

Machine Translation vs. Human Translation: Comparing the effectiveness and limitations of automated translation tools with human translators

Sodiqova Mahliyoxon Sherbo'ta qizi

Tashkent state transport university's student

Abstract .This article explores the comparison between machine translation (MT) and human translation, analyzing their effectiveness and limitations. Machine translation, powered by artificial intelligence, has advanced significantly with tools like Google Translate and DeepL offering near-instant translations. However, these tools often struggle with nuanced texts, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references. Human translators, on the other hand, bring expertise, cultural understanding, and creativity to the translation process, ensuring accuracy and depth. This article examines the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches, highlighting the contexts in which each is most suitable.

Key words: Machine translation, human translation, artificial intelligence, cultural nuances, translation accuracy, automated tools

Аннотация. В статье проводится сравнительный анализ машинного перевода (МП) и перевода, выполненного человеком, с акцентом на их эффективность и ограничения. Машинный перевод, основанный на искусственном интеллекте, значительно продвинулся вперёд с такими инструментами, как Google Translate и DeepL, которые предлагают переводы практически мгновенно. Однако эти инструменты часто сталкиваются с трудностями при работе с текстами, содержащими нюансы, идиоматические выражения и культурные ссылки. Переводчики-люди, напротив, привносят в процесс перевода свой опыт, культурное понимание и творческий подход, обеспечивая точность и глубину. В статье рассматриваются сильные и слабые стороны обоих подходов и подчеркиваются контексты, в которых каждый из них наиболее уместен.

Ключевые слова: *Машинный перевод, перевод человеком, искусственный интеллект, культурные нюансы, точность перевода, автоматизированные инструменты*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqola mashinaviy tarjima (MT) va inson tomonidan amalga oshirilgan tarjimalarni solishtirib, ularning samaradorligi va cheklovlarini o'rganadi. Sun'iy intellekt asosida ishlaydigan mashinaviy tarjima Google Translate va DeepL kabi vositalar bilan sezilarli darajada rivojlandi va deyarli bir zunda tarjima xizmatlarini taklif qilmoqda. Shunga qaramay, bu vositalar murakkab matnlar, idiomatik iboralar va madaniy kontekstlarni tarjima qilishda qiyinchiliklarga duch keladi. Inson tarjimonlari esa o'z malakasi, madaniy tushunchalari va ijodiy yondashuvi bilan tarjimaning aniqligini va chuqurligini ta'minlaydi. Maqolada har ikkala usulning kuchli va zaif tomonlari ko'rib chiqilib, har biri qaysi holatlarda mos kelishi ko'rsatiladi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Mashinaviy tarjima, inson tarjimasi, sun'iy intellekt, madaniy nozikliklar, tarjima aniqligi, avtomatlashtirilgan vositalar*

Introduction

The translation industry has witnessed significant changes with the advent of machine translation (MT) technologies. In recent years, machine translation tools have evolved rapidly, allowing for faster and more accessible translations. However, while these automated systems offer undeniable convenience, they also come with limitations, particularly when compared to human translators. Human translation, rooted in cultural understanding, expertise, and emotional intelligence, continues to play a crucial role in delivering high-quality translations. This article seeks to compare the two approaches, evaluating their effectiveness, limitations, and the roles they play in different translation contexts.

Effectiveness of Machine Translation

Machine translation has come a long way, thanks to advancements in artificial intelligence and neural networks. Tools like Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft Translator can process large volumes of text at lightning speed, translating between hundreds of language pairs. These tools rely on machine

learning algorithms, which have improved accuracy over time by learning from vast datasets of multilingual text.

The primary advantage of machine translation is speed and scalability. For tasks requiring quick translation of large amounts of text, such as user manuals, product descriptions, or real-time communication in foreign languages, MT is highly efficient. Tools like Google Translate have also made foreign language materials accessible to a broader audience, democratizing access to information.

However, machine translation falls short when it comes to context, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references. For example, when translating literary works or legal documents, which demand precision and subtlety, MT often fails to grasp the deeper meaning or nuances. The phrase "break the ice" in English, for example, might be translated literally into another language, missing the idiomatic meaning of initiating conversation.

Strengths of Human Translation

Human translation, unlike its machine counterpart, benefits from context-awareness, creativity, and cultural understanding. A human translator can interpret the tone, style, and intention behind a text, providing a translation that is not only linguistically accurate but also emotionally resonant with the target audience.

Professional translators are adept at handling complex texts such as legal contracts, medical documents, and literary works, where precision and cultural sensitivity are critical. Human translators can detect and adapt metaphors, jokes, or references that may not have an equivalent in the target language. For instance, a reference to a cultural event in one country may require careful adaptation or explanation when translated for a different audience.

One famous example of the effectiveness of human translation is the work of Constance Garnett, who translated Russian literary masterpieces by Dostoevsky and Tolstoy into English. Her translations captured the spirit and depth of these complex works in ways that machine translation would struggle to replicate, ensuring the author's voice remained intact across languages.

Limitations of Machine Translation

Despite its advances, machine translation tools are still prone to errors, especially in contexts where precision and subtlety are required. Cultural differences, humor, and idioms often result in inaccurate or awkward translations. A well-known case of machine translation failure occurred when the phrase "out of sight, out of mind" was translated into Russian as "invisible idiot," showcasing how literal translation can lead to absurd results.

Moreover, machine translation lacks the ability to tailor a text to a specific audience or purpose. For instance, marketing materials may need a tone that is engaging and persuasive, something that automated tools cannot consistently achieve without significant human editing. Thus, machine translation often requires human post-editing to correct mistakes, refine language, and ensure appropriateness for the target audience.

Limitations of Human Translation

While human translators excel in quality and precision, they face limitations in terms of speed and cost. Translating large volumes of text manually is time-consuming and expensive, making machine translation the preferred option for certain tasks. Human translators also have varying levels of expertise, and not all translators specialize in every field, meaning that for technical subjects, finding the right translator may take time.

Additionally, the availability of professional translators for rare language pairs or dialects can be limited, while machine translation tools are often capable of handling a wider range of languages, albeit with varying degrees of accuracy.

Conclusion

Both machine translation and human translation have their respective strengths and weaknesses, and their effectiveness largely depends on the context in which they are used. Machine translation is invaluable for quick, high-volume tasks, offering speed and convenience. However, for more nuanced, creative, or culturally sensitive translations, human translators remain indispensable.

As technology continues to evolve, the future of translation may well involve a combination of both approaches, with machine translation handling

routine tasks and human translators ensuring the quality, creativity, and cultural relevance of the final product.

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