Abstract

In recent years, research as well as software applications have been concentrating on Machine Translation (MT). This is due to many factors, the most important of which is the increasing need to create online communication between different parts of the world and between people speaking different languages. Translation between two languages, which are distant and have different structures, e.g. Arabic and English, poses a challenge for linguists who aim at developing a system which could contribute towards more accurate Machine Translation.

The current thesis conducts an experiment on *Google Translate*, which is considered one of the most popular 'web-based' free tools. An experiment is carried out on fourteen English-authentic articles extracted from six different legal contracts. These articles are fed into the system which in return produces Arabic outputs as translations of the articles.

An assessment is performed to analyze the performance of the tool in handling the legal text on two main levels, the lexical and the syntactic respectively. An error analysis is also furnished on both levels by categorizing the errors under the two levels. Each level includes three subcategories of problems that recur in the assessment. The lexical level breaks into polysemy and homonymy, legal doublets, and legal adverbs. On the other hand, the syntactic level includes problems of morphological parsing, concord and modality.

The overall assessment shows that the system is not feasible in the field of legal translation as such practice is characterized by paramount precision that *Google Translate* fails to achieve. However, the system can usually furnish a gist of the input which can help end users to figure out the subject matter of the source text.