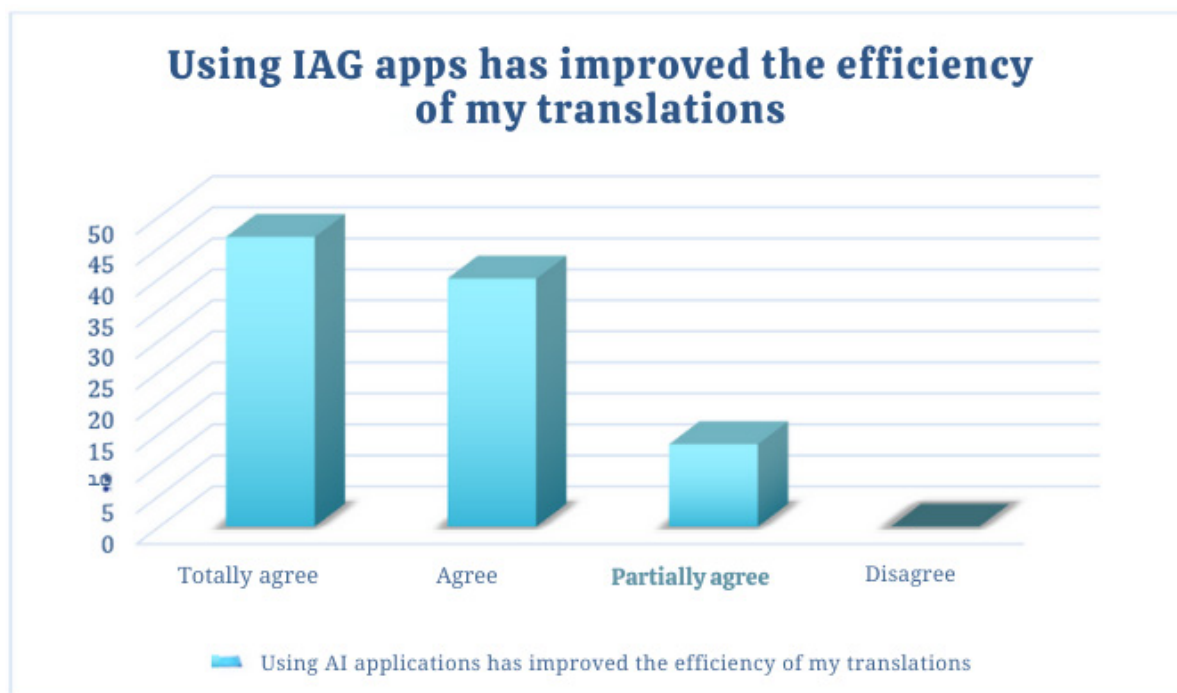


Figure 1. Perception of improved translation efficiency

As shown in figure 1, 46,67 % (n=7) of participants stated that they strongly agree that the integration of generative artificial intelligence (AIG) tools has improved the efficiency of their translation process and outputs. Meanwhile, 40 % (n=6) expressed agreement with this statement, while 13,33 % (n=2) indicated partial favorability regarding the use of these applications and their impact on the translation process. Notably, none of the respondents expressed disagreement with the incorporation of the systems introduced during the course.

Regarding the implementation of AIG tools to optimize the translation process, including translation and post-editing time, students were asked about their level of satisfaction with the systems used in the course. Descriptive results indicate that 66,7 % (n=10) of participants reported being satisfied with the incorporation of these tools, while 26,67 % (n=4) expressed complete satisfaction with their use in optimizing the translation process. On the other hand, only one student (6,67 %) maintained a neutral stance on the question.

The study gathered both positive and negative experiences regarding the implementation of ChatGPT 3.0 in the translation process. While the tool has proven useful in various stages of translation work, it also presents limitations that affect students' efficiency and accuracy.

Despite its ability to generate high-quality translations in semi-specialized contexts, students identified key areas requiring improvement. One of the main concerns was terminological accuracy. Although ChatGPT generally provides an adequate translation, terminological inconsistencies were observed in specialized texts, requiring students to conduct thorough revisions to ensure the correctness of terms. This issue can be attributed to the probabilistic nature of the model, which lacks a structured database of discipline-specific terms. As a result, the translator's intervention remains essential for validating and correcting terminology.

Another limitation identified by participants was the lack of preservation of the original document format. Since ChatGPT is primarily designed for text generation, it does not maintain the structure of the source document, posing an additional challenge for students. This deficiency not only affects the visual presentation of the translated text but also increases post-editing time, as users must manually replicate the document's layout. In professional settings, where productivity and consistency in formatting are crucial, this issue represents an obstacle that could be mitigated through complementary tools or more efficient workflows.

Additionally, some participants mentioned difficulties in command-based interaction and content fragmentation. The need to provide detailed instructions to obtain precise results was found to be tedious and time-consuming. This observation suggests that making the most of the tool requires specific skills in crafting precise instructions, highlighting the importance of training in prompt engineering strategies.

On the other hand, the free version of ChatGPT imposes limitations on processing long texts, forcing users to translate paragraphs in a fragmented manner. This method not only disrupts workflow continuity but may also affect textual cohesion, requiring additional adjustments in post-editing.

Despite these limitations, students acknowledged that ChatGPT is a valuable tool for AI-assisted translation.

One of the main benefits identified is its ability to generate high-quality translations in semi-specialized texts. Participants noted that for moderately difficult texts, the tool provided adequate results, suggesting that it can be beneficial in contexts where terminological complexity is not highly technical. However, when texts contained specialized terms, a thorough terminological review was necessary to ensure message accuracy.

Another positive aspect highlighted by students was grammatical and stylistic accuracy. ChatGPT proved effective in producing well-structured and grammatically correct translations in general texts. This facilitates post-editing, as syntactic and coherence errors are minimal compared to terminological inconsistencies.

Furthermore, participants identified that using AI contributed to optimizing the translation process. The tool allowed them to reduce the time required to generate an initial draft, making it easier to focus on post-editing and terminological review. This finding indicates that artificial intelligence can play a complementary role in professional translation, reducing the workload for mechanical tasks and allowing translators to focus on strategic aspects, such as contextual adaptation and specialized revision.

The final questions of the survey aimed to assess students' overall opinion of the course "AI Applications in Translation" and its impact on their professional training. Figure 2 shows that the majority of participants believe that the course significantly contributed to their development as future translators, equipping them with tools to enhance productivity and optimize the translation process using AI.

While ChatGPT has limitations, students identified its potential to streamline workflow, enhance translation quality, and serve as a support tool in post-editing. However, the results also highlight the importance of comprehensive training that combines the use of automated tools with the development of critical and strategic translation skills. The participants' experience demonstrates that, to maximize the benefits of AI in professional practice, it is essential for translators to receive training in post-editing strategies, terminology validation, and format adaptation.

In conclusion, integrating AI tools into translation education is a process that requires both an understanding of their benefits and awareness of their limitations. While ChatGPT has proven to be a useful resource for optimizing the translation process, its effective use depends on training in post-editing and complementary tools to overcome its shortcomings. These findings highlight the need for continued research on the intersection between AI and translation competence to develop methodologies that maximize the potential of these tools in translator training.

Self-Efficacy in the Use of Generative AI Tools and Impact on Professional Training

The data collection instrument, used as a survey with participating students, helped to understand self-efficacy regarding the use of generative AI tools (GAI), such as ChatGPT 3.0, and their impact on professional translator training. When asked how they would rate their performance in class, participants provided responses reflected in figure 2.

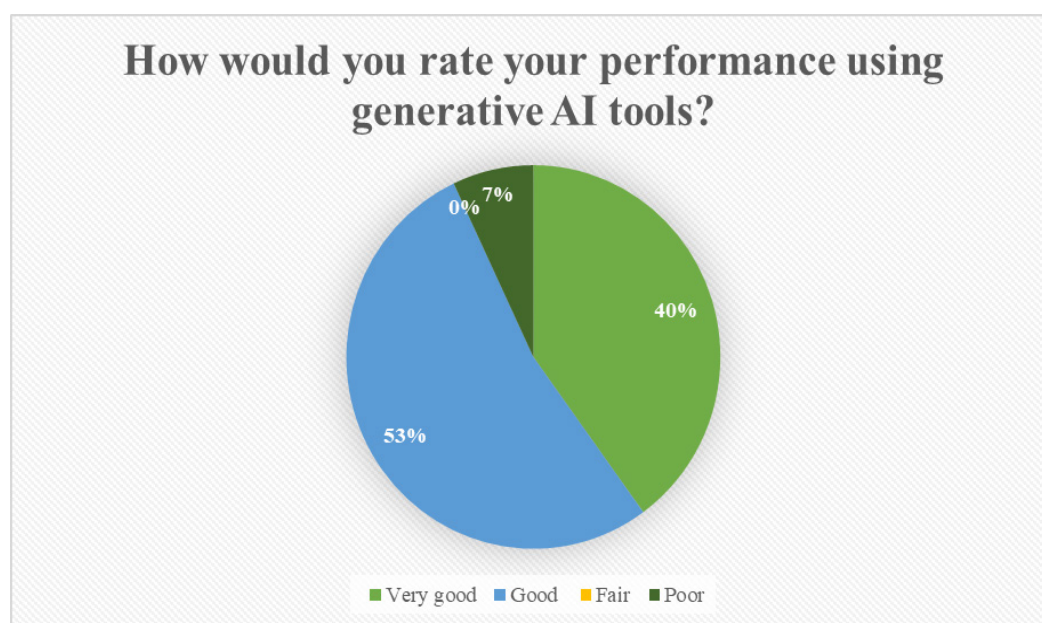


Figure 2. Self-efficacy in the use of generative AI tools

As shown in figure 2, 53,3 % of the students who participated in the course rated their performance with GAI tools as good. Additionally, 40 % of the participants indicated that their performance was very good, reflecting

a high level of confidence in their ability to use these tools. However, only one student, representing 6,7 % of the sample, rated their performance as poor.

This finding is particularly relevant when comparing these perceptions with the final course evaluations. While these evaluations were not part of the present qualitative analysis, they help confirm that students perceived self-efficacy aligns with their actual academic performance. That is, students who expressed a positive assessment of their performance with GAI tools also received corresponding grades in their evaluations, suggesting a relationship between perceived competence and effectiveness in applying these systems in the translation context.

This reinforces the idea that implementing GAI tools in translator training not only impacts the development of technical skills but also influences students' self-confidence and perception of self-efficacy. The relationship between these variables could be explored in future studies to analyze in greater depth how familiarity with and frequent use of these technologies affect the learning curve and academic performance in translation training environments.

Additionally, when asked about which generative AI tools they would consider incorporating into their translation practice, students identified ChatGPT, DeepSeek, SDL Trados, and WordFast Pro 5 as their main choices. Participants highlighted that these tools offer high terminological accuracy in most cases and enable deep post-editing processes, contributing to both the quality and format of translations.

Another relevant aspect noted by students is the ability of these tools to optimize time and the translation process. In particular, they mentioned that combining machine translation with post-editing allows them to achieve more satisfactory results in less time, suggesting that GAI tools impact not only translation efficiency but also the perceived quality of final products.

This finding highlights the importance of integrating machine translation and post-editing tools in translator training, promoting didactic strategies that strengthen the critical use of these technologies. Since AI-assisted translation is a growing trend, it is essential for future translators to develop skills to assess terminological accuracy, adapt text format, and optimize post-editing to maximize the quality of the final product.

Finally, when asked whether they would apply generative AI tools in the rest of their training and professional practice after taking the course, 100 % of the participants agreed on their incorporation as applied technologies and translation support tools. This result demonstrates a widespread acceptance of GAI in the translation field, suggesting that students perceive these tools not only as assistants in translation production but also as key elements in optimizing their professional performance. The unanimity in responses indicates that exposure to and guided use of these technologies in an academic setting have generated confidence in their effectiveness and real applicability in the translation field.

Moreover, this finding highlights the need to continue exploring the pedagogical integration of GAI tools in translation education, ensuring that students not only master their technical use but also develop a critical approach to post-editing, quality assessment, and information management. Since AI will continue evolving and transforming the professional landscape, it is crucial for translation training to adapt by incorporating methodologies that enhance the strategic use of these technologies.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study confirm the importance of generative AI tools (GAI) in translator training, particularly their impact on students' perception and self-efficacy in applying these technologies. Most participants experienced an increase in confidence and performance when using tools like ChatGPT in pre-translation, translation, and post-editing processes. Likewise, students' widespread acceptance of these tools suggests that incorporating them into translation education is a valid and beneficial strategy.

One of the most relevant findings was the relationship between a positive perception of GAI and self-efficacy in their use. Students who viewed these tools as a complement to their professional skills demonstrated greater confidence and effectiveness in their application. This supports the initial hypothesis that a favorable perception of AI's usefulness is linked to better performance in translation tasks. However, challenges were also identified, such as the need for specific training in post-editing and managing the technical limitations of these tools.

The observed limitations include a lack of terminological accuracy in highly specialized texts, dependence on detailed prompts for optimal results, and the inability to maintain the original document format. These shortcomings highlight the importance of expert human intervention in post-editing and final text revision. Additionally, the study suggests that introducing teaching strategies focused on optimizing the use of these technologies could significantly improve their applicability in professional practice.

Regarding self-efficacy, the data show that students developed greater confidence in their translation skills after gaining experience with GAI tools. This suggests that familiarity with these technologies, combined with appropriate pedagogical guidance, can reduce technological anxiety and encourage more efficient adoption of machine translation tools in the future.

From a pedagogical perspective, the results highlight the need for a curriculum design that integrates

technology and traditional translation training in a balanced way. Incorporating practical activities in the classroom, such as post-editing and critical evaluation of AI-generated translations, can strengthen students' instrumental competence and prepare them for an ever-evolving job market.

Furthermore, the finding that all participants expressed their intention to continue using GAI tools in their training and professional practice suggests that these technologies have not only been accepted but are also seen as a necessity in contemporary translation studies. However, it is essential to balance their use with the development of critical and creative skills to prevent excessive dependence on these technologies.

Finally, this study contributes to the discussion on the evolution of translation training in the AI era. While GAI tools present technical and pedagogical challenges, they also offer unique opportunities to optimize the translation process and improve the quality of the work of future translators. With proper implementation and complementary training in post-editing and terminology validation, AI can become a key resource for translation training and professional practice.

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