The Effect of Machine Translation on Translation Classes at the Tertiary Level

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Abstract

Machine translation (MT) has rapidly become an essential tool for almost all students at all levels all around the world to assist their translation tasks. The present study investigated the role of MT in translation classes as a facilitating tool at the tertiary level and presented some possible challenges that the participants faced during the implementation process. To this end, 49 students majoring in an English Language and Literature department of a state university in Turkey participated in the study. Data was collected through an open-ended questionnaire with 24 items, and analysis of the semi-structured interview notes obtained from the focus group discussion. The results apparently prove that participants utilize MT to assist their translation tasks irresistibly, and they mostly agreed that MT is unquestionably a facilitating and beneficial tool despite the possible challenges deriving from cultural and linguistic differences between the source and target languages. Thus, it is suggested that some of the functions provided with MT tools need to be developed to meet the needs of learners while translating some certain cultural expressions. Finally, this study reveals that MT with its multiple features is a useful and pedagogical tool that can be utilized by foreign language learners as a digital resource in translation classes.

Keywords: Machine Translation, Technology, Digital Dictionary Tools, Language Learners, Reflections

1. Introduction

It is accepted that translation has many effects on learning a foreign language, and it has been incorporated into many foreign language teaching programs all over the world. Apart from the contributions, it offers to language learning, translation, in particular, has gained significant interest of many people who use it for many purposes. To fulfill the regarding purpose, people have started to shift from human translators to machine translators. As Alsohybe, Dahan, and Ba-Alwi (2017) state today people tend to use automated translation applications rather than human translation because it is both cost-efficient and time-efficient for them. Educationally speaking, researchers in the field have begun to investigate the tendency levels of the users related to the role of MT in translating the source language into the target language (Lee, 2020; Munday, 2016). Hatim and Munday (2004) make the point that

translation is a significant activity in people's daily lives and it needs to be taken into consideration using alternative tools. As telecommunication technology makes communication much easier, anytime, anywhere and many times for free (Jurafsky & Martin, 2000), it deserves to be used for translation studies. To this end, some computer science engineers started to create machines that can translate text messages. However, it can be said that translation is a difficult task because of its dependency on the Natural Language Processing (NLP) and the structure of the languages (Jurafsky & Martin, 2000, cited in Alsohybe, Dahan, & Ba-Alwi, 2017).

As put forth by Kumar (2012), computers are increasingly used for the translation of millions of words in different languages by the users in the world every day. Language learners also utilize machine translation resources to ease their translation studies. Translator Online, Foreign Word, Web Trance, Prompt and Google Translate (GT) are a few to list (Hampshire & Salvia, 2010). That is to say, the use of online resources for translation is advancing rapidly and the number and features of them are increasing day by day. Of these tools, Google Translate (GT) is generally considered as one of the most commonly used online resources available for translation in the world as it offers many useful and practical features for the users who can exploit for various purposes from speech-to-text to text-to-speech translation. In this regard, researchers have conducted some studies on the effectiveness and perceptions of the users of the Google Translate (e.g., Ganjalikhani, 2014; Hampshire & Salvia, 2010; Jolley & Maimone, 2015; Karnal & Pereira, 2015; Korošec, 2012; Omar, 2021; Sujarwo, 2020). As people from different fields use GT, foreign language learners also commonly apply this tool as an instructional and supporting material as well as the other software resources with various features. Considering the effect of these digital tools on translation, this study intended to investigate the role of MT in translation classes as a facilitating tool at the tertiary level and possible challenges faced by the students. Based on the review of literature, it can be said that there is not much research focusing on the effectiveness of machine translation on foreign language learners' translation classes in the Turkish context. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap with the research which was conducted with English as a foreign language (EFL) students who are majoring in an English Language and Literature Department (ELL) in a state university, Turkey.

2. Literature review

Throughout human history, translation has been used in many fields for multiple purposes from religion to language education. Basically, in all translation tasks the purpose has been "to serve as a substitute for the original, making it intelligible for people who cannot read the language in which it was written" (Köksal & Yürük, 2020, p. 329). This aim can be achieved in two ways: human translation and machine translation. Machine translation, which is highly appreciated by many people all around the world now, can be defined as the software associated with computer systems in the interpretation of text messaging, from one normal language straight into another (Hutchins, 1986, cited in Ali, 2016). It is the translation carried out by the computer without having much or any human intervention (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014). Hutchins (2003) defines machine translation as computerized systems which are responsible for the production of translations with or without human assistance. In other words, "it is a sub-field of computational linguistics that investigates the use of software to translate text or speech from one natural language to another" (Sinhal & Gupta, 2014, p. 22).

When it comes to perception of MT by language tutors and language learners, it is considered "innovative and positive learning experience" (Niño, 2009, p. 253). Foreign language learners' views with respect to the role of MT in language learning and translating texts, to a great extent, would be that it is a need. In this respect, Sinhal and Gupta (2014) briefly summarize the main reasons for using MT as follows: "too much to be translated, boring for

human translators, major requirement that terminology used consistently, increase speed, top quality translation not always needed, and reduced cost" (p.22). That is to say, despite the linguistic and cultural deficiencies in some certain cases, MT is regarded as the easiest and the simple way to reach the target translation. Writing in the same context, Bakay Avar and Yıldız (2019) add that "MT has been improving substantially over the last few years as a result of the increased computational power and the parallel corpora, and this improvement has shifted from string/word-based models towards tree/phrase-based models and, in recent years, towards deep learning/neural network-based models" (p. 437). Additionally, as people all over the world have inevitably tended to be dependent heavily on digital technology because of the COVID-19 pandemic for two years, it is assumed that foreign language learners will keep using MT after the COVID-19 pandemic. In this sense, Omar (2021) claims that "Using MT in L2/FL learning contexts has become a fait accompli and is expected to grow even further with the increasing demand for online learning in the post-COVID era" (p.85). In his study, Omar (2021) investigated the value and implications of using machine translation in vocabulary acquisition with forty-seven ESL students at the tertiary level. He found that students had challenges in vocabulary acquisition, and MT does not provide an optimal solution to overcome in using vocabulary unless they are used in meaningful contexts accompanied by higher metacognitive skills. With regard to online translation tools, GT, among all the others, is one of the commonly preferred ones by the users because it offers some popular features and includes corpus-based data for the users (Chandra & Yuyun, 2018; Kirchhoff et al., 2011).

There are some valuable features of GT that students can benefit from for oral or written translation tasks such as such as speech-to-text or text-to-speech functions. However, some studies prove that users come across some difficulties in terms of accuracy, use and practicality, and so on. Chandra and Yuyun (2018) explored the use of GT in EFL essay writing and its role in language learning. In their case study, data was collected from eight participants analyzing their writing tasks. The findings revealed that students preferred GT for three purposes respectively: vocabulary, grammar, and spelling, and students perceive GT as a dictionary facilitating lexical items.

It can be said that there are fewer studies concerned with the perceptions of foreign language learners about the use of machine translation in the Turkish context. One of the studies conducted by Zengin and Kaçar (2011) aimed to figure out the problems that EFL academicians face about their translation practices and find out the attitudes towards the use of various translation tools. The results of the study conducted with seventy-three EFL academicians from three Turkish universities reveal that the use of online translation tools and search engines are beneficial in enhancing the quality of existing translation practices. With respect to the use of machine translation in teaching English as a foreign language in the Turkish context, it is not possible to find much research. In this regard, it is thought that this study would meet this gap as it aimed to investigate the role of MT in translation classes as a facilitating tool at the tertiary level and possible challenges that students faced during the implementation of it for translation tasks.

3. Methodology

This case study collected qualitative data through the survey and the focus group discussion. Thus, this study firstly intends to figure out to what extent EFL learners use MT to assist in translation classes considering the fact that free online MT systems are favored by EFL university students (Yang & Wang, 2019). The other purpose of this study is to explore the major challenges the participants encounter while applying digital translation tools for translation tasks, and their suggestions about how to exploit them more effectively for the benefit of correct translation. In this context, this study intended to seek responses to the following research questions.

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1. How often do EFL learners use machine translation to assist their translation tasks?
2. What are the challenges that the EFL learners face while applying machine translation in their translation studies?

3.1 Participants and Setting

The sample group of this study is composed of 49 participants majoring in an English Language and Literature (ELL) department in a state university in Turkey. All of the participants responded to the questions in the survey while 11 of them contributed to the study with their responses to the focus group discussion part of this research. The reason for choosing this group was convenience sampling because of the availability of the participants and it was not possible to reach the entire population (Fred & Perry, 2005). Out of 90 students majoring in English Language and Literature (ELL) department, 49 of them accepted to take part in this study. 74% of the participants were female while 26% of them were male, and ages ranged from 19 to 24. Before conducting the research, they were all informed about the research and they responded to the questions voluntarily. The research was conducted in the third semester (year 2) with the classes who started to study translation subject in fall semester. The students met once a week for two class hours when the Translation Class was scheduled. In one of these classes the survey was administered to 49 students. In the following week the focus group discussion which lasted for 90 minutes was carried out with 11 participants who voluntarily participated in the meeting.

3.2 Data Collection

To collect data two types of instruments were used: a survey and focus group discussion. The survey was composed of 24 open-ended questions, 18 of which were adapted from the research carried out by Mario and Ashari (2017). Some of the items were modified concerning the needs of the new population, language and location (Harkness, Villar & Edwards, 2010). To provide the research questions with in-depth data, six more questions, one of which included the list of the MT tools, were devised by the researchers. Before applying the survey, the questions were piloted by 9 students to find out whether the statements are appropriate for level and research aims. Furthermore, the expert opinions were taken for the content and face validity from three colleagues. Depending on the feedback some of the items were revised. Additionally, a focus group discussion with 11 participants out of 49 participants who voluntarily accepted to take part in the meeting was held. Thus, it was intended to gather large and rich amount of data to check the similar or different responses received from the questionnaire (Dörnyei, 2007). The questions used for data collection in both cases intended to figure out to what extent MT contributes to translation tasks for the participants and the challenges they faced while using to aid their translation tasks. During the focus group discussion session, which lasted for about 90 minutes, participants were required to discuss the topics that they responded to in the survey previously and directly related to the research problems which were categorized as the use of machine translation, challenges and suggestions. When the questions were asked to the participants the researcher asked them to stop at intervals so that she could note down the main points in the responses which would be used for data analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis

In this case study qualitative data was collected using face-to-face interviews and open-ended questions in a survey with a couple of closed items as well. The results were depicted using descriptive techniques such as frequency and percentage using content analysis. The results were also categorized as the themes that emerged from the content analysis according to repeating words and topics. The categorization of the results was checked by two experts in the field as an external auditor (Cresswell, 2002) to ensure the validity of data.   In a qualitative

study, it is believed that categorizing the themes for content analysis serves a great help for the researcher so that he can make valid inferences from text (Weber, 1990).

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis of this study reveal that all of the participants use the machine translation tools as an aid in translation classes. Findings obtained from the questionnaire and focus group discussion were analyzed with frequency and percentage. Results of the content analysis were also presented in tables and with some sample extracts.

4.1 Results and Discussion of Data obtained from Questionnaire

The frequency and reasons for using the machine translation tools

The participants were firstly asked if they ever used machine translation for supporting their translation task, and all of the participants (N=49) responded positively. The second question intended to find out the use of frequency of machine translation. The results show that more than half of the participants (53 %) use it every day, and one-third of them sometimes (34 %) use it, and the rest (12%) of the participants rarely prefer it. To have a general picture of the awareness of machine translation tools, participants were asked about the Machine Translation Providers that they are familiar with. Based on the responses, the translation tools and the number of the participants who are familiar with them are listed respectively as follows: Google Translate (n=44); Tureng (n=37); Yandex (n=37); Microsoft Translator/Bing (n=11); Amazon Web Services translator (n=9); Wordlingo (n=8); Lingenio (n=7); Automatic Trans (n=6). Only two of the responses to this question included the other translation tools such as Naver, Skykode, LionBridge, Babylon, MyMemory, GrammarSoft and so on. They were also asked if other tools were also preferred by them, and they noted various other sources at varying numbers such as Sesli Sözlük, Dict.ca, Oxford English Dictionary and Cambridge Dictionary.

The reasons for utilizing the machine translation were investigated with the question "*Why do you use machine translation?*" The responses for this question revealed that the students use it for finding the equivalents of vocabulary (43%) and sentences (26%), for doing homework and assisting to write essays (16%), for the definitions of idioms in the target language and other purposes (15%). The findings seemed to be aligned with the results of the study conducted by Chandra and Yuyun (2018) which proves that students use MT for checking vocabulary, grammar and spelling while writing essays.

In another question, the types of languages were intended to be identified. The findings indicate that 40 % of the participants use machine translation in English and Turkish languages. The rest of the participants use it for other languages such as German, French, Korean, Arabic, Japanese, Spanish, Italian and so forth. When the participants were asked how they found the quality of the explanations and equivalents of the searched expressions in terms of comprehensibility, 67% of the responses revealed that it was easy to comprehend the explanations, and 18% of them found it sometimes hard to understand. Furthermore, 47% (n=23) of the respondents believe that the use of the translation tools has a great help for them to translate the topics, whereas 6% do not agree with the use of it. They also believe that the use of machine translation is quite important for them (55%), and they state that when they use it appropriately in the translation studies, it does not have any negative effects on motivating them to learn English (78%). They were also required to respond if it would always be possible to have the correct corresponding meanings. Responses to this question indicate that 19 participants (38 %) could usually get them easily whereas 44% of them could sometimes have difficulty in finding the exact translations. As a follow-up question they were asked what alternative method they

followed when they could not find the expected results through machine translation. Some of the statements for this question are listed as follows:

Table 1. The alternative ways of reaching the correct translation

Statement	n
I choose a closer one.	1
I translate (check, correct, paraphrase) on my own.	8
I check it using a printed dictionary, look up words in dictionary (and fix it).	8
I search it on another machine translation tools to make sure.	6
I ask someone professional (my teachers, friends, people etc.)	5

Views about the use of machine tools

To validate the responses obtained from the previous questions, participants were required to present their views about the contribution of machine translation to translation classes. Table 2 displays the detailed analysis of the question.

Table 2 Views about the effectiveness of machine translation tools in translation classes.

Statements	n	%
It makes us lazy and impatient in finding the correct equivalents.	10	20
It contributes to our memory in a good way.	1	2
It helps us learn new words.	3	6
It does not have any positive effect.	1	2
It may sometimes mistranslate the words/expressions (have negative effect).	6	12
It sometimes has no response or unclear equivalents.	13	26
It causes us to forget how to use printed (paper) dictionaries.	4	8
It helps us to communicate or understand the target language.	2	5
It can help us interpret or understand the vocabulary from different perspectives.	2	5
Its simple usage makes translation easier and saves time.	7	14
Total	**49**	**100**

The Table 2 reveals some attention-gathering facts about the perceptions of the EFL university students on Machine Translation. As is seen, some of them (26%) state that the difficulty in getting the exact meanings and using these tools frequently makes them lazy and impatient (n=20). On the other hand, some of the participants (14%) agree that the speed to get the target translation makes it beneficial. Depending on the results it can be concluded that despite the negative views the participants possess, they all prefer these tools to assist their translation courses.

Similarly, in another question, participants were requested to express their views about the importance and role of the translation tools in their translation classes. When the responses were analyzed, it was found that 43 % (n=21) of the participants find them timesaving and help them find the target explanations easily. 12 respondents agree that through machine translation they can do their homework faster. The other finding about the benefit of machine translation reveals that participants mostly find it easy to use and access anytime and anywhere (n=16). In a similar question, which validates the responses given above, participants were asked if these

tools are really necessary. According to the responses to this question, it can be stated that a great amount of the participants (55%) believe the value and importance of these tools for translation studies whereas 31 % of them do not agree with them. As for the effect of the tools on raising interest in learning English, almost two-third of (78%) the participants responded positively. Regarding the findings analyzed above, it can be asserted that the findings are in line with the results of the study conducted by Ballabh and Jaiswal (2015) which show that accuracy and speed of translation are two main measures to evaluate the performance of MT tools. The same research adds that linguistic quality and ease of integration with the existing tools are the indicators for evaluation. Therefore, the results imply that MT has positive and negative effects on translation classes for learners, which is also supported with the findings of the study conducted by Marito and Ashari (2017) and   Sujarwo (2020).

Problems Faced While Using Machine Translation Tools

In relation to the research question 2, the questions 11, 15 and 17 aimed to figure out the problems the participants face while applying machine translation. The findings are important in shedding light on the development of the machine translation tools. Out of 49 participants, only one student stated that he has not faced any problems while using machine translation and one of them has not provided any responses. They were also asked to note the challenges they faced in reaching the target translation. The responses were categorized into five themes according to word repetitions: mistranslation (63%), ambiguity (6%), incomplete translation (6%), internet access (5%), irrelevant translation (20%). Some of the significant problems the participants face are given in the following statements:

It mostly translates in a wrong way both in meaning and structure. (S23)

I sometimes come across weird translations. (S12)

I can't find all the words. (S35)

Some translations do not fit the context in the source language. (S47)

The participants were specifically requested if they could get the exact equivalents of the searched items immediately in a separate question as well, and the percentages of the answers given to this question are as follows: Yes (14%), Yes, most of them (24%), No, I can't (22%), No, not always (22%) and Sometimes (2%). Additionally, they were requested in what language they usually had difficulty in reaching the correct translation. More than half of the students (69%) state that it is easier to translate from English to Turkish whereas one-third of them (27%) find translation from Turkish to English easier. Only 5% (n=2) of them believe that both cases are easy. When the participants were asked about the negative effects of using machine translation on their professional and language learning development, the responses varied. 18% of the students agree that, as in the previous responses, MT makes them lazy for learning and retaining new words and they lose their motivation to use print dictionaries. 10% of them believe that they may slow down in improving the target language as it offers incorrect equivalents. Remarkably, 27% of them did not express any clear effect about it, and the rest (10%) were in favour of using it due to the speed and accuracy.

Table 3. Problems faced while using machine translation

Statement	n	%
It mostly translates incorrectly (wrong words, wrong meaning, wrong grammar).	32	65
Some translations are weird.	2	5
I cannot find the correct equivalents and have difficulty in figurative meanings.	4	8
Translations are sometimes ambiguous.	2	5

It is difficult to translate sentences correctly.	2	4
It is not very reliable.	1	2
Problems in Internet connection.	4	8
It is obviously translated with no emotion in it.	1	2
I haven't faced any problem yet.	1	2
Total	**49**	**100**

The analysis in the table above briefly summarizes the general difficulties occurring during the use of MT. As is clear in Table 3, unlike the findings of the study by Marito and Ashari (2017). 65% of the participants face the problem of mistranslations provided by the Machine Translation. The responses in the table and other questions reveal that MT does not always have one-to-one correspondence linguistically and structurally between the target and source language. Based on the results, it can be concluded that ambiguity, affordances of internet connection, reliability and accuracy can be considered main problems for foreign language learners. In this vein, the results have some similarities with the study carried out by Arnold et al. (1994), which proves that there are likely to have lexical ambiguity and structural ambiguity in MT. Furthermore, as the results prove in this study students become passive users in reaching the target corresponding items, and this view is also supported by the research carried out by Marito and Ashari (2017) and Omar (2021). The other significant finding of this study is that students are in trouble with finding the one-to-one correspondence of the lexical and syntactic items. What is more, translation of figurative language is again generally problematic due to linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target language. The findings regarding the correct translation of vocabulary resonate with the research results conducted by Omar (2021) in that MT does not provide an optimal solution to overcome problems in using vocabulary.

Suggestions for Effective Use of Machine Translation

To get the suggestions from the participants about developing an efficient MT tool for users, the following question was asked: *"If you were to guide or direct the website designer(s) of the machine translation tools, what would be your suggestions?"*. This question led participants to offer some solutions to the problems they generally face while using Machine Translation. The participants offered different suggestions related to the correctness, structure, pronunciation and practicality of the translation tools. Additionally, participants suggest that machine translation tools offer the authentic use of the searched items along with the synonyms and antonyms.

As the analysis of the results reveal, participants would like to be able to translate not only at word or phrase level, but also at sentence and paragraph levels correctly. They state that some digital translation tools lack pronunciation features, and they want them to be equipped with the pronunciations of the searched or uploaded texts. As the users in this study were students in English Language and Literature Department, they offered that if machine translation tools provided etymological background of the words it would be so useful and helpful for them. They also suggested that machine translation tools should include literary examples, idioms, slang and figurative language translations as well. That is to say, participants agree that MT fails to offer these functions for the users. Needless to say, in foreign language teaching no matter techniques or tools students use, they need to be provided with examples of vocabulary used in rich and multiple contexts (AlQahtani, 2015).

4.2 Results and Discussion of Data obtained from Focus Group Discussion and Some Suggestions

The second part of the data collection process is focus group discussion held with 11 participants. The analysis of the questionnaire displayed some facts about the use of machine

translation, problems and suggestions. Likewise, the content analysis of the focus group discussion data revealed similar and more detailed information about the research topic. During the discussion session, participants were requested to talk about the effect of machine translation, the challenges they encountered while applying the tools, and their suggestions on the use and improvement of these tools. After the content analysis of the discussion, three themes emerged: "correctness", "context" and "user-friendliness" aspects of the machine translation tools.

Correctness of the Machine Translation Tools

Firstly, in relation to the mistranslations provided by the machine translation tools, participants emphasized that they mostly could not receive correct translations related to the literary texts such as poems, dramas, dialogues, etc. and films or songs in which figurative language is mostly used. Although it is important for English for specific users to receive a correct translation in literary works, the responses prove that not all the machine translation tools provide 100 % accuracy. They also elaborated on their responses by stating that literary texts and other written or verbal query data such as lyrics and films mostly include slang and natural language. Therefore, designers of these tools can focus on this aspect of the language more.

Context Relevancy

Another category that emerged out of the content analysis of the focus group discussion was the "context". The participants stated that in some source texts related to science such as chemistry, biology, etc. MT (here the participants referred to Google Translate) mostly translated correctly but when it comes to social sciences, they think that it needs to be developed. To have a concrete opinion whether these participants had information on the Corpus Linguistics and Discourse Analysis, which would be a great help for them to translate some texts, out of 11 participants only one female participant said that she heard about it and only one male participant said that the class would take that course at the 3rd or 4th grades. So, it could be said that if these participants had taken Corpus Linguistics course previously their responses to the interview questions and suggestions (solutions) related to the machine translation could be different. Additionally, to aid the learners with more effective usage tips of the machine translation tools, the designers of the faculty program can consider offering the Corpus Linguistics course to the students at the 1st or 2nd years of the faculty rather than in the 3rd or 4th years and thereby the students' awareness of different sources of data and data-driven learning and solutions for the mistranslated texts might be raised. The findings of the focus group discussion support the responses received to the open-ended questionnaire which reflects the challenges they face related to the context.

User-Friendliness

The third category that emerged from the content analysis of the focused group discussion is about the user-friendly aspect of the machine translation tools in the market. Participants mentioned that the machine translation tool Google Translate, which they mostly prefer, does not always provide correct equivalents for the lyrics and slang words. For that reason, some participants stated that they preferred to use Urban Dictionary for the translation of lyrics. Moreover, they expressed that they found the pronunciation function of the Google Translate to be monotonous, robotic and boring. Therefore, they believe that it should be developed to sound much better and more natural. They also added that GT, which is commonly utilized as a dictionary along with Meriam Webster, should have hypermedia or hypertext functions to boost authenticity and realistic usage of the lexis.

As seen in the results, one of the most attention-gathering responses from all of the participants related to the most of the questions in the interview is that all the participants use machine translation tools for finding the definition of unfamiliar words or in other words. MT is regarded as a "pocket dictionary". These findings support the findings of the previous studies in the literature such as the one conducted by Marito and Ashari (2017). Therefore, machine translation tools / providers can develop their service by focusing more on this point and can combine themselves with the other online machine translation tools and other effective online dictionaries that are mostly used and mostly regarded as user-friendly to make the machine translation even faster, more helpful, more user-friendly and more effective.

Suggestions and solutions offered by these translation course students, who are active users of these machine translation tools, can be taken into account by MT providers. Therefore, most of the participants suggest that machine translation systems or tools can provide different meanings of a word rather than one, they can also include old English words and especially sample sentences in which the words they search for are used in varying contexts correctly to meet the needs of the users and to provide them with better results for their sentence and paragraph translations and more effective usage of these tools. Additionally, as nearly all participants of the study who study at the English Language and Literature department use MT as an online dictionary. Furthermore, they expressed that if these tools also include the etymology of the words, they could help them translate more effectively and prove to be more practical for them.

In accordance with the responses and the findings from face-to-face discussions with the participants, GT can be developed in providing the correct equivalents of the idioms, figurative language and whole sentence translation including the different types of contexts such as art, law, science and so on. Other MT dictionaries and especially MT tools, which are expressed to be providing better results for idioms, figurative language, and different numbers of phonetic options can also be developed to provide a better, faster and more user-friendly software so that their popularity can grow among the users and thereby helping them to reach better and more effective results in their translation studies.

To conclude, the findings of the study show the importance of the development of these MT systems. Despite most of the students believe that machine translation is unavoidable for their translation studies, they have some suggestions to have better tools that would help them reach the correct translations immediately. Therefore, if the designers of the MT systems take the problems the EFL students face and the possible solutions offered by them into account, they could both improve the effectiveness of these systems and change the negative effects of these tools on the users.

5. Conclusion

This study intended to figure out the role of MT in enhancing the translational studies of the foreign language learners. In this context, survey and focus group discussion techniques were used to gather data from 49 participants majoring in English Language and Literature department at a state university in Turkey. The findings reveal that all of the participants use MT tools in translation classes at different intervals ranging from twice a month to on a daily basis. They use MT to find the equivalents of unfamiliar words, to translate sentences, paragraphs and texts, to do their homework and to assist to write essays. Furthermore, to translate some literary works, some idiomatic expressions and complex sentences students apply the machine translation. In searching the corresponding meanings, participants prefer translations From English to the Turkish language, and it was found out that MT is regarded as a useful tool despite the fact that they face difficulties in obtaining the one-to-one

correspondence. The other significant findings related to the difficulties are incorrect translation, misspelling words, wrong word choice that is inappropriate to the context, lack of offline features, and lack of corresponding words.

The results of this study show that EFL learners in translation classes or in other words "active users of machine translation" can be introduced with different types of machine translation tools. Although there are more than one hundred machine translation tools providers on the market, nearly all of the participants in this study and other users of machine translation tools in Turkey are mostly familiar with Google Translate and in rare cases some examples such as Yandex translate and Tureng come to their minds. It is true that machine translation tools such as My Memory Translated, Babylon and the others can also provide better translations results in sentence and paragraph levels. Therefore, EFL learners should be introduced to different types of machine translation tools and they should also be provided with some tips on how to make effective use of these tools in their studies.

To sum up, all of the participants use Google Translate mostly and frequently despite their negative experiences during translation tasks such the mistranslation and wrong structures and wrong meaning provision. However, awareness of different types of machine translation tools can be raised among the users of machine translation and some tips and practical solutions can be offered by the instructors, teachers, instruction designers (such as offering Corpus Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, etc. courses at the earlier years of the faculty for the learners) or other professionals in this field to assist the users of machine translation on how to use them more effectively rather than just avoiding using them which is mostly caused by the prejudices towards them related to the mistranslation or wrong structures they provide.

When it comes to the limitations of the study, two important limitations of the study can be stated: the number of the participants and type of the context. The further studies can be conducted with a larger number of participants and in different contexts such as in different departments like translation departments or even in other departments on different subjects like chemistry, biology, physics etc. as they also need to use machine translation for practicality reasons and to keep up with the recent developments related to their subject area in the rapidly developing world. Considering the topic as novel and a part of rapidly improving technology, it is suggested that MT deserves in-depth studies with larger participants from different populations using alternative data collection techniques for various purposes and variables.

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