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Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,
Linguística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 35, 2019, Especial N°

21

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia
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Maracaibo - Venezuela

Investigate The Effectiveness Of Google Translate Among Iraqi Students

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Abstract

Technology has been proved to be effective in helping the students to improve their English language through the use of various applications. The purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of Google Translate. The study also investigates the students' attitudes towards the use of Google Translate. Lastly, the study explored the advantages and disadvantages of Google Translate. The participants of the study were 50 Iraqi undergraduate students in the studying year 2018/2019 participated in the study. A quantitative research design approach will be adapted to analyse the data gathered from the subjects. The study used a survey questionnaire to collect data from participants. The findings of the study showed that the Iraqi Undergraduate students hold high level of attitude towards the use of Machine Translation (Google Translate). The results have also revealed that Google Translate have some advantages (low cost, easy to access, quick translation) and drawbacks (grammatical mistakes, no proofread tool, etc).

Investigar La Eficacia De Google Traducir Entre Estudiantes Iraquíes

Se ha demostrado que la tecnología es efectiva para ayudar a los estudiantes a mejorar su idioma inglés mediante el uso de diversas aplicaciones. El propósito del estudio es investigar la efectividad de Google Translate. El estudio también investiga las actitudes de los estudiantes hacia el uso de Google Translate. Por último, el estudio exploró las ventajas y desventajas de Google Translate. Los participantes del estudio fueron 50 estudiantes universitarios iraquíes en el año de estudio 2018/2019 que participaron en el estudio. Se adaptará un enfoque de diseño de investigación cuantitativa para analizar los datos recopilados de los sujetos. El estudio utilizó un cuestionario de encuesta para recopilar datos de los participantes. Los resultados del estudio mostraron que los estudiantes de pregrado iraquíes tienen un alto nivel de actitud hacia el uso de la traducción automática (Google Translate). Los resultados también han revelado que Google Translate tiene algunas ventajas (bajo costo, fácil acceso, traducción rápida) e inconvenientes (errores gramaticales, ninguna herramienta de revisión, etc.).

1. Introduction

In the past, language learners used a dictionary to get meanings of unknown words in another language. This might be time-consuming and learners might find it was hard to interpret the meanings, particularly, when they translate a whole text. However new technologies now have been developed to facilitate language learners to get information and access new knowledge in another language.

During the last century, scholars focus on machine translation tools, due to the recent technological revolution. Machine translation tools approved high performance in controlling various translation acts. Given the importance of communication and translation, not only the students of translation make frequent use of Machine Translations (MTs), particularly Google Translate (GT), but also learners from various disciplines and fields of study consult GT for translating texts from English into their first language. Although it has shortcomings in translating different text types (Jolley & Maimone 2015), GT serves 200,000,000 users daily. Hence, it is frequently and widely used due to its convenience, user-friendliness and speed. There is a growing necessity for investigating the frequency of us-

ing the Google translation tool by learners. Accordingly, some researchers have investigated the frequency of usage and required training for using machine translation tools (Jolley & Maimone 2015; Korosec 2012).

Most of the studies in previous literature have examined and evaluated GT through experimental designs (Ganjalkhani, 2014; Karnal & Pereira, 2015; Hampshire & Salvia, 2010). Some studies have focused on student attitudes toward GT by conducting quantitative surveys (Jolley & Maimone, 2015; Korošec, 2012). However, the number of studies conducted in the Arabic context on the usability of GT is very limited (Kumar, 2012). Furthermore, Arab and non-Arab students use Google Translate for translating different text types such as persuasive, technical and literary texts. In addition, the literature introduces Google Translate as an ever-growing translation tool that supports various languages including Arabic. Few studies were reported on Google Translate usability by Arab learners of English (Abuelyaman et al. 2014). Current situation of a growing number of Arab learners in Malaysian universities required farther investigation for the usability of Google Translate as assistant translation tool in their education performance. Therefore, this study aims to investigate Arab EFL postgraduate students' usage and attitudes toward Google Translate and the advantages and disadvantages Of Google Translate in Malaysian Universities. This current study aims to fill the gap of the absent studies that need to be done in the Arabic context and among the Arab students especially in Malaysian universities.

2. Research Objectives

1. To investigate the students' attitudes toward the using of Google Translate among Arab undergraduate students in Iraqis universities.
2. To explore the Advantages and disadvantages of Google Translate.

3. Research Questions

1. What are the students' attitudes towards the using of Google translate?
2. What are the Advantages and disadvantages of Google Translate?
4. Significance of the study

The results of the study are expected to contribute to the development of applied linguistics in particular. It is expected to provide not only theoretical significance but also practical input. Theoretically, this research was

expected to deepen the knowledge of MT as one of language learning tool in learning English. On the other hand, the practical significance of this research was showing the advantages that learners should know about MT (GT) in EFL learning process. The researcher found that learner has the ability to consider the use of MT in EFL learning process. In addition, this research will contribute to the academic literature of machine translation tools for foreign language learning in foreign context and the role of MT used in the learning process, and also contributed to the experience of L2 learners.

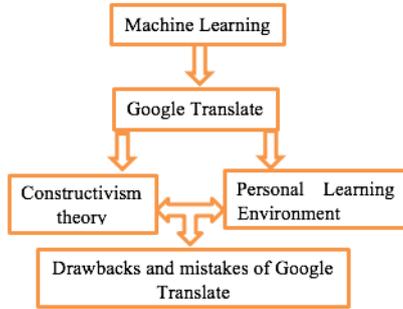
5. The Scope of the Study

The study is under the discipline of translation. in terms of the mistakes and drawback found by the students, a quantitative study had been conducted by implying a questionnaire survey as a data collection instrument. This research will focus on specific translation tool named (Google translation tool). The samples of the current investigation will be Iraqi undergraduate students. The reason for chosen this research area because learners use GT as a tool for translating their assignments.

6. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 illustrates the research conceptual framework. The study adopts two theories to lay the foundation of the study namely the theory of constructivism and Personal Learning Environment. The first theory is the theory of constructivism that revolves around the construction of knowledge based on previous knowledge with multiple perspectives (Reeves 1992). Hence, this theory helps the learner use his/her prior knowledge to build new knowledge using web-based tools (GT tools) (Koohang et al. 2009).

The second theory is personal learning environment theory advocates life-long, informal learning where learners with different learning styles can benefit from the learning environment (the Web and GT) (Attwell 2007). Thus, this theory facilitates learner; (learners with different learning styles) use of GT for the purpose of translation of different texts informally, personally in and out of class. Based on the tenets of these theories, the study examined the issues of GT on the usefulness of GT. And identify the mistakes and drawbacks of machine learning.



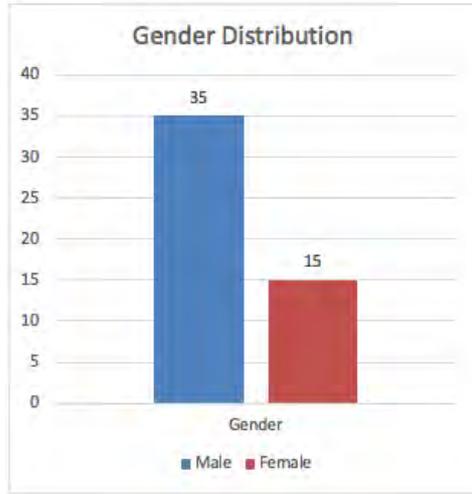
7. Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative research approach, based on the descriptive approach, the data analysis included doing descriptive and inferential statistical analysis based on the research questions. For the research questions, the analysis included finding out the means, standard deviation, and percentage of the students’ responses to each item in the questionnaire. This was helpful to identify the trends and norms of the students regarding the students’ attitudes towards the use of google translate and the mistakes and drawbacks of Google translate and machine learning. A questionnaire will be employed in this study to collect data. There are several reasons for choosing this instrument. First, it is easy to collect the data from a large number of participants in a short period of time. Second, the researcher could analyse it with elaborating the details. Third, the researcher will get exact and accurate responses. The sample of the study will be 50 undergraduate students studying English language in one of the Iraqi universities during the studying year, 2018-2019. The selection of the sample because the undergraduate students level frequently use machine translation (Google Translate) In their study. The questionnaire will be distributed to gather the data from the sample of the study. To report the mean scores of the subjects’ responses for each case which ranges from 1-5, the measurement offered by Hanson et al was adopted (Hanson, Creswell, 2005). According, to these researchers, the mean scores of agreements range from 1.00 to 2.33 are construed as low. mean scores of agreements range from 2.34 to 3.67 are construed as moderate and mean scores of agreements range from 3.68 to 5.00 are construed as high. The following are the findings.

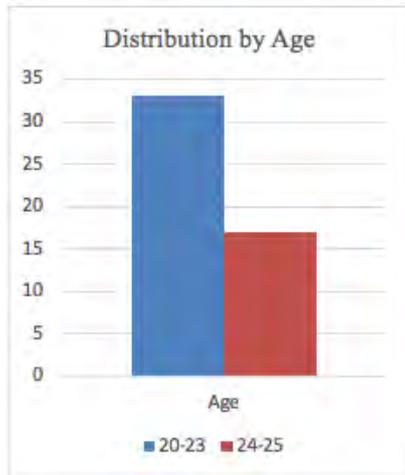
8. Findings and Analysis

Findings of demographic information: The first question in the demo-

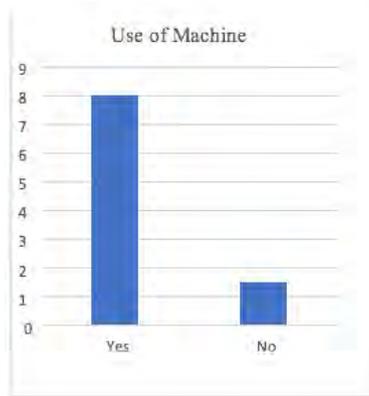
graphic part of the questionnaire asked the students to select their gender. The figure below shows the distribution of students in the current study by their gender. The total number of participants who responded to the questionnaire is (50). The male subjects were (35) and the female subjects were (15).



Furthermore, based on the analysis of the demographic information, participants were in age groups of 20-23 were (33) and 24-25 (17). It is noted that the age group of 20-23 accounts for the greatest number of participants. This shows that the students are mostly adults with few of them as middle-aged respondents, which is typical in university settings.



Question three in the demographic information part of the questionnaire required the subjects to select the answer if they use machine translation in translating words from the English language to the Arabic language. the figure bellow shows that 45% (90) of the subjects use the machine translation while only 5% of the subjects don't use machine translation in translating.



The purpose of these questions was to elicit the students' level of attitudes towards the use of Google Translate. Thus, to answer the first research question and to analyse the questionnaire, SPSS 22.0 was run to do descriptive statistics to the mean score(M), standard deviation (SD) and percentage.

The students showed the high level of attitudes (M=3.80) towards the use of google translate, the students agreed that google translate texts quickly and free and easy to access. Based on the findings of the questionnaire the students agreed that gives them more advantages than disadvantages. The students also showed another high level of agreement that the quality of texts translated by machine translation is better than their translation. Through the use of Google Translate the students learn new vocabularies. Moreover, the data showed that the students can write English sentences better and learn grammar and structure with the assistance of Google Translate. The findings showed that Google Translate doesn't make the students lazy to think and use their effort in reading and writing.

The students in the second place showed a moderate level of attitudes towards the use of google translate. the don't get much translation skills from using Google Translate. Also, the student don't get confident in using Google Translate. The gathered data showed that the students don't fully

rely on the accuracy of Google Translate in translating from Arabic and vice versa.

The result of the second research question which investigated the advantages and drawback of Google Translate among the undergraduate students in Iraq. The participants of the study stated some advantages about the use of Google Translate like: It has the ability to translate almost all the languages around the world. Google Translate translates so fast and easy to access. The participants have also stated another advantage which is the low cost of Google Translate which is free in most of the countries. The students also stated that they can get more skills and learn new vocabularies through the use of this application. On the other hand, the students also stated some Disadvantage and drawback of Google Translate. These disadvantages can be stated as: the quality of translation is dependent on the language pair. The source and target languages are involved affect the quality of output text. Moreover, Google Translate is a web-based translation database, Spanish or English tend to be more accurate while other languages like “the Arabic language are less likely to be accurate and produces significant grammatical errors”. The participants of the interview stated that “Google Translate does not have a system to correct for translation errors which makes the students are lost in translation”. So, as we can see the pros and cons of Google translate to make it clear that, although you may sometimes have success using Google translate, you would not want to use it for anything of great importance without checking to make sure that there are no errors in context, grammar or otherwise.

9. Discussion

The findings showed that students realized that Google Translate had both benefits and drawbacks. They had positive attitudes towards Google Translate as it was convenient to use and it was helpful for all students in learning English especially learning new vocabulary. The findings support some researchers stating that learners’ positive attitudes are encouraged when computers are used for language learning (Lyons, 2017). However, the students admitted that their attempt in reading and writing English was reduced and the problem of vocabulary retention occurred when they used Google Translate. These findings correspond to Kumar (2012) who found that students viewed Google Translate as helpful, but they could not learn English well because it affected their ability to think.

For the advantages, the students stated that Google Translate was a convenient and fast tool for translating texts. Students mentioned that they gained a lot of vocabulary knowledge in using Google Translate, particularly for

poor English learners. Students stated that they could easily understand English sentences because Google Translate could translate the whole sentence at one time. Students admitted that Google Translate output was more reliable than their own translation. Thirteen students reported that a speaker button was beneficial for pronunciation practice.

Results of the study suggest that students realize Google Translate as a good English learning tool for learning the English language. but sometimes it is still not useful for their study because it, sometimes, produces inaccurate or inappropriate meanings of words, and students pay less attention to learning English in using Google Translate. Students agreed that they get the meaning of the text. However, they did not pay much attention to the knowledge of new words. So, they cannot retain the knowledge of new vocabulary for a long time. These drawbacks of Google Translate, although affecting students' English learning. Yet, the undergraduate students in Iraq still believe that Google Translate is able to give them more advantages than drawbacks.

Conclusion

This study was designed to investigate the students' attitudes towards the use of Google Translate among the Iraqi undergraduate students. Lastly, the study investigated the advantages and disadvantages of Google Translate. The study collected the data by using a survey questionnaire which was administrated to a group of Iraqi English language students. The students' responses were analysed descriptively for the mean scores, standard deviation, percentages and inferentially to find whether the mean scores were statistically significant in order to answer the research questions. The findings of such analysis were reported and discussed in comparison to other previous studies in the area of using Google translate. The second instrument of gathering data was interview. Moreover, the students showed a high level of attitudes towards the use of Google translate. The findings also revealed some advantages (translate quick, easy to access etc.) and disadvantages (inaccurate output text, Proofreading tool etc.) of using Google Translate

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Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 35, Especial N° 21, (2019)

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.
Maracaibo - Venezuela

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