Exploring Online Tools

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Instructional Technologies for TESOL Classrooms
EDUC-X 425.04

April 1, 2026

The purpose of this essay is to discuss the effectiveness of using the Google Translate application in an ESL business course. There are three components to this essay: 1) original English text and translated text in Korean using Google Translate; 2) Native Korean speaker's feedback of the translation; 3) Analysis of the translation, feedback, and usefulness of Google Translate.

1. Translation:

Through this Instructional Technology for TESOL Classroom course, I hope to finally step out of my analogue comfort zone. I have held out as long as I could by making excuses why I don't use recent technology. One such excuse to hide my fear and laziness was saying that I am jinxed when it comes to anything electronic; errors and mishaps only happened to me. However, post COVID, we've all had to accept the inevitable that our daily life is centered around wireless technology. Education and business have become paperless. As a result, my goal is to effectively utilize technological tools to better assist others in learning English in the workplace.

이 TESOL 교실을 위한 교육 기술 강좌를 통해 마침내 아날로그 방식이라는 안락한 영역에서 벗어나고 싶습니다. 그동안 최신 기술을 사용하지 않는 이유에 대해 변명만 늘어놓으며 최대한 버텨왔습니다. 제가 두려움과 게으름을 숨기기 위해 했던 변명 중 하나는 전자 기기와 관련된 일에는 항상 운이 없다는 것이었습니다. 오류나 사고는 오직 저에게만 일어나는 것 같았죠. 하지만 코로나19 이후, 우리는 일상생활이 무선 기술을 중심으로 이루어져야 한다는 불가피한 현실을 받아들여야만 했습니다. 따라서 제 목표는 기술 도구를 효과적으로 활용하여 직장에서 다른 사람들이 영어를 배우는 데 더 나은 도움을 주는 것입니다.

2. Feedback:

I received feedback from Byong Kang, the CEO of Lotte Global Logistics. I've worked closely with Mr. Kang on several occasions. Since he is fluent in both languages and fully Korean and American,I asked his opinion on whether the translation is accurate. Most importantly, I asked him to comment on whether the translation carries the same message as the original English text. According to Mr. Kang, the Google Translate did a good job in translating because the Korean word choice best portrays the English terms. Utilization of correct vocabulary is critical in business transactions so he was impressed with how well Google Translate relayed the message of the original text.

3. Analysis:

I have used Google Translate since its inception in 2006. That is why I know that Google Translate has come a long way in its precision. As an attorney working on international

transactions, I had to frequently read documents, write briefs, and email in different languages, particularly in Korean. In the beginning, Google Translate was not very efficient in translating because the terms were not accurate and the original meaning was skewed. Although there was improvement the last few years, the sentence structures were still awkward. As a result, I would have to revise my original writing to get the message across accurately.

As Mr. Kang mentioned, there is no room for misunderstanding in business. In English, “the” and “a” can make a big difference in a contract. Similarly, in Korean, word choice can alter the outcome of a meeting. Since there are cultural differences and words that can’t be translated, misunderstandings are bound to happen. That is why in business, it is better to avoid references, extreme words, idioms, and metaphors.

For this assignment, however, I used figurative language such as “step out of”, and “held out”, in addition to terms without direct translation such as, “comfort zone”, “jinx”, and “paperless”. I wanted to test how well Google Translate could carry out my intended message about my reluctance and acceptance of technology. As expected, Google Translate outperformed itself in maintaining the integrity of my original text.

I have become dependent on Google Translate as it has proven itself to be reliable and accurate in translating business material. Therefore, I encourage the participants in my seminars to utilize Google Translate to check their understanding of the resources I provide them. That is only after they have read or listened to the material and first provided a summary of the same.

If Google Translate is used from the getgo, it prevents the participants from digesting the material to make sense of it in English. Understanding the material in Korean from the very beginning shuts the door to English comprehension. That is why I ask the participants to give themself the benefit of doubt and trust their instinct for comprehension after they have read or listened to the English material. Thereafter, Google Translate can be utilized to check their understanding and identify what they may have missed.

In business English, terms are very sensitive and an integral part of communication. There are also professional terms specific to each industry. As a result, Google Translate is an effective tool in exploring term options that best fit the business context. Due to recent improvements in sentence structure to accurately interpret the original text, I will continue to utilize Google Translate in my seminars.