

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF ONLINE TRANSLATION OF ARABIC LANGUAGE INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE: IMPLICATIONS ON STUDENT LEARNING PURPOSES

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Introduction

Researchers in the field of natural languages have undertaken a serious effort to support manual translations by inventing machine translations. Hutchins (1986, p: 15) defines Machine Translation (MT) as “ the application of computers in the translation of texts, from one natural language into another” Also Known as automatic translation, MT has also been considered in the last decade as a computational linguistic phenomenon. Apparently, MT is considered as a worthwhile subject for researchers, commercial developers and users (Hovy et al. 2002). As for researchers, they need to apply their theories to find out the differences that might be made by the machines. By doing so, it will be easier for developers to detect the most problematic issues and make the implementations on the system design. Evidently, the motive of commercial developers is to attract customers to buy their products. In turn, the users, who are interested in benefitting from MT, will decide which product meets their requirements. Examples of previous researches and studies include the employment of various approaches to MT, such as studies by Marcu (2001), Richardson et al (2001), Groves (2006) and Tahir et al. (2010). Earlier researches focused on the direct approach such as the word-by-word analysis of the source language. Later on, researchers moved to the rule-based and statistical approaches. Salem (2009) is an example of this research trend. Meanwhile, there were researchers who were interested in the evaluation of MT quality since the users’ demand increased for the use of machines with high levels of translation quality according to the rapid growth of technology and information.