

A Study on Translating Technical Terms from English to Sinhala via Google Translate by Trainee Translators: With Special Reference to Technical Terms in Environmental Science

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Abstract

The process of translation can be defined as the process of translating words or texts from one language to another. Specialized translation, a category of translation, which is referred to a highly specialized field or domain, contains technical terms. Technical terms must be translated into the target language accurately. This study focuses on the technical terms of environmental science. Trainee translators may utilize Google Translate to translate technical terms for their ease. This study was conducted to analyze the effectiveness of using Google Translate when translating technical terms in environmental science and to identify the methods that can be used for more effective and accurate translations. As the methodology, the qualitative method was utilized. Twenty technical terms in environmental science were translated into Sinhala via google translate and also were given to undergraduates who are reading translation studies degree programme in the University at Kelaniya to translate them into Sinhala. They were asked to mention the method they used to translate the terms. Moreover, they were asked not to use google translate. Google translate and the translation given by the undergraduates were compared with the aid of the “Glossary of Technical Terms (English-Sinhala)” provided by the Department of Official Languages. Undergraduates had utilized different methods – using the application “Termino Hub”, using dictionaries, referring to other similar documents on environmental science, asking suggestions from those who are in the relevant field. Based on the findings, it was decided that translating technical terms via google translate could not be approved as it does not provide the accurate Sinhala term of the technical word. Hence, it is better to conduct human translation. The translator must always try to provide the most accurate translations of technical terms by using effective and approvable digital tools or written sources.

Key words: environmental science, Google Translate, human translation, technical terms, translation

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