

## Optimizing the Use of Google Translate in Translation Teaching: A Case Study at Prince Sultan University

**Authors :** Saadia Elamin

**Abstract :** The quasi-universal use of smart phones with internet connection available all the time makes it a reflex action for translation undergraduates, once they encounter the least translation problem, to turn to the freely available web resource: Google Translate. Like for other translator resources and aids, the use of Google Translate needs to be moderated in such a way that it contributes to developing translation competence. Here, instead of interfering with students' learning by providing ready-made solutions which might not always fit into the contexts of use, it can help to consolidate the skills of analysis and transfer which students have already acquired. One way to do so is by training students to adhere to the basic principles of translation work. The most important of these is that analyzing the source text for comprehension comes first and foremost before jumping into the search for target language equivalents. Another basic principle is that certain translator aids and tools can be used for comprehension, while others are to be confined to the phase of re-expressing the meaning into the target language. The present paper reports on the experience of making a measured and reasonable use of Google Translate in translation teaching at Prince Sultan University (PSU), Riyadh. First, it traces the development that has taken place in the field of translation in this age of information technology, be it in translation teaching and translator training, or in the real-world practice of the profession. Second, it describes how, with the aim of reflecting this development onto the way translation is taught, senior students, after being trained on post-editing machine translation output, are authorized to use Google Translate in classwork and assignments. Third, the paper elaborates on the findings of this case study which has demonstrated that Google Translate, if used at the appropriate levels of training, can help to enhance students' ability to perform different translation tasks. This help extends from the search for terms and expressions, to the tasks of drafting the target text, revising its content and finally editing it. In addition, using Google Translate in this way fosters a reflexive and critical attitude towards web resources in general, maximizing thus the benefit gained from them in preparing students to meet the requirements of the modern translation job market.

**Keywords :** Google Translate, post-editing machine translation output, principles of translation work, translation competence, translation teaching, translator aids and tools

**Conference Title :** ICIT 2017 : International Conference on Interpreting and Translation

**Conference Location :** London, United Kingdom

**Conference Dates :** October 19-20, 2017