fully automatic translation of high quality accepting any kind of text as input, is an ideal which will not be achieved in the immediate future. Progress towards this ideal is limited by the extent of our knowledge about human languages. In particular, the semantic analysis of language, which is arguably the most important area for Machine Translation, is still at rudimentary stage, even for English. Because of these limitations, many experts in Machine Translation have decided to focus on much more modest aims (ibid: 32).

The present achievements in MT coincide with Butler's hypothesis specifically in the area of the quality of the outcome. However, more research is directed towards translating from one language to many and vice versa with lower ambitious outcomes; *Google Translate* is an example of a service which can translate between 58 languages instantly.

2.4. Machine Translation History

After discussing certain principles and problems facing MT, a brief history is furnished in the coming section. Although MT was a dream in the 17th century, it did not come to light until late 20th century. Hutchins (1994) is one of the renowned researchers who wrote in the history of MT among others such as Tucker and Nirenburg (1984), and As-Safi (2004).

Hutchins (1994) classifies the history into four main periods:

1. Precursors and Pioneers, 1933-1956
2. The decade of high expectations and disillusions 1956-1966
3. The quiet decade 1967-1976
4. MT research in the 1980s

2.4.1. Precursors and Pioneers, 1933-1956

The first MT work was made in solid proposals by George Artsouni and Petr Smirnov-Troyanskii. Their work was simply a storage device on a paper tape