Language policy: on the use of translation machines

Introduction:

- A **machine translation** is never a valid translation or equivalent of the original text.

  Translation machines should only be used to get an impression of the content of simple work documents.

  For reliable translations, UT has contracted three translation partners, who work with the UT glossary of educational terms and the UT style guide for English and offer the best price-quality ratio: https://www.utwente.nl/en/service-portal/facility-services/procurement-preferred-suppliers/preferred-suppliers/translation-partners

- **data protection and privacy** are not warranted by free translation machines.

- **common issues**: translation machines produce mistranslations and omissions and sometimes fail to translate at all. Therefore, one must always proofread machine translations carefully.

- **"hallucinations" in translations**: some translation machines contain an AI component, which can cause so-called "hallucinations", i.e. they may add things that are not in the original text. Here too, the following applies: proofread the product carefully.

- **AI programs** are not translation machines: they "hallucinate" and do not warrant privacy and data protection. Do not use these for translations!

Overview:

Translation machines	**Data protection and privacy**	**Quality of the translation**
MS Word Translation Feature	**Okay**, because the UT has a license. *Use this feature via your UT account!* Nevertheless, the following applies: never share personal or sensitive content.	**Reasonable**
Other translation machines	**No warranty** Paid versions may offer some protection, but because UT already has a license for MS Word, the purchase of further licenses is not deemed necessary. Moreover, a paid version does not guarantee better quality.	**Variable** If the translation machine contains an AI component, the program may "hallucinate" and add things.

AI programs	Data protection and privacy	Quality of the translation
	No warranty	N/A, because AI does not produce translations as such and entails the risk of "hallucination".

Conclusion: the translation function in MS Word – provided it is used through an active UT account – guarantees some privacy and data protection, and provides a reasonable impression of the content of work documents. The most important thing to bear in mind is that the result must always be proofread carefully.

The advice is therefore that for getting a quick impression of the content of a work document in another language – without private or sensitive content – the translation function of MS Word is to be used through a UT account, and to take a critical look at the result by comparing it with the original next.

Finally, for the translation of all other documents it is strongly recommended to make use of the services of UT's translation partners.

If the machine translation of a working document is to be used for publication or official purposes, professional post-editing is desirable to ensure that the translation is a valid equivalent of the original. The UT translation partners can be contacted for post-editing as well, at a favourable rate.