

# The Use of Google Translate in the Arabic-English Classroom

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**Abstract**—This study examines the uses, perceived quality, and ethical and policy considerations of the use of Google Translate (GT) among Saudi college students majoring in English language and translation, as well as on the part of their instructors. Using separate surveys for students and instructors, the findings indicate widespread use of GT by both students and instructors, who acknowledge its effectiveness for translation tasks. However, a misalignment exists between the actual use of GT and formal academic policies. Course specifications do not mention GT, and traditional dictionary use continues to be the primary focus of translation training. Most instructors have not integrated GT into their teaching activities nor provided guidelines or policies regarding its effective use, despite recognizing its benefits. The study concludes by discussing the pedagogical implications of these findings and suggests solutions for better integration of modern translation tools such as GT into the curriculum. The study highlights the gap between current academic practices and the real-world workplace, which has already integrated Machine Translation (MT) extensively. The study advocates for clear policies and for the structured teaching of MT to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of translation training in the evolving professional landscape.

**Index Terms**—Google translate perception, machine translation quality perception, policy and ethics of Google Translate

## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, the landscape of translation has undergone a remarkable evolution, transitioning from the use of traditional paper-based methods to the use of sophisticated machine translation (MT) technologies. Traditional paper-based translations rely heavily on human translators, involving time-consuming manual processes. However, with the advent of MT, especially with recent advancements in artificial intelligence and neural networks, the capabilities and efficiency of translation have been revolutionized (Wang et al., 2022). Modern MT systems can swiftly process vast amounts of text, offering translations that are increasingly accurate and nuanced, thus bridging language barriers and facilitating global communication in ways previously unimagined. This shift marks a turning point in the history of translation, ushering in a new era of accessibility, speed, and accuracy in cross-linguistic communication.

Reflecting the transformative shift in translation methodologies, as stated by Ata and Debreli (2021) and Lee and Briggs (2021), Google Translate (GT) has notably become the most popular MT tool among students. It is also the most researched translation tool (Almusgarraf & Bailey, 2023). This trend is further evidenced by Shankland's (2013) report, which highlighted that—even a decade ago—GT was providing a billion translations daily for over 200 million users, a figure that has undoubtedly grown. The preference for GT over traditional dictionaries, which Ata and Debreli (2021) note are losing their primacy as the main linguistic resource, underscores the tool's widespread adoption. GT's accessibility, user-friendly interface, and continual improvements in accuracy through advancements in artificial intelligence make it an indispensable resource.

Despite the extensive literature examining GT from a pedagogical perspective, focusing on its impact on students' writing, vocabulary enhancement, and overall language proficiency development (e.g., Lee, 2020; Tsai, 2019; Rowe, 2022), few studies have focused on students' and instructors' perceptions of GT use (Mulyani & Afina, 2021), especially in the context of translation training (Man et al., 2020). In addition, since the quality of GT can vary significantly across different language pairs, largely depending on the quality of available parallel corpora (Wang et al., 2022), it is expected that some language pairs might elicit different perceptions with regard to GT use on the part of users. The current study seeks to understand the perceptions of Arabic-English translation majors regarding GT. Indeed, it is essential to sample linguistically-diverse language groups to fully understand any particular linguistic phenomena.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. History of Google Translate

Prior to discussing GT, it is essential to establish a clear understanding of MT. MT refers to the automated process of translating text or speech from one language to another using computer software. This technology has evolved significantly over time, transitioning from basic word-to-word matching techniques to sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) engines that produce increasingly-accurate translations.

Historically, MT has undergone three major developmental phases (Wang et al., 2022). The initial phase, known as rule-based MT, relied on sets of linguistic rules and dictionaries to convert text from the source language to the target language. This approach was followed by statistical MT (during the 2000s), which utilized statistical models to infer ways to translate texts based on large amounts of bilingual corpora, as opposed to human experts writing rules. The most recent phase is neural MT (started in 2014), which represents the current state of the art, and one which is evolving. NMT employs deep neural networks, a type of artificial intelligence, to learn linguistic patterns based on available corpora and predict translations. NMT operates as a fully-integrated system that autonomously learns semantic meanings and obtains translation knowledge directly from its training corpora, without requiring manually-crafted rules. In 2016, GT departed from SMT and adopted NMT, making it more natural and accurate (Zhang & Zong, 2020).

### *B. Learners' Use and Perception of MT*

Research with regard to students' use of MT tools, particularly GT, reveals that learners frequently rely on these technologies in their language learning and translation tasks. Across different contexts, students report using GT primarily for word- and sentence-level translations. For instance, Wei (2021) found that 94.6% of Malaysian students used GT as a key part of their English learning process, acknowledging its utility for quick translations. Similarly, Mulyani and Afina (2021) reported that 89% of Indonesian students used GT to check unknown words, and 100% relied on it to verify collocations, with 84% using it to translate full sentences. Pham et al. (2022) also supported these findings, showing that Vietnamese students used GT primarily to save time and improve pronunciation. A study by Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) maintains that Saudi and South Korean students exhibited a high level of acceptance and use of MT tools, primarily for individual words and sentence translations. The study further emphasized that Saudi students used MT tools for a broader array of reasons than their Korean counterparts. In fact, Dahmash and Nada (2020) reported that Saudi English learners consider GT as an essential application on their smartphones. Overall, students consistently perceive GT as a convenient tool for translating sentences, and some even use it for longer texts such as paragraphs or essays.

Despite the widespread use of GT, students recognize its limitations when translating more complex texts. Yanti and Meka (2019) noted that students regularly used GT in translation classes but understood that the tool's output often required rechecking for accuracy, particularly in terms of grammar and meaning. Pham et al. (2022) similarly found that students saw GT as helpful for vocabulary, but frequently encountered grammatical and semantic errors, leading to misunderstandings. Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) also highlighted accuracy issues and the need for corrections, with students continuing to use MT tools despite these concerns. Nonetheless, students maintain a generally positive attitude toward GT. Wei (2021) found that most students considered GT useful, though less effective for longer sentences or paragraphs. The study by Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) revealed that students' positive perceptions of MT tools strongly correlated with actual usage.

Ethical considerations and policy issues are central to students' perceptions of GT use. Mulyani and Afina (2021) reported that 72% of students believed the ethicality of GT depended on how it was used, with many finding it acceptable for word-level translations but more problematic for graded assignments or when used without proper post-editing. These findings echo the results of Jolley and Maimone (2015), who noted that while students frequently used GT, they were cautious about plagiarism and academic dishonesty, especially when translating entire paragraphs. Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) further addressed concerns about English avoidance where students might use MT tools to avoid engaging with the language. Some educators view this as a limitation. These studies highlight the importance of clear guidelines and training on the ethical use of MT tools, emphasizing that while students appreciate the convenience of GT, they need to be taught how to use it responsibly to avoid over-dependence and potential ethical violations.

### *C. MT as a Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Tool in Language Education*

GT is the most widely-used CALL tool among students (Ducar & Schocket, 2018). Furthermore, a systematic review of the effectiveness of MT in language education conducted by Lee (2023) identified two main trends. First, GT's accuracy has been rapidly improving, significantly reducing the number of lexicogrammatical errors, particularly since GT transitioned from SMT to NMT in 2016, making it acceptably usable across most language pairs. Second, the use of MT has had a positive impact on foreign language learning in various linguistic areas. Regarding specific areas where GT is beneficial, GT is most frequently-implemented as a CALL tool in writing classes.

For example, a study by Lee (2020) involved Korean-English college students using GT as a reference for their L2 writing. In this study, students initially translated their L1 writing into L2 without GT's aid, and subsequently produced another L2 translation using GT. The students then compared and corrected their own writing against the GT output. The findings indicated that MT reduced lexicogrammatical errors and enhanced student revision. Moreover, utilizing MT for revision purposes positively impacted students' writing strategies and encouraged them to see writing as a process. Students also reported positive attitudes toward the use of GT in writing classes. The researchers concluded that MT can be an effective aid in language learning.

Another study by Stapleton and Kin (2019) explored the use of GT with a younger demographic. This study involved Chinese primary school EFL learners who were divided into two groups: one group wrote directly in their L2 (English), while the other wrote—on the same topic—in their L1 (Chinese) and then used GT to translate their text into L2. When the resulting texts were evaluated by teachers, there were no significant differences in the scores between the manually-written and the GT-translated versions. Interestingly, in instances where there were differences, the GT-translated versions

consistently received higher scores than the manually-written texts, with teachers unaware that they were evaluating machine-translated content. The researchers noted that the mechanics, vocabulary, and grammar in the GT-generated English writings appeared to match the quality of human-generated English writings.

In addition to aiding with writing, MT tools have further contributed to enhancing students' vocabulary choices and grammar, as evidenced by Tsai (2019) and Rowe (2022), respectively. Moreover, such tools have proven effective in increasing learners' metalinguistic awareness of the target language, particularly when they critically evaluate MT outputs (Ryu et al., 2022). These tools also promote learners' independence (Niño, 2020). Furthermore, an earlier study by Niño (2008) demonstrated that MT particularly improved students' paraphrasing skills, showcasing the broad educational benefits of these technologies.

#### *D. GT for Translation Major Students*

Alsalem (2019) observed—with Arabic-English translation students—that while the uncontrolled use of GT can enhance translation skills, it is inadvisable for beginners due to the risk of developing an overreliance on these tools. This caution is echoed by Yamada (2019), who stressed the importance of controlled post-editing training to help Japanese-English translation students tackle the challenges posed by the fluent-sounding and human-like outputs of current NMT systems. Without such training, it would be difficult to achieve professional post-editing standards.

On the effectiveness of MT in reducing workload and enhancing output quality, Yang et al. (2023) reported that Chinese-English translation students with six months of training experienced improved translation quality and reduced mental strain when using MT compared to manual methods. The post-edited translations slightly surpassed those of manual translations, making it the preferred method.

Additionally, the role of technological proficiency in the effective use of translation tools was examined by Man et al. (2020), who found a strong, positive correlation between students' knowledge of translation technology and their usage rates. Notably, second-year Chinese-English translation students utilized these tools more frequently than their first-year peers, indicating that as students become more proficient in the use of technology, their reliance on, and benefit from, MT increases. The researchers attest that these tools form an essential element of a translator's competence (see also Rico & González Pastor, 2022).

These findings collectively suggest that incorporating MT into translator training programs could significantly aid in preparing students for the demands of the modern translation profession, underscoring the importance of integrating targeted post-editing training into curricula to fully leverage these technological advancements.

### III. METHODS

#### *A. Research Questions*

The current research examines three areas regarding perceptions of GT: GT usage, perceptions of GT quality, and perceptions of the ethicality of the use of GT. The following research questions correspond to these three areas:

1. How frequently do translation students and instructors use GT, and for what purposes?
2. How do translation students and instructors perceive the quality of GT?
3. What ethical considerations, policies, and training practices do translation students and instructors follow regarding the use of GT?

#### *B. Participants*

The study employed a convenience sampling technique which resulted in a group of 82 participants, comprising 59% females and 41% males. All participants spoke Arabic as an L1 and were Saudi university students majoring in English and Translation at the bachelor's level. By the time they completed the survey, these students were in their final two semesters of an eight-semester program. They had already completed at least two-thirds of their specialized translation courses, which are a significant component of their 141-credit-hour degree program. These courses included, but were not limited to, medical translation, technical translation, media and political translation, business and economic translation, and a translation field project.

The study also included 16 Saudi instructors, consisting of eight males and eight females. These participants were chosen because they either teach or have taught one or more of the translation courses offered within the department. All instructors held doctoral degrees in fields closely related to language studies, including linguistics, TESOL, and applied linguistics, with at least 56% of them specializing specifically in translation. Additionally, 90% of them had five or more years of teaching experience.

#### *C. Instruments*

To investigate the use of GT among students and instructors, two separate surveys were administered via Google Forms online. Both surveys were adapted, with permission, from Jolley and Maimone (2015), who examined perceptions of GT use among Spanish-speaking participants. These surveys were also employed by Ata and Debreli (2021) in a study exploring GT use among Turkish learners. For the current study, the surveys were slightly modified to address the specific context of Arabic-English translation students.

The surveys focused on various aspects of GT usage, including frequency, purpose, perceived quality, and ethical considerations. The student and instructor surveys were conducted in English and consisted of six questions assessing GT use, five questions evaluating the perceived quality of GT, six questions addressing ethical and policy issues, and an additional six questions gathering background information.

Example questions from the students' survey include:

-Overall, how often do you use Google Translate when working on assignments for a translation course?

-In general, how often do you use Google Translate to translate full sentences?

-Overall, how often do you use dictionaries when working on assignments for a translation course?

-For English to Arabic translation, how effective or ineffective do you think Google Translate is for translating: [single words, full sentences, paragraph. etc.]?

-Decide if using Google Translate is considered cheating or not cheating under each of the following conditions: [single word, full sentences, full paragraphs, etc.]

All responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale, with options such as "very effective," "effective," "somewhat effective," "not effective," and "clearly not effective." All questions were closed-ended, with optional open-ended spaces provided for additional comments. The surveys were distributed electronically to students and instructors through a public Telegram group for the Department of English at Al-Imam University. Reminders were sent periodically throughout the semester until data collection was completed.

#### IV. RESULTS

The survey data collected from both students and instructors were analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were calculated separately for each group to summarize their responses.

##### A. How Frequently do Translation Students and Instructors Use Google Translate and for What Purposes?

As shown in Figure 1, GT is widely utilized by translation students, with 47% of participants indicating that they always or usually rely on it, 35% sometimes use it, and 16% rarely or never resort to it. In contrast, traditional dictionaries are less-commonly employed, with 33% of participants reporting that they always or usually use them, 14% sometimes use them, and 54% rarely or never utilize them. Interestingly, instructors expected that a significant majority of their students (87%) always or usually employ GT. Reflecting the general preference of students for GT over traditional dictionaries, one student stated: "I think we need to learn how to use those engines to know how to use them correctly. Maybe just maybe there is no one use dictionary no more ... why I need to have dictionary app to just research for one word. Before, we learned from just books and school, now from internet and web." Another student notes: "Honestly, using Google Translate or any other similar platform is a necessity in these days. It's not cheating at all. It's a partial replacement of old-fashioned dictionaries. However, it needs time to develop. Using these new tools saves people time and effort".

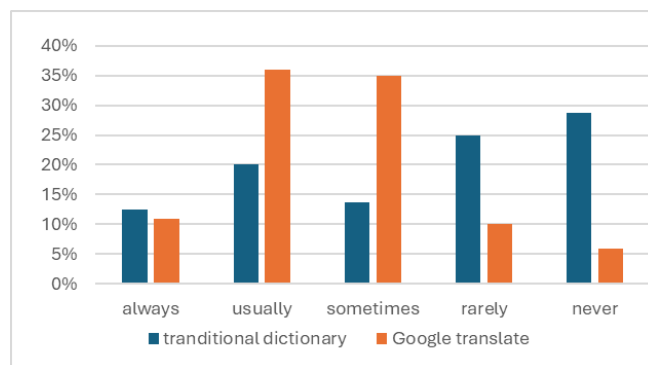


Figure 1. Students' Frequency of GT Use vs Traditional Dictionaries

With respect to instructors' use of GT, as Figure 2 shows, 40% always or usually use it, 53% sometimes do, and 6% rarely do. Furthermore, 60% of the instructors in the study always or usually use traditional dictionaries, 13% sometimes consult them, and 6% rarely use them.

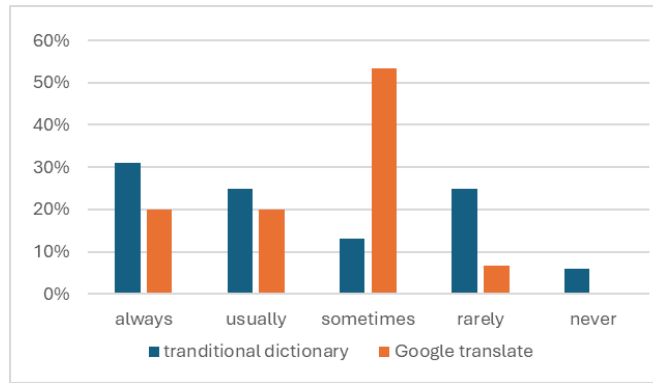


Figure 2. Instructors' Use of GT vs Traditional Dictionaries

Regarding the purposes for which students use GT compared to instructors' expectations, almost half of the students (44%) reported that they always or usually use GT for single-word translations. In contrast, instructors believed that all students (100%) use GT for this purpose. Interestingly, while only 20% of students stated that they always or usually utilize GT for full sentence translations, instructors believed that 87% of students do so. Similarly, only 15% of students reported always or usually using GT for whole paragraph translations, whereas a majority (87%) of instructors thought that students use GT for this purpose (see Figures 3 and 4).

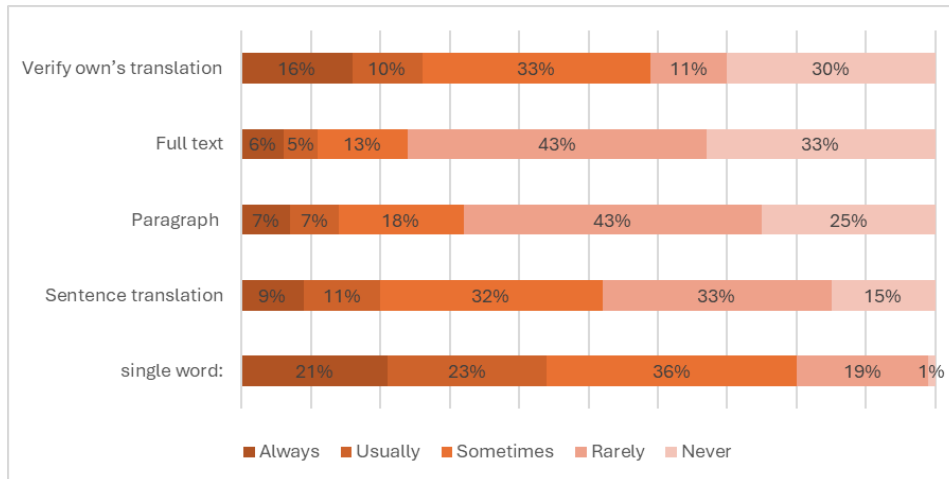


Figure 3. Students' Purpose of GT Use

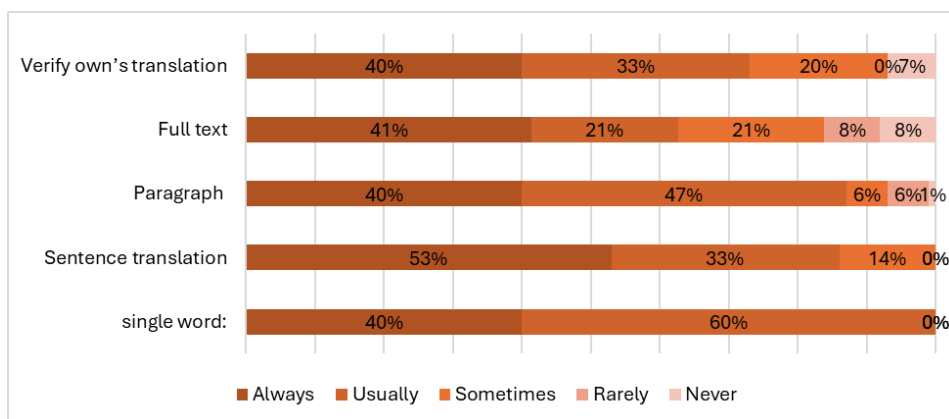


Figure 4. Instructors' Expectations of Why Students Use GT

Furthermore, a significant number of students (44%) agreed with the statement: “I first try to translate a complete sentence by myself, but if I have difficulties I copy the complete translation from Google Translate.” Additionally, 49% of students indicated that they use GT to “compare my own translation to the translation by Google Translate.” When presented with the statements “I first use Google Translate to translate a sentence, then I read the translation to fix any language mistakes” and “I don’t use Google Translate at all to translate complete sentences or paragraphs”, 35% and 21% of students agreed with these statements, respectively.

*B. How do Translation Students and Instructors Perceive the Quality of Google Translate?*

The evaluation of GT quality by students and instructors revealed notable differences, particularly in translation directionality. While students seemed to value English-to-Arabic translations similarly to the opposite direction, instructors gave higher evaluations to English-to-Arabic translations compared to the other direction. Specifically, as shown in Figure 5, approximately 68% of student respondents deemed GT to be effective, very effective, or somewhat effective, 4% were unsure, and the remaining 28% rated it as either not effective or very ineffective. For Arabic-to-English translation, a similar pattern emerged: 68% of participants regarded GT as effective, very effective, or somewhat effective, 26% perceived it as not effective or very ineffective, and 6% were unsure.

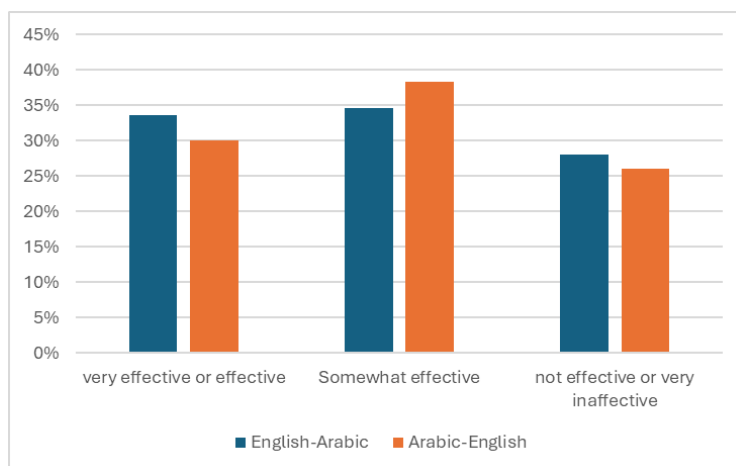


Figure 5. Summarized Effectiveness Ratings of GT by Students

Instructors, on the other hand, had more favorable ratings for English-to-Arabic translations (see Figure 6). A majority (82%) regarded GT as somewhat effective or very effective/effective, while the remaining 18% viewed it as either not effective or very ineffective. In contrast, for Arabic-to-English translation, 56% of the instructors viewed it as somewhat effective or very effective/effective, and the remaining 43% questioned its effectiveness.

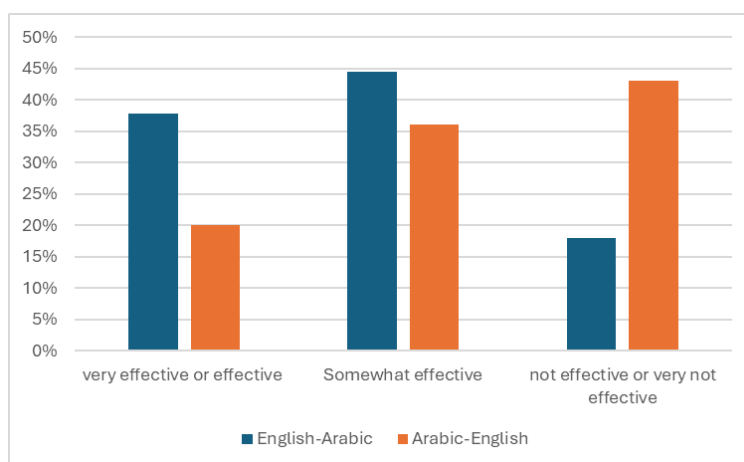


Figure 6. Summarized Effectiveness Ratings of GT by Instructors

When examining the specific purposes of translation, it is evident that both instructors' and students' effectiveness ratings decreased as the translation segment transitioned from single-word translation to paragraph translation, which is to be expected. However, instructors consistently rated the effectiveness higher for English-to-Arabic translation than vice versa, a distinction not apparent on the part of students. Both instructors and students agreed that GT is less effective for translating anything above the word level, with instructors providing slightly more positive evaluations overall.

It is well-established in the literature that there is a translation asymmetry where English-to-X translations are of higher quality than X-to-English, especially when X is a resource-poor language (Abu-Al-Sha'r & Zughoul, 2009; Jabak, 2019). Superior translation quality from English is due to the refined translation algorithms which are based on the higher quality and quantity of digital corpora available for resource-rich languages such as English when it comes to training these models (Wang et al., 2022). Abu-Al-Sha'r and Zughoul (2009) have also noted that English-to-Arabic translations are better than vice-versa. The fact that students did not perceive such asymmetry indicates a gap in their evaluation and understanding of MT, likely due to inadequate guidance from their instructors regarding the nuances of MTs.

Regarding the statement on whether the quality of English-to-Arabic GT translations is better than their own, only 44% of students clearly expressed confidence in their own translation quality by disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the

statement. Conversely, 46% of students either agreed, strongly agreed, or somewhat agreed with the statement, while 10% were unsure.

The results related to GT's role in helping students achieve their language goals were mixed. Most students (73%) and instructors (75%) agreed that GT can help improve students' vocabulary choices in English (see Figure 7). Additionally, nearly half of the students (43%) and 25% of the instructors considered GT to be effective for improving sentence structure in English. For overall English performance, 50% of instructors and 37% of students believed that GT can help improve students' overall English proficiency. On the other hand, 44% of instructors and 21% of students agreed that GT is not a good learning tool. Moreover, a majority of instructors (62.5%) indicated that GT might be helpful to the language learning process. However, only 29% of students believed that their instructors would think so. In fact, 46% of the students held the belief that their instructors would consider GT to be potentially harmful and detrimental to language learning.

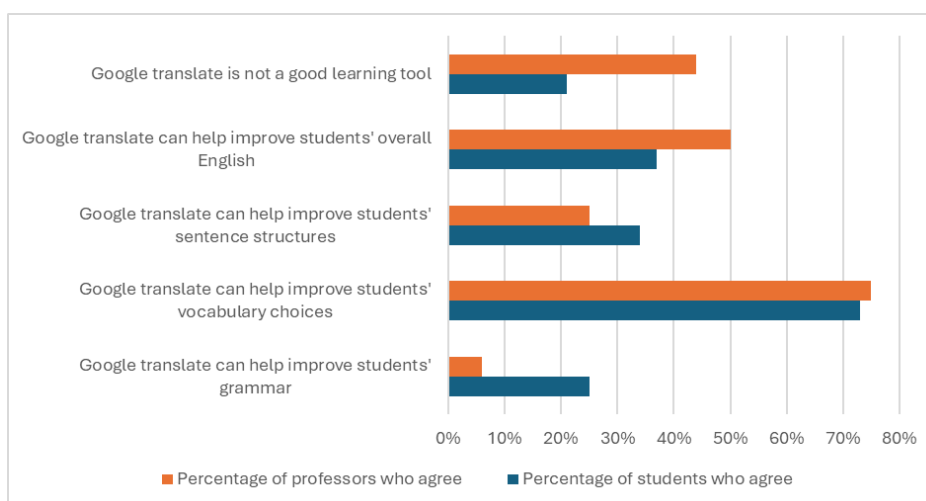


Figure 7. Instructors' and Students' Views on the Effectiveness of GT as a Learning Tool

### C. What Ethical Considerations, Policies, and Training Practices do Translation Students and Instructors Follow Regarding the Use of Google Translate?

With regard to ethical considerations, nearly half of the students (46%) believe that using GT is not cheating, regardless of how it is used. However, 34% of students think that their instructors view the use of GT for assignments as unethical and dishonest, regardless of how it is used. Almost half of the students (49%) agreed that whether GT use is considered cheating depends on how it is used, and a similar percentage (52%) believed that their instructors hold the same view. Only a small percentage of students (2.6%) agree that GT use is cheating, regardless of its usage.

Specifically, a majority of students (63%) believed that translating full sentences is ethical, whereas a minority (26%) considered translating full paragraphs to be ethical. One student commented on this issue, stating: "My work as a translator is to come up with the best translation possible, and after all, I'm using a tool to help enhance the translation (not cheating)." In contrast, 75% of instructors reported that the ethicality of GT use depends on how it is used, and only 12.5% considered GT completely ethical, regardless of how it is used.

Regarding the policy on the use of GT for completing translation assignments, the majority of instructors (68%) did not allow full-paragraph translation at all, and 39% also prohibited sentence translation. The remaining instructors permit GT use beyond the word unit, but under certain conditions. Students' reports corroborate these numbers, indicating similar percentages on whether their instructors allow the use of GT. For example, one student wrote: "Most of them do not agree with the use of Google Translate. They believe that students may overly depend on it and that stops their English improvement." Despite this, when instructors were asked if they have an official policy regarding GT use available to students, 50% reported not having one. One professor commented, "The course specification demands that students use dictionaries and nothing else".

Moreover, the majority of instructors (73%) did not spend any time in class demonstrating the use of GT, and most have never assigned activities requiring the use of GT or other online translation tools (60%). However, a significant number of instructors (69%) and students (75%) agreed that it would be beneficial if instructors spent time teaching students how to effectively use GT. Notably, the same percentage of instructors (69%) indicated that they had never received any training related to GT or other computer-assisted translations. Despite this, 50% of instructors expressed interest in learning more about GT. As far as traditional dictionaries are concerned, 75% of instructors allowed their use in general, with only 18% imposing certain conditions. Additionally, 85% of students reported receiving training on dictionary use.

## V. DISCUSSION

The findings reveal a clear discrepancy between the pedagogical practices advocated by instructors and the actual behaviors of students regarding GT use. Despite instructors' emphasis on traditional dictionary skills—supported by dedicated training sessions—students overwhelmingly prefer the convenience of GT. This trend aligns with previous research such as that of Alhaisoni (2016) and Lee and Briggs (2021), who also observed a significant reliance on MT tools due to their enhanced accuracy. Additionally, Liu et al. (2022) found that over 60% of Chinese-to-English translation students frequently used MT for their assignments, underscoring its growing prevalence in academic settings.

Students not only rely on GT for single words but also use it for translating larger segments such as sentences and paragraphs. While the frequency of GT use decreases as the text length increases, a substantial number of students continue to use it for larger passages, as shown by Mulyani and Afina (2021). However, the appropriateness of GT use for translating full paragraphs depends heavily on post-editing skills, which, as this study reveals, tend to be lacking among students. Only 35% of the students attempt post-editing, a deficiency likely resulting from insufficient training. This raises concerns about students' reliance on GT without the necessary post-editing skills to ensure accuracy and fluency in translation.

In fact, as Koponen (2016) pointed out, post-editing has become an established component of the translation workflow in professional contexts. Similarly, Vieira (2019, p. 12) noted that “post-editing is no longer a separate task undertaken only in MT development circles. Rather, it is increasingly part of what translators do.” These observations underscore the importance of integrating post-editing training into translation programs. Of course, the effort required for post-editing depends on factors such as the language pair and the type of text (Vieira, 2019). This being said, the majority of instructors in our research indicated never having received any training with respect to GT or other MT tools. This educational oversight is highlighted in the literature, with Jolley and Maimone (2015), and Samman (2022) echoing the critical need for such training, particularly given the increasing demand for these skills in the marketplace, as emphasized by Povilaitienė and Kasperė (2022).

Students' and instructors' perceptions regarding the quality of GT vary, but both groups generally view it as an effective tool for translation tasks. About half of the students and a majority of the instructors consider GT to be somewhat or very effective, particularly in improving vocabulary choices. This aligns with previous studies such as those of Jolley and Maimone (2015) and Liu et al. (2022), where participants rated MT outputs as accurate or somewhat reliable. Tsai (2019) and Amin (2020) also noted that GT helps reduce grammatical and content errors in student writing, contributing to overall language development. However, our study revealed that instructors tend to give GT higher marks for English-to-Arabic translation compared to Arabic-to-English, while students do not make such distinctions. This variance in directionality reflects instructors' deeper awareness of the limitations of MT, especially when handling more complex language structures. Despite this, both groups agree that GT becomes less effective when translating beyond word level, further highlighting the need for post-editing to enhance translation quality.

The ethicality of using GT is a contested issue, with nearly half of the students believing that GT use is not cheating, regardless of how it is employed. A significant portion of students also consider full sentence translation ethical. This view aligns with international perspectives, in that Mulyani and Afina (2021) and Ata and Debreli (2021) found similar attitudes among Indonesian and Turkish students learning English. However, instructors remain divided on the use of GT beyond single-word translations. Most professors discourage its use for sentences and paragraphs, and formal academic policies still focus on the use of traditional dictionaries, with little to no mention of GT. This lack of policy is mirrored in the finding that most instructors have not integrated GT into classroom activities, possibly because they themselves lack formal training in MT (Rico & González Pastor, 2022). Without clear policies, students are left to determine for themselves whether their use of GT is ethical, often basing their judgments on the degree of post-editing or specific use cases. For example, Liu et al. (2022) found that 71% of their Chinese-English translation students associated the extent of post-editing with the ethicality of using MT, with more extensive post-editing perceived as making GT use ethical. In addition, 24% of the students in our study believed that using MT for graded assignments constituted an ethical issue.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This study highlights the widespread use of GT among Saudi translation students and instructors, revealing a notable gap between students' reliance on GT and the lack of formal academic policies or training surrounding its use. While both students and instructors acknowledge the effectiveness of GT in translation tasks, instructors often discourage its use beyond single-word translations, and traditional dictionary skills remain the primary focus of translation training. Despite the growing use of MT in professional translation, institutions have been slow to adapt, leaving students without the necessary skills to effectively use and post-edit MT outputs. Glendinning (2014) emphasized that many educational institutions have yet to address the growing role of MT in language education, despite its increasing integration into the professional translation landscape.

Given the inevitability of GT use by students, even when not allowed, it is crucial to formally integrate GT into translation curricula. Educators should establish clear policies regarding GT use, ensuring students understand when and how to use it appropriately. Structured training sessions on the use of GT should be introduced, focusing on post-editing, the limitations of MT, and best practices for improving translation quality. Rather than discouraging the use of GT by emphasizing its errors, instructors should guide students on how to refine and enhance GT output. Providing take-home assignments that explicitly require GT use could further help students develop practical skills, enabling them to engage

with MT tools confidently and ethically within a supportive learning environment. By acknowledging and embracing MT in the classroom, educators can better prepare students for the realities of the modern translation industry.

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