



## COMMON ONLINE TECHNICAL TOOLS FOR TRANSLATION: STUDENTS' CHOICES, PERCEPTIONS, AND TRANSLATION STRATEGIES USED

Nguyen Minh Trang<sup>i</sup>

Binh Duong University,  
Thu Dau Mot City,  
Vietnam

### Abstract:

This research study presented the results of online technical tools used in translation studies. Most of these technical tools were freely selected by university students of an English education programme while performing their translating tasks. The study results showed that Google Translate, ChatGPT, and Google Lens were the most frequently used online technical tools the students had selected for their translation. The advantages and disadvantages of these tools were also analysed. The study revealed the participants' perceptions of the translation tools they used, hoping that the results would shed light on improving these technical translation tools to tool designers when mistakes made by machine translation were pointed out. The study recommended to translators that machine translation needs to be done along with human intervention while performing translation tasks. Translation strategies used by the target students were also investigated. Recommendations for future research studies on the topic were given in this article.

**Keywords:** translation; online translation tools; technology for translation; students' perceptions; translation strategies; travel brochures

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Translation Studies in the Internet Age

The Internet is now so ubiquitous that almost everyone uses it on a daily basis for work, school, and even for recreational activities.

As in translation studies, the Internet has enabled the development of online tools that assist translators and professional translators save time and effort (Brooks, 2020). The term 'Machine Translation' (MT) was coined, and the history of MT dates back to the early 1950s. The first attempt at MT was the 1954 Georgetown experiment, in which an IBM 701 computer attempted to translate 60 Russian sentences into English. Despite the fact that the results were far from ideal, it attracted interest in the advancement of MT technology. In decades,

---

<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [nguyenminhtrang@hotmail.com](mailto:nguyenminhtrang@hotmail.com)

numerous research institutions and government agencies, including the United States Air Force and the European Union, invested in MT research. However, progress was slow, and translation technology was insufficiently developed to produce consistent and accurate translation products. In recent years, MT technology has vastly improved as a result of the development of more potent processors and advances in natural language processing. Today, individuals and enterprises all over the world use MT to translate diverse texts and documents quickly and effectively. Despite the advancements, there is still a great deal of room for development, and scientists are still developing and refining the technology. As Halim (2019) finds out, *“Many previous studies discuss about how translation technology could work for the benefits of the translators in general. However, there has been limited studies on the topic of the student translators’ perceptions on translation technology.”* (p. 2). Perhaps, this is a good reason for this current study to fill in this gap.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

This research attempts to find out answers to the following three research questions (RQ):

- 1) What common technical tools available online did the university students use to perform the assigned translation task?
- 2) What are the advantages and disadvantages of these tools?
- 3) How can student-translators solve their translation problems?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The research aims to encourage students/language learners to confidently use technology when translating a source language (SL) text to a target language (TL) text without fearing making mistakes to resolve the translation problems faced. The project also helps technology developers take into consideration students’ ideas or perceptions of their technical translation tools to improve their tool designs with a view of assisting students and/or translators better perform their translation tasks.

## **2. Literature Review**

In the simplest terms, brochure translation refers to the translation of an organization's or association's brochure from a source (SL) into other target languages (TLs) for the purpose of assisting tourists in comprehending what the brochure entails. In other words, brochure translation helps eliminate any misunderstandings that may arise between a tour business and its consumers, regardless of their nationality or language background (Agato translation, 2022). Brochure translation helps tour agents expand their business success. Therefore, a tour brochure used as a guide should be written with special care in terms of style writing, accentuation, usage, grammar, and language accuracy.

## 2.1 Travel Brochure Translation

A tourist brochure is a unique type of text comprising a great deal of technical information for advertising purposes. Numerous elements, such as graphic design, images, and a variety of typefaces, can be found in tourist brochures. In brochures, texts are divided into small segments, which are short sentences and paragraphs followed by images, diagrams, or tables. The primary purpose of a travel brochure is to inform and entice the reader. These three components comprise the text's message. Van Leeuwen (2004) classifies travel brochures as 'communicative acts'. The objective of travel brochures is to provide travelers with information about excursions or tours that travelers need to for their travel destinations. Therefore, the use of word choice and good photographs are important to help successfully gain travel agents' business objectives. Therefore, travel brochures necessitate meticulous design, useful content, and persuasive elements, largely relying on the utilisation of words and images to achieve this goal.

According to Holloway (2004), the utilisation of brochures as the primary marketing instrument distinguishes the tourism sector from nearly all other industries. Travel brochures provide a unique purpose by serving as a substitute for intangible products that cannot be physically observed or examined prior to purchase.

Weightman (1987) says that travel brochures shape travelers' expectations and perceptions, and they present a 'predefined landscape' for the tourist to explore. Thus, the language used in travel brochures should be a 'self-fulfilling prophesy'. He recommends that research on how words and images take travelers' interests in tourism should be further investigated. Bühler (1990) tries to point out how similar tourism language is to other languages by studying functions, structures, tenses, and enchantments. Dann (2001) adds four distinct features that differentiate the language of tourism from other modes of communication. These qualities include the absence of sender identification, monologue, exaltation, and tautology. Both the translator and the author of the tourist brochure writing must pay special attention to these vital features as a text is organised and adhered to particular grammatical principles. It possesses a unique lexicon and semantic substance. The system communicates messages and functions using a traditional framework of symbols and codes, while also utilising a distinct register. Therefore, Dann (2001) says travel brochures must appeal to visitors in two ways: firstly, through form and images, and secondly, through flawless English. He concludes that the language should fulfil the criteria for correctness and fluency and be effective in the communicative context of a travel guide.

## 2.2 Translation Problems

Miremedi (1991) classifies translation issues into two main categories: lexical issues and syntactic issues. The translator must possess an awareness of the underlying intention that extends beyond the literal language in order to prevent any distortion of the author's intended message. Broeik (1981), cited in Miremedi (1991), said that lexical problems can be caused by metaphorical expressions, idioms, and semantic voids that concepts which cannot be found or be found exact equivalents in other TLs. Other issues that can be found while translating are proper names which do not exist in a TL.

For syntactic problems, Nida (1975) reminds translators that it is important to note that there are no two languages which possess identical systems of structural organisations. That means language structures of an SL text do not possess identical structures that are in other TLs. These issues may be the results of differences in word class, word order, grammatical relations, sentence constituents functions within a sentence, styles, and pragmatic aspects (Owji, 2013).

Besides lexical and syntactic problems, translators also face pragmatic problems. According to Zahiri et al. (2015) study on translation errors, *“lexical, syntactic and pragmatic errors and the most common problems students face while doing their translation assignments”* (p. 15).

### **2.3 Translation Strategies to Handle Translation Problems**

Lörscher (1991), Chesterman (1997), and other scholars concur on several key attributes of a translation strategy: (a) it is focused on achieving specific objectives, (b) it is centred around addressing specific problems, (c) it necessitates making deliberate judgments, (d) it may involve conscious awareness, and (e) it entails the manipulation of text. The two prototype translation techniques stated above possess the following features. There is a consensus among researchers that translation strategies encompass the process of issue-solving. The challenge is in selecting suitable translation procedures to address the encountered translation issues.

Translation strategies have been the subject of several research. In order to address issues with translating legal language, Stepanova (2016) studied the approaches and techniques used by a group of practicing solicitors and professional translators. The study's conclusion revealed that a variety of translation techniques and strategies are applied when translating legal jargon. Rus and Harpa (2018) carried out another study. A comparison research including a few students from Petru Maior University aimed to show different approaches to translation practice according to the kind of material and the translator's training. A study by Pujiastuti (2014) was implemented in Indonesia to characterise the methods employed by Bengkulu University's accounting students in translating their abstracts from Bahasa Indonesia into English. This research concentrates on the translation technique that students in the English Education Study Programme used to translate a news article, drawing from the three studies previously stated. Finding out the translation techniques employed by Universitas Brawijaya's English Education students in the Faculty of Cultural Studies is the goal of this study. They translated a news story as part of their translation practice classes. The purpose of this study was to ascertain which translation techniques students apply when translating a news story. In theory, this study could serve as a guide for researchers in the future who wish to carry out translation-related research. This study is anticipated to become a valuable resource for information in the translation area, offering readers insights into translation tactics. The results will be useful to society in general and to the translation industry in particular. Readers will learn from this study that various translators may interpret similar same news in different ways. This occurs as a result of their disparate approaches to handling translation issues while addressing translation problems. Therefore, it is inaccurate to assume that all translators will provide translations that are the

same. The translation techniques described are those that fall under the category of Baker's taxonomy. Baker (2011) suggested a collection of translation procedures known as 'Baker's taxonomy'. Because it is included in the learning materials for students undergoing translation practice, this collection of translation strategies was selected. Furthermore, Owji (2013) asserts that because Baker's taxonomy outlines the tactics employed by qualified translators, it contains the most suitable collection of strategies. Fifteen strategies were proposed by Baker (2011: 26-42) for translators to utilize.

Table 1 below provides a summary of these strategies:

**Table 1:** Translation strategies for professional translators suggested by Baker

No	Strategy	Method Used
1	Translation by a more general word	This is one of the most common strategies to deal with many types of non-equivalence.
2	Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word	A strategy in the semantic field of structure.
3	Translation by cultural substitution	This strategy involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target language item, considering its impact on the target reader.
4	Translation using loan words plus explanations	This strategy is usually used in dealing with culture-specific items, modern concepts, and buzzwords.
5	Translation by paraphrasing using a related word	This strategy is used when the source item is lexicalized in the TL text but in a different form.
6	Translation by paraphrasing using unrelated words	The paraphrase strategy can be used when the concept in the source item is not lexicalized in the target language.
7	Translation by omission	Translators employ this method to shorten lengthy explanations when the meaning given by a certain item or term is irrelevant in the comprehension of the translation.
8	Translation by illustration	This strategy can be useful when a physical entity can be illustrated, particularly in order to avoid over-explanation and to be concise and to the point.

Newmark (1988) distinguished two concepts: (a) translation types or translation methods and (b) translation strategies. Newmark said translators use translation methods to translate the whole SL text, while he uses translation strategies to translate 'sentences or small units of an SL text' (p. 81). The author suggested seven translation methods including word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation, and communicative translation, with fifteen translation strategies to the translation field of studies.

Table 2 illustrates Newmark's translation strategies:

**Table 2:** Translation strategies suggested by Newmark (1988: 82-91)

No	Translation strategy	Procedures
1	Transference	The process of transferring an SL word to a TL word. This strategy includes transliteration.
2	Naturalization	This strategy adapts a SL word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology of the TL.
3	Cultural equivalent	Approach of substituting cultural terms in a SL text with cultural equivalents in a TL text.
4	Functional equivalent	Using a culture-neutral word.
5	Descriptive equivalent	In this procedure, the meaning of the culture-specific word is explained in several words.
6	Componential analysis	Comparing a SL word with a TL word which has a similar meaning but is obviously an exact equivalent.
7	Synonymy	Translators use equivalents in a TL text.
8	Through-translation	This strategy uses literal translation of common collocations, organizational names, and components of compounds. 'Calque' or 'loan translation' are other names refer to this strategy.
9	Shifts or transpositions	A shift in the grammar such as words, verbs, structures that do not exist from a SL text to a TL text.
10	Modulation	Translators reproduce the message of the original text, since a SL text and a TL text are different in terms of perspective.
11	Recognized translation	Translators normally use the official or the generally-accepted translation of any institutional term.
12	Compensation	It occurs when loss of meaning in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part.
13	Paraphrase	meaning of the culture-specific word is explained in detail.
14	Couplets	Translators integrate two different translation strategies.
15	Notes	Additional information is added to a TL text.

If comparing the strategies recommended by Baker and Newmark, it is not difficult to recognize that although the terms used by the two authors are different the strategies used to translate an SL text to a TL text are similar (e.g. literal translation, paraphrase, loan words, substitution). This current research study used both Baker's (2015) and Newmark's (1988) strategies to analyse the target students' translation products, as these translation strategies have been introduced to the target students during the Advanced Translation course and are being used by professional translators.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

39 translated papers were randomly selected from a mid-term test given to a target group of 39 students attending the Advanced Translation course, which lasted 45 hours at a Vietnamese university. The participants were assigned to perform their translation assignment using any technological tools available to them to translate a tour brochure written in Vietnamese (SL) into English (TL) (see Figure 1). The target students could freely select any translation tools

available online to complete this assigned translation. Before using their favorite technical tools, the students were asked to correct errors from the brochure written in Vietnamese, if any. The students were then recommended to use online technical tools to perform their translation. The task also requested the participants to describe the advantages and disadvantages of the tools used, telling the readers how they resolved the problems faced and their perceptions of the selected online tools that produced data for this research study.

Figure 1: Translation task assigned to the target students

**COMBO 4 ĐẢO**

Lịch Trình:

- 8h00: Xe và hrv đón quý khách tại khách sạn .
- ✓ Tham quan cơ sở nuôi cấy ngọc trai
- ✓ Hòn Mây Rút: check in và quay flycam.
- ✓ Hòn Dăm Ngang : bơi ngắm san hô miễn phí
- ✓ Hòn Móng Tay : Ăn trưa, tắm biển , nghỉ ngơi.
- ✓ Hòn Thơm: Công viên san hô ( chi phí tự túc).
- ✓ 15h30: Trải nghiệm cáp treo vượt biển dài nhất thế giới.
- ✓ Sunset Sanato : check in , ngắm hoàng hôn. ( tự túc chi phí)

18h00 : Xe và HDV đưa khách về khách sạn.

**TOUR BAO GỒM**

- Xe đưa đón
- Bữa trưa theo menu
- Cano hiện đại
- Trái Cây và nước suối
- Thiệt bị lặn
- Bảo hiểm du lịch
- HDV chuyên nghiệp
- Hỗ trợ chụp ảnh
- Chụp Sup
- Vé cáp treo

**Giá trọn gói**  
**1.250.000 VND**

Hotline - **0911 909 866**

Trần hưng đạo, Dương to, Phú Quốc.

**MIỄN PHÍ Flycam**

**DÀNH CHO TRẺ EM:**

FREE: DƯỚI 1M  
TÍNH 50%: TỪ 1M - DƯỚI 1M4  
TÍNH 100%: VÉ NGƯỜI LỚN

### 3.2 Participants

39 participants (male: 19; female: 20) were equipped with theories and practical skills of translation studies at the tertiary level. The participants were asked to use the theoretical and technical knowledge they had learned to translate the above brochure into English. The participants recommended using technological tools available online to perform their Vietnamese-English translation. They were also recommended to apply human intervention after translated products were obtained to back-check and correct errors, if any, from these products. For data analysis of this study, each translated product of the students was tagged with a hash symbol (e.g., # 1). Only the content of the translated product was selected. Regarding the ethical issues, the real names and the student codes of the participants were neglected.

### 3.3 Data Collection

This research study is primarily a qualitative research study, with quantitative data analysed for descriptive statistics. Prior to devising an SL text for the participants to translate into English, the participants were surveyed to suggest their translation theme preferences. Two favorite themes from the fields of 'tourism' and 'economics' were suggested by the

participants. This means this assigned translation topic was selected after a learner's needs analysis had been carried out. The task asked the participants to translate a tour brochure designed by a tour agent and distributed to local and foreign tourists who want to explore the beauty of Phu Quoc islands in the Mekong Delta region, South Vietnam.

The current research attempted to understand university students' favourite online translation tools used to complete their classroom translation tasks as well as the advantages and/or disadvantages students faced while using these technical translation tools. The study also investigated common translation strategies used by the respondents. The text used for translation came from the official website of a popular travel agency in Vietnam. According to the researcher's instructions, individual students were asked to produce their own version of the translation. These translated products were then collected and analyzed by the researcher in terms of the frequency of technical tools used for translation, the advantages and disadvantages of using technical tools when performing this assigned task, and the students' perceptions of the use of these website-based translation tools.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Content analysis was applied after thematic coding was constructed to investigate common mistakes and strategies the target student-translators made while doing the translation assignment. Content analysis is considered an appropriate and rigorous tool to explore qualitative data related to students' perceptions and learners' strategies use (Cresswell, 2014; Cresswell & Cresswell, 2020). Descriptive statistics using SPSS version 22 were run to show the percentage of the issues the author of this research study wanted to discover. Member checking as recommended by Cresswell (2014), was also carried out for research reliability of content analysis.

## 4. Results and Discussion

**4.1 Answer to RQ#1:** What common technical tools available online did the students use to perform the assigned translation task?

58.9% of the target students from this Advanced Translation Studies course used Google Translate (GT) for their translating performance. This figure proves to be coincidental with the figure released by other researchers (e.g. Brooks, 2020; Siregar et al., 2021), which means GT is still the most frequently-used online translation tool by students at the tertiary level. Table 3 below indicates the frequency of online MT tools used by the target students in this current study.

**Table 3:** MT tools used by the target students

Name of MT tools used	Percentage
Google Translate	58.9%
ChatGPT	20.5%
Google Lens	12.8%
Cambridge Translate Online	7.5%



The second most frequently-used tool is ChatGPT (20.5%), and the third tool is Google Lens (12.8%). In order to comprehend the gist of the assigned SL text, students tended to use Google Lens (GL). The reason lied behind the use of this GL tool is that this tool can be downloaded freely, and it proves useful to assist students in understanding the 'main content of the assigned message' easily before they started doing their translation tasks.

Students also used Cambridge Translate (GT) from Cambridge Dictionary Online (available at <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>) to translate short sentences from Vietnamese into English. Despite the fact that this tool can automatically translate sentences within the 160-word limit, the students said the translation accuracy of this tool is rather high.

*"It's quick. The accuracy of the translation is relatively high." (#3)*

Interestingly, the target students also used Microsoft tools, which have already been added to their personal computers, to check grammar and spelling mistakes when translating an SL text.

One popular tool Quillbot ([quillbot.com](http://quillbot.com)) available online was also used by this group of translation studies for grammar correction, spelling-mistake replacement, and sentence paraphrasing.

#### **4.2 Answer to RQ#2: What are the advantages and disadvantages of these technical tools?**

The results of this research study show that despite these technical tools being considered the art-of-state technical tools, these tools still had some pros and cons.

##### **4.2.1 Advantages**

The most striking advantage that most students agreed on is that using technical tools available online for translation work could help them perform their translating tasks faster, and more cost-efficient if compared to hiring professional translators. This finding is similar to Brooks' (2020) ideas about MT translation.

*"AI translation can be a cost-effective solution compared to hiring professional human translators for certain tasks." (#37)*

For ChatGPT used for translation, the students expressed their ideas that this tool was used as a main tool of translation assistance. Its striking features recognized are time-saving and availability:

*"AI translation can process and generate translations quickly, saving time compared to manual translation. AI translation tools are accessible online and can be used anytime, anywhere, as long as there is an Internet connection." (#22)*

ChatGPT proves to be a useful online tool that the target students like to make use of.

*"ChatGPT has been trained on a vast amount of data, enabling it to comprehend and organize knowledge from various domains, including specialized language." (#23)*

Although the SL text in Vietnamese was written in a formal language, ChatGPT still understood the original source and performed its translating task well.

*"Fast translation. ChatGPT translated according to the formal form." (#10)*

*"The accuracy of the translation is relatively high." (#4)*

#### **4.2.1 Disadvantages**

Regarding the limitations of the technical tools used, the results still show that the target students expressed their disastification of technical tools' cons while performing their translation tasks.

*"AI translation tools may struggle with understanding context, resulting in potential mistranslations or inaccuracies, especially with complex or ambiguous sentences." (#14)*

*"When a SL text used abbreviations, technical translation tools or AI tools cannot recognize the errors. A SL text with abbreviations cannot be recognized for correct automatic translation." (#38).*

*"The abbreviations are unclear that cause great difficulty in translating." (#9)*

One example is the phrase 'Shoot soup' written in the brochure, which caused students great difficulty in guessing its meaning. The use of Google Translate produced resulted in:

SL: "Chup SUP"

GT: "Take soup" (wrong TL translation)

However, students equipped with background knowledge have recognized that 'shoot soup' is an abbreviation of "Stand-up paddle boarding photography" (#10). This translation error 'take soup' made by Google Translate cannot be recognized easily if translators do not have background knowledge of the subject. This can be identified as cultural differences as Vietnamese tourists do not normally have this form of photo shooting while taking a sea tour in Vietnam as Westerners usually do. This cultural difference caused difficulties for translators as having been pointed out by researchers (e.g. Chan, 2004; Newmark, 1988). Chan states that 'a translation devoid of cultural considerations results in distortion' (p. 52).

While ChatGPT has become a trending tool in the field of translation studies, it still shows its constraint in understanding the unique characteristics of SL texts.

*“While Chat GPT is trained on a large dataset, it can still produce inaccurate or ambiguous translations in certain cases. This is particularly true when translating specialized texts or dealing with languages with unique characteristics.” (#23)*

AI-based translation sometimes fails to produce good quality translated products when facing the complexity of an ST text (Zakir & Nagoor, 2017) as ChatGPT could not match unique word structures, special terms and lack of knowledge related to special fields of areas.

*“Facing word orders, styles, large stock of vocabulary in Vietnamese, ChatGPT failed to perform exact knowledge related to special fields of areas.” (#23)*

When encountering such cases, it is easy to see that, like Google Translate, ChatGPT produces word-by-word translation.

*“Normally, translation involves directly translating each word one by one without the ability to rephrase the sentence.” (#10)*

*“The meaning can be “lost in translation” because there is no way to incorporate context. Google Translate does not have a system to correct for translation errors.” (#4)*

One common issue that most students of this study faced while using online translation tools is the grammar and vocabulary issue. Online translation tools which these students have used failed in providing correct grammar structures and the right word choice, especially if terminology from an SL text conveys abstract meanings.

*“Not correct in grammar and vocabulary.” (#20)*

*“Vietnamese and English have different grammatical structures, which can lead to challenges in maintaining the same sentence structures while translating.” (#23)*

Table 4 summarizes the key advantages and disadvantages of the translation tools that the students of the present study perceived.

**Table 4:** Advantages and disadvantages of MT online tools

Online MT tools used	Advantages	Disadvantages
Google Translate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide quick translation.</li> <li>- Save time and effort.</li> <li>- Suggest formal styles of translating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does not have a system to correct translation errors.</li> <li>- Cannot recognize abbreviations.</li> <li>- Does not have a system that suggests or correct for translation errors.</li> </ul>
Google Lens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help grasp main ideas of a SL text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fail to understand abbreviations and acronyms.</li> </ul>
ChatGPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide fast translation.</li> <li>- Provide fluent and coherent translation.</li> <li>- Be economical.</li> <li>- Save money for hiring translators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fail to understand abbreviations in SL texts.</li> <li>- Chat GPT's knowledge is bounded by the training data it received and may not have access to the latest information.</li> <li>- It may lack complete or up-to-date knowledge, especially regarding evolving translation practices.</li> </ul>
Cambridge Translate Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fast, accurate translation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Translators encounter word limits.</li> </ul>

#### 4.3 Answer to RQ#3: How can student-translators solve their translation problems?

Each individual student performed the task assignment using online translation tools they knew, or they have used before. They were recommended to utilize any online tools that were available to them at the time of performing the assigned task. Based on the translation theory learned, the target student-translators would apply what they have learned to resolve the issues they faced. Content analysis of 39 papers shows that most students have faced issues in translating (1) technical terms, (2) MT word-for-word translation, and (3) culture-related issues.

**Table 5:** Most common translation issues faced by the target student-translators

No	Issues	Percentage
1	Technical terms	52%
2	Word-for-word translation by MT tools	14%
3	Culture-related issues	12%

Table 5 above shows that the proper use of technical terms (52%) in the field of tourism industry is the most challenging issue the target students had. From students' translation products, issues of technical terms faced while translating the text were mostly handled by using MT tools. Corpus-based data from MT tools which the students used have provided the target students with appropriate suggestions of vocabulary used in this special field of profession. In case of doubts, *"ESP dictionaries in the tourism industry were referred to"* (# 11). Most students used Google Translate before cross-checking their assigned translation text as online translation tools or translation software *"allow users to quickly and easily translate words and phrases in a foreign language"* (Oxford Open Learning). However, MT tools could produce word-for-word translations that were not correct in TL; the target students then double-

checked and corrected errors using print ESP dictionaries in tourism, or they sought the experts' help as a human translation intervention.

In order to solve translation issues faced, the participants of this research study have used different strategies (Sun, 2020). Table 5 illustrates students' mostly-used types of translation strategies to resolve translation problems they have encountered.

(a) SL: Vé cáp treo Hòn Thơm

TL: Hon Thom cable car ticket (#7)

(b) SL: Đi ra Hòn Mây Rút: Check in và quay Flycam

TL: Visit May Rut Island: Check in and drone shots (#10)

(c) SL: Hòn Dăm Ngang: Bơi ngắm san hô miễn phí

TL: Go to May Rut Island: Check in and fly Flycam (#11)

(d) SL: Chụp SUP

TL: SUP photography. (Wrong translation)

**Table 6:** Most common types of translation used by the target students to correct translation errors made by MT tools

No	Translation types	Percentage
1	Literary translation	52%
2	Substitution	28%
3	Modulation	20%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

Table 6 illustrates that literal translation is the most commonly used strategy by the respondents, while substitution and modulation are the second and third translation strategies used by this group. As there is no language which has exact meaning or similar structures (Nida, 1975; Newmark, 1988; Al-Badrany, 2023), students had to make use of literal translation techniques to convey phrase meanings from an SL text to a TL text as indicated in (a), (b) and (c) cited above. Substitution is the second strategy used by the target students. Substitution in translation helps handle translation terms raised by cultural differences between an SL text and a TL text, while modulation assists students in replacing phrases or sentences that do not exist or they could not find them out in a TL to convey similar ideas as indicated in (d) (Rahmatillah, 2017). Example (d) had to be translated with human assistance from an expert in the tourism industry to turn out to be "*Stand-up paddle boarding photography*" (#10). Students failed to translate this phrase even then. They used the Google Translate tool as this type of photograph-taking is uncommon in Vietnam. Perhaps while performing this translation, the student-translators have faced certain problems in translation, which surely created certain errors. However, an error analysis in students' translation from these 39 test papers is beyond the scope of this research study, and it will be deeply investigated in another paper in future.

## 5. Conclusion

This article investigated three major issues that translators are often concerned about. Which online translation tools were mostly used by the target university students? What are the pros and cons of each tool? Which translation strategies did the students utilize to solve problems faced? The research study tried to discover how translation technology or technical tools can help them fulfill their translating tasks. The results of this study confirmed that online MT tools do help translators, even student-translators, in performing professional or complex translation work. As discussed above, Google Translate is still the main technical tool that most students of this research study referred to. With the emergence of AI technology, ChatGPT is the second translation tool that the participants of this study also made full use of. Google Lens proves to be useful when the students need to grasp the main ideas of the assigned translation texts before using Google Translate tool, ChatGPT or AI tools. Interestingly, online dictionaries like *Cambridge Dictionary online* can be a great help for short-sentence translation that seems to perform more accurate translation than long sentences pasted on Google Translate. Together with technical tools, the results of this study do recommend technology-based translation or machine translation should be done along with human editing or human translation as Al-Badrany (2023: 158) has found out in his research study, *“human translators are better than machine translators in detecting errors and correcting them in translation.”*

### 5.1 Limitations

This research study only focuses on commonly-used MT tools which students of English education programmes have freely selected and used in their bilingual translation. The study does not investigate and deeply analyse linguistics and cultural issues that the target learners faced due to the research objective and space limitation of the article. These issues will not be the focus of this research. However, these issues will be discussed separately in another article in future.

### 5.2 Recommendations

When limitations of using web-based MT are discovered, future research on using technology for translation should have more research focus on:

- In-depth comparison between MT tools that bring the most avoiding errors in translation to their users.
- Comparison between MT and HT to see which translation method performs better translating work.
- Further investigation on common cultural and linguistic issues faced by translators using MT tools.
- Establishing systems that MT tools can be added-on to automatically correct translation errors that technology fails to perform.

## Acknowledgement

The author of this research paper would like to express sincere thanks to all the students of Group 1 attending the Advanced Translation course (Course code: ENG1472), at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Binh Duong University, Vietnam, for their responses to the research questions in their mid-term test papers which helped produce this article for publication.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

## About the Author

Nguyen Minh Trang is a lecturer at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Binh Duong University. He has been teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) at tertiary level for over 25 years. He has several publications in international journals and a member of *TESOL International*. His research interests include academic listening, discourse analysis, translation and interpretation studies. He can be reached at [nguyenminhtrang@hotmail.com](mailto:nguyenminhtrang@hotmail.com).

## References

- Agato translation (2022). *Features of Translation of Tourist Texts (Brochures, Stands, Guides)*. Retrieved from <https://agatotranslate.ae/features-of-translation-of-tourist-texts-brochures-stands-guides/>
- Al-Badrany, Y. Y. (2023). Unawareness of Common Errors in English and Its Impact on Human vs. Machine Translation into Arabic. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 145-160. <https://tpls.academypublication.com/index.php/tpls/article/view/5326/4302>.
- Brooks, R. (2020). *A Brief History of Machine Translation Technology*. Retrieved from <https://www.k-international.com/blog/history-machine-translation/#:~:text=Machine%20Translation%20is%20Born&text=In%201954%2C%20IBM%20demonstrated%20at,was%20delighted%20by%20the%20idea>.
- Bühler, K. (1990). *Theory of Language: The Representational Function of Language*. Translated by D. F. Goodwin. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Claramonte, V. & África, M. (2022). *Translation and Contemporary Art: Transdisciplinary Encounters*. New York: Routledge.
- Council of the European Union (2021). *Brief for translating manuals, brochures and user guides*. Retrieved from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/trad/etu/pdf/Brief%20for%20translating%20user%20guides,%20manuals%20and%20brochures\\_v2%2010May21.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/trad/etu/pdf/Brief%20for%20translating%20user%20guides,%20manuals%20and%20brochures_v2%2010May21.pdf)
- Cresswell, J. W. (2014). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson.
- Cresswell, J. W. & Cresswell, J. D. (2020). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). SAGE.

- Dann, G. (2001). *The Language of Tourism: a Sociolinguistic Perspective*. 2nd ed. Wallingford, UK: CAB International cop.
- Dastjerdi, H. V. & Abdolmaleki, S. D. (2012). *A Study of Translation Problems of Tourism Industry Guidebooks: An Error Analysis Perspective*. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/75880871/A\\_Study\\_of\\_Translation\\_Problems\\_of\\_Tourism\\_Industry\\_Guidebooks\\_An\\_Error\\_Analysis\\_Perspective](https://www.academia.edu/75880871/A_Study_of_Translation_Problems_of_Tourism_Industry_Guidebooks_An_Error_Analysis_Perspective)
- Hogg, G., Min-Hsiu Liao, M., & O'Gorman, K. (2014). Reading between the lines: Multidimensional translation in tourism Consumption. *Tourism Management*, 42, 157-164.
- Holloway, C. (2004). *Marketing for tourism*. 4th ed. Prentice Hall.
- Kang, N. & Q. Yu. (2011). *Corpus-based Stylistic Analysis of Tourism English*. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. Vol 2, Issue 1, pp.129-136. <http://www.ojs.academypublisher.com/index.php/jltr/article/view/0201129136>.
- Miremadi, S. A. (1991). *Theories of translation and interpretation*. SAMT.
- Nida, E. A. (1975). *Semantic structure and translating*. SAGE.
- Oxford Open Learning. *Translation Apps: Pros and Cons* (online). <https://www.ool.co.uk/blog/translation-apps-pros-and-cons/#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20main%20advantages,people%20who%20speak%20different%20languages>.
- Rahmatillah, K. (2017). *Modulation in translation process*. *Ethical Lingua*. Vol 4. No.1. <https://ethicallingua.org/25409190/article/view/54>
- Siregar, R., Safriandi, F., Kalsum, E. U., & Lubis, S. (2021). *Students experience of translation tool use in language learning*. <https://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-1021.php?rp=P11811670>
- Sun, S. (2020). Strategies of translation. *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Edited by Carol A. Chapelle. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316093121\\_Strategies\\_of\\_Translation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316093121_Strategies_of_Translation)
- Tsaknaki, A. *Online translation tools and their use in the learning process*. [Online]. [https://www.academia.edu/22008397/Online\\_translation\\_tools\\_and\\_their\\_use\\_in\\_the\\_learning\\_process](https://www.academia.edu/22008397/Online_translation_tools_and_their_use_in_the_learning_process)
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2004). *Ten reasons why linguists should pay attention to visual communication*. In P. LeVine, & R. Scollon (eds), *Discourse and Technology: Multimodal Discourse Analysis*. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 7-19.
- Zahiri, T., Sadeghi, B., & Maleki, A. (2015). Strategies and Errors in Translating Tourism Brochures: the case of EFL Learners. *Science Journal (CSJ)*, Vol. 36, No. 3. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/714056>
- Weightman, B. (1987). Third World tour landscapes. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 14, 227-239.



Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). and European Journal of Multilingualism and Translation Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).