

## Using Web Based Translations in Medical Communication

A) A complex medical and treatment discussion with patients whose knowledge of the local language is inadequate remains challenging. After treating a child whose parents did not speak English, we resorted to the use of a web based translation tool. We were unsure as to whether Google Translate was accurately translating our complex medical phrases. We aimed to evaluate the accuracy and usefulness of Google Translate in translating common English medical statements.

B) Ten commonly used medical statements were chosen by author consensus. These were translated via Google Translate to 26 languages. Translations only were sent to native speakers of each language and translated back into English by them. The returning English phrases were compared with the originals and assessed for meaning. Minor grammatical errors were accepted but not if the meaning was altered.

C) The results showed that of the ten medical phrases translated by Google translate and then translated back into English, 57.7% were correct and 42.3% were wrong. Out of the 26 languages used, Africa languages scored the lowest, followed by Asian languages. Western European languages were the most accurate. There were some serious errors discovered trial. For instance, "Your child is fitting" translated in Swahili to "Your child is dead". In Polish "your husband has the opportunity to donate his organs" translated to "your husband can donate his tools". In Mathi "your husband has had a cardiac arrest" translated to "your husband had an imprisoned heart".

D) The conclusion drawn is that in today's world "just google it" is considered to be the answer to everything, but for health related questions this should be treated with caution. Google Translate should not be used for taking consent for surgery, procedures, or research from patients or relatives unless all other avenues to find human translators have been exhausted and the procedure is clinically urgent.

### Questions 1-4

In which paragraph (A-D) is the following information found. Letters may be used more than once.

1. When calculating the results, slight mistakes in language, possibly related to syntax or structure of language, were admitted.
2. It is believed that most information and help can be found on google.
3. The aim was to test whether Google Translate could be used reliably for medical communication.
4. Significant mistakes were found in the translations which were web based.

5. The research was conducted after a situation in which a patient's relatives did not speak English.
6. The translate function is not admissible to get people's permission for operations.
7. Accuracy in meaning was essential.

Answers can be found on my blog: [www.ieltsliz.com](http://www.ieltsliz.com) on the main reading page.

IELTS Liz