

Babel or Babble: How fair is the use of Google Translate by international students in assessments and learning?

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Outline of session

What is Google Translate and how does it work?

Differing views of role of Google Translate within Higher Education

Initial findings of research into use of Google Translate by international students at NTU

Your views

What is Google Translate and how is it used?

Free online
translation tool

Can translate text of
any length from one
language to another

Accuracy when
translating most
languages into
English: around
6.0/6.5
IELTS (Groves &
Mundt, 2015)

Example of
text
translated
from Chinese
to English
using Google
Translate

NB: Google
owns the
copyright of any
texts that it
translates

~~[At]Near~~ Near the end of the year, the Academic Standards Committee of Fudan University publicly released the first notice, which reported the investigation of three academic violations of the school, and many professors and students were dealt with. We should pay tribute to Fudan University for its ~~self-discipline~~ **self-disclosure** and brave efforts to maintain academic ~~dignity~~ **integrity**

What role, if any, should tools such as Google Translate play in students' studies?

Allowing the use of Google Translate undermines the idea of doing a degree at an English-speaking university

Allowing international students to use tools such as Google Translate means that they can by-pass an essential stage of their learning

Tools such as Google Translate are already 'out there' and being used by students so banning their use is not realistic

Introducing the use of Google Translate within classes legitimises it and makes it difficult to deal with cases where a student submits an assignment that has been translated 'wholesale' using Google Translate.

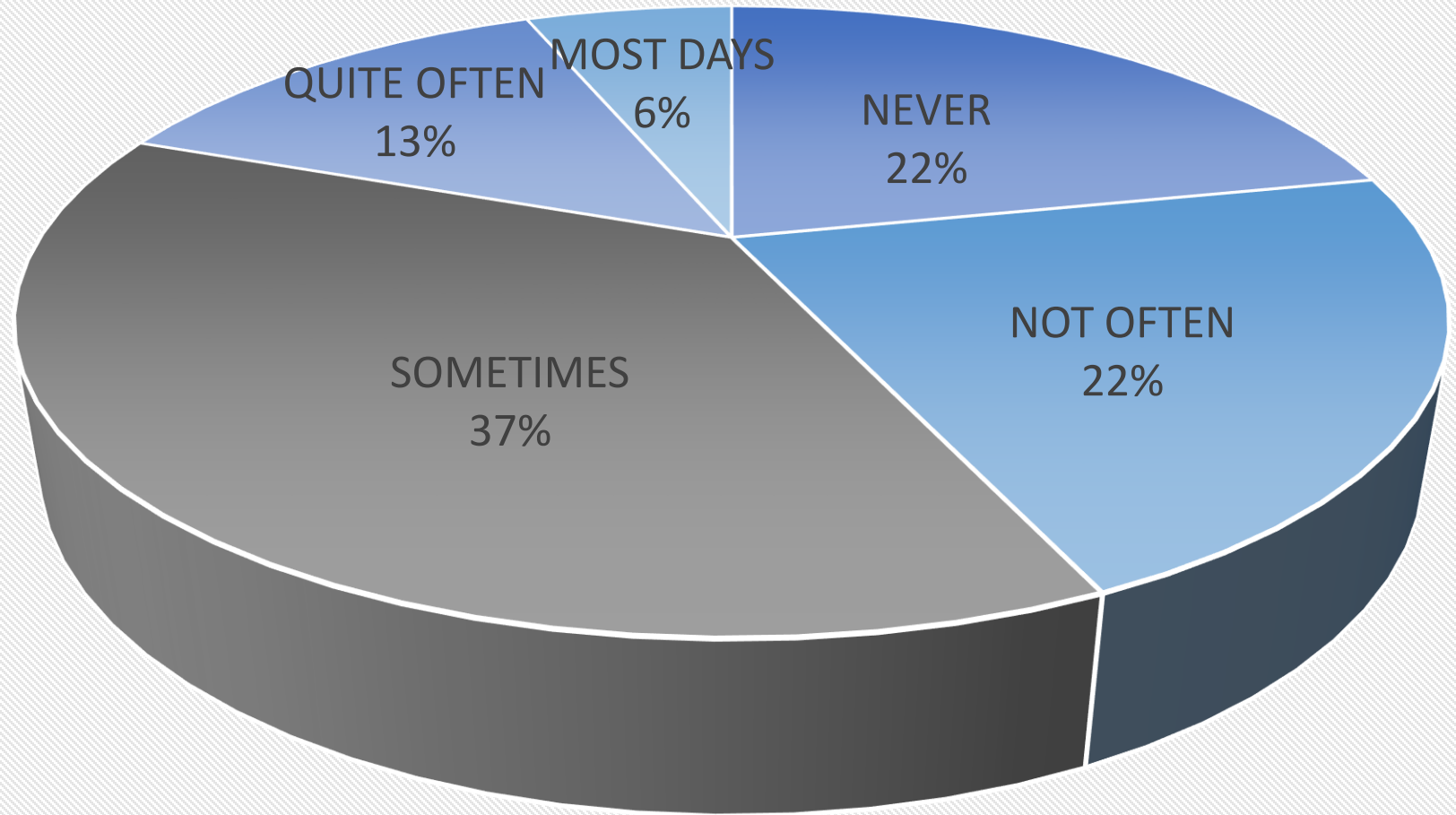
Allowing international students to use Google Translate creates an even playing field for them in comparison to Home students

It's ok for students to use Google Translate for reading texts but not writing assignments?

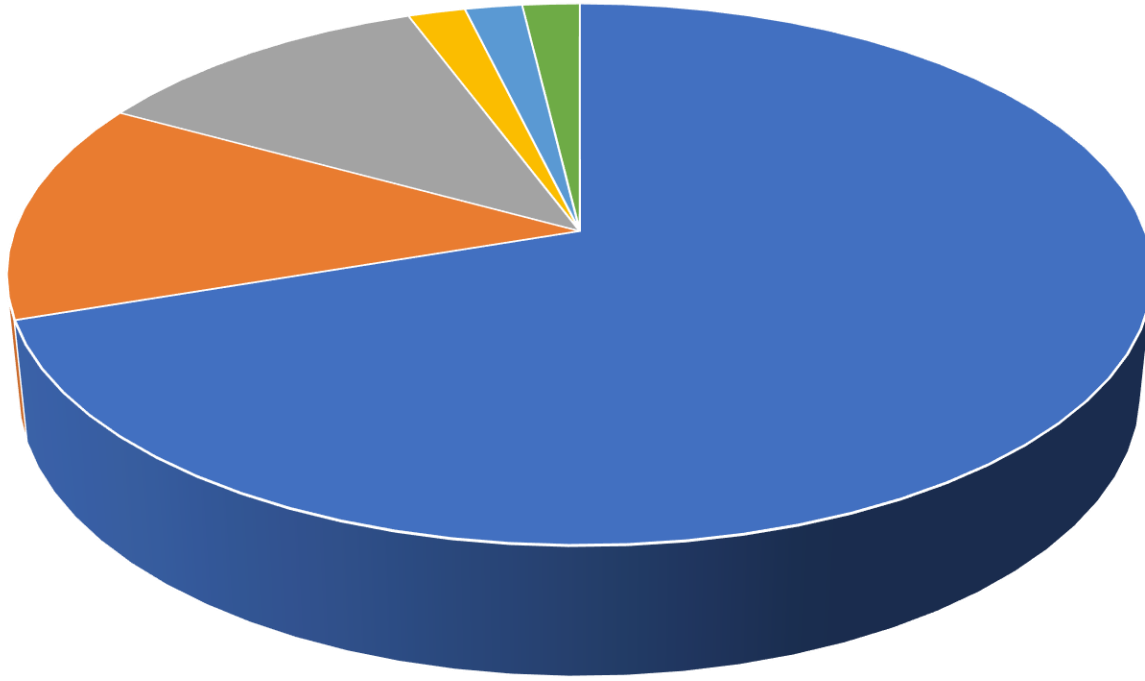
Google Translate is one of the many tools available to students e.g. electronic dictionaries, spell/grammar checkers etc. and should be regarded in the same way (Kim & LaBianca, 2018)

Universities should have a clear policy on the use of tools such as Google Translate (Mundt & Groves, 2016)

Questionnaire
Data (N=84) –
Frequency of
Use

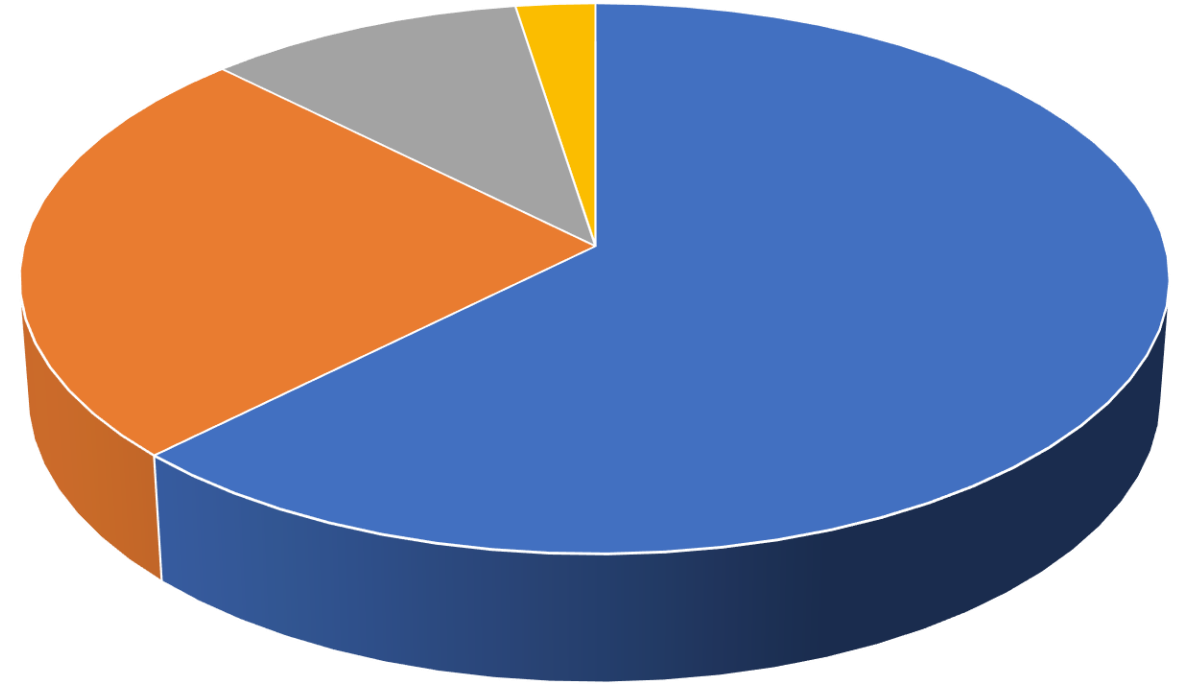


**How students use MT for READING -
63% of RESPONDENTS**



- Translating unknown words
- Translating unknown phrases
- Translating sentences
- Translating paragraphs
- Translating large parts of a text
- Translating whole texts

**How students use MT for WRITING -
48% of RESPONDENTS**



- Translating unknown words
- Translating unknown phrases
- Translating sentences
- Translating paragraphs
- Translating large parts of a text
- Translating whole texts

Questionnaire Data

“International students be allowed to use translation software (e.g. Google Translate) on their subject courses”

Disagree / Strongly Disagree (8%)

- Imperfect software
- MT not a short-cut for learning
- Knowledge of English is key aspect of studies

Agree / Strongly Agree (60%)

- Difference between understanding ideas and expressing them in English
- Alternative to dictionary - useful tool
- Helps with reading load – understanding, processing and evaluating texts at speed
- Helps with learning words and phrases
- Fairness – puts them on same level as home students



Your views

- Look at the views we discussed earlier
- Discuss with the people sitting near you which one(s) you agree or disagree with
- Based on your discussions, what do you think an NTU policy on the use of machine translation software should look like?

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Your views

Go to **Menti.com** and use
the code **78 57 07**.

List of References

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Groves, M & Mundt, K. (2016) A double-edged sword: the merits and the policy implications of Google Translate in higher education. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 6 (4) 387–401.

Kim, E-Y J & LaBianca, A S (2018) Ethics in Academic Writing Help for International Students in Higher Education: Perceptions of Faculty and Students. *Journal of Academic Ethics* 16 39–59.