



Using Google Translate to Improve Junior Students' Translation

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Abstract

Using Google Translate to improve junior students' translation research was conducted to know the effects of Google Translate and to know the students' opinion about it. This study would help students to face the difficulties they faced in translation. The experimental group in this study, which took place at Yanbu University College (women's campus), contain 6 junior students. The result of this study showed that Google Translate affected students' translation in some part; it influenced the student's comprehension, word selection, and punctuation, but it did not affect idioms translation. Moreover, the students had almost a positive opinion on it.

Keywords: Translation, Google Translate, Junior student

INTRODUCTION

The technological revolution affects almost everything in this life. The students use it a lot to help them to understand easily. Also, most of the teachers use it to teach their students. The technology makes the learning easier. The students use many apps to help them in translation; Google Translate is one of these apps. In this research, the researcher will attempt to know the effect of using Google Translate for improving translation.

Technology became an essential part of people life. It makes their life easier, so they use it in every field even in translation. Due to the difficulties in translation in junior level, the students try to find many solutions for that difficulties. Using Google Translate may deal with some of these difficulties. It may provide the students with the best words, the suitable punctuations or the meaning of the text. Google Translate will affect their translation. These effects may be negative or positive. Also, it may help them and may not.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of using Google Translate for improving translation. Also, it aimed to investigate the students' opinion about Google Translate.

In this research, the researcher attempted to answer the following research questions:

- Did Google Translate help junior students to improve their translation?
- What was the effect of Google Translate on junior students' translation?
- What was students' opinion about Google Translate?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of Key Concepts

Translation. It is not a new field, but the study of it started in the second half of the twentieth century. The word translation by itself has a lot of meanings. For example, it may refer to the general field of translation, the outcome which is the transfer text, or the procedure of the translation which means translating. The procedure of the translation deals with two important terms; the source text (ST) which involves the source language (SL), and the target text (TT) which involves the target language (TL). The translation has three types. First, intralingual that means the translation happens in one language. Second, interlingual that means the translation happens between two languages. Third, inter semiotic which means the translation of verbs; signs to non-verbal signs (Munday, J., 2001).

Google Translate. It is a machine or a website that offers online translation for many languages. The translation in Google Translate can be done by many ways. It can translate between 103 languages by typing. Also, it can translate a text that is in a photo between 38 languages. Moreover, it can translate through conversation (between 32 languages) and handwriting (between 93 languages). The translation can be done online or offline (iTunes, 2018).

Junior student. Junior has four meanings. First, it refers to the child student whose age is about 7 and 11. Second, it refers to the younger of two who have the same name in a family. Third, it refers to the person who has lower rank or status. Fourth, it refers to the student who is in the third year before the last year in the school or college. The last meaning is suitable meaning for this study (Oxford Online Dictionary, n.d.).

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Bahri, H., and Mahadi, T. S. T. (2016) conducted a study on Google Translate as a supplementary tool for learning Malay. The participants were 17 from many countries and they studied at University Sains Malaysia (USM). Google Translate was used to improve students' Bahasa Malaysia language in the course LKM 100 which was for the beginner. It was a quantitative and qualitative research. The researcher used a questionnaire that contained 15 questions; 12 of them were quantitative and 3 were qualitative. The result was that Google Translate did not have any effect in speaking, listening or grammar. However, it had a great effect on vocabulary, writing, and reading. It was a useful and helpful device for the students to make them more mindful and answerable, and for the teachers because it would not waste their time or their power.

Cai, Z., Graesser, A. C., and Li, H. (2014) investigated a comparison study on Google Translate with human translation. The researchers made the comparison by using "Selected Works of Moa Zedang" which is an original Chinese book. That book had a translated edition. They selected some parts of the original book to make the comparison.

They translated that part by using Google Translate. Then, they compared it with the translated edition. They compared the formality and the cohesion. The results showed that the translation of Google Translate was similar to human translation formality. About the cohesion, Google Translate was better than human translation.

Giannetti, T. R. (2016) carried out a study on Google Translate as a resource for writing. The participants were from an intermediate school in New York City. They were 13 students who were in the 7th grade. The researcher applied the study in a Spanish course. The students had different background and they had different mother tongues. The study was mixed methods. The researcher gave them some direction before he collected the Page 4 of 7 data on the capacity of Google Translate and how they could reduce their writing errors. The data was collected by three ways. First, the research took some notes and supervised the students in the class. The focus in the first way was on the pre-existing knowledge about Google Translate. Second, the researcher gave the students two writing assignment. The research compared their writing before and after using Google Translate. Third, the researcher gave the students a close-ended survey that asked about their opinion on Google Translate. The result of the study showed that Google Translate minimized the syntactic and semantic errors. Also, the students had to know some techniques to be able to use Google Translate successfully.

One of the studies made the comparison by using a translated book. In contrast to this study, the researcher will do the comparison by using students' translation without Google Translate and students' translation with the help of Google Translate. The participants in this study will be Saudi junior students where in some researches they were American middle school students. The Arabic language is the mother tongue for all the participants.

METHOD

Design

This research was mixed methods research. It contained an experimental group and a control group for doing a pre-test and post-test. The experimental group was given a questionnaire to collect their opinion.

Participants

The participants of this research were 6 female junior students at Yanbu University College. They were Applied Linguistics students. The participants were the same in the experimental group and the control group. Their age was between 20-25. Their Language proficiency was intermediate, and their native language was Arabic.

Instruments

Pre-test and post-test. The participants of the experimental group and control group were the same. At the first, they were given a pre-test which contained 7 texts for translation to measure the quality of their translation. Then, they were given a post-test which contained 7 texts for translation to measure their quality of translation with the help of Google Translate. Both tests measured their understanding, word choice, use of

punctuation and idioms translation. The researcher used some of the answers to make a comparison.

Questionnaire. A questionnaire was given to the experimental group only to ask them about their opinion about Google Translate to improve their translation. The questionnaire contained 6 statements, and used 5 Likert scale which were "strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree", and "strongly disagree".

Data Collection Procedure

First, the researcher designed a pre-test and gave it to the participants. The researcher measured the quality of their translation. After that, the researcher designed a post-test and gave it to the experimental group to measure the quality of their translation. In the post-test, the participants tried to improve their translation with the help of Google Translate. To do that, the researcher gave them some information and steps to use Google Translate. Then, the researcher compared the data according to use of punctuation, choice of words, translating idioms and understanding. Next, the experimental group was given a questionnaire asking about their opinion about Google Translate and the researcher analyzed the responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher presents the results of the research according to the research tools.

Table 1. The table for scores on the pre-test and the post-test

Student	Pre-test				Post-test			
	Understanding	Word choice	Punctuation	Idiom	Understanding	Word choice	Punctuation	Idiom
1	1.8	0.8	1.8	1	1.2	1.7	1.6	1
2	1.6	1	1	1.5	1.8	2	2	1
3	1.4	1.1	1.6	1	2	2	2	1
4	1.6	1	2	0.5	2	1.5	2	1
5	1.8	1.6	1.5	0.5	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.5
6	1.8	1	1.5	0.5	1.8	1.8	1.5	0.5
mean	1.6	1.1	1.6	0.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.8
Total	5.1				6.2			

Pre-test and Post-test

The researcher asked the participants to translate 7 text in order to measure the quality of their translation in the pre-test and the post-test.

Table 1 showed that the average of the total marks for the pre-test is 5.1 out of 8 and the average of the total marks for the post-test is 6.2 out of 8 which suggested Google Translate had a positive effect on students' translation. Word choice was the most affected aspect. The average marks of the word choice for the pre-test is 1.1 and the average mark for the post-test is 1.8. For example, the researcher gave a student this sentence (I had hoped it would come to pass last weekend, but better late than never) to translate it from English to Arabic; the pre-test translation was (لقد كنت اتمنى مجيئه في الاجازة)

كنت امل ان يحدث) (الاسبوعية ولكن متأخر افضل من اي وقت مضى (ذلك في نهاية الاسبوع الماضي ولكن في وقت متأخر افضل من اي وقت مضى). In contrast, translating the idioms was not affected. The average marks of the pre-test and the post-test is the same; it is 0,8. For example, the researcher gave a student this sentence (be like two peas in a pod) to translate it from English to Arabic; the pre-test translation was (كن كحبتين من البازلاء) (في حجرة), and the post-test translation was (كن كحبتين من البازلاء في جراب). The average marks of understanding and punctuation were affected a little; the average mark for both of them in the pre-test is 1.6 and in the post-test is 1.8. For example, the researcher gave a student this sentence (To present the theories underlying the measurement and evaluation of mental abilities, aptitudes, achievements, interest and personality organization) to translate it from English to Arabic; the pre-test translation was (لعرض) (النظريات الاساسية والقياسات وتنظيم القدرات العقلية استعداداته فائدة مؤهلات تنظيم الشخصية لتقديم النظريات الكامنة في قياس وتقييم القدرات العقلية، والكفاءات، والانجازات، والفوائد، وتنظيم) (الشخصية). All of these examples showed the effects of Google Translate.

Questionnaire

The researcher asked the participants to give their opinion on Google Translate to improve their translation.

Table 2. Response frequencies for questionnaire items

Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SD	Mean response
1- Google Translate improved my translation.	2	2	2	0	0	4
2- I can use Google Translate easily.	3	3	0	0	0	4.5
3- When I used Google Translate, I understood the text easily.	0	4	2	0	0	3.7
4- Google Translate provided me with a good terms.	3	1	1	1	0	4
5- Google Translate helped me to translate idioms.	0	2	0	2	2	2.3
6- Google Translate gave me suitable punctuations.	0	1	3	2	0	2.8

Table 2 demonstrated students' opinions toward using Google Translate to improve their translation. The mean response to statement 1 (4) showed that the majority of the students thought that Google Translate improved their translation. Google Translate did not improve all aspects of translation, but it improved the most as it is seen in the pre-test and the post-test. Also, the mean response to statement 2 (4.5) showed that most of the students used Google Translate with ease. More than half of the students agreed that Google Translate helped them to understand the text easily and this was proven by the mean response to statement 3 (3.7). They could know the main idea of the text which is the most important thing in translation. Moreover, the majority of the students thought that Google Translate supplied them with perfect words. They used those words before, but Google Translate reminded them about those words. It helped them to remind those words and this was proven by the mean response to statement 4 (4). This result is in agreement Bahri, H., and Mahadi, T. S. T. (2016) finding that showed that Google Translate had a great effect on vocabulary. Otherwise, the mean response to statement 5 (2.3) showed that Google Translate did not help the students to translate the idioms in a good way because idioms need to be learned previously or to have some knowledge about it

before the translation. Furthermore, this table showed that Google Translate did not have a great effect on using the suitable punctuation and this was proven by the mean response to statement 6 (2.8).

The results of the two tools showed that Google translate in general helped students to have a good translation. It helped them in some area; like, understanding and word choice. However, it has no effects on idioms translation. Also, Google Translate has a little effect on punctuation. The participants showed a positive attitude and opinion towards using Google Translate; that might happen because it is helpful and useful for translation.

CONCLUSION

The aims of this study were showing the effects of Google Translate on students' translation and showing the students' opinion on Google Translate. The researcher found that Google Translate influenced students' translation in some aspects. It affected their comprehension, word selection, and punctuation, but it did not affect idioms translation. Also, the students had almost an affirmative opinion on it.

The researcher recommended that the students should use Google Translate as a helper if they face any difficulties in translation. They do not need to depend on it all the time. They should only use it at the beginning stages of translation until they become professional. Teachers should not prevent using Google Translate as a helper because it reminds them of many things that are forgotten.

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APPENDIX A: PER-TEST

Please translate the following sentences. You can only use the dictionary.

Teddy Roosevelt was both a strong president and a memorable public figure.
Many enthusiastic people attended that recent event.
Despite what her stepmother told her, Cinderella had hope.
Be like two peas in a pod.
I had hoped it would come to pass last weekend, but better late than never.
To present the theories underlying the measurement and evaluation of mental abilities, aptitudes, achievements, interest and personality organization.
If I had found her address, I would have sent her an invitation.

APPENDIX B: POST-TEST

Please translate the following sentences. Translate with the help of Google Translate.

Teddy Roosevelt was both a strong president and a memorable public figure. (16\3)
Many enthusiastic people attended that recent event.
Despite what her stepmother told her, Cinderella had hope.
Be like two peas in a pod.
I had hoped it would come to pass last weekend, but better late than never.

To present the theories underlying the measurement and evaluation of mental abilities, aptitudes, achievements, interest and personality organization.
If I had found her address, I would have sent her an invitation.

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is about students' opinion about using Google Translate to improve translation after they used it. Please, for each statement, choose the response that expresses your agreement with the statement.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1- Google Translate improved my translation.					
2- I can use Google Translate easily.					
3- When I used Google Translate, I understood the text easily.					
4- Google Translate provided me with a good terms.					
5- Google Translate helped me to translate idioms.					
6- Google Translate gave me suitable punctuations.					