The Role of Google Translate on Technical Translation; A Comparative Study of Manual and Google Translate- with special reference to Japanese and Sinhala

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Abstract

It is said that there are about 6000 to 7000 languages used all over the world. The need to exchange information, written in various languages, is the prominent need for translation. Therefore, to meet various translation needs, there is an increasing tendency to use machines or software; such as Google Translate (GT) instead of relying solely on human. Most of the people seek the help of GT as it saves time and costs less comparing to the manual translation. Although many of us use GT as a translation tool or an aid; the problem arise here is the trust-worthiness and the accuracy of the result. Therefore, the objective of this research is to identify the differences and similarities of GT and manual translation in technical translation contexts and to find out how reliable its translations to meet the translation needs. In the previous studies done in Google Translate related to Sinhala language, many researchers have pointed out that translations to and from Sinhala through Google Translate need much mor improvements in its structure, contextual meaning and narration, because Sinhala is comparably low in usage when comparing to English and also some language like Japanese, Chinese, Russian and French *(Jayamal 2018)*.In this study, Japanese used as the source language and Sinhala as the target language where selected 30 business mails written in Japanese were taken in to consideration. The collected data was translated by both modes; two sworn translators and GT and the translated data from both modes were analyzed under Brian Mossop's 12 parameters of translation which goes under 4 groups; Transfer, Content, Language and Presentation. The selection of appropriate words, grammar and the presentation of contextual meanings were not similar with manual translations and GT has mainly failed in translating Japanese honorary expressions and in addressing contextual meanings. So that, it proves that GT is only an aid of translation which provides a very basic translation but cannot be used as a reliable official document when considering Japanese and Sinhala Languages.

Keywords: Google Translate (GT); Manual translation; Reliability; Accuracy; Mossop's translation para meters.

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