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A study of Thai EFL learners' problems with using online tools and dictionaries in English-to-Thai translation

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Article Info

Abstract

Online tools and dictionaries play a critical role in teaching translation. While these tools are normally beneficial to students, they can present several problems. This study aimed to investigate the translation problems that arise as a result of the usage of online tools and dictionaries in online translation classes. The participants of the study comprised 66 third-year English major students enrolled in a course called "General Translation 2" at a university in Thailand. The data collection methods used were a translation task and a student record form. Prior to completing the translation task, the participants received training in how to use dictionaries and online tools. The task required participants to read a news article from the BBC website and then translate it into Thai. After completing the task, participants were asked to list the English words they found interesting or those for which they sought additional information, as well as the online tools they used to complete the task. The types of translation problems were identified and analyzed at the word level. These errors were examined by frequency and percentage, and the types of online tools used by participants were recorded. The study's findings indicate that 15 problematic terms frequently result in misinterpretation. Three major problems arose as a result of participants' excessive reliance on Google Translate, their failure to transliterate (proper noun) into Thai, and their lack of context awareness. In summary, the findings may inform online teaching and learning in translation courses during and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Introduction

Technology is undeniably a significant element of 21st century language learning. Online tools are essential for learning a foreign language. Whether for learning or translating a foreign language, many online translation tools and dictionaries are available. In translation classes, students might use online tools such as online dictionaries, search engines and online translators (OTs) to translate words or phrases. However, as online translation is generated by machines, certain errors may occur. As stated by Stymne (2011), statistical machine translation

relies on an incomplete target language model to produce proper target language texts, which often results in ungrammatical output. Translation tools are unable to completely and correctly translate texts with unique structures, grammars, contexts, and even ambiguity. These errors frequently occur when translation tools are used by new translators to translate sentences.

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted teaching and learning. Many schools and universities are now offering online courses. Both teachers and students must adjust to online learning. As a result, online tools play a far larger role in the online classroom. One of the authors is a lecturer of English in a university's teacher education program and has taught translation classes for numerous years. Many of the students in this program already used translation tools and online dictionaries to complete translation tasks prior to the pandemic. During classes, they have been allowed to use any online tools, search engines, or phone apps on their phone or tablet, but they are required to use only paper dictionaries when completing translation tasks during the classroom's mid-term and final exams.

Following Thailand's COVID-19 outbreak, there has been high demand for online tools, as all classes must be conducted online. Due to the fact that classes are completely online, students can complete the tasks by using a range of such tools. They are allowed to use any of these tools during class activities, as well as in the midterm and final examinations. Online tools and online dictionaries are becoming more popular as technology has developed. However, due to the effects of the pandemic, the use of these online tools for translation is increasing even faster as they are far more practical to use in online classes than dictionaries in book format. Many students may be unaware of the fact that online tools and dictionaries vary in terms of quality and reputation. Although some online tools are of poor quality, a student may choose to use them out of familiarity and/or convenience. Therefore, it is interesting to explore what online tools they use independently in an online context and how effective they are. In translation courses, beginning translator learners tend to translate without reading the whole text first and often render the text word for word (Napu & Hasan, 2019). Although students may be familiar with online tools, their understanding of their functions and how to use them successfully may be limited. Therefore, if students are trained to use online tools for translation, their translation work may produce more accurate outcomes. In much of the literature, little research has addressed how effective online tools are in translation courses. This study investigated the translation problems that arise in online translation classes as a result of the usage of online tools and dictionaries. The results of this study provide guidance for teaching and learning in translation courses.

Literature Review

Learners profit in a variety of ways from the online tools currently available for language study. Students most often used online dictionaries, search engines, and machine translators for language study. The following is a short comprehensive review of previous research on online resources for translation and other language learning skills.

At present, we are living in the age of digital technology and the Internet. Online tools are used in order to overcome the barrier of learning and understanding a second language (e.g., Conroy, 2010; Garcia & Pena, 2011; Gaspari, 2007; Zengin & Karçar, 2011). These technologies provide "anytime, and anywhere education" to students (Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009). Numerous studies have demonstrated that students use online dictionaries to solve problems and check language during translation (Fujii, 2007; Somers et al., 2006; Zengin & Kaçar, 2011;). Second language (L2) learners used online dictionaries to "correct the accuracy of style and organization" when confronted with language difficulties (Zengin & Kaçar, 2011). Tananuraksakul (2015) found that the use of the online Cambridge Dictionary improved learners' English during writing assignments. Similarly, Dwaik (2015) revealed that language learners who use online dictionaries have a higher average reading proficiency than those who use electronic and printed dictionaries.

Computers and smartphones have had a profound effect on the way individuals learn in a variety of circumstances, including language learning (Kukulska-Hulme, 2009). This has had an effect on how students use their dictionaries, and internet-based or online dictionaries have grown in popularity among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students (Dashtestani, 2015). Numerous studies (Alhatmi, 2019; Aslan, 2016; Fallianda, 2020) have considered the growth in the global use of online dictionaries.

The use of online dictionaries (ODs) has also been studied extensively. Jin and Deifell (2013) surveyed 265 foreign language students at the postsecondary level, and 85 percent used ODs. Of the participants, 27.7 percent reported they used ODs daily, 39.7 percent weekly, 3.6 percent monthly, 2.2 percent rarely, and 26.8 percent

"whenever". Larson-Guenette (2013) reported a similar number of German language learners using ODs: 87 percent of respondents used ODs or a thesaurus at least once in the semester, 43 percent used them daily, 26 percent weekly, 13 percent "only when writing," 8 percent rarely, and 2 percent never. Liang and Xu (2018) investigated the usage of an online dictionary by English EFL learners in an L1–L2 translation task with 47 university graduate student participants from a Chinese university. The findings highlighted distinct difficulties, such as a preoccupation with L2 equivalents and a lack of awareness of other lexical information, which may hinder the correct use of dictionary information.

Another helpful tool for language and translation learning is search engines (SEs). According to Fujii's (2007) research, L2 Japanese students were able to acquire and improve their vocabulary and language skills while using search engines to translate their assignments. Eighty-eight percent of participants indicated that they would use search engines for any language learning activity and would continue to use them for future assignments. Zengin and Kaçar (2011) demonstrated that Turkish students had a favorable attitude toward the use of search engines in translation. Their participants chose to use a search engine in conjunction with online dictionaries over paper dictionaries. Moreover, they noted that online dictionaries and search engines aided in improving translation's "style and structure." In addition, the study mentioned that both online dictionaries and search engines were beneficial for determining the fluency of language usage.

Additionally, OTs aid learners in translation. The goal of utilizing online dictionaries and translators in translation is to convert a text from one language to another (Garcia & Pena, 2011; Gaspari, 2007). Consequently, online dictionaries are used at the word level, while OTs are used at the textual level. While some features of OTs have been documented in literature for over two decades, the number of OTs used by students has only recently been investigated. White and Heidrich (2013) interviewed a class of university-level intermediate German students about their usage of OTs. Twelve of the eighteen participants (67.8%) stated that they used OTs to complete classroom activities. Another study, Jolley and Maimone (2015), found that 74.2 percent of 128 Spanish students frequently used OTs.

Recent research indicates a growing preference for online translation tools over online dictionaries and search engines. Munpru and Wuttikrikunlaya (2013) surveyed the online tools used by 65 undergraduate students in English-Thai and Thai-English translation.

The findings revealed that online dictionaries were the most frequently used (61%). Thai students tended to negotiate translating L1 and L2 by translating, checking meaning, and looking up unknown words. In terms of searching for content in L2 learning, search engines were often used (61%) for searching unknown words (74.24%). Over a three-month period, Tight (2017) examined how intermediate Spanish students used online tools to compose brief pieces. Google Translate (GT) was shown to be the most frequently used online resource (114 consultations, 38% of queries). Three online dictionaries accounted for the majority of consultations (186, or 62% of questions), while search engines were not used at all during the study. Wuttikrikunlaya et al. (2018) examined 14 Thai undergraduate students' usage of online resources for L2 writing. While students might use any tool, it was discovered that all the students used an online bilingual dictionary at least once to assist them in writing an English composition assignment. Students primarily used OTs (74.91%), ODs (16.25%), and SEs (0.70%). Boonmoh (2021) explored the use of dictionaries and online tools for reading by Thai EFL learners. Fourteen learners were asked to identify the dictionaries and online tools used in performing a task. All 14 students used GT as a base dictionary, and three students used the Google search engine (www.google.com) to search for unknown words. The data revealed that the learners used bilingual dictionaries more frequently than monolingual ones.

When completing language learning tasks such as reading and writing, it appeared that OTs were the most popular tool for EFL students, whereas search engines were used very occasionally. Bilingual dictionaries were favored by students over monolingual ones. Students tended to use online dictionaries and search engines to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words when completing translation assignments. Before the COVID-19 epidemic, paper dictionaries were occasionally observed in classrooms. However, as classes are now online, students more frequently use online tools during class activities. Therefore, any translation problems would stem from the use of online translation tools. Studies have revealed that students have issues with the accuracy of GT, such as grammatical errors and absence of a proofreading function (Habeeb, 2019), as well as inaccuracy and meaning mismatch (Brahmana et al., 2020).

As demonstrated by the above review of the literature, online dictionaries, search engines, and online translation engines have been studied in language learning contexts, such as reading, writing, and translation. However, these studies were conducted using only specific tools, either

only online dictionaries or only a few online tools. In the present study, participants were allowed to use any online tools in a natural setting. Teachers of translation will benefit from the study's findings, which they can use as teaching guides when incorporating online resources into their courses. As researchers, we obtained a better understanding of how online tools can be used to complete a translation task. The objectives of this study were to investigate what translation problems are associated with the use of online tools, together with the causation, and what types of online tools were used by students.

Methodology

The study's participants consisted of 66 third-year English major students at a Thai university. They were enrolled in the second semester of the 2022 academic year in a course called General Translation 2. They had all completed a course called General Translation 1 during their second year of study. However, the participants had never been trained in the use of online translation tools. All the participants were Thai students between the ages of 20 and 21. They were all non-native English speakers.

Two research instruments were used in this study: a translation task and a student record form. The translation task was part of a BBC news story. The story was divided into ten parts (227 words in 10 sentences). The student record form consisted of a record in which students listed the English words they searched for further information, together with the online tools they used. Before doing the task, the participants were trained in how to use online tools for translation, such as the Longman online Dictionary, the Google Ngram Viewer, and Google image, etc.

The 66 participants in this study were divided in groups of three. In the first week of the course, the participants were trained over three hours in how to use online tools for translation. A three-hour training session on Online Tools and Dictionaries was delivered via Zoom to students. In the training, they learned several useful online tools and techniques for finding the meaning of words. They were asked to do some tasks in order to apply these tools to translation and practice using them. These tasks included comparing and analyzing the features and functions of online English-English dictionaries and online learner's dictionaries, finding the differences between two similar English words such as "house" and "home" using online tools, analyzing the part of speech of a word that appeared in a sentence and looking up its meaning according to its part of speech,

and practicing selecting the correct meaning of a word used in a specific context. In the second week, students were assigned to read a ten-sentence news article, i.e., 'Yuzuru Hanyu: Chinese netizens' outpouring of support for Japan skater' on the BBC website. They were assigned the role of a professional translator and instructed to accurately and precisely translate these ten sentences into Thai. They were then asked to list the English words they found interesting or the English words they looked up for additional information, as well as the online tools they used. The participants were asked to complete the task in three hours.

The translation task data were analyzed by detecting frequent errors in terms of meaning. These errors were analyzed in order to determine their possible causes, taking into account the online tools they used according to the student record form. Although a number of research methods can be utilized to determine translation problems and their causes, one of the most relevant methods is to compare the types of problems found in the students' completed translations to the online tools they used. This is due to the fact that translation errors may be spotted immediately and tracked by examining the online tools the student used. Problems that arose that were not caused by the use of online tools, such as misspelling, were disregarded. The resulting errors were analyzed through the use of frequency counts and percentages. The Thai translations from 22 groups were combined into a spreadsheet, resulting in a total of 22 translation versions. Ten sheets were made, with the first page containing the first sentence and the last sheet containing the tenth sentence. Each page contained the Thai translations for 22 distinct groupings. Each translation was evaluated and graded according to the supplied rubric. This rubric was scored across three categories: accuracy (5 points), word choice (4 points), and spelling (1 point).

Results

From Table 1, it can be seen that 15 words were problematic. Nine words were nouns (5 out of 9 were proper nouns), five words were verbs, and the remaining word was an adverb. Most of them were content words, except the word "locally", which was a function word. In terms of word frequency, students consulted four low-frequency words, two mid-frequency words, and three high-frequency words. Five of these ten problematic words have more than one part of speech. Considering the frequency, the number of occurrences of some words was relatively high because these words appeared in two sentences.

Table 1 Problematic words

No.	Looked up words	Word class	Frequency	Multi part of speech	Occurrences
1	reclaim sentence (1, 5)	verb	low	-	29
2	savaged (sentence 2)	verb	low	adj, v. n.	19
3	rallied (sentence 1)	verb	low	v. n.	17
4	event (sentence 9)	noun	high	-	16
5	applauded (sentence 6)	verb	low	-	15
6	locally (sentence 9)	adverb	mid	-	14
7	fell (sentence 3)	verb	high	v. n.	9
8	27-year-old (sentence 5)	noun	-	-	8
9	routine (sentence 3)	noun	mid	n. adj.	7
10	crowd (sentence 4)	noun	high	v. n.	6
11	Weibo (sentence 5, 10)	noun			31
12	Hanyu (sentence 1, 4)	noun			23
13	Zhu Yi (sentence 3, 9)	noun			22
14	Nathan Chen (sentence 6)	noun			7
15	Eileen Gu (sentence 10)	noun			6
	Total				229

For example, the word "reclaim" occurred in both the first and fifth sentences. The participants mistranslated this term in both sentences 29 times, therefore, even though it appeared twice, it was counted as a single problematic word. This is also true for the 23 occurrences of the word "Hanyu" in sentences 1 and 4, 23 occurrences of the word "Zhu Yi" in sentences 3 and 9, and 31 occurrences of the word "Weibo" in sentences 5 and 10. Hanyu, Zhu Yi, and Weibo are each counted as three words.

As shown in Table 2, there were 19 instances of problematic words in all 10 sentences, 11 of which were related to meaning and the remaining eight were problems related to the use of proper nouns. When considering each sentence's overall score, the sentences numbered 5, 1, and 3 received the lowest marks (7.5, 7.6, and 7.7). This unsurprising given that these sentences had three problematic words. While the total scores for sentences 7 and 8 were quite high, this was due to the absence of a problematic word. The following are some examples of incorrect sentences written by students.

Sentence 1:
Chinese netizens have <u>rallied</u> around Japanese figure skating star <u>Yuzuru Hanyu</u> after the two-time defending Olympic champion fell on his final skate, failing to <u>reclaim</u> his title.

[ชาวเน็ตจีนแห่<u>ประท้วง</u>นักสเก็ตลีลาชาวญี่ปุ่น <u>ยูซูรุ ฮานยู</u> หลังจากได้แชมป์โอลิมปิก 2 สมัย พลาดโอกาสจากการเล่น สเก็ตครั้งสุดท้าย โดยไม่สามารถ<u>ทวงคืน</u>ตำแหน่งได้] (Group 4's translation)

Note: The underlined words indicated problematic problems.

To accurately translate a source language into a target language, translators must have a thorough understanding of the story and its context. Yuzuru Hanyu, a Japanese ice skater, won two medals at the 2014 and 2017 Winter Olympics.

Table 2 Average translation scores and problematic words for translation

Sentence	Problematic words (15 words) (19 occurrences)		Overall scores (10 points)
	Meaning related (10 words) (11 occurrences)	Proper noun (5 words) (8 occurrences)	
1	reclaim, rallied	Hanyu	7.6
2	savaged	-	8.3
3	fell, routine	Zhu Yi	7.7
4	crowd	Hanyu	9
5	reclaim, 27-year-old	Weibo	7.5
6	applauded	Nathan Chen	8.5
7	-	-	9.7
8	-	-	9.6
9	event, locally	Zhu Yi	8
10	-	Weibo, Eileen Gu	8.8

Although he failed to win a gold medal in the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing, Hanyu is still adored by his followers, the majority of whom are Chinese. As can be seen, Group 4 mistranslated the verb "rallied" as "to protest," changing the meaning entirely from 'Chinese netizens came together to show support for Yuzuru Hanyu' to 'Chinese netizens gathered together to protest against Yuzuru Hanyu'. The second problematic term is the skater's given name. While the word "Yuzuru Hanyu" was transliterated incorrectly in Thai as /Yū su ru ḥā nyū/, it was written correctly in English. According to Japanese sound, the right pronunciation should be /Yū su ru ḥā niw/. Finally, given that Yuzuru Hanyu has already won two gold medals in the Olympics, his failure to win a third means that he cannot retain his title of champion. However, in the Thai translation, the word [ทวงคืน] /thwng khūn/ implies having previously lost something and regaining it.

Sentence 3:

US-born <u>Zhu Yi</u> also <u>fell</u> twice in her <u>routine</u> at the Beijing Games.

[ชู ยิ ที่เกิดในสหรัฐฯ <u>พ่ายแพ้ถึง 2 ครั้ง</u>ใน<u>กิจวัตรประจำวัน</u>ของเธอที่ปักกิ่งเกมส์] (Group 12's translation)

For this example, it is vital to note that the American-born ice staker Zhu Yi fell twice during her competition in the Beijing Olympics. As can be seen from Group 12's work, the first problematic word was the skater's name. The word "Zhu Yi" was mistakenly transliterated into Thai as /Sūyi/. According to the Chinese sound system, the correct pronunciation is /Cū xî/. Next, this group mistranslated the verb "fall" as "to defeat", changing the meaning from "Zhu Yi fell two times during the competition" to "Zhu Yi lost twice at the Beijing Games." Finally, the word "routine" was mistranslated as "the things you regularly do", changing the meaning from "Zhu Yi fell two times during her performance at the Beijing Games" to "Zhu Yi lost two times in her daily schedule at the Beijing Games."

Sentence 5:

On Thursday, Chinese social platform <u>Weibo</u> overflowed with messages of support for the <u>27-year-old</u> after his failed attempts to <u>reclaim</u> his title.

[เมื่อวันพฤหัสบดีที่ผ่านมา <u>Weibo</u> แพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลของจีนเต็มไปด้วยข้อความให้กำลังใจสำหรับ <u>27ปี</u>หลังจากที่เขาความพยายามที่จะ<u>ทวงคืน</u>ตำแหน่งของเขา] (Group 14's translation)

In this example, there were numerous messages on Weibo expressing support for the 27-year-old Yuzuru Hanyu after his unsuccessful attempt to win the championship. As can be seen from Group 14's work, the first problematic term was the social platform's name. The word "Weibo" was not written in Thai; instead, students used the English term ("Weibo") in their translation. Later on, "27-year-old" was mistranslated as "27 years", changing the meaning from "support messages for Hanyu who is 27 years old" to "support messages after 27 years of his attempt". Finally, this group mistranslated the verb "reclaim" as "to get back something that you have lost". However, because Yuzuru Hanyu has already won two Olympic gold medals, he cannot maintain being a champion this time. In the Thai version, the term [ทวงคืน] /thwng khūn/ denotes retrieving something that was previously lost.

Table 3 displays the types of translation problems found at a word level. There were 229 occurrences of errors that were classified into four categories. With 128 instances (55.9%), the first major translation problem was that participants selected the incorrect meaning from their online translation tools. This was followed by 78 instances of participants failing to transliterate English proper nouns into Thai (38.9%). It was found that none of the five proper nouns in the news article were transliterated since the participants wrote them in English. The last two types of translation errors were omitting the word to be translated and failing to select a suitable word in the target language, each of which occurred six times (2.6%). In the third

Table 3 Types of translation problems at the word level

Types of translation problems	reclaim	savaged	rallied	event	applauded	locally	fell	27-year-old	routine	crowd	Weibo	Hanyu	Zhu Yi	Nathan	Eileen
1) Choosing wrong meaning	29	19	17	15	15	14	8	7	4						
2) Not transliterating into Thai											31	23	22	7	6
3) Omitting the word to translate				1			1	1	3						
4) Not choosing appropriate word in target language										6					
Total	29	19	17	16	15	14	9	8	7	6	31	23	22	7	6

type, certain sentence words were not translated. There were four problematic words, namely, 'event', 'fell', '27-year-old', and 'routine', so these words were removed from their translation efforts. Finally, although students could correctly translate some words, they were unable to choose a more appropriate word for the context. For instance, the word "crowd" was translated as "ฝูงชน"/ Fūng chn/. The term "ฝูงชน"/ Fūng chn/ may not be appropriate to use with people in Thai because the word "ฝูง" /Fūng/ is typically used to refer to a group of animals.

Table 4 displays the reasons why students made mistakes in the translation exercise. The first major cause of problems, with 106 incidents (47.5%), was students' over reliance on GT. Students who used GT to translate were unaware of the fact that the meanings produced via GT were inaccurate. They simply copied and pasted the results from GT into the translation task without verifying the other meanings in different contexts using other dictionaries. There were nine problematic words that arose from GT. Following are some examples:

Extracted from Sentence 6:
Many applauded the 22-year-old's win
[หลายคนปรบมือให้กับชัยชนะของเขาวัย 22 ปี] (Group 1's translation)

From Group 1's work, the word "applauded" was incorrectly literally translated into Thai as "to clap the hands," so changing the original meaning from "people admired Nathan Chen's victory" to "people clapped their hands for Nathan Chen's victory."

Extracted from Sentence 9:
being picked for the Chinese team event over locally-born skaters.
[ได้รับเลือกให้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรมทีมจีนมากกว่านักสเก็ตหลายๆ คนที่เกิดในท้องถิ่น] (Group 2's translation)

In this instance, Zhu Yi was selected for the Chinese team's competition over other Chinese-born skaters. As seen in Group 2's work, "event" was incorrectly translated as "activity." Actually, the accepted definition of "event" in this case is "sporting event." Secondly, "locally" was the second problematic word. This word was incorrectly translated into Thai as "specifically small places in which you reside." The right interpretation of "locally" in this statement refers to China as a country, so "domestically".

The second cause of the problem, with 89 incidents (39.9%), was of the students' lack of knowledge of how to appropriately write English names in Thai. Following are some examples:

Extracted from Sentence 6:
Reflecting US skater Nathan Chen's victory
[สะท้อนถึงชัยชนะของ Nathan Chen นักสเก็ตชาวอเมริกัน] (Group 15's translation)

As seen in Group 15's work, the skater's name "Nathan Chen" was not written in Thai; rather, participants used the English phrase ("Nathan Chen") in their translations.

Extracted from Sentence 3:
US-born Zhu Yi also fell twice
[ชูยี ที่เกิดในสหรัฐก็ล้มลงถึงสองครั้ง] (Group 8's translation)

The word "Zhu Yi" was mistakenly transliterated into Thai as / Sǔ yî /. The correct pronunciation according to the Chinese sound system is /Cū xî/.

The third cause of problems was that students lacked context awareness, with 20 incidents (8.9%); three problematic words resulted from this issue. Due to the presence of multiple definitions in dictionaries, students were sometimes unable to select the context-appropriate definition since they did not properly study the explanation and example sentence supplied in monolingual dictionaries.

Table 4 Causes of problems in translation

Causes of problems	reclaim	savaged	rallied	event	applauded	locally	fell	27-year-old	routine	crowd	Weibo	Hanyu	Zhu Yi	Nathan	Eileen
1) Over reliance on Google Translate	22	12	11	15	15	14		7	4	6					
2) Lack of knowledge of how to properly write names in Thai											31	23	22	7	6
3) Lacking context awareness	7	7					6								
4) Lacking awareness of part of speech			6				2								
	29	19	17	15	15	14	8	7	4	6	31	23	22	7	6

Extracted from Sentence 2:

Chinese social media users <u>savaged</u> *one of their own athletes.*

[ผู้ใช้โซเชียลมีเดียของจีนโจมตีนักกีฬาคนหนึ่งของพวกเขาเอง] (Group 17's translation)

As seen in Group 17's work, the word "savaged" was incorrectly translated as "attack", altering the meaning from "Chinese social media users criticized an athlete" to "Chinese social media users attacked an athlete." In the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, the term savage" appears as an adjective, a noun, and a verb in chronological order. As a verb, the term "savage" has two different meanings. If used between humans and animals, the definition of "savage" is "attack." The second meaning, however, is the correct one, which is "to severely criticize someone or something." To find the appropriate meaning, participants must scroll down and attentively read the explanation.

The final cause of problems was that the participants were unaware of the part of speech of the words they were looking up; there were eight instances (3.6%) of three such problematic words. In general, when participants look up a word's meaning in a dictionary, they select the first definition without considering the word's part of speech. Participants were unaware that certain words had multiple parts of speech. It was important to determine the correct part of speech of the word, look it up in the dictionary, and then choose the meanings that correspond to the context of the translation.

Extracted from Sentence 1:

Chinese netizens have <u>rallied</u> *around Japanese figure skating star*

[ชาวเน็ตจีนแห่ชุมนุมรอบนักสเก็ตลีลาชาวญี่ปุ่น] (Group 22's translation)

As can be seen from Group 22's work, the part of speech of "rallied" is a verb (to support); however, participants mistranslated "rallied" as "a large public meeting" (noun), completely altering the meaning from "Chinese netizens gathered to show support for a Japanese ice skater" to Chinese netizens gathered around a Japanese ice skater." When searching for "rally" in the Longman online dictionary, the first result that emerged was a noun. The students would have to scroll much further down to get the definition of the verb form of "rally."

When analyzing the types of online tools that the 22 groups of participants used to perform the translation task, it was found that the GT online translation tool was by far the most popular. Twenty-one out of twenty-two groups (95.5%) reported using Google Translate. Eleven groups (50%) indicated that they used the online bilingual dictionary (Longdo) to complete the task. The online translator (Ilovetranslate) was ranked as the third most frequently used online tool by 10 groups (45.5%). Online learners' dictionaries were the fourth and fifth most often used online tools. Nine groups, or 40.9 percent, reported using the online Cambridge Dictionary, whereas just six groups, or 27.3 percent, reported using the Longman online dictionary. It is evident that students rely on OTs and bilingual dictionaries more than monolingual dictionaries. Only two groups (9.1%) reported using a search engine (www.google.com). In addition, two groups (9.1%) accessed www.thairath.co.th, a news website, to obtain additional information.

Discussion

According to the findings, there were 15 problematic terms, 10 of which commonly led to misinterpretations. The data from the record form indicated that these words were on the list of English words that interested the participants or that they looked up to obtain more information. These 10 problematic words are High, Medium, or Low-frequency words according to the Longman Communication 9000 (LC9000) in the sixth edition of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (LDOCE). This was not surprising given that the participants had difficulty understanding unfamiliar words. They consequently consulted dictionaries and online tools in order to comprehend the meanings of these words. The results are consistent with the findings of Koplenig et al. (2014), who discovered that students most frequently looked up high-frequency words. The large proportion of high-frequency words looked up may indicate that students' vocabulary was restricted and that they heavily relied on dictionaries and online tools to understand their meaning (Boonmoh, 2021).

The findings indicated the majority of problematic words were content words, whereas function words were not problematic for participants. However, the number of content words in the news may have been greater than the number of function words. This conclusion is similar to the findings of Liang and Xu (2018), who reported that Chinese language learners tended to look up content words more frequently than function words. Content words are terms that connect to both meaning and comprehension; it is important to acquire content words in order to use a second language effectively. Learners may otherwise struggle to comprehend the meaning of commonly used content words with many meanings.

From the results, the main translation problem was that students could not select the correct meaning from online tools. This finding is consistent with a survey conducted by Laongpol (2018), which revealed that word choices and the mismatching of words and their meanings were the most frequent errors found in translating news headlines. In addition, the findings are similar to those of Wongranu (2017), who reported that semantic errors were one of the most frequent translation errors. The cause might be due to the fact that participants could not comprehend the actual meaning of the source text. Although they consulted dictionaries, they were unable to determine the precise interpretation for each context. Some research (Ho & Bui, 2013; Pham & Tran, 2013) found that students' translation skills were limited because they lacked appropriate knowledge of the source text and struggled to identify target language equivalents.

One of the important problems which occurred was that participants did not transliterate English proper nouns into Thai. This issue likely happened because students may have been faced with unfamiliar proper names in Chinese. Therefore, because the students could not read Chinese, it was rather difficult for them to write Chinese names in Thai. In addition, students occasionally omitted and did not translate certain words from the source text. The removed words were evidently relatively difficult to translate. They may have deleted these challenging terms as a strategy to avoid misinterpretation. The final problem was that students did not choose appropriate words in the target language. Although students were able to understand the words correctly, they were unaware that the chosen word in the target language was not appropriate for the context. Students might not have been careful in proofreading their work.

Following the identification of the translation problems, the errors were analyzed in order to find their possible causes, considering the online tools the students used according to the students' record form.

From the findings, an excessive reliance on GT was one of the leading causes of translation problems associated with online tools. The constant use of GT by L2 learners was due to its speed and convenience. This result was comparable to that of Xu and Wang (2011), who discovered that translation students relied more on electronic resources more due to their convenience than to their accuracy. Despite the fact that students are sometimes prohibited from using OTs when completing language assignments, OTs are the most frequently used online tools utilized by students (Ducar & Schocket, 2018; O'Neill, 2019; White & Heidrich, 2013)

The second cause of translation is students may lack knowledge of how to appropriately write English names in Thai. It was possible that they did not know how to pronounce proper nouns correctly. For this reason, some proper nouns were mistakenly transliterated into Thai. The findings are consistent with those of Laongpol (2018), who discovered that there was an issue with students' ability to transliterate proper nouns. Thus, it is essential for students to search for additional information about specific terms.

For the third cause, the study revealed that students were unaware of context when looking up words in online dictionaries. Typically, they chose the first definition that appeared in the online dictionaries without considering example sentences. This finding is comparable to that of Tono's (1984) experiment, which showed that dictionary users tended to select the first meaning unless there was clear evidence to the contrary. Li (1998) similarly found that dictionary users have a tendency to select the first equivalent in the dictionary entry; consequently, this is a cause of translation inaccuracies.

Finally, this study indicated that the part of speech is a component that can generate translation difficulties for students. Frequently, they selected the first definition in the dictionary entry without verifying the part of speech of each word. The participants' inadequate knowledge of English structure also contributed to their inability to analyze the part of speech of words.

In terms of the students' choice of dictionaries and online tools, the results showed students used online translations and bilingual dictionaries more frequently than monolingual dictionaries, while monolingual dictionaries required more time and were more difficult to navigate. This result was similar to a study conducted by Fallianda (2020), which revealed that pre-intermediate and intermediate students used bilingual dictionaries more frequently than monolingual dictionaries. Although the participants were trained to use a variety of online tools, particularly monolingual dictionaries, they still favored online translations and bilingual dictionaries. GT was the most popular online translation tool among students, according to the research. This result was consistent with that of Lyons (2016), who claimed that GT was the online tool utilized by Thai students the most. This finding agrees with that of Jolley and Maimone (2015), who discovered that Spanish students used OTs most frequently. In contrast, when Munpru and Wuttikrikunlaya (2013) investigated the online tools Thai students used for translation assignments, they found that online dictionaries and search engines were the most

popular. It can be stated that online translation engines have become more effective in recent years. Moreover, it can be inferred that students today are somewhat dependent on the speed and simplicity of online translations when they translate without using other online resources.

Pedagogical Implications

This study's findings suggest the following recommendations for translation teachers and students. When teaching translation, teachers should tell students that online translations are not always correct in order for them to use them more successfully. As stated by O'Neill (2019), teachers should provide students with recommendations for the proper use of the technology by highlighting its merits and drawbacks. In addition, teachers should encourage students to use online tools with caution, advising them not to accept the output of OTs without further consideration or editing (Knowles, 2016). In addition, teachers must encourage students to access additional online translation tools, such as Bing Microsoft Translator, DeepL, and Reverso. As a result, students are able to compare the findings of GT and another tool in order to choose the best translation.

Despite students' preference for bilingual dictionaries while performing translation tasks, teachers must emphasize the importance of considering meanings and English sample sentences in monolingual dictionaries. Students should be encouraged to use at least two online tools to cross-check the target information because the quality of some online tools, such as bilingual dictionaries, is rather low. For instance, some websites allow people to submit information without it being reviewed by an editor (Wuttikrikunlaya et al., 2018)

Moreover, when using monolingual dictionaries, teachers should advise students not to choose the first meaning without first checking the meanings, word usages, and contexts. Because some words have several definitions, students must scroll down to read and carefully select the definitions. Furthermore, teachers should emphasize the significance of words as a part of speech. When looking up the definitions of words, students must be aware of the part of speech of the words because the meaning of some words changes when the part of speech is changed. Teachers should stress that English structure is an important component that can cause translation problems. Students may misread phrases if they are unable to analyze or specify the part of speech of words. As a result, before assigning translation

projects to students, teachers should introduce some exercises to help them practice analyzing English structures.

Next, when translating English into Thai, students tend to write the English word when they encounter a proper noun in English. Teachers should remind students to transliterate proper nouns into Thai. Furthermore, teachers should encourage students to use search engines to verify information or research how to write specific terms from reliable websites. Then, translation work should constantly be reviewed for accuracy and for the appropriateness of the target language.

Finally, teachers should evaluate the content of articles when selecting articles for students to translate. For instance, asking English Education students to translate a text on a medication may be quite challenging and inappropriate, as the text is genre-specific and requires a great deal of background knowledge, and the students may not derive much value from attempting the topic.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined how third-year English majors at a Thai university used online tools to complete an English-Thai translation exercise. It found multiple errors and several causes of error in the use of online tools. However, this study does not attempt to greatly extrapolate its findings to a broader context due to the task's use of a single 227-word news article. If the research had been undertaken with students from other Thai institutions, or with those in other countries, the outcomes could have been different. In addition, students were only required to translate one type of news article in this study. It is therefore possible that not all errors in English to Thai translation were detected. To improve the generalizability, future research involving many institutions should be conducted. Use of several text types, diverse genres, and longer texts would assist with better determining translation problems and their relationship to the types of online tools that students use.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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