

The use of web-based translation software in translating religious terms

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Abstract

Purpose – The integration of the Internet in translation creates several opportunities for translators. This study aims at examining the impact of using web-based translation (WBT) on translating religious texts.

Design/methodology/approach – The study followed a quasi-experimental study design. Sixty students enrolled in English Department, University of Bisha, participated in this study. The participants were divided randomly into three groups (i.e. words group, sentences group and passages group). The data was collected through a translation test and a questionnaire.

Findings – The results indicated that WBT is more beneficial in translating words than translating sentences or passages. In addition, WBT is more beneficial when words are translated from English into Arabic as well as from Arabic into English. The results from the questionnaire revealed positive attitudes toward using WBT in the process of translation.

Originality/value – This use of technology in translation has been examined in many studies (e.g. Bundgaard *et al.*, 2016). WBT can be used to translate any field of knowledge. One of these fields is religious translation. According to O'Connor (2021), the study of religious translation has expanded greatly in recent years from its strong textual tradition and a constant focus on equivalence and translatability. However, very little has been done to examine the impact of WBT on translating religious texts. Therefore, this study aims at exploring the impact of WBT on translating religious texts with special reference to Islamic texts.

Keywords Web-based translation, Religious texts, Translation, Decontextualized translation, Contextualized translation, Machine translation

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Communication is an essential aspect of life. However, the differences between languages may impede the communication between people of different languages. Thus, translation is necessary to facilitate communication between people of different languages. Translation is defined as “the general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form; whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have such standardization” (Brislin, 1976, p. 1). According to Newmark (1988), translation is a process of replacing one written statement in a Source Language (SL) by the same message in the Target Language (TL).

Translation can be improved by using technology. Technology is used in translation to offer several opportunities. Sazdovska-Pigulovska (2018) points out that translation technologies change the nature of the translation profession. It provides the profession of technology with highly sophisticated tools that translators need to be qualified to get a better job. In addition, translation becomes faster when Internet is used. Also, the Internet increases productivity and improvement in the quality of translation.



There are two ways to use technology in translation: machine translation (MT) and computer-assisted translation (CAT). MT is defined as “a sub-field of computational linguistics or natural language processing that investigates the use of software to translate text or speech from one natural language to another” (Quin and Xiaojun, 2015, p. 105). In this sense, Web-based translation (WBT) can be considered as one type of MT. The second one is the CAT which denotes any type of computerized tools that translators use to help them conduct their jobs (Bowker, 2002). WBT can be used to translate religious texts. According to O’Connor (2021), the study of religious translation has expanded greatly in recent years from its strong textual tradition and a constant focus on equivalence and translatability. Most of the previous studies were conducted in using traditional instruments for data collection. As far as the author knows, few studies were done to examine the impact of WBT on translating religious texts (e.g. Soomro *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, this study aims at exploring the impact of WBT on translating religious texts with special reference to Islamic texts.

Review of literature

Translation and religions

Each language has certain terms that are unique to that language or to the culture related to that language. These terms are called culture-bound or culture-specific terms. According to Newmark (1988, p. 94), culture-bound terms are particularly “tied to the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression.” Schwarz (2003, p. 14) also defined culture-bound terms as “concepts in any language that are unique to that language or to the culture associated with that language and create a cultural gap between speakers of different languages.” These culture-bound concepts create translation problems. One of the major areas of culture-bound concepts is religious terms.

Religious terms are different from one language to another. This difference may cause several misunderstandings. The main challenge lies in overcoming misunderstandings that may occur because of different terminology in each religion. Overcoming these misunderstandings is necessary especially in countries where many languages exist. This is done under the topics of investigating the relationship between multilingualism and translation. This area has been the “topic of some research within translation studies in the Western academy though it still requires more in-depth study not only in Western contexts but also in other regions of the world, such as South Asia” (Israel, 2021, p. 125).

Religious translation is one of the most challenging types of translation because it deals with texts that have special meanings. There is a possibility of losing the meaning of the source text or part of it. In addition, some translators may misunderstand the meaning of the text in the source language because it is not their native language. Religious expressions pose challenges to translators because “religion is an important institutional network that binds people to one another” (Lustig and Joline, 2003, p. 16). Thus, the task of translating religious texts is not an easy one. It involves incorporating a range of elements to achieve equivalence and convey the exact meaning. On the other hand, religious texts may add fascinating examples of new symbolic discourse that shapes reality and identity under specific historical circumstances (López-Alcalá, 2021). The differences in religions create different terms in different languages.

Islam is one of the major religions of the world. The followers of Islam are diverse in their languages. The Islamic texts have been originally written in Arabic. Arabic belongs to Semitic language family, whereas English belongs to Germanic. Thus, many differences emerge between these two languages. In addition, Arabic culture is different from Western culture. This adds another burden for translators. Translators face several problems when they try to render Islamic texts from Arabic into English and vice versa. To be a successful

translator of Islamic terms, a translator needs to be competent in Arabic as well as in English. They need to be aware of the connotative as well as the denotative meaning of the Islamic terms in each context. They need to be well qualified in religious knowledge to adequately understand the source texts and accurately translate them for people of different languages and different religions.

Problems of translating religious terms

Many problems occur when someone tends to translate Islamic texts from Arabic into English or vice versa. The first problem is that some words in Islamic terminology do not have identical equivalent in English language. Instead, they have partial equivalents. For example, the word "زكاة" [*zakaat*] in Islam does not mean "charity", because "charity" in Islamic terminology means a voluntary charity, while *zakaat* in Islam means "compulsory charity". Second, some Islamic terms do not exist in English at all. For example, the term "الاعتكاف" [*ali'tikaf*] does not have a direct equivalent in English. The non-existence of equivalents in English creates difficulty for translators to translate these terms into English. Third, the same term has different meanings in SL and TL which may cause another problem. In other words, the term in English may indicate illegal meaning, but in its equivalent in Arabic indicates legal meaning. For example, the term "تعدد الزوجات" [*ta'adud al-zawajaf*] is translated wrongly in English into "polygamy" or "bigamy". The concept of "polygamy" is prohibited in some societies. But in Islam, it is not prohibited to marry more than one wife up to four. Fourth, in Islamic terminology, there are terms that need to be translated into English in more than one word when they are translated into English. For example, the word "الطواف" [*al-tawaf*] can be translated in English as "circumambulation" but as Islamic term, it has a special meaning as a worship. To translate this term, the translator needs to use "semantic voids". According to Zohre (2013), this strategy includes those words that represent concepts that cannot be found in other special communities. The close equivalents may be found, although the exact equivalent cannot. Therefore, the best translation for the word [*tawaf*] is circumambulation around the Kaaba. Also, religious translation is so sensitive. It requires a translator to be more accurate than any other types of translation (Bahameed, 2014). Therefore, translator should be more aware to transfer the emotive expression meaning from the source language to the target language.

Regarding the Islamic terms, Elwa (2014) categorized them into three types: unfamiliar Islamic terms that are only used in Islamic contexts; Islamic terms that are only used in non-Islamic contexts; and familiar Islamic terms that are also used in non-Islamic contexts. Another classification was proposed by Ghazala (1995). He classified the Islamic religious items into three categories: new items that were not available in Arabic language before the advent of Islam; familiar Arabic item that Islam gave it new implications; and items that are known in the Arabic language.

Web-based translation

The emergence of the Internet has shifted the translation industry to a new era. Like many other inventions, translators have adapted this new technology in their profession. According to Garcia (2015, p. 68), "WBT as well as mobile phone applications created with the specific purpose of facilitating the speed and consistency of human translators, thus reducing the overall costs of translation projects while maintaining the earnings of the contracted translators and an acceptable level of quality". One of the most frequent and user-friendly technological environments used in translation is the Internet. Internet facilitates the job of translators in several ways. For example, they can make regular contacts with each other and receive texts electronically across national and cultural borders. The use of these websites saves time and increases the productivity of translators.

WBT created several opportunities for the translators. The main advantages of WBT are speed, flexibility and user-friendly interface. They speed up the rate of translation. WBT is also used to increase productivity and improvement in the quality of translation. Some studies (e.g. Bundgaard *et al.*, 2016; Chung and Ahn, 2021; Javadi and Khezrab, 2020; Odacioglu and Kokturk, 2015) were conducted to examine the impact of WBT on translation process. Odacioglu and Kokturk (2015) explored the effects of technological developments on translation teaching in the twenty-first century. They found that technology facilitated the profession of translation. Javadi and Khezrab (2020) conducted a study on the effect of WBT on legal translation training. They concluded that using WBT was useful to assist legal translation instruction. Another study was conducted by Chung and Ahn (2021) to examine how learners' use of Google Translate to affect syntactic complexity, accuracy, lexical complexity and fluency in L2 writing. The results indicated major improvements in accuracy but unclear benefits in syntactic and lexical complexity.

Google Translate is considered by some scholars as the best website used for translation because it is a multi-lingual online computer interpretation (MT) system (Kane, 2021). On the other hand, some scholars hesitate of using Google Translate because it has many limitations. They examined the benefit of Google Translate, as a MT, in comparison to CAT tools. For example, Xu and Li (2021) compared Google Translator, along with some other MT software and some CAT tools to analyze the different features and advantages between MT and CAT tools. They also attempted to compare the error rate and match rate of the two types in English translation. The results revealed that the total number of errors in CAT tools was less than that of MT software. Google Translate was reported to be the software with the most translation errors, and the number of errors reached 78.

Contextualized vs decontextualized translation

Translation studies can be conducted in two contexts: contextualized and decontextualized translation. Decontextualized translation is defined in this study as translating words without information concerning how they are used in contexts. In this sense, the word represents a wide range of meanings. In the current study, contextualized translation is defined as translating words with surrounding words that are used as a context. According to Hatim (2009, p. 37), "contexts tend to shape and are in turn shaped by texts".

When context is used, the word represents a very limited number of meanings. Some studies were conducted to compare the output of translation in both conditions (context or out of context). For example, Prior *et al.* (2011) compared translations of single words with contextualized translation choices of the same items. They found that translating decontextualized translation possibilities partially reflect the translator' life experience regarding the conditional distributions of alternative translations. Also, Shehab *et al.* (2014) compared the specific choices made in the contextualized situation with those made in the decontextualized situation. They aimed to explore whether word frequency influenced on translation choice. The results revealed that when certain contexts were used of different terms in two different cultures, it was expected to find their equivalents in both languages, despite the peculiarities of each language. In this case, the translator should translate with regards to the context of these terms.

The above-mentioned studies examined the difference between contextualized and decontextualized translation based on human translators' choice. Human translators can think and select the exact translation. WBT may have different results if words are used in isolation (decontextualized) than in contexts (contextualized). This is due to the inability of WBT to anticipate the exact translation. As far as the author knows, no single study has examined the difference in translation that may arise when WBT is used for decontextualized in comparison to contextualized translation.

Using Internet in translating religious terms

Internet facilitates translation by creating high-quality translation. However, the implementation of Internet in religious translation poses some problems. Some religious terms are not covered on the Internet because they have special meanings. This can be attributed to the fact that most of the existing websites rely mainly on general-purpose bilingual dictionaries, which usually lack translations of special religious terms. Some studies were conducted to find out the impact of WBT on religious texts. For example, [Soomro et al. \(2013\)](#) examined the use of Google Translate in translation of religious text from English to Urdu and Arabic to Urdu. They found that using Google Translate in translating normal words from English to Urdu generated incorrect translations. Also, religious text translation from Arabic to Urdu also generated unacceptable translation.

Translators' perception of using WBT

The use of WBT can be affected by several factors. One of these factors is the attitude of the translators toward using WBT in their profession. Positive attitude can lead to acceptance of using WBT in the process of translation. On the contrary, negative attitude may hinder translators from using WBT in their profession. Several studies were conducted to explore translators' attitudes toward WBT (e.g. [Al-Marroof et al., 2020](#); [Alotaibi, 2014](#); [Cetiner, 2018](#); [Kassem, 2021](#); [Yang and Wang, 2019](#)). [Alotaibi \(2014\)](#) found that the increased knowledge of CAT tools leads to positive attitudes toward CAT tools. [Cetiner \(2018\)](#) examined the development of attitudes before and after training of using technology in translation. The findings showed that the participants developed a positive attitude after training in using CAT tools. [Al-Marroof et al. \(2020\)](#) aimed to explore Google Translate acceptance by Arab translators. They found that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and motivation had a significant impact on behavior intention to use Google Translate. Similar results were obtained by [Yang and Wang \(2019\)](#) about MT. [Mahdy et al. \(2020\)](#) examined the attitudes of professional translators and translation students toward CAT tools in Yemen. They found that Yemeni translators and translation students have a positive attitude toward CAT tools and are enthusiastic to implement CAT tools. [Abu Dayyeh \(2020\)](#) also found that the participants highly recommended using CAT tools in translation. Similarly, [Kassem \(2021\)](#) found that significant positive attitudes toward using CAT tools. In sum, all these studies reported positive attitudes among translators toward using technology in translation.

The aim of this study is to find out the impact of using WBT on translating Islamic terms. It also seeks to explore the perception of the translators toward the use of Internet in translating religious texts. Besides, the current study also attempts to find out the most frequent problems they face when they use Internet in translating religious texts. The study will answer the following questions:

- (1) What is the impact of using WBT on the translation of words, sentences and paragraphs from English into Arabic and vice versa?
- (2) How do the participants perceive the implementation of WBT websites in translating religious texts?

Methods*Participants*

A sample of 60 participants was randomly selected from the Department of English, University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia. All the participants were native speakers of Arabic. Their age ranged between 19 and 24 years old. They were enrolled in Translation three course, level eight (4th year) at the English Department. The area of this course was religious translation from Arabic into English and vice versa. They participated in the study voluntarily after their

consent to the request of their instructor. They were informed about the aim of the study and its procedures. They were divided into three groups. The first group were asked to translate ten words from Arabic into English and ten words from English into Arabic. The second group were asked to translate five sentences from Arabic into English and five sentences from English into Arabic. The third group were asked to translate a paragraph from Arabic into English and a paragraph from English into Arabic.

Instruments

The instruments used to collect the data were a translation test and a questionnaire. The translation test was created by the author to examine how participants used Internet to translate religious texts. The test was validated by two experts in translation. All ambiguous items were modified and some items were rewritten correctly. The test was made up of three versions. Each group took one test of these versions. The first one included ten terms to be translated from English into Arabic and ten terms to be translated from Arabic into English. The second one included five sentences to be translated from English into Arabic and five sentences to be translated from Arabic into English. The third test included one paragraph to be translated from English into Arabic, and one paragraph to be translated from Arabic into English.

Procedures

The participants were divided into three groups with 20 participants in each. The first group were instructed to translate words. The second group were instructed to translate sentences. The third group were instructed to translate paragraphs. All of them were told to use Google Translate website to translate the required assignment. Their answers were analyzed to discover if there were any significant differences between the three groups in translation output.

Rubric

Waddington's Rubric was used as a rubric for evaluating the output of the translation in this study. Waddington (2001) stated that different texts should be assessed differently. Therefore, Waddington proposed a model with four assessment methods (i.e. Method A, Method B, Method C and Method D). In this study Method C was used to evaluate the participants' translation output. Method C was designed as a holistic assessment method. In this method, the translation competence was considered as a whole. The examiner should consider the three aspects of the translator's performance. Waddington (2001) designed five levels of performance in this method. Then, he determined two possible scores for each level. In this case, if a translation fully fulfills the requirements of a specific level, it receives a higher score. On the contrary, if a translation is placed between two levels but is closer to the upper level, it receives the lower score (see Table 1).

Data analysis

An ANOVA analysis was performed to compare the participants' scores to find out the difference between the mean scores of the three groups in the test. Another two ANOVA tests were conducted to find out the impact of the Internet on translation based on the target languages. The analyses were performed using SPSS 22.0. To find out the mean differences between the groups, Sheffe's post hoc test was performed. In addition, the effect size was calculated. According to Cohen (1988), effect sizes were small ($\eta^2 = 0.01$), medium ($\eta^2 = 0.06$) and large ($\eta^2 = 0.14$). In addition, a descriptive analysis (i.e. means, standard deviations) was

Table 1.
Scale for holistic
Method C based on
Waddington (2001)

Level	Accuracy of transfer of ST content	Quality of expression in TL	Degree of task completion	Mark
Level 5	Complete transfer of ST; only minor revision needed	Almost it is like a piece originally written in English. Minor errors	Successful	9, 10
Level 4	Almost complete transfer; requires certain amount of revision	It is like a piece originally written in English with many errors	Almost completely successful	7, 8
Level 3	Transfer of the general idea but with several errors; needs substantial revision	Some parts read like a piece originally written in English, but others look like a translation. There are a large number of errors	Adequate	5, 6
Level 2	Transfer weakened by serious mistakes	Almost the entire text looks like a translation; there are frequent errors	Inadequate	3, 4
Level 1	Totally inadequate transfer of ST content	The translation reveals a total lack of acceptable translation	Totally inadequate	1, 2

performed to explore the attitudes of the participants toward using the Internet in translating religious texts.

Results

To find out the effectiveness of using WBT software on translating religious texts, an ANOVA analysis was computed to compare the mean scores of the outputs of the three groups. The first analysis was performed to find out whether there was a significant difference between the three groups. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of the student's scores in the three groups.

The scores of the three groups were compared using an ANOVA test to check if there was a significant difference between the scores of the participants according to three categories (words, sentences and paragraphs). The results indicated that there was a significant difference (the *p*-value is 0.000) proving that using Internet in translating religious texts was more beneficial when words were translated in isolation (mean = 17.55). Also, using Internet in translating religious texts was useful for translating paragraphs (mean = 15.75) more than translating sentences (mean = 13.75). The effect size (η^2) was 0.69 which indicated that the effect was large in favor of the words group.

To further examine the differences between the three groups and how the Internet used to assist translation might affect the participants' achievement in translation based on the target language, an ANOVA test was performed. Table 3 shows the results obtained from the translation test. The mean scores of the three groups were compared to see if there was any impact of Internet on translation based on target language.

The scores of the three groups were analyzed using an ANOVA test to check if there was a significant difference between the scores of the participants in translation from English into Arabic. The results indicated that there was a significant difference (the *p*-value is 0.001) proving that using Internet in translating religious texts was more beneficial when words

Table 2.
Comparison of the
scores between the
three groups

	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	<i>F</i>	Sig	η^2
<i>Words group</i>	20	17.55	1.23438	27.020	0.000	0.698
<i>Sentences group</i>	20	13.75	2.12442			
<i>Paragraphs group</i>	20	15.75	1.40955			

Note(s): Total scores was 20

were translated in isolation from English into Arabic (mean = 8.75). Also, using Internet in translating religious texts from English into Arabic was useful for translating paragraphs (mean = 8.10) more than translating sentences (mean = 7.50).

Further analysis was performed to examine the differences between the three groups and how the Internet used to assist translation might affect the participants' achievement in translation from Arabic into English. Table 4 shows the results obtained from the translation test.

The scores of the three groups were computed using an ANOVA test to check if there was a significant difference between the scores of the participants in translation from Arabic into English. The results indicated that there was a significant difference (the *p*-value is 0.000) proving that using Internet in translating religious texts was more beneficial when words in isolation were translated from Arabic into English (mean = 8.80). Also, using Internet in translating religious texts from Arabic into English was useful for translating paragraph (mean = 8.25) more than translating sentences (mean = 5.65).

To find out the mean difference among the three groups, Sheffe's post hoc test was performed as shown in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, the mean difference between words and sentences was significant (*MD* = 3.80, *Sig* = 0.000) which indicated that using WBT was more effective in the translation of words in isolation than for translation sentences. In addition, the mean difference between words and paragraphs was significant (*MD* = 1.80, *Sig* = 0.004) which indicated that using WBT was more effective in the translation of words in isolation than for the translation of paragraphs. Moreover, the mean difference between paragraphs and sentences was significant (*MD* = 2.00, *Sig* = 0.001) which indicated that using WBT was more effective in the translation of paragraphs than for the translation of sentences.

	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	<i>F</i>	Sig
Words group	20	8.75	0.96655	7.610	0.001
Sentences group	20	8.10	1.37267		
Paragraphs group	20	7.50	0.51299		

Note(s): Total scores was 10

Table 3.
Comparison of the
scores of the
translation from
English into Arabic

	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	<i>F</i>	Sig
Words group	20	8.8000	0.76777	38.649	0.000
Sentences group	20	5.6500	1.46089		
Paragraphs group	20	8.2500	1.29269		

Table 4.
Comparison of the
scores of the
translation from
Arabic into English

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Words	Sentences	3.800*	0.51716	0.000	2.5001	5.0999
	Paragraphs	1.800*	0.51716	0.004	0.5001	3.0999
Sentences	Words	-3.800*	0.51716	0.000	-5.0999	-2.5001
	Paragraphs	-2.000*	0.51716	0.001	-3.2999	-0.7001
Paragraphs	Words	-1.800*	0.51716	0.004	-3.0999	-0.5001
	Sentences	2.000*	0.51716	0.001	0.7001	3.2999

Note(s): *The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5.
Sheffe's post hoc test

In general, using WBT was more effective in the translation of words in isolation, and then it was effective in the translation of paragraphs, and finally in translation sentences.

The questionnaire

Table 6 shows that about 50% of the respondents felt that translation websites could be useful only with languages of the same origin. The respondents were uncertain about whether translation websites could avoid taboo words. Similarly, the respondents were uncertain about their preferences to use websites to translate words only or to translate sentences only. The respondents agreed that translation websites could be used to translate texts from Arabic into English and vice versa. However, the percentage of agreement was higher in the case of using translation websites to translate texts from English into Arabic (60.9%). The respondents felt that translation websites were more suitable for translating English into Arabic and vice versa. Although, 46.3% of the respondents were neutral, some of the respondents (39%) agreed that translation websites hinder translators' creativity.

Perceptions concerning the impact of internet on translating religious texts

To find out the participants' perception of using Internet in religious translation, the questionnaire included 13 statements about using Internet in translating religious texts. The results are shown in Table 7.

About 59% of the respondents agreed that translation websites were not capable enough to deal with religious terms that had partial equivalents in the target language. Most of the respondents agreed that translation websites were not intelligent enough to deal with religious terms that had special meaning. The respondents were uncertain regarding using translation websites for translating religious terms. About 44% of the respondents agreed that it was easy to use the Internet in translating religious texts. However, 34.1% of the respondents were uncertain and about 22% of the respondents did not agree with this statement. About 53% of the respondents felt that they were very interested in using translation websites in translating religious texts. About 58% of the respondents felt that using translation websites in translating religious texts could help them improve translation efficiency. Some of the respondents (39%) felt that using translation websites in translating religious texts could help them improve translation quality. On the other hand, about 27% of the respondents did not agree with this statement. In addition, 34.1% of the respondents were neutral. This means that integrating translation websites in religious translation did not

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1. Translation websites can be useful only with languages of the same origin	12.2	2.4	36.6	41.5	7.3	3.29	1.07
2. Translation websites cannot avoid taboo words	12.2	22	31.7	19.5	14.6	3.02	1.23
3. I prefer to use translation websites to translate words only	0	26.8	22	26.8	24.4	3.48	1.14
4. I prefer to use translation websites to translate sentences only	0	22	26.8	39	12.2	3.41	0.974
5. I use translation websites to translate texts from Arabic into English	7.3	9.8	31.7	36.6	14.6	3.41	1.09
6. I use translation websites to translate texts from English into Arabic	9.8	4.9	24.4	46.3	14.6	3.51	1.12
7. Translation websites are more suitable for translating English into Arabic	2.4	17.1	43.9	34.1	2.4	3.17	0.833
8. Translation websites are more suitable for translating Arabic into English	4.9	24.4	39	26.8	4.9	3.02	0.961
9. Translation websites hinder translators' creativity	0	14.6	46.3	31.7	7.3	3.31	0.819
10. Translators feel confident when using translation websites	7.3	26.8	22	29.3	14.6	3.17	1.20

Table 6. Perceptions concerning the impact of internet on translation general texts

Statement	SD	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	SA	Mean	SD	WBT software in translating religious terms
1. Translation websites are not capable enough to deal with religious terms that have partial equivalents in the target language	4.9	14.6	22	46.3	12.2	3.46	1.05	
2. Translation websites are not intelligent enough to deal with religious terms that have special meaning	9.8	7.3	14.6	51.2	17.1	3.58	1.16	
3. Using translation websites is useless for translating religious terms	2.4	17.1	36.6	24.4	19.5	3.41	1.07	
4. I find it is easy to use the internet in translating religious texts	9.8	12.2	34.1	36.6	7.3	3.19	1.07	
5. I am very interested in using translation websites in translating religious texts	0	17.1	29.3	46.3	7.3	3.43	0.86	
6. Using translation websites in translating religious texts can help me improve translation efficiency	4.9	14.6	9.8	53.7	4.9	3.63	1.08	
7. Using translation websites in translating religious texts can help me improve translation quality	2.4	24.4	34.1	34.1	4.9	3.14	0.93	
8. Using translation websites are useful for my translation practice in translating religious texts	2.4	7.3	39	46.3	4.9	3.43	0.80	
9. Using translation websites in translating religious texts helps me finish translation tasks accurately	12.2	17.1	24.4	34.1	12.2	3.17	1.22	
10. Using translation websites in translating religious texts helps me finish translation tasks smoothly	12.2	14.6	41.5	17.1	14.6	3.07	1.19	
11. Using translation websites in translating religious texts makes my translation ability get higher than most students in my class	17.1	26.8	14.6	31.7	9.8	2.90	1.30	
12. Using translation websites in translating religious texts can develop my translation competence	17.1	7.3	34.1	36.6	4.9	3.04	1.16	
13. Some individual religious terms should be explained by using more than one word of the target language	14.6	14.6	24.4	26.8	19.5	3.21	1.33	

Table 7. Perceptions concerning the impact of internet on translating religious texts

guarantee the translation quality. However, using translation websites could be useful for religious translation practice as stated by about 51% of the respondents. Most of the respondents were uncertain about the benefits of using translation websites in translating religious texts to get higher performance in their classes.

Discussion

This study tries to find out the use of WBT in translating religious texts. The first research question is about the impact of using WBT on the translation of words, sentences and paragraphs from English into Arabic and vice versa. The results reveal a positive impact of using WBT in translating religious texts for both contexts (i.e. decontextualized and contextualized). The results also reveal that WBT is more effective for translating words in isolation.

The results also reveal that the means are higher in translating words in isolation which indicate that using Internet in translating religious texts is more useful when words are translated in isolation. These findings can be attributed to the fact that WBT is still at its primitive phase. These websites can anticipate the meaning of a word in isolation, but when these words are used in context, the exact meaning of these religious words may be lost. These websites are not clever enough to select the accurate translation because many religious words have special meanings. These meanings, in many cases, are not the common meaning of the target words. Websites are not fully equipped with the characteristic of selecting the exact translation of such words. To prove this assumption, Figure 1 is a screenshot from Google Translate for the translation of the word polygamy.

As shown in [Figure 1](#), Google Translate uses the term “polygamy” to translate “تعدد الزوجات” which is acceptable in Islamic law. However, in English it means an illegal practice of having more than one husband or wife at the same time.

These findings are not identical with the previous findings of [Soomro et al. \(2013\)](#). They examined the effect of using Google Translate in translation of religious text from English to Urdu and Arabic to Urdu. They concluded that using Google Translate in translating Islamic words from English to Urdu generated incorrect translations. The current study found that in some cases, Google Translate selected the exact translation of the Islamic word and in some other cases, Google Translate failed to select the exact translation of some words. The difference of the finding between this study and [Soomro et al. \(2013\)](#) can be attributed to the fact that Google Translate has shown great advancement in the recent years. The output made by Google Translate nowadays is more advanced than the output produced when that study was conducted (i.e. 2013).

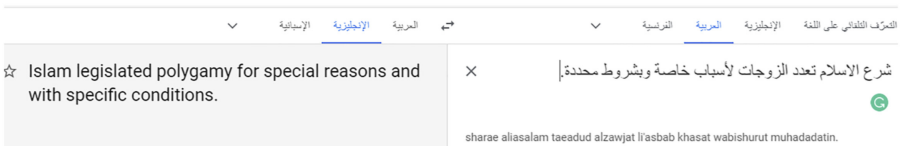
The second research question is about the participants’ perception of the implementation of WBT websites in the translation of religious texts.

The participants have a positive attitude toward using WBT in translation in general. However, they express some concerns. First, they feel that translation websites can be useful only with languages of the same origin. Second, translation websites cannot avoid taboo words. For example, the word “Abo” which is an offensive word in English is translated into Arabic as “أبو” which is not an offensive word in Arabic. Third, translation using websites may hinder translators’ creativity. Regarding the use of WBT in translating religious texts, the participants feel that translation websites are not capable enough to deal with religious terms that have partial equivalents in the target language. They feel that it is interesting to use translation websites in translating religious texts and this might help them improve translation efficiency. The findings of this study are in line with many of the previous studies. For example, [Al-Marroof et al. \(2020\)](#) found that the participants who used Google Translate with perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and motivation had a positive intention to use Google Translate in translation.

Conclusion

The current study aims at examining the use of WBT in translating Islamic texts. It also attempts to explore the attitudes of the translation trainees toward the use of WBT in translating religious texts. The results of the study reveal that using WBT translation in religious translation is more effective in translating words than sentences and paragraph. However, further studies need to be conducted using more sophisticated websites designed for translation. In addition, future research needs to compare the effect of WBT in translating different texts from different religions. The study also finds that WBT does not provide accurate translation for some religious terms. Therefore, the study recommends a collaboration between translators, linguists and software designers to improve the algorithms of Google Translate to enable it to anticipate the accurate terms based on the context. The study also finds that the participants have a positive attitude toward using WBT in translation. However, many factors may affect this perception such as age of translators, major of study, experience in translation, technological knowledge and so on. Further studies can be conducted to find out the correlation among these factors.

Figure 1.
Screenshot from
Google Translate for
the word polygamy



It is essential to note that the study has some limitations. One of these limitations is the number of participants which can affect the generalization of the results. Further studies are needed with a larger sample. Since only one WBT was used in this study (i.e. Google Translate), more websites designed for translation can be used to explore impact of these websites on the translation quality.

Pedagogical implications

In the light of the findings of this study, the author recommends a collaboration between translators, especially Islamic texts translators, and specialists in artificial intelligence to create a reliable database to be used for translating Islamic texts from Arabic into English and vice versa. The author also suggests that special training courses about using WBT in translating Islamic texts can be designed for translators and students who are studying at translation departments.

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Appendix
The test

Q1. Translate the following English words into Arabic:

The Lord of all tdat exists	Guardian
Day of resurrection	Verse
Hypocrites	Individual obligation
Good deeds	Pillars of Islam
Ablution	Major sins

Q2. Translate the following Arabic expressions into English:

إله الناس	رد السلام
بر الوالدين	التوحيد
صدقة السر	يوم النشور
الآخرة	الهجرة
جهنم	إيتاء الزكاة

Q3. Translate the following English sentences into Arabic:

Islam is tde only religion tdat calls mankind to tde straight patd
All people are equal in Islam
Do that which Allah commands you to due to the best of your capacity
I Bear witness that there is no God but Allah
Piety is good manner

Q4. Translate the following Arabic sentences into English:

هاجر المسلمون إلى الحبشة هجرتهم الأولى
جزاك الله خيرا
الدعاة يحملون رسالة الإسلام للناس كافة
أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم
الأخلاق هي أعظم ما يدعو إليه الإسلام

Q5. Translate the following English text into Arabic:

Sincerity and good intention are important in Islam. It is, therefore, essential that every noble action should be based on these two virtues; and heart should be free from all such things that destroy noble deeds. Hypocrite, ostentation, greed for wealth, riches and other worldly things fall in the category of such evils. Since the true condition of heart is known to Allah alone, the true position of one's actions will be known on the Day of Resurrection when one will be required for them by Allah. In this world, one will be treated according to his apparent condition while his insight will be left to Allah.

Q6. Translate the following Arabic text into English:

يعتبر القرآن الكريم الكتاب المقدس للمسلمين، وقد أنزل القرآن الكريم على النبي محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم باللغة العربية الفصحى في مراحل متعددة على مدار ثلاث وعشرين سنة، ويوجد العديد من نسخ القرآن الكريم المتوارثة عبر الأجيال، ويعود تاريخ بعض قطع ومخطوطات القرآن الكريم إلى القرن الثامن أو السابع الهجري، كما أن أقدم نسخة موجودة من النص الكامل له تعود إلى القرن التاسع الهجري، ويعتبر المسلمون ما تنزل من الآيات القرآنية فيه بأنها كلمات الله المقدسة وأن تعليماتها مكملة لما جاءت به الكتب السماوية السابقة مثل كتب العهد القديم والجديد.

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