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TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT – An investigation on the negative impact of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills

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Abstract

This qualitative research which took the form of a case study was conducted to investigate the negative impacts of online language translators on University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine Campus year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills. The genre of this research was a Sociocultural study whereby, it aimed at obtaining their perceptions on how the use of online language translators negatively impacted their Lectura y Composición skills and on the quality of the its output. It also intended to identify any gaps. This study was guided by a review of previous studies and the New Literacies Study.

The participants of this study were year 3 UWI students 'who either majored or minored in Spanish. Data was collected via primary documentary sources in the form of an open-ended questionnaire, secondary documentary sources such as books, journals, and Scholarly articles, and primary oral sources namely semi-structured interviews. The data was analysed using thematic analysis.

The findings of this study showed that using the online language translators was detrimental to participants' Lectura y Composición skills in a number of ways. Due to the shift to online learning, most participants grew significantly reliant on the usage of online language translators because of their easy accessibility. Furthermore, their Composición became excessively literal, with grammatical errors and an artificial tone. Foreign language anxiety and a lack of self-confidence also hampered their Lectura y Composición abilities. Despite the detrimental consequences of online language translators, perceptions on their quality differed.

Keywords: Spanish, online language translators, negative impacts, Lectura y Composición skills, literal, reliance, dependence, coherence, self-efficacy, perceptions, fluency, reading, writing

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List of Acronyms

UWI – The University of the West Indies

OLT – Online Language Translator

FLA – Foreign Language Anxiety

Introduction

Topic

An investigation on the negative impact of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students Lectura y Composición skills.

Rationale

Lectura y Composición skills is the reading and writing component of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Spanish programme. The use of online tools such as translators on students' Lectura y Composición skills has been debatable recently. The use of online language translator (OLT) services, which purport to convert text from one language to another are often unallowed for classwork, owing to ethical and pedagogical considerations, has become a problem in foreign language instruction (O'Neill par. 1). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face learning was replaced by remote learning. This allowed students studying Spanish as a second language to freely use online tools to assist in Lectura y Composición. Although this topic may be one that is widely investigated throughout the world, there is no research relating to Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore, investigating within the geographical scope of Trinidad and Tobago allows for unexplored data to be added to the global discussion of the topic. Furthermore, this study aimed to debate the hypothesis that the use of online tools such as translators had a negative impact on UWI Year 3 Spanish Students Lectura y Composición skills.

Thesis statement

In relation to UWI Year 3 Spanish students, it can be debated that the use of online translators has a negative impact on their Lectura y Composición skills.

Parameters

Chronology

This study was conducted during the timeframe of September 2021 to April 2022 as the target population for attended online classes during this period. This allowed for research to determine whether throughout the academic year if there was a decrease in Lectura y Composición skills. Furthermore, the continuation of online classes allowed for the hypothesis that the use of online tools such as translators has a negative impact on UWI Year 3 Spanish Students Lectura y Composición skills to be tested.

Geography

This study was conducted in Trinidad and Tobago. Furthermore, it focused on the Year 3 Spanish students at the U.W.I, St. Augustine Campus since there was no existing research related to this topic and group of students. Additionally, the researcher of this paper was also a Year 3 Spanish student at the U.W.I, St. Augustine Campus, which allowed for the easy gathering of primary information on the topic.

Themes

This study examined both the negative social and educational impacts of online translators on Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills.

People

The target population of this study was Year 3 Spanish students at the U.W.I, St. Augustine Campus. Narrowing the study to this group of students allowed for credible and real-time information to be collected relating to the St. Augustine Campus.

Objectives

This work was intended to:

1. Examine how the use of online translators negatively impacts U.W.I Year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills.
2. Generate information on the topic related to Trinidad and Tobago
3. Assess whether students' Lectura y Composición skills are further off from the authentic Spanish language after the introduction of online translators
4. Analyse the perceptions of UWI Year 3 Spanish students on the use of online language translators.

Research Questions

1. What do year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceive to be the negative impacts of using Online Translators on their Lectura y Composición skills?
2. What are year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students' perceptions regarding the quality of the output of online translators?

Methodology

Data Collection

This study utilized three types of data collection sources. It used Primary documentary sources in the form of an open-ended questionnaire, Secondary documentary sources such as books, journals, and Scholarly articles, and Primary oral sources namely semi-structured interviews.

Data Utilization

The genre of this research was a Sociocultural study. The sociocultural approach examines the norms of the social groups and subgroups in which the individuals participate in order to better understand human behaviour and personality development. These are frequently unspoken principles that guide a person's behaviour (McKay par. 2). This was a sociocultural study since it sought to understand the reason students used O.L.T's and how it negatively impacted their Lectura y Composición skills.

The research design of this study took the form of a Qualitative study where the focus was on investigating the negative impacts of online language tools on U.W.I year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills. Qualitative research was employed to examine and

perceive a significant phenomenon which allowed for more flexibility in the study design, the capacity to avoid relying on the researcher's pre-set assumptions, and the potential to provide additional depth and detail to the researcher's results. It made it possible to collect data on sensitive issues using a variety of approaches. This strategy was also a cost-effective and convenient means of data collecting.

Furthermore, this qualitative research approach adopted the form of a Case study design. A case study is an in-depth investigation of a person, a group of individuals, or a unit with the goal of generalizing across several units (Heale & Twycross 7). This study followed the case study approach because it fulfilled all the requirements to be one. Initially, there was a predefined boundary including an eight-month period from September 2021 to April 2022. This study also had a scope which was to investigate the negative impacts of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students' *Lectura y Composición* skills at the St. Augustine Campus. There was a relevant social group consisting of year three tertiary Spanish students. In addition, the type of evidence collected was direct. Furthermore, the priorities for data collection included documentary sources, an open-ended questionnaire, and semi-structured one on one interviews. Finally, the priorities for data analysis included interviews and questionnaires that were analysed through thematic analysis.

Limitations

1. There were incomplete responses in the open-ended questionnaire
2. Some participants did not respond in a timely manner, thus withholding the progress of the data analysis
3. Not every individual in the target population participated in the study.

Chapter outline

This study consisted of three main chapters, which were:

- Chapter 1 entitled the Literature Review and Conceptual/Theoretical Framework
 - This chapter entailed a summary of preceding published works on the topic of the negative impact of online tools on language 2 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills and their perspectives on the output of online translators. In addition, it also included the Conceptual and Theoretical framework which explained the path of the research and the theoretical constructs which influenced the study.

The thesis chapters which were divided into three chapters as seen below:

- Chapter 2 entitled Methodology
 - This chapter entailed the research methodology. It consisted of a description of the sample or participants, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, research ethics and steps for ensuring validity and reliability.
- Chapter 3 entitled Analysis and Interpretation
 - This chapter involved the analysis and interpretation of the data which was done via Thematic analysis.

- Chapter 4 entitled Discussion
 - This chapter included the discussion of the results.

Chapter 1: Literature Review and Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

Chapter Introduction

The aim of this chapter was to review literature and examine articles relating to language 2 Spanish students' perceptions on the negative impacts of using OLTs' on their Lectura y Composición skills. Also, it assessed their perceptions regarding the quality of the output of OLT's. In addition, it also examined the New Literacies Study Theory in relation to the topic. This literature review followed the thematic structure, whereby the information was organized around several key themes.

Literature Review

The upsurge in the use of language learning technology over the past few years has resulted in many students frequently using online tools such as OLT's in their reading and writing skills of the foreign language. The literature reviewed for this study identified that there are several negative impacts that have occurred due to their usage.

Initially, literature stated that students suffered a decrease in reading and writing fluency. Correa stated that using OLT's was ineffective, as in most cases students' writing fluency declined. While students believed that the influence of OLT's was useful in their writing, certain errors left teachers baffled. When teachers highlighted these errors, students reverted to working without the translator. However, in most instances their skills had already decreased which left them angry and frustrated (5). Furthermore, Fredholm stated that OLT's accurately produced simple grammar constructions such as the agreement of adjectives with nouns, however, it lacked in areas of syntax, cohesive devices, the choice of verb moods and

aspects. This resulted in unnatural writing hence, the texts produced sounded awkward which often led to difficulty and misinterpretation when attempting to analyse them (12).

In addition, OLT's produced texts that are translated too literally, that is, verbatim. Correa indicated that this most often occurred with idiomatic expressions, which when translated created a totally different meaning. This too produced inaccurate and senseless texts (13).

O'Neill argued that texts written solely utilizing OLT's had several grammatical, lexical and syntactical errors as well (75). Moreover, these texts contained spelling errors, mistranslations of idioms and proper nouns, and literal translation of informal phrases of the foreign language (3). Fredholm added that there was a misuse or lack of grammatical connectors in translated texts. Correa agreed stating that misspelt words in the original text were often not translated (7). However, Tight reaffirmed that grammatical errors were far more common than spelling and vocabulary errors (157).

Furthermore, articles reviewed indicated that OLT's software was limited. Gianetti proposed the idea that the software used in OLT's lacked the capacity to properly translate verbs since English does not have unique verb conjugations and some tenses like Spanish, so verbs were often translated and conjugated inaccurately and in the wrong tense (7).

Additionally, another negative impact was reliance and dependence on OLT's. From the literature reviewed, there appeared to be a correlation between OLT usage and students' dependence on them. Although some genuinely did not trust their own abilities in the foreign language, many simply depended on it for convenience (Xu & Wang 79; Maimone 185). Online language translators produced large and instantaneously translated texts in the target language. Gianetti argued that students often believed that these OLT's were shortcuts and so they became overly dependent on them, instead of using them for additional support (16). He

further argued that students completely depended on the use of OLT's in writing in the foreign language, which impeded their ability to properly write texts and form proper sentences in the target language (Pritchard; Gianetti 65).

Learners of the Spanish language also experienced Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA). Researchers' findings revealed that the more advanced the language proficiency level, the greater the anxiety levels. Lower-level Students viewed Spanish as a prerequisite to graduate while advanced learners chose Spanish as a Major or Minor. For advanced learners, it implied a form of employment hence tremendous pressure was placed on their performance. These individuals often worried about their relationships with classmates and instructors. They felt inferior to instructors, hence they developed anxiety while trying to maximize their potential to gain their respect (Marcos-Llinás and Juan-Garau 11). Furthermore, Mejía stated that students experienced greater levels of anxiety around peers, as they feared they would critically evaluate their skills (9). Students also felt more anxious in their second year as they thought their personal and others' expectations for themselves were greater (10).

In relation to Trinidad and Tobago, Ali stated that Spanish students at lower levels also suffered from FLA due to expectations placed on them by their peers and teachers (38). This created a pattern, which continued into advanced levels of learning the language. This may have caused students to rely heavily on OLT's as they progressed.

In addition, foreign language learners faced a lack of self-confidence. Fredholm stated that many foreign language students doubted their skills and knowledge in the target language and would rather rely on translators for basic vocabulary and conjugations and seldomly analysed the text produced from O.L.T.'s (42).

Students also had their own perceptions about the use of OLT's. O'Neill indicated that some students argued that they should not depend on these OLT's while some refuted

this stating that they were useful (5). O'Neill revealed that participants thought they were useful and a resourceful verification tool (157). Some students disagreed with these claims, instead believing that OLT's were not reliable and produced grammatical, spelling, and verb conjugation errors. Maimone added that students believed that using these translators were ethical except for when translating large texts (191). Furthermore, O'Neill argued that OLT's were unreliable, untrustworthy, inaccurate, produced many errors and could lead to over-dependency (170).

Although the research design and questions were influenced by the literature reviewed in this section, there were some gaps identified between the literature and this study. Initially, the literature reviewed were based on studies conducted during the pre-pandemic period whereas this study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, most of the studies reviewed used a quantitative or mixed methods research design whereas this study used a qualitative approach. In addition, most of the studies collected data through the close-ended questionnaires or semi-structured interviews. However, this study collected data through open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Also, data was collected through face-to-face interviews, whereas, in this study technology such as Zoom, WhatsApp and Google forms were used due to the COVID-19 Pandemic limitations and protocols.

Furthermore, the literature reviewed were based on countries outside of the Caribbean. While there were articles from the Caribbean region related to tertiary level Spanish students, there were no studies specifically on the use of OLT's in Trinidad and Tobago or the Caribbean. Although these studies focused on tertiary students, one study was conducted on Secondary School students in Trinidad associated with FLA but not OLT's.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework Design



This study was primarily guided by “The New Literacies Studies” which was an extension of the New Literacy Studies (NLS). The New Literacies Studies expanded on the idea that language was a medium for meaning. It claimed that new technologies and digital literacies also acted as mediums for transmitting meaning and that the social and cultural settings in which they were utilized influenced the meaning communicated (Giannetti 9). Furthermore, according to The New Literacies Studies, different digital instruments are devices for delivering and receiving meaning much like language (Gee 44). In addition, technology was a mode for conveying meaning between two or more persons, and that various technological language tools altered the meaning conveyed (Giannetti 81). The New Literacies Studies also contends that the social, historical, cultural and institutional practices of various groups of people shape the meanings that their technologies produce (Gee 44). It also noted that these practices almost often included more than simply the use of a digital tool; they also included methods of behaving, engaging, valuing, believing, and knowing as well as the use of a variety of other tools and technologies including spoken and written language (Gee 44). In addition, The New Literacies Studies aims to discuss distinct ‘digital literacies’ or diverse ways of employing digital technologies within various sociocultural practices (Gee 44). This study argued that the use of OLT’s have a negative impact on UWI year 3 Spanish students’ Lectura y Composición skills. Hence, the theoretical idea implied that people’s practices shape the meaning that OLT’s produce. Here the reliance on the OLT’s gives it a negative meaning. Additionally, students’ perspectives on the quality of the translation output were related to this theory and the practices previously described were based on their behaviour, beliefs and values of the quality produced.

Chapter Summary

The principle focus of this subchapter was to review literature relating to the topic. It discussed the negative impacts of OLT usage on students' Lectura y Composición skills in previous studies conducted. It also discussed their perceptions on the OLT usage. Furthermore, a gap was identified since there was no literature relating to the topic in the Caribbean region.

Chapter 2- Methodology

Chapter Introduction

The aim of this subchapter is to highlight the methodological approach taken. It will consist of a description of the sample or participants, methods of data collection and data analysis. Furthermore, it will discuss the research ethics and steps for ensuring validity and reliability. The research questions of this study were:

1. What do year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceive to be the negative impacts of using Online Translators on their Lectura y Composición skills?
2. What are year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students' perceptions regarding the quality of the output of online translators?

Research Method

Research Sample or Participants

This study employed convenience sampling to select the sample of participants. Convenience sampling is a way of collecting samples from a location or Internet service that is conveniently accessible (Edgar). This method of sampling was beneficial to this study as it was low costing, prompt and simple to apply. The participants consisted of UWI, St. Augustine year 3 students who were either pursuing a major or minor in Spanish. An invitation was sent to 60 prospective persons via email and WhatsApp, prior to the data collection process from which those who accepted the invitation became participants of the study. As a result, this method generated a target population of 31. Convenience sampling was also applied to select ten persons for semi-structured interviews in order to obtain a profound understanding on the topic.

Methods of Data Collection

The data for this study was obtained by following all the Covid-19 protocols. As such, the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were administered using the mediums of Google forms and Zoom respectively. These were further described in Figures 2, 3, and 4.

Figure 2

Primary Documentary Source

Data Collection method	Process for data collection	Reason for using this method
1).Open-ended questionnaire – Open-ended questions are free-form survey questions that allow respondents to respond in open text style, allowing them to express their full knowledge, feeling, and comprehension (Bhat, 2020).	• To ensure accurate results, a pilot questionnaire was administered to five participants who were chosen using convenience sampling. • On collecting the data, it was analyzed and the necessary readjustments were made to the questionnaire. • A new questionnaire was then constructed and distributed to the 31 participants who were given a period of two weeks to complete it.	• While researching, the research believed an open-ended questionnaire would be appropriate for this study, since it allows participants to express their views and honest opinions while remaining anonymous. • Its benefits included data being collected in a shorter period and inexpensive.

This table showed the reasons and process by which the Primary Documentary Source, an Open-Ended Questionnaire, was used to collect data

Figure 3

Primary Oral Source

Data Collection Method	Process for data collection	Reason for using this method
Semi-Structured interview- A semi-structured interview is one in which the interviewer does not strictly adhere to a predetermined set of questions. Rather than a basic question and response approach, they are asked more open-ended questions, which allow for a discussion with the interviewee (Doyle, 2020).	• A pilot study was also conducted for the semi-structured interviews with four participants via Zoom who were selected using convenience sampling. • The data collected was analyzed and the necessary changes were made. • A new selection of questions was drafted and interviews were conducted with ten participants individually using the medium of Zoom. Consent was given for the sessions to be recorded, transcribed and analyzed.	• This data collection method allowe for a deeper insight into the participants experiences using online language translators.

This table showed the reasons and process by which the Primary Oral Source, a Semi-Structured Interview, was used to collect data

Figure 4

Secondary Documentary Sources

Data Collection Method	Process for data collection	Reason for using this method
Secondary documentary sources- Journals, books, Scholarly articles	The researcher used google Scholarly, to obtain previous Journals, books and Scholarly articles which contained information on the topic.	This method allowed the researcher refer to previous information on the topic as a guide to compare results for this study.

This table showed the reasons and process by which the Secondary Documentary Sources, for example Journals, Books and Scholarly Articles were used to collect data

Methods of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected from both the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis is a technique for analyzing qualitative data. It is commonly used to describe a collection of texts, such as interview transcripts. The researcher studies the data carefully to uncover recurring themes – subjects, ideas, and patterns of meaning (Caulfield, 2020). Thematic analysis can be done in a variety of ways, but the most frequent method involves a six-step procedure. The Methods of Data Analysis were further described in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5

Steps in Thematic Analysis Process

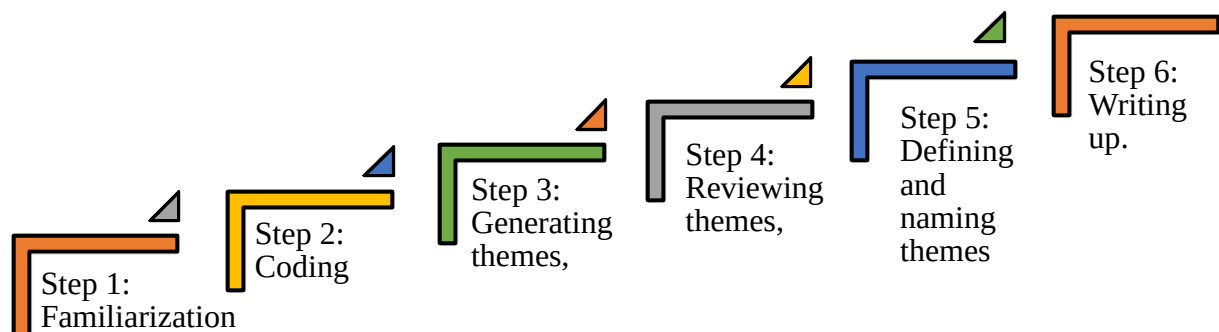


Figure 6

Data Analysis Process

Step	Activity
Step 1 - Familiarization	The researcher familiarized herself with the data by reading the responses of the questionnaire twice and making important notes. The researcher transcribed the interviews during the first listening period and made important notes during the second.
Step 2 - Coding	Here, the researcher compared the data collected by both the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The data was then coded with respect to each research question and codes were assigned.
Step 3 – Generating Themes	Patterns and similarities were then identified among them. Based on patterns identified, several codes were combined under the heading of a single theme. In addition, the researcher determined if any of the produced codes were too vague or irrelevant.
Step 4 – Reviewing Themes	The themes were reviewed ensuring that they were suitable. The data set was then reviewed and compared with the themes developed. The researcher ensured all the data including the themes were correctly represented and any necessary changes made.
Step 5 – Defining and Naming Themes	Then the themes generated were named and defined. Each theme was defined to give the researcher a better understanding of where the data will be placed. Each theme was assigned a concise and understandable name for clarity by the reader.
Step 6 – Writing Up	The researcher explained how frequently each theme appeared and what it meant in this section, using data samples as support. Then a conclusion was made which summarized the major concepts discovered and demonstrated how the research questions were answered through data analysis.

This table showed the Data Analysis Process the researcher used to analyze the data collected which was done via Thematic Analysis

Research Ethics

Prior to initiating this study, an invitation (Refer to Appendix A) and informed consent form (Refer to Appendix B) was sent to each individual of the target population via email and WhatsApp. This consent form entailed the ethical considerations to ensure participants were cognizant of the requirements prior to the commencement of the data collection process. Participants were required to sign the consent form declaring that they accepted the terms and conditions. This form was returned to the researcher prior to the commencement of the study via email or WhatsApp where the option was given to either scan or take a picture. Throughout the study participants were reminded that their privacy would be maintained. As such, all the information shared by participants including their identity were secured separately from other participants and supplementary notes taken. Before the start of the interviews, each of the participants granted permission for the session to be recorded. The interviewer also read the list of ethical considerations prior to the beginning of each interview. Interviewees were asked about what they thought would be delicate topics and were given the option to say no comment where they thought applicable.

Steps in ensuring validity and reliability

The consistency with which a method measured something was referred to as reliability. If the same result was regularly attained when the same procedures were employed under the same conditions, the measurement was considered dependable. Whereas, The term “validity” refers to the precision with which a technique measured something. Furthermore, high validity research would have yielded results that matched real-world traits and changes in the physical or social reality.

Two things which could have affected the validity and reliability were respondent bias whereby participants gave untruthful responses and researcher bias where the researcher can begin the study with preconceived ideas which can also affect the results. To minimize these biases, certain strategies were employed to ensure validity. The first strategy was prolonged involvement which referred to the amount of time a researcher is involved in a study, including contact with the environment and the study participants (Kriukow). Here, the researcher was a member of the studied community hence gaining participants' trust was easy. This reduced the risk of respondent bias. The second strategy utilized was triangulation. This refers to the triangulation of data by using different instruments to collect data. Data collected for this study used Primary documentary sources in the form of an open-ended questionnaire. Secondly, it employed secondary documentary sources such as books, journals, and Scholarly articles. Finally, used primary oral sources namely semi-structured interviews.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this subchapter was to highlight the methodology used. It included information about the sample or participants, data collection and data analysis methods. It also outlined research ethics and methods for assuring validity and reliability.

Chapter 3: Analysis of Results

Chapter Introduction

The topic for this research study was: An investigation on the negative impact of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students Lectura y Composición skills. The research questions for this study were:

1. What do year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceive to be the negative impacts of using Online Translators on their Lectura y Composición skills?
2. What are year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students' perceptions regarding the quality of the output of online translators?

Substantial research on the use of OLT's by Spanish language learners has been conducted on an international level in developed and developing countries, in contrast to the studies conducted little to no research has been done on the topic within the Caribbean. The aim of this research was to identify the negative impacts of OLT's on UWI year 3 Spanish students Lectura y Composición skills by conducting a qualitative study with the sample size directly linked to the criteria of our research topic.

The six-step thematic analysis approach was employed to analyse data collected from the open-ended questionnaire and interviews. Using this approach, the themes deduced include Lack of Coherence, Decrease in Self-efficacy, and Perceptions of Online Translators.

Figure 7

Codes and Themes Generated When Data was Analysed

Code	Theme
Decrease in Reading and Writing Fluency	Lack of Coherence
Literal Translation	
Grammatical Errors	
Reliance/Dependence on online translators	Decrease in Self-efficacy
Foreign Language Anxiety/Doubting	
Lack of Self Confidence	
Negative Perception	Perceptions of Online Translators
Neither Negative nor Positive Perception	
Positive Perception	

This table consisted of the codes and themes generated when the data was analysed via data analysis

Figure 8

Description of Themes

Theme	Description of Theme
Lack of Coherence	This theme focused on reasons why texts might lack coherency, such as incorrect spelling, incorrect verb conjugation, tenses and agreement, incorrect agreement of noun and adjective, literal or word for word translation, and an overall decrease in reading and writing fluency
Decrease in Self-Efficacy	This theme focused on the mental impact of the usage of online language translators on Lectura y Composición skills, such as reliance and dependency, foreign language anxiety, and lack of self-confidence in reading and writing the language
Perceptions of Online Translators	This theme focused on participants' perceptions on the quality of online translators' output
This table described each theme generated	

Reiterating from Figures 7 and 8, themes one, two and three answered the research question one “What do year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceive to be the negative impacts of using Online Translators on their Lectura y Composición skills?” While theme four answered research question two “What are year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students’ perceptions regarding the quality of the output of online translators?” Each theme is further discussed below.

Analysis of Research Question One

Research Question One: What do year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceive to be the negative impacts of using Online Translators on their Lectura y Composición skills?

Main Theme 1: Lack of Coherence

The first theme generated to answer research question one was Lack of Coherence which can be described in terms of Decrease in Reading and Writing Fluency, Literal Translation, and Grammatical Errors.

Decrease in Reading and Writing Fluency

Participants were asked to describe how the use of online language translators negatively impacted their Lectura y Composición skills. Certain participants indicated that there was a decrease in their reading and writing fluency due to the availability of OLT's. Some experienced a decrease in their writing skills. For instance, participant 13 said,

“Because of the availability of translators, I tend to send my English pieces through them instead of translating myself. Now I struggle to write texts in Spanish that sound natural and fluent.”

Interviewee 9 also had a similar experience stating,

“I feel like my writing now lacks fluency because it is very basic and sounds unnatural or robotic like, I don’t know where and when to use certain tenses and moods like the subjunctive anymore.”

Other participants expressed a sense of frustration because their reading skills decreased. Participant 18 stated,

“My Spanish skills have decreased so badly that now I cannot even read and understand texts at the level that I am supposed to be at without using the translator.”

For similar responses refer to Appendix E

Therefore, the use of OLT’s can adversely affect participants’ Lectura y Composición skills to the point where their language ability is questionable at this learning level. Thus, OLT’s can produce translations that are unnatural to native speakers. While different countries that speak the same language may have their own variations, OLT’s can lead to learners developing writing skills and vocabulary which may deviate from the original language.

Literal Translation

The second aspect that emerged was literal translation. This topic focused on participants responses which identified that the OLT produced translations that were verbatim. For example, participant 15 said,

“Once I translated a text in English to Spanish using the translator, and when I checked it over with someone, they pointed out that the text was translated word for word and lacked fluency”

This topic also focused on participants’ responses which stated that their Composición skills were influenced to sound too literal as opposed to that of a native speaker. For instance, participant 10 stated,

“They usually have literal translations, it has influenced my own writing skills to become more literal and lack the essence of a native Spanish speaker, I cannot understand most of the Spanish literature books”

In addition, some participants had a history of using OLT’s and determined that dictionaries produced better translations, for example participant 5 said,

“I used it in high school because I was afraid of failing. Now I use dictionaries instead of translators for whole sentences because it gives a better meaning.”

For similar responses refer to Appendix E

Thus, OLTs produced translations that were verbatim, and sometimes the original message may be construed. Additionally, their learning strayed significantly from that of a native speaker. Also, dictionaries may give more accurate translations than OLT.

Grammatical Errors

The third aspect that emerged was grammatical errors. This referred to responses which indicated that the translator produced incorrect applications of normative norms for sentence construction. For instance, participant 4 stated,

“Some words that I found did not give a precise translation.”

Furthermore, interviewee 2 had a similar view however focused more on lexicon and syntax stating,

“Not always fully corrected (lexicon or syntax wise)”

For similar responses refer to Appendix E

Thus, participants who experienced grammatical errors highlighted that the OLT produced lexical and syntactical errors which made their pieces incorrect.

Main Theme 2: Decrease in Self-efficacy

The second theme generated to answer research question one was a Decrease in self-efficacy, which can be explained in terms of Reliance/Dependence on translators, Foreign Language Anxiety/Doubting, and Lack of Self Confidence.

Reliance/Dependence on translators

The first aspect which emerged was Reliance/Dependence on translators. Some participants indicated that they became fully dependent on the use of OLT's. For example, participant 4 thought of the translator as their best friend stating,

“I barely used it before however since the start of the pandemic the translator is now my best friend. I hardly even try to use my own brain”

Likewise, interviewee 10 had an increase in dependency on the translator stating,

“I think my skills has declined because I am now heavily dependent on the translator because it makes life easier.”

However, other participants blamed the increase in workload since switching to online classes for their reliance/dependence on the translator. For instance, participant 3 said,

“I'm becoming more forgetful and the volume of work being assigned makes me cut corners”

In addition, participant 10 also mentioned using the translator for large amounts of text which was impossible to translate in a short period of time stating,

“Online learning and the increase in assignments made me reliant since I didn’t have much time to translate large texts in short time, and now I complete my assignments faster with the translators.”

Furthermore, some participants blamed the easy access to OLT’s as the reason why their Lectura y Composición skills decreased. For example, participant 19 stated,

“Yes, because they are easy to access and I have freedom to do what I want since we do not have face to face classes”

For similar responses refer to Appendix E

Therefore, participants’ Lectura y Composición skills decreased due to their reliance/dependence on the OLT’s as a result of online classes, increased workload, and its easy accessibility. This reliance/dependence prohibited the further development of their skills.

Foreign Language Anxiety/ Doubting

The second aspect which emerged was Foreign Language Anxiety/Doubting. While using OLT’s, participant 13 developed FLA because the decrease in skills made them feel inferior to lecturers, this person stated,

“At times when I think of how my lecturers are native Spanish speakers I become afraid that on my own I could write something that doesn’t make sense to them”

Other participants' reliance on the translator made them doubt their ability to independently write pieces. For example, participant 10 stated,

“No, because I doubt myself and do not trust my writing skills”

Similarly, interviewee 7 said,

“I get scared now to write on my own because although I know the translators have errors, I still trust it more than my own skills. Without it, or if there were face to face classes, I don't know what I'd do, I'd probably be writing at CSEC level.”

Some participants felt anxious about their expectations for themselves as participant 23 said,

“My skills decreased and this makes me anxious at times because I wonder if I can work without the translator.”

In addition, participant 31 thought of the expectations of others stating,

“In year 1 gpa didn't count so I didn't really care but now it does and I feel nervous to perform well to make my family proud”

For similar responses refer to Appendix E

Thus, it can be presumed that reliance on the OLT negatively impacted participants' Lectura y Composición skills whereby they now developed anxiety as they felt inferior to native Spanish speakers and doubted their ability to compose pieces without the use of translators.

Lack of Self-Confidence

The third aspect which emerged was Lack of Self-Confidence. Some participants expressed a lack of self confidence in composing pieces independent of translator usage. For instance, participant 1 said,

“No I don't, there are so many technical terms or higher level structures that I haven't met yet and my writing would be mediocre, not what I want for myself”

Additionally, participant 30 mentioned second guessing themselves stating,

“No, I dont feel confident without the use of online translators because I feel like I formed a habit of using the translators even if I know how to create the sentence by myself”

However, some participants expressed that despite knowing how to write pieces, they lacked self-confidence by using the translator as a verification tool, for example participant 12 said,

“No I like to use online translators to double check my work”

Similarly, interviewee 1 was fearful of making mistakes stating,

“I am always second guessing and overthinking because I do not want to make mistakes, so I use online language translators as a verifying tool.”

For similar responses refer to Appendix E

Thus, the heightened use of translators caused participants to lack self-confidence in their participants' Lectura y Composición skills. Participants are no longer confident to read or write the Spanish language.

Analysis of Research Question Two

Research Question Two: What are year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students' perceptions regarding the quality of the output of online translators?

Main theme 3: Perceptions of Online Translators

One theme was generated to answer research question two was Perceptions of Online Translators which can be described in terms of Negative Perceptions of online translators, Positive Perceptions of online translators, and Neither Negative nor Positive Perceptions of online translators.

Negative Perceptions of Online Translators

The first aspect of Perceptions of Online Translators which emerged was Negative Perceptions of online translators. Some participants indicated that the OLT was not efficient for large pieces of text, for example, participant 1 said,

“They falter with large pieces of text because they are not all programmed to work like that.”

Similarly, participant 8 added that they were not accurate stating,

“They are not always accurate when typing in full sentences. It is better to type individual words.”

However, some participants believed that the OLTs produced errors and too literal translations, for example, participant 12 said,

“They usually contain many grammatical errors, are very literal and do not sound natural”

Furthermore, some participants indicated that the translations may sometimes give the wrong meaning, for instance participant 26 said,

“Sometimes when they translate the meaning of the text changes from what was originally intended.”

For similar responses refer to Appendix F

Hence, participants had a negative perception of the use of OLTs because it gave incorrect translations for large pieces of text, produced errors, literal translations, and at times produced different meanings from the original text.

Positive Perceptions of Online Translators

The second aspect of Perceptions of Online Translators which emerged was Positive Perceptions of online translators. Some participants indicated that the OLT was useful and efficient for learning Spanish online, for example, participant 4 said,

“I think they are very efficient and good for learning.”

Likewise, participant 24 said,

“They are useful because you can widen your vocabulary.”

Similarly, interviewee 9 said,

“I think these translators were created with the intention of being used by everyone so my perception is that it is helpful and useful.”

For similar responses refer to Appendix F

Hence, while OLTs can have a negative impact on a student's Lectura y Composición skills some still believe that they are useful for learning the language.

Neither Negative nor Positive Perceptions of Online Translators

The third aspect of Perceptions of Online Translators which emerged was Neither Negative nor Positive Perceptions of online translators. Some participants were indecisive and thought that the quality of the output was acceptable at times but not always perfect. For example, participant 3 said,

“Some of them are really good but it's never perfect for eg with large texts”

Likewise, participant 18 supported this view stating,

“The quality depends on the phrases that you are translating. At times the translations may indicate a direct influence from English and this would make the translation inaccurate or of a low quality.”

For similar responses refer to Appendix F

Therefore, OLTs can give both accurate and inaccurate translations hence, it is unfair to deem it imperfect.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this section was to analyze the data collected from the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Via the process of thematic analysis three themes emerged which were Lack of Coherence, Decrease in Self-efficacy, and Perceptions of Online Translators. It was clear from the findings that the use of the OLT negatively impacted participants' Lectura y Composición skills in a variety of ways. It was found that most participants became heavily reliant on the use of OLT's due to online learning and its easy accessibility. In addition, their Composición became too literal, contained grammatical errors and sounded unnatural. Lectura y Composición skills were also hindered by a FLA and lack of self-confidence. Despite the negative impacts of OLTs, perceptions on the quality varied.

Chapter 4 - Discussion

Chapter Introduction

The main objectives of this research study were to examine UWI Year 3 Spanish students' perceptions on how the use of online translators negatively impacted their Lectura y Composición skills and the quality of the output of OLT's. The findings of this study are based on data collected through the open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis in subchapter 2. This subchapter will include a discussion of the findings. It will illustrate why the findings of this study were relevant and how it was related to the findings of other studies.

Discussion of Findings

As expected, there were a number of key reasons why year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceived that there was a negative impact on their Lectura y Composición skills due to Online Language Translators usage. Upon analyzing the data collected, one reasons participants thought that OLT's usage had a negative impact on their Lectura y Composición skills were a Lack of Coherence. This consist of a Decrease in Reading and Writing Fluency, Literal Translation and Grammatical Errors.

The results showed that some participants experienced a decrease in their Lectura y Composición skills as a result of the constant usage of the OLT In addition, their fluency decreased due to the easy accessibility and availability of OLTs. They were no longer able to read and understand the meaning of texts without using the translator. They use the translators to translate their written English pieces to Spanish and are unable to understand the translation since the translator used uncommon or higher-level synonyms. Some participants indicated that their writing sounded 'robotic like' which could have occurred as the translator uses a data base of information. This left participants feeling frustrated. These results were in tandem with Correa who indicated that when teachers point out students' mistakes and they attempt to write without the translator, they become frustrated since they already lost their skills and were unable to replenish it instantly (5). Fredholm further indicated that the OLT accurately translates small pieces of writing as this is what it was programmed for. However larger pieces resulted in inaccurate translations and unnatural writing influences (12). Hence, it is clear participants were using the translator for large pieces of writing which was why their writing fluency begun to sound unnatural.

The reliance on translators caused participants' writing fluency to become literal and in some cases translations were verbatim. The translations produced can sometimes be literal

because of the programming of the software of the OLT. Results suggested that some were unaware of the influence the translators had on their writing until it was identified by others. Others recognized that their writing sounded too literal, lacked the essence of a native speaker and was strongly influenced by the English language. Results also showed that participants believed dictionaries gave better translations than OLTs. These results are in tandem with Correa who indicated that literal translations often occur with idiomatic expressions and these may sometimes lose its meaning (13). Results of this study indicated that participants were responsible for their decrease of writing fluency as they refused to use a wider span of language tools to verify translations. This is in keeping with the New Literacies Theory which stated various technological language tools can alter the meaning of the original text.

Another consequence of using OLTs was writing containing grammatical errors. Some participants noted that because of the OLTs influence, unknowingly their pieces contained lexical and syntactical grammatical errors, incorrect verb tenses and a lack of agreement between gender and adjectives. The results were consistent with the literature reviewed, as O'Neill argued that OLTs usually produced grammatical, lexical and syntactical errors (75). Furthermore, Tight indicated that grammatical errors were common when using OLTs (157).

Another reason participants thought that OLT's usage had a negative impact on their Lectura y Composición skills were aspects related to a Decrease in self-efficacy. These aspects consist of Reliance/Dependence on translators, Foreign Language Anxiety/Doubting and Lack of Self Confidence.

Participants were highly reliant/dependent on OLTs because of the shift to online classes, easy accessibility of translators allowed students to become complacent. The shift

caused an increase in workload whereby participants became stressed and reverted to using translators for assignments. This resulted in some participants being unable to construct pieces without the aid of the translator. While the literature reviewed was based on articles pre-pandemic, the results concurred with the findings of Gianetti who argued that students often used translators as shortcuts which resulted in them becoming substantially dependent on the tool. Furthermore, he stated that this dependence limits their capacity to write effectively in the target language and compose whole sentences (16). O'Neill also believed that translators were flawed, unreliable and resulted in over-dependency (170). These results support the New Literacies Theory, since individuals' cultural, historical and social practices influence their use of technology in this case the OLT. Prior to the pandemic, participants rarely used OLTs however due to cultural practices of being complacent, the dependency increased.

The heavy reliance on OLT's resulted in FLA which caused participants Lectura y Composición skills to diminish. They felt inferior to lecturers, other native Spanish speakers and anxious when composing and reading pieces their academic level. These results support Marcos-Llina's & Garau findings which revealed that advanced learners struggle to perform because of high expectations and often have an inferiority complex to instructors and native speakers (11). Mejía also indicated that as tertiary students progressed, their personal and others' expectations of themselves increased which resulted in anxiety (9). In relation to the New Literacies Theory, participants used OLTs based on social norms to impress instructors.

Furthermore, participants' self-confidence was diminished. Participants doubted their ability to compose pieces so they used the translator to verify their work. They lacked confidence in believing that without OLTs their work will not be at a high academic level. As

seen in Fredholm's findings, foreign language students often mistrusted their reading and writing skills of the target language and resorted to translator for perfection (42).

Perceptions of online translators was used to classify the participants' responses regarding the quality of the output of OLTs. The responses spanned from negative, positive to indecisive views. Some participants thought that OLTs hindered Lectura y Composición skills as it produced translations that contained grammatical errors, were literal and deviated from the intended meaning. Furthermore, its usage was inefficient for large pieces of text. This was au courant with Gianetti who indicated that OLTs were not reliable and produced syntactical and lexical errors (31). Additionally, O'Neill argued that translators were inaccurate and unreliable (170).

On the contrary, some participants thought OLTs were useful and efficient for learning and widening vocabulary. This is supported by Gianetti who indicated that participants viewed translators as helpful (31). This was reaffirmed by O'Neill who revealed that participants thought they were useful and a resourceful verification tool (157).

Other participants were indecisive believing that the translator can give both high- and low-quality translations depending on the nature of the text. They admitted that the translator produced ineffective translations for large pieces of text but was competent for single words or shorter pieces. The results agreed to an extent with Maimone who indicated that participants thought translator usage was ethical except for translating large texts (191).

As such, online language translators' usage resulted in several negative impacts with reliance being the prominent issue. This was due to the shift to online classes and easy access to these tools. This chapter provided a discussion of the findings and highlighted why they were important to the research as well as other studies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this small-scale qualitative research which took the form of a case study was conducted to determine the negative impacts of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills. It was based primarily on the theory of the New Literacies Study which states that technology is a mode for conveying meaning between two or more persons and that various technological language tools alter the meaning conveyed. The sociocultural approach, argued that the use of OLT's had a negative impact on UWI year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills. In relation to the New Literacies Study theory, it implied that participants' practices, shaped the meaning that OLT's produce. Here the reliance on the OLT's gave it a negative meaning. Additionally, students' perspectives on the quality of the translation output were related to this theory and the practices highlighted were based on their behavior, beliefs and values of the quality produced.

This research aimed to answer two questions, "What do year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students perceive to be the negative impacts of using Online Translators on their Lectura y Composición skills?" and, "What are year 3 UWI language 2 Spanish students' perceptions regarding the quality of the output of online translators?" Furthermore, its objectives were to examine how the use of online translators negatively impacted UWI Year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills, to generate information on the topic related to Trinidad and Tobago, to assess whether students' Lectura y Composición skills are further off from the authentic Spanish language after the introduction of online translators, and to analyze the perceptions of UWI Year 3 Spanish students on the use of online language translators.

Thus, results indicated that receiving assistance from an OLT to compose and complete assignments negatively impacted the Lectura y Composición skills of year 3 UWI Spanish students. These negative impacts were categorized into two main themes, Lack of Coherence and a Decrease in self-efficacy. Lack of Coherence was further broken down into Decrease in Reading and Writing Fluency, Unnatural Writing, Literal Translation, and Grammatical Errors. Decrease in Self-efficacy focused on impacts that mentally affected participants' skills such as Reliance/Dependence on the online translator, Lack of self-confidence, and Foreign Language Anxiety. It was clear that the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic allowed easy accessibility for OLT's usage which caused participants to become complacent with the effort they placed into their work.

Additionally, despite the negative impacts of the OLT on their skills, participants had negative, positive, and neither negative nor positive perceptions on the quality of the OLT output. Furthermore, one key finding of the study was its uniqueness since it was the first of its kind on this topic to be conducted in the Caribbean region. Hence, while the OLT negatively impacted participants' Lectura y Composición skills, it should not solely be blamed as participants had the choice to terminate the use of these tools and independently replenish their skills. As such, upon the introduction of the OLT, participants' ability to become competent Spanish learners experienced a paradigm shift from a native Spanish speaker.

Recommendations

Assistance from an OLT to compose and complete assignments hindered the Lectura y Composición skills of year 3 UWI Spanish students. While there were articles from the Caribbean region related to tertiary level Spanish students, there was no studies specifically on the use of OLT's in Trinidad and Tobago or the Caribbean. The following are some recommendations to alleviate the problem:

1. Since no studies were found which examined the topic in Trinidad and Tobago and by extension the Caribbean further research should be done.
2. Training programmes should be implemented for students to effectively use OLT's
3. Lecturers should be more vigilant on the use of OLT's and set penalties for those who use them indiscriminately.
4. The language programme should be restructured to avoid heavy workloads to discourage the use of OLT's.
5. Lecturers should be trained to use OLT's to enhance students' self-confidence and build vocabulary.
6. Programmes should be implemented for students to get counselling about their FLA and lack of self-confidence.

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Appendix A

Letter of invitation for study

Letter of invitation

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: An investigation on the negative impact of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills

I am a final year Spanish student at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, embarking on my final year research project and I would like your assistance. This study will investigate the negative impact of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills. The main purpose of this qualitative study will be to examine how the use of online translators negatively impact UWI Year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills and analyze the perceptions of UWI Year 3 Spanish students on the use of online language translators. The researcher would like to obtain the perceptions of UWI Year 3 students who are pursuing either a major or minor in Spanish.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please read and complete the consent form attached to this study and return it to the researcher via the email address impactoftranslators@gmail.com. The researcher will then contact you approximately a week later via email with further directions.

For further information you can email us at impactoftranslators@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Appendix B*Consent Form for Study*

Project Title: An investigation on the negative impact of online language translators on UWI year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills

I, _____ a UWI year 3 Spanish _____ student hereby consent to participate in a study to be undertaken by _____. I understand that the purpose of the research is to gather data how the use of online language translators negatively impacts UWI Year 3 Spanish students' Lectura y Composición skills and analyse their perceptions on the use of online language translators. I acknowledge that:

- Upon receipt my questionnaire will be coded, and my name and address will be kept separately from it
- The information that I will offer will not be released in an identified form
- Accumulated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals
- Individual data will not be released to anyone except at my request and with my permission
- I am allowed to withdraw my consent at any time during the study, in which event my involvement in the research study will instantaneously cease, and any information acquired will be returned to me or destroyed at my request.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C

Questions Used in Open-ended Questionnaire

1. Please state your year group and program of study.
2. Describe your experience as a student pursuing a degree in Spanish during the current pandemic.
3. Describe how the shift to online classes has impacted your Lectura y Composición skills?
4. Did you use online language translators prior to the pandemic? If yes, state the purpose for which you used online language translator tools.
5. Do you think that your online language translator usage has increased because of the pandemic and why?
6. Describe how the use of online language translators has negatively or positively impacted your Lectura y Composición skills.
7. Do you think that the convenience of online language translators has made you reliant on them and how?
8. As a year 3 Spanish student, do you feel confident enough to compose pieces without the use of online language translators and why?
9. Do you think that if online language translators were not as easily accessible, would your Lectura y Composición skills be equal or more fluent to the native language and why?
10. Describe your thoughts on the quality of the output of online language translators.
11. Why do you continue to use online language translators despite their repercussions?
12. As a final year student, would you recommend the use of online language translators and why?

Appendix D

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Describe what your personal experience was like using an online language translator.
2. What were some flaws you noticed with using online language translators which could have impacted your L+C skills?
3. Do you have confidence in using online language translators? Why?
4. Do you use online language translators due to your lack of self confidence in the Spanish language? Why?
5. Since you began to use online language translators, have you experienced any fears in reading or writing the language on your own?
6. Describe your L+C fluency since you began using online language translators?
7. What is your honest perception of using online language translators?
8. Since you began using online language translators, do you believe your L+C skills are similar to that of a native speaker?
9. Imagine a scenario where one day you become a Spanish teacher or lecturer. Do you think it would be ethical for you to recommend to your students the usage of online language translators despite the known consequences and downfalls of the translators?
10. Since you are a final year Spanish student, do you think that after having graduated with a BA/Minor in Spanish, would you be able to live and work in a Spanish-speaking country with ease without using a translator?

Appendix E

Participant Responses to the Question: Describe How the Use of Online Language Translators Have Negatively or Positively Impacted Your Lectura Y Composición Skills.

Responses	Codes
Question: Describe how the use of online language translators has negatively or positively impacted your Lectura y Composición skills. Responses 1. I would say positively because the lengthy texts include highly academic terms that I didn't know before 2. I think it has not really impacted them negatively but more positively because these tools allow me to understand the material thought in class if i'm unsure about what's being said 3. It makes it easier for me to meet deadlines 4. It has negatively impacted my lectura y composicion skills as sometimes I would research a word and then it would be the wrong word to use in a certain context but it has positively impacted it as I see many examples of phrases, words and conjugation generators 5. I used it in high school because I was afraid of failing. Now I use dictionaries instead of translators for whole sentences because it gives a better meaning 6. Since I've been using these apps , I feel like I haven't really learnt much new vocabulary and in some instances I struggle with simple things 7. I believe it has helped me in terms of increasing my vocabulary skills and my comprehension skills. It has however made me a little lazier. If I don't understand something I don't try to work it out, I automatically look it up online. 8. It expanded my vocabulary 9. Positively because I get a lot of new vocabulary words 10. Positively because it is easy to write Spanish texts using them, negatively because it decreased my Spanish skills competence and confidence and I solely depend on them/Decrease of Reading and writing fluency/Lack of self confidence 11. I feel like negatively, I haven't remembering vocabulary as much since I started using translators. 12. I think there is a negative impact because i tend to use it more than I should	Grammatical Error Decrease of Reading and Writing fluency Reliance/Dependence due to laziness Lack of self confidence Literal Translation Foreign Language Anxiety/Doubting

13. It had a negative impact on my L+C skills. Because of the availability of them, I tend to send my English pieces through them instead of translating myself. Because of this dependence, I struggle to write texts in Spanish that sound natural and fluent/Decrease of Reading and Writing Fluency
14. I think it made my writing flow less. In some instances when I was reading over my work I did not know what some words meant and I felt frustrated.
15. Once I translated a text in English to Spanish using the translator, and when I checked it over with someone, they pointed out that the text was translated word for word and lacked fluency
16. Because of my reliance on the online translators, I am now scared to use my own knowledge and skills to write texts and understand written texts because I feel like I would make many errors/Reliance/dependence due to laziness
17. At times i am overly dependent on it and this negatively impacts my lectura y composicion skills.
18. My Spanish skills have decreased so badly that now I cannot even read and understand texts at the level that I am supposed to be at without using the translator / Decrease of reading and writing fluency
19. It has affected me so much that now when I write texts on my own, they sound just like the translator's texts. I only realized this when my friends from Spanish class told me about it /Decrease of reading and writing fluency
20. It has negatively affected my Spanish skills especially my grammar which I use incorrectly now
21. I find my writing sounds unnatural now
22. My skills have decreased. Since switching to online I have become fully dependent on the translator because it makes my life easier.
23. Due to my reliance my skills decreased and this makes me anxious at times because I wonder if I can work without the translator.
24. I cannot write large texts without it now
25. I have gotten lazy now I just send all my assignments through google translate, idk what I wouldve done if we had f2f classes again, I prob wouldve failed
26. I realized that I became dependent and everytime that I try now to write on my own I still go back to the translator because sometimes I cant remember words
27. Sometimes I try to read texts on my own but I get anxious when I see a few new words so I just put them through a translator to avoid wrong interpretation

28. My vocab has not increased since using these translators since I am not given the opportunity to learn the vocab on my own 29. Being home has made me very laid back and now I just choose to send all my English pieces through the translator to translate them 30. I've gotten so lazy that now I just write my Spanish assignments in English and just pass them through a translator. Google translate is a life saver. 31. I use google translate so much now that when I do try to write texts on my own it is translated word for word from English and lacks the Spanish influence. It makes me feel bad because I feel like I wrote better in high school when I couldn't use translators.	
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Appendix F

Participant Responses to the Question: Describe Your Thoughts on the Quality of the Output of Online Language Translators.

Responses	Codes
Question: Describe your thoughts on the quality of the output of online language translators. Responses: 1. They falter with large pieces of text because they are not all programmed to work like that. 2. Certain translators are better than others and some can be very inaccurate. It's up to the student to determine whether or not it's reliable or not 3. Some of them are really good but it's never perfect for eg with large texts 4. I think they are very efficient and good for learning. 5. The online dictionaries are very useful as you can find synonyms, conjugations and they give more than one meaning 6. It is not so great. Face to face is better. 7. Google translator should only be used if you are familiar with the language because sometimes they produce errors which is how lecturers know that you've been using the translator. However spanish dict is more accurate or translating words individually. 8. They are not always accurate when typing in full sentences. It is better to type individual words. 9. It is moderate. Most translate word for word and literal meanings 10. I think sometimes the output is accurate while other time it is not as accurate. 11. I think the quality is alright, there are definitely mistakes , mainly grammatical mistakes that I can notice with the use of translators but not spelling errors. 12. They usually contain many grammatical errors, are very literal and do not sound natural 13. I think the quality is good but not 100% accurate 14. I think that the quality is only good for small texts not big ones, sometimes the translation can be too literal 15. Like I said before, I translated a text and the output was word for word and my friends laughed at me so I don't think it's good	Negative perception Neither positive nor negative Positive perception

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">16. They are not good to use17. They are better than language teachers describe them, but they do still require extra checking as they are not always accurate.18. The quality depends on the phrases that you are translating. At times the translations may indicate a direct influence from English and this would make the translation inaccurate or of a low quality19. I don't like the quality at times there are grammar errors20. They have too many errors and produce word for word translations at times.21. Sometimes they sound fluent and sometimes they don't22. They are good for small pieces not big ones because you can have inaccurate translations.23. At times the translation could give the wrong meaning24. They are useful because you can widen your vocabulary.25. They usually produce too many grammatical errors26. Sometimes when they translate the meaning of the text changes from what was originally intended.27. I don't think it's of a good quality28. I think they can be useful to a certain extent29. If used in the correct situation the output can be helpful30. They contain too many errors31. They are only good for short texts not large ones | |
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Appendix G

Questions and Responses for Semi-Structured Interview 7

Responses	Codes
Interviewer: Hi good afternoon, how are you today?	Reliance/Dependence on
Interviewee: Hi, I'm fine thank you.	online translators
Interviewer: Great, today we will be talking about how the use of O.L.T.s have impacted your L+C skills and what are your perceptions on them.	Decrease in Reading/Writing Fluency
Interviewee: Okay.	Grammatical Errors
Interviewer: Before we begin, I will review the ethical considerations with you.	Literal Translation Lack of self-confidence
Interviewee: Okay I understand.	Foreign Language
At this point the interviewer read the ethical considerations.	Anxiety/Doubting
Interviewer: Can I have your permission to record the session for research purposes only?	Neither positive nor negative
Interviewee: Sure.	
Interviewer: Okay, let's begin. Describe what your personal experience was like using an online language translator.	
Interviewee: I have had both good and bad experiences using an online language translator. It's an easy and convenient way to translate large texts and assignments, but it contains so many errors. I always have to reread what I've translated because a lot of times it uses words that don't seem very natural in the Spanish language, that is, it	

is very close to the English word and it also translates word-for-word./Decrease in Reading/Writing Fluency/ Grammatical Errors/Literal Translation

Interviewer: What were some flaws you noticed with using online language translators which could have impacted your L+C skills?

Interviewee: As I mentioned before, it translates very literally, because of this, my own writing skills have diminished and I no longer write similarly to that of a native Spanish speaker. My written texts lack coherence, I use improper grammar constructions at times, and it just doesn't sound very natural or fluent in the Spanish language./Decrease in Reading/Writing Fluency/Grammatical Errors

Interviewer: Do you have confidence in using online language translators?

Interviewee: Sometimes

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: Although I have become very reliant on them, I am not fully confident with online translators, they contain so many errors and translate things weirdly, for eg, in this case, a translation from English to Spanish sounds very unnatural, uses incorrect verb tenses and mood at times, doesn't properly agree adjectives with their nouns since Spanish has gendered nouns and adjectives must

agree, and follows English grammar such as word order and the placement of adjectives. I always have to recheck these things, and I'm not even sure if my corrections are correct because I have become so reliant on the translator itself./Foreign Language Anxiety/ Doubting

Interviewer: Do you use online language translators due to your lack of self confidence in the Spanish language?

Interviewee: Yes I do. I've always been wary of my Spanish writing and reading skills, previously I made an effort to improve them but now with the shift to online classes, it's just made it more difficult for me to find time to practice and get feedback from lecturers. So I'm still not confident in my reading and writing skills in the Spanish language, hence I use it quite often when required to write large texts for assignments as well as when I have to do heavy reading, not only in the Lectura y Composicion component but also in areas such as Spanish literature. Mainly because I'm scared I make an error when writing or I misinterpret something when reading.

Interviewer: Since you began to use online language translators, have you experienced any fears in reading or writing the language on your own?

Interviewee: I get scared now to write on my own because although I know the translators have errors, I still trust it more than my own skills. Without it, or if there were face to

face classes, I don't know what I'd do, I'd probably be writing at CSEC level.

Interviewer: Describe your L+C fluency since you began using online language translators

Interviewee: My fluency with regards to L+C has decreased significantly. I still know and understand all the basic grammar and verb tenses and conjugations and those sorts of things, but I feel like now I have a lot of trouble on deciding in what context or situation they should be used. My writing is not up to par with the level of education that I am at.

Interviewer: What is your honest perception of using online language translators?

Interviewee: I think they can be good for short phrases or if you're looking up individual words, but for large texts they contain too many errors. I feel like the software used doesn't have the capacity to translate things naturally or even correctly in some cases. It is also bad in cases where people such as myself become heavily reliant on it.

Interviewer: Since you began using online language translators, do you believe your L+C skills are similar to that of a native speaker?

Interviewee: Absolutely not, previously I'd used it for short phrases and as a form of assistance when writing, and my writing was really good, but when you use it too much and

become reliant on it like myself, you begin to follow the way things are written via the translator, and so now I write texts and translate things literally and even when reading I interpret things word for word./Reliance/Dependence on online translators

Interviewer: Imagine a scenario where one day you become a Spanish teacher or lecturer. Do you think it would be ethical for you to recommend to your students the usage of online language translators despite the known consequences and downfalls of the translators?

Interviewee: No I don't think it would be ethical because I know and understand all the shortcomings of the translator, and have personally experienced its consequences myself, so why should I who have learnt the lesson about these tools, allow my students to use it? That is only going to cause them detriment because students don't usually try to use these things to translate one or two words, students become lazy or sometimes too stressed and use it because of its convenience. So I think it'd be better to not recommend it at all and explain to them its consequences long term.

Interviewer: Since you are a final year Spanish student, do you think that after having graduated with a BA/Minor in Spanish, would you be able to live and work in a Spanish-speaking country with ease without using a translator?

Interviewee: Immediately, no. I would not. I think that I would have a lot of trouble since my skills in all components are faltering severely right now, however, I do believe that after a while with practice, since I'll be forced to practice, I will be able to live with ease because being immersed within a language is the best way to practice and learn it.	
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Appendix H

Reasons for the Negative Impacts on Lectura Y Composición Skills Which Appeared in the Open-Ended Questionnaire, Semi-Structured Interview or Both

Reasons	Occurred in Open-Ended Questionnaire	Occurred in Semi-Structured Interview
Decrease of Reading/Writing Fluency	✓	✓
Literal Translations	✓	✓
Grammatical Errors	✓	✓
Reliance/Dependence on Online Translator	✓	✓
Foreign Language Anxiety/Doubting	✓	✓
Lack of Self Confidence	✓	✓
Negative Perception	✓	✓
Positive Perception	✓	✓
Neither Negative nor Positive Perception	✓	✓

This table showed if the reasons appeared in responses obtained from the Open-Ended Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interviews