Machine Translation versus Student Translation: A Study of Some Lexical and Syntactic Problems In Economic Texts

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Abstract

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This study aims at investigating Machine and Student Translation (MT and ST) and the lexical and syntactic problems committed in some chosen economic texts. It will compare and contrast the two kinds of translation and shed some light on their strengths and/or weaknesses.

The study will show which of the two kinds of translation can or cannot produce a reliable and good quality translation as the professional translation does. We will find that both techniques have some problems and defects — whether lexical or syntactic. MT can be used as an aid for translators and common people, but cannot stand alone without Student intervention. It needs pre- and post-editing. The lexical errors of both translations appear in word choice, no translation, omission, addition, ambiguity, redundancy, and foreign terminology. The syntactic errors appear in word order, articles, pronouns, number, gender, inflection, and case marking. Other syntactic errors include subject-verb agreement, incomplete sentences (fragments), and wrong syntactic categories.
Moreover, MT cannot be credited to be as faithful to the text as ST. MT distorts the message and cannot understand and apply Student languages' rules when dealing with various pieces of information. Machines do not have the Students' ability of thinking, understanding, feeling, and linking pieces of information and parts of speech together. Consequently, machines cannot produce a natural language and a reasonable message. Only the Student's mind can understand Human languages and deal with them.

This study, finally, attempts to draw translators' attention to search for solutions and improvements for MT programs and problems.

Abbreviations

MT: Machine Translation

HT: Human Translation

ST: Student Translation

NLP: Natural Language processing

LP: Language Processing

SL: Source Language

TL: Target Language