The Impact of Online Social Media on Translation Pedagogy and Industry

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Abstract- Despite the impact of online social media language and applications on translation theory and practice, Arabic translation studies are so far largely based on what is referred to as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) with little regard to colloquial and spoken forms of Arabic which represent the main bulk of online social media. As thus, this study argues for the importance of incorporating social media language and colloquial forms of Arabic into translation studies and addressing the sociocultural aspects (including, in particular, the dialectical and linguistic changes) that impact the translation accuracy and reliability. This study explores the role of linguistic variation as reflected on the use of intensifiers in Egyptian and Libyan Arabic Dialects on the translation accuracy and reliability. For the purposes of the study, a corpus is designed of 12, 723 Twitter Posts on the Egyptian and Turkish intervention in the Libyan Conflict. Four intensifiers were identified. Two of these colloquial intensifiers are from the Libyan Arabic dialect: halba and 'ūrām) and two from Cairene Egyptian Arabic Dialect: awui and ğddān). Analysis shows that intensifiers are rendered differently among Libyan and Egyptian Arabic dialects. It can be quite a challenge to recognize the intended degree of the intensifier at hand: a case that requires translators to render it correctly and convey the intended message to the best. Results also indicate that the language of social media in Arabic exhibits unique linguistic features that have their implications to the accuracy and reliability of translation performance and thus need to be considered in translation education and training. Translation students and trainees thus should be equipped with the online social media competencies to cope up with the increasingly rapid changes of the digital age.

Keywords— Cairene Egyptian Arabic, Libyan Arabic, intensifiers, online social media, translation, pedagogy, industry

I. INTRODUCTION

The recent years have witnessed an increasing importance of sociocultural contexts and aspects of the language of online social media in translation studies in different languages including English, Chinese, and Spanish [1-4]. This can be attributed to the increasing popularity of online social media with their implications to translation pedagogies and industry. The hypothesis is that there is much in common between translation and online social media; therefore, language and applications of online social media are indispensable from translation theory and practice [5-7].

Despite the impact of online social media on translation theories and concepts, very little has been done on the issue in Arabic. This may be due to the fact that users of online social media normally use colloquial forms of Arabic, which has long been ignored in translation studies. Such studies have traditionally focused on what is referred to as MSA, a formal version of Arabic that is based on Classic Arabic (also referred to as Quranic Arabic). This form of language is widely used across almost all Arab countries with slight changes. Furthermore, it used to be the only form for writing for centuries. Taken the diaglossical nature of Arabic into account, MSA has always been favored over colloquial and spoken dialects [8-10]. These dialects are even still considered by many as distortions of Arabic. Reasons for this are mostly religious since Arabic is the language of Qur'an, the Holy book of Muslims and which is regarded by Muslim believers to be the words of God [11].

With the increasing expansion of communication channels in an unprecedented manner, however, colloquial and spoken forms of Arabic are gaining more legacies nowadays and these are more frequently used in social media platforms [12-14]. As thus, disciplines including pragmatics, sociolinguistics and CDA have come to discuss the linguistic properties of the colloquial and spoken forms of Arabic. Nevertheless, sociocultural aspects of Colloquial Arabic (as opposed to MSA) are not well addressed in almost all translation courses in academic settings. So far, translation is largely based on texts or speeches in MSA as it is still considered by many educators and instructors to be more prestigious. One main problem with approaches of the kind, numerous linguistic forms including social media language are disregarded. These colloquial forms, however, are widely used in everyday communications and exhibit geographic, social, political, and linguistic diversities that need to be considered. Given the global social, economic, and political changes we witness today, there is an increasing demand for the translation of colloquial and spoken forms of Arabic especially the language of the social media [1, 15].

In light of the above argument, this study argues for the importance of incorporating social media language and colloquial forms of Arabic into translation studies and addressing the sociocultural aspects (including in particular the dialectical and linguistic changes) that impact the translation accuracy and reliability. The study is limited in scope. It is only concerned with exploring the use of intensifiers in Cairene Egyptian Arabic Dialect (henceforth CEAD) and Libyan Arabic Dialect (henceforth LAD) and their pedagogical implications to translation studies. The rationale is that intensifiers are very frequent in everyday communication and are spontaneously used by speakers. Indeed, the notion of intensification has been explored in relation to linguistics, sociolinguistics, stylistics, and translation studies [16, 17]. Intensifiers are effective language markers that used in a variety of conversational situations. They are carriers of sentimental feelings that speakers express in various degrees [18]. Those feelings are, of course, part of the speaker's attitude in giving an opinion towards a political phenomenon such as the Turkish and Egyptian intervention in Libya, for example. Whether it is to catch attention, to ridicule someone, or to use pun, these are linguistic elements that are not intended to be sacrificed or standardized in the target texts for aesthetic aspects of translation. This is a sterile space in

social media where the public mainly use dialects and can obtain immediate access to translated texts in a variety of forms. The data of this paper were collated from Twitter and it shows the degree of translation challenges of social media colloquial utterances. A corpus is designed of 723 Twitter Posts on the Egyptian and Turkish intervention in the Libyan Conflict. It is assumed that Twitter is an appropriate source of data for the purposes of the study. First, Twitter is one of the most widely used social media sites all over the world countries including Egypt and Libya. Second, Twitter reflects almost all the words used in everyday speech.

The rest of this article is organized as follows. Part 2 explores the linguistic intensification and social media. It surveys the literature on the implications of linguistic and dialectical differences to translation pedagogies in general and in Arabic in particular. Part 3 describes the methods and procedures of corpus design and the ways of extracting the intensifiers. Part 4 presents the analysis of the use and functions of intensifiers in CEAD and LAD. Part 5 concludes and summarize the findings and results and reflects on their implications to translation pedagogies.

II. THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

The recent years have witnessed an increasing interest in translation studies related to the language of social media. This may be attributed to the dominance and widespread of the language of social media over the social networks and platforms which have drastically changed the translation in terms of theory, training, and professional practice [1, 19-22] There is an increasing demand for translation services based on the online social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter. Global businesses and institutions are interested in communicating, engaging and connecting with their clients and audience all over the world directly through social media platforms as these have been proved to be more effective than corporate websites [23, 24]. In response to these developments, the language of social media has been the focus of different translation studies and pedagogies. Researchers have been concerned with addressing the challenges of translating the language of social media including linguistic variation.

The issue of dialectical and linguistic variation with its implications to translation has been extensively investigated over the recent years. The claim has always been that dialectical and linguistic variation represents one of the main problems and challenges in translation especially with the increasing use of less formal forms of language and regional dialects [25-28]. Ethelb [29] argues that some of the linguistic features of dialects prove to be "problematic in rendering them to a standard language" or even maintaining similar effect that is present in the source text. Dialects represent social and regional variations in terms of sentence structure, figures of speech, and reference to local literature. Social media platforms and networks show good opportunities for the spread of regional dialects where millions of users all over the world can use their own dialects freely and spontaneously. Thanks to social media networks that thousands of regional dialects across the world have been maintained and revived [30, 31].

Despite the linguistic and cultural significance of regional dialects, translation problems related to linguistic changes within these dialects have not been comprehensively surveyed. To address these problems, a communicative and and functional approach have been adopted over the recent years [25]. The claim is that there is a close relation between discourse and place [32, 33]. Texts thus should be considered as situations and actual communication with focus on the context of use and participants [34, 35]. These approaches have been clearly reflected on the teaching methods of translation. Over the recent years, social media applications have been the focus of different pedagogical approaches to translation studies and training. In this regard, translation students and trainees should be taught online social media competencies as well as communication backgrounds. These competencies are key and highly needed for the digital age we witness today [36-38].

In spite of the extensive recent literature on the integration of online social media into translation studies, very little has been done on the use of online social media language and applications in translation in Arabic. This study seeks to address the gap in literature through exploring the implications of translating the language of online social media in Arabic with a special focus on exploring the uses of intensifiers in CEAD and LAD.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The data collected in this study are based on a corpus derived from Twitter on the issue of the Turkish and Egyptian intervention in Libya during the month of July 2020. In order for the data to be representative and to avoid commercial messages and spam, the researchers looked only at users who had written at least 30 posts that month, had fewer than 1000 followers and who followed fewer than 1000 others. This came up with 1733 users and 49,237 posts. Data sets were then reduced to only CEAD and LAD speakers as indicated on their profiles. This had the effect of reducing the posts into just 12, 723 posts and 846 users. The use of intensifiers was then recorded with the nationality and gender of the writer. The corpus included the posts written either in Arabic or Arabizi (also known as Franco-Arabic). The latter is a form of Arabic orthography that is characterized by spelling Arabic words using the Latin script. The rationale of including Arabizi which is considered by many linguists as a deviant form of Arabic is that it is widely used in social media networks. It is even argued that Arabizi is now spreading beyond the realm of social media and finding its way into print media such as newspapers, books, and advertisements. Four intensifiers were identified. Two of these colloquial intensifiers are from the LAD: halba and 'ūrām and the other two are from CEAD: awui and ğddān.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The collated data in this study is concerned with the Turkish and Egyptian intervention in Libya. It presents views of the Libyans and Egyptians on the conflict in Libya. These views are expressed on Twitter. The study reflects the dialectal uses of intensifiers that have been uttered by CEAD and LAD speakers on social media platforms. The analysis of these contextual intensifiers has been linked to their pragmatic functions within the actual texts and real time usages so that their contexts are present to the reader. The analysis will have some translation implications that are done for pedagogical purposes.

Thus, this analytic section of the study deals with the afore-mentioned four intensifiers that are colloquial in terms of their uses. It is important to note that these four intensifiers are amplifying and maximizing in function. They are usually adverbs modifying nouns with a sense of boosting speakers' viewpoint on a topic, probably controversial and argumentative, at hand.

1)	awui
1a)	ممكن تطلع مفيركه، حييقا شكلك وحش أوى.
Transliteration	mmkn ttl' mfbrkh, hīb'iā šklk ūhš <u>awui</u>
Meaning	It could be a fabrication, you will be <u>very</u> shamefaced.
1b)	بكرة تجربه، وتتبسط أوى.
Transliteration	bkrī tğārbūh, ūtnbīst <u>awui</u>
Meaning	You will see it, you will be <u>so</u> happy.
1c)	في ميدان رمسيس والدنيا متهينة أوى.
Transliteration	fī mīdān rmsīs wāldnīā mthī'ih <u>awui</u>
Meaning	In Ramsis Square, and things are <u>well</u> prepared.
1d)	والبقية بصراحة كثير أوى.
Transliteration	wālb īh bşrāḥh ktīr <u>awui</u>
Meaning	Honestly, the rest are <u>too</u> much.

According to Omar and Alotaibi [39] intensifiers are used frequently in social habitats and settings. Their frequency depends on the individual's idiosyncratic features. However, the intensifiers awui and *ğddān* appear to have a high recurrence in CEAD. Example (1) above shows a number of occasions where the intensifier awui is used by CEAD speakers on Twitter. Paradis [40] distinguishes between reinforcers and attenuators intensifiers. In this sense, the intensifier awui in CEAD, which can best be translated as very or so in English is a booster that express a high degree of intensity. There are four instances in Example (1) above where the use of intensification is present. Although they are spotlighting intensity of a cognitive concept that speakers argue through, their pragmatic function is somehow different. In Example (1c): fī mīdān rmsīs wāldnīā mthī'ih awui (In Ramses Square, and things are well prepared), the intensifier awui functions as an adverb to show preparedness of an event that taking place Ramses Square – it tells that preparation are perfectly in place. The intensifier awui is rendered into four English forms (i.e., very, so, well and too), that take the contextual and pragmatic functions of each intended message into consideration. Although these translations are done for showing meanings, they present the actual contextual settings of the intensifiers.

The results of the study agree with the literature in the sense that speakers subconsciously express their cognitive concepts, especially when their interactions involve elements of comparison [41]. They tend to use intensifiers as they have comparative elements that speakers flag out. Example (2) below offers a set of three cases where the Arabic intensifier $\check{g}dd\bar{a}n$ is used in CEAD.

2)	ğddān
2a)	مصر جميلة جدا.
Transliteration	mșr ğmīlh ğddān
Meaning	Egypt is <u>very</u> beautiful.
2b)	دي تمنها غالي جدا.
Transliteration	dī tāmnhā ģāli <u>ğddān</u>
Meaning	This is <i>very</i> expensive.
2c)	السيسي رئيس مصر القوي جدا.
Transliteration	al-sīsī r`īs mṣr al-qwy ğdd ān
Meaning	The president of Egypt, Sisi, is <u>very</u> strong.

 $\check{g}dd\bar{a}n$ is a widely used intensifier in CEAD. In fact, it is also used in LAD, however, not in a colloquial sense like the case in CEAD. It is an adverb that modifies adjectives which express opinions subjectivelyy. In the three examples of (2)

above, the notion of truth is not definitely confirmed, other than communicating one's opinion. The use of *ğddān*, which can best be rendered into very in English, displays a high degree of intensity shown in the adjectives ğāmīl (beautiful), $\dot{q}\bar{a}li$ (expensive), qwy (strong). As decontextualized, example (2a) may be seen at the first glance as a short simple sentence of 'topic' and 'comment'. However, it was extracted from a comment on Twitter that defying Turkey due to its intervention in Libya and this Egyptian stance by pro-Sisi activists on Twitter has a discursive message. This is also the case in Example (2b) where the term *adli addan* (very expensive) is the cost of Egypt. The pragmatic meaning here is that if war erupts with Turkey, the Egyptians will stand in defense of their land. The interesting, and probably complicated, point that borne in this sentence is that a firm belief of a serious confrontation is presented in a calmly colloquial language. A point that translators need to be fully aware of when handling colloquial translation of texts on social platforms. Indeed, Example (2c) is a continuation of such defying discourse by pro-Sisi activists on Twitter. In following the lines of such pragmatic function of intensifiers in their contextual uses, it can be evidently noticed that those Twitter users are involved in a particular mode of writing. This mode is defined by Hatim and Mason [42] as a discourse which allows participants to adopt "a particular attitude towards areas of socio-cultural activity" (e.g. defying discourse).

The use of intensifiers by LAD speakers on Twitter has probably the same function, but different in their colloquial and dialectal nature. One of the most frequently used intensifier in Libya dialect is $h\bar{a}lbh$ (a lot/too much). Five examples in (3) below reflect the use of this intensifier by LAD speakers.

3) 3a) Transliteration Meaning	hālbh مع أن حتى الفيدر الية فيها فجوات هليه و عيوب. <i>m' anūh hti al-fīdrālīf fīhā fĝwāt <u>hālbh</u> ū' rūb</i> Even through federalism has <u>a lot of</u> gaps and defects.
3b)	لاحظوا قصة تركيا، طلعت هلبه حوافر.
Transliteration	lāhzwā qsi trkīā, tl`t <u>hālbh </u> hwāfr
Meaning	Notice the story of Turkey, it showed <i>a lot of</i> pro-Hafter.
3c)	لو تسكرت جوانب أخرى، حتتدمر تركيا هلبه.
Transliteration	lū tskrt ğwānb a <u>h</u> rā, httdmr tūrkīā hālbh
Meaning	If other sides are closed, Turkey will be <u>severely</u> damaged.
3d)	الزبالة في الشارع والتلفزيون، هلبه علينا.
Transliteration	al-zbālh fī al-šār ' wāltlfzīūn, <u>hālbh</u> 'līnā
Meaning	Garbage is in street and on TV, too much on us!
3e)	هلبه على اوروبا، لا تتحمل.
Transliteration	<u>hālbh</u> ʿlā aūrūbā, lā ttļml
Meaning	<u>Too much</u> on Europe, it wouldn't bear it.

 $h\bar{a}lbh$ in LAD means (a lot of/too much/too many). It operates at a level of maximizing speakers' degree of intensity and certainty. It is subjectively employed by speakers when expressing political views in our research data. The tendency of using dialects in such manner is that speakers feel more expressively fluent and comfortably communicative with this style on social media. It is interesting how intensifiers be used in a metaphorically-laden statement such as in Example (3d). The backgrounded phrase, $h\bar{a}lbh$ '*līnā* (too much on us) has been employed figuratively to refer to the garbage found on TV, compared to the one on streets. Thus, $h\bar{a}lbh$ '*līnā* (too much on us) expresses refusal of watching a TV program that contradicts the speaker's political news. Similarly, this LAD intensifier, in Example (3) above, exhibits intensity of abstract quantity such as <u>hālbh</u> '*lā* aūrūbā (Too much on Europe), $f\check{g}w\bar{a}th\bar{a}lbh$ (a lot of gaps), and $httdmr t\bar{u}rk\bar{i}ahled{h}$ (Turkey will be severely damaged). The translation of the intensifier $h\bar{a}lbh$ (halba) can be rendered into 'a lot', 'severely', or 'too much' in English, as the translation of their meanings show. However, it can take other forms depending on their context in sentences. It can also take the form of 'very' in the sentence $hl\bar{u}hh\bar{a}lbh$ (she is very beautiful).

Another regional LAD intensifier that expresses amplification and maximization is $\bar{u}r\bar{a}m$ (a lot of/too many/too much).

4)	ʿūrām
4a)	ولو واحد من عرم المستشارين اللي معه.
Transliteration	ūlū wāḥd mn ' ūrām al-mstšārīn al-lī mʿh
Meaning	None of the too many of his advisers.
4b)	طرقات عرم تغيرت.
Transliteration	țūrqāt <u>ʿūrām</u> tġīrt
Meaning	Too many plates have changed.
4c)	عرم مع حفتر وعرم مع السراج.
Transliteration	<u>ʿūrām</u> mʿ ḥftr ūʿrm mʿ al-srāj
Meaning	To many with Hafter, too many with Al-Saraj
4d)	عرم كذب، لكن أنكم تستنجدوا بأردو غان!
Transliteration	<u>ʻūrām</u> kḏb, lākn ankm tstnjdwā b'ardūġān
Meaning	Too much lies, but to seek assistance from Erdoğan!

This mode of interaction on Twitter comment domain shows that interlocutors tend to have loquacity and ease during the conversation; they use elements of dialect mixed with standard language, as in Example (4a) above, where the colloquial use of 'ūrām inserted in an informal sentence. This indicates that expressiveness plays a crucial role in selecting the linguistic style and dialect. Speakers in this mode of interaction feel that there are social barriers, and therefore speak comfortably. Example (4b) could have a pragmatic problem in translation due to its social function. The word tūrgāt reflects the political views and beliefs in Libyan political arena. It means that people change their political views according to their personal interest. The intensifier $\bar{u}r\bar{a}m$ is inserted to this sentence in an indication to people – too many people have changed their views to meet the victor's aims in the Libyan conflict. Example (4c) has almost the same function of the intensifier in (4b) - too many people supporting Hafter and too many other supporting Al-Saraj. However, the intensifier in Example (4d) has the function of modifying abstract quantity. 'ūrām can be used with countable and uncountable nouns in LAD and this is reflected in the translation above.

In light of these examples, such variations in the pragmatic functions of those intensifiers in CEAD and LAD can cause increasing challenges to translators if the source context and the political situation are somehow ambiguous. As pragmatic bearers of dialectal and inferential meaning, intensifiers can be problematic when processed into a target language [43, 44]. For instance, Example 3(b) can pose a particular difficulty if the pragmatic function of the sentence is missed out. However, the translation of intensifiers can be achieved despite "the frequently subtle differences between the two linguistic utterances in English and Arabic". As demonstrated, intensifiers in Arabic differ from English in their semantic and pragmatic functions. For instance, the adjective ktir in Modern Standard Arabic and halbh in LAD, that means 'a lot' can be rendered into various forms in English, as shown in Example (3) where they are rendered into 'a lot', 'too much', and 'severely'. This is because intensifiers carry the attitudinal meanings of speakers towards a particular event. In addition, the degree of identification speakers present and stress in the source text can be problematic and troublesome to translators if their pragmatic function is unjustifiably lessened. Intensifiers are gradable in function and thus their gradability has to be maintained in translation.

Tipton and Desilla [37] argue that pragmatic aspects play a very important in translation processes so that translators should deal with meanings in concrete acts of communication that need to be mediated between different sociocultural contexts. It is suggested that it can be quite a challenge to recognize the intended degree of the intensifier at hand. For instance, the pragmatic meaning of 'very' could be rendered differently among LAD and CEAD: a case that requires translators to render it correctly and convey the intended message to the best.

It is important for translators also to get familiar with the different colloquial dialects of Arabic. They should also know how and where their translations are going to be used. If they are translating promotions and advertisements for businesses and corporations, they need to know their audience. Educational institutions and course designers need to address the industry needs and demands through developing these business skills to students and practioners of translation.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study explored the use of linguistic intensification on online social media texts. It specifically looked at the LAD and CEAD intensifiers and their use of Twitter. The study, however, offered a thorough analysis of the selected intensifiers, taking into account their contextual and pragmatic function from a translation point of view. Indeed, in translation processes, different factors need to be addressed for accuracy and reliability purposes. These factors include dialectical and linguistic changes that occur on the target texts, Twitter comments in our case. Translators thus are encouraged to identify the linguistic changes within texts so that translations are accurate, and convey the pragmatic meaning intended by users. It can be concluded that intensifiers in LAD and CEAD are lexically challenging to speakers of English and to speakers of Arabic as well.

Given the global changes in translation industry, it is becoming important for educational institutions to address the different needs of translation students and trainee translators. In fact, social media platforms, such as Twitter, open doors for translators to equip themselves with the variation of dialectal use and colloquial linguistic expressions used by different users in wide geographic locations in the Arab world. Social media platforms are sites for people to connect as they offer researchers tremendously useful corpora of written and spoken texts to study the discrepancies and variations among languages.

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