ISSUES IN INTERACTIVE TRANSLATION PRACTICE ON TWITTER

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Abstract: *I used my Twitter account to tweet images of English and Arabic texts to be translated by my student followers who are translation major. My followers translated the texts and corrected the translation errors, tweeted and re-tweeted their translations and corrections for feedback. I gave feedback on the location and types of translation errors, tweeted prompts, translation tips and resources while followers were re-thinking and working on their answers. The followers reported that they benefited from the variety of translation tips, feedback and dictionaries tweeted. Further pedagogical issues, reflections and recommendations on interactive translation practice via Twitter are given.*

Keywords: *Twitter, translation Tweets, translation hashtags, translation instruction, translation practice, translation education*

I. INTRODUCTION

The past few decades have witnessed a revolution in the use of technology in foreign language teaching and learning and translation instruction and training. A review of the literature has shown numerous studies that revealed the purposes for which various technologies are used. For example, Bahri and Mahadi (2016) found that many English-Persian translation instructors encourage their advanced students to use mobile devices such as laptops, smartphones and tablets for doing homework- assignments, communication with each other, note-taking, acquiring technological skills, searching the Internet to locate resources and checking terminology databases. In Nitzke, Tardel and Hansen-Schirra's (2019) study, the ERASMUS+DigiLing project was used for teaching and improving linguists' and translators' skills and knowledge of digitalisation to prepare them for today's job market. They created six online courses which focused on digital linguistics, localization in the digital age and post-editing machine translation. The DigiLing courses proved to be effective in training translation instructors so that they can stay up to date in their job profiles. In Japan, Takewa (2013) incorporated a Discussion Board and a PaperShow into postgraduate specialised English-Japanese translation modules. The instructor posted the source texts and students had to translate them, read all the translations posted online and leave comments, suggestions or questions on at least one translation a head of class. The PaperShow is like an overhead projector but is connected to a computer. Results showed that the discussion Board enhanced students' active learning and promoted quality learning experiences. It facilitated student-centred learning and helped them take charge of their own learning. Receiving comments on their own work and making comments on other students' work had positive effects on them. They felt less threatened to express their opinions and a positive group dynamic was created. Similarly, the PaperShow was useful to students with hearing difficulties and to those who wished to review important points raised in class. Comments were saved and included in PaperShow presentations which were made available online.

Furthermore, the online localisation platform Crowdin was used for preparing prospective translators at universities, in workshops and private courses offered by the Khan Academy. The Khan Academy also offers tutorials and exercises in medicine, chemistry, computer programming, English grammar, art history and music. The Crowdin platforms translates materials into 65 languages. It is used by 35,000 companies and organisations working in various fields, to help manage their localisation, i.e. translating website content, mobile applications and desktop software into several languages. Crowdin customers hire translators and choose the method of crowdsourcing, i.e. giving the website or application users the opportunity to co-create their native language version. The Crowdin platform helps in organising the process with translators as well. It gives instant translation previews, and the final layout of a website with all the materials, pictures, videos, links and real time content updates. Translators working with know where a translation segment belongs, can decide where a text needs to be minimized to fit the window size, can find their own translation mistakes and correct them (Kudla, 2017).

Other researchers have utilized online cooperative specialized translation. In China, the effects of online cooperative translation on EFL sophomore students majoring in educational technology was investigated by Yang, Guo and Yu (2016). Results demonstrated that online cooperative translations significantly increased students' interest and self-efficacy in specialized English translation. Student engagement significantly correlated with their interest and self-efficacy in translation. Similarly, results of a study by Kitjaroonchai, Kitjaroonchai and Phutikettrkit (2018), in a Thai-English translation course, revealed a statistically significant difference in Thai students' translation skills using online collaborative translation (OCT) in Google Docs. Most students had a positive attitude towards (OCT).

A MOOC (massive open online course) was run at the Open University of UK. It consisted of a free six-week online course that offered a collaborative cross-language discussion on the topics of migration in Europe, a taster of Massive Open Online Courses in the foreign language, and an introduction to subtitling TED Talks. Those activities were hosted on a Moodle page and associated with a forum where students could get feedback from their instructors and course mates. The project hired translation graduates specialising in several languages who collaborated in the translation and subtitling of Open Educational Resources (OER) from English to French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Catalan, Greek and vice versa. Results of surveys showed that MOOCs are suitable for engaging online communities of translators, language teachers and learners, and those interested in crowdsourcing of OER translations. The participants explored numerous online open translation tools such as Transifex, Amara and Google Translator Toolkit, which enabled and facilitated the crowdsourcing of translation, dubbing and subtitling. They reported that they enjoyed the tasks and had the opportunity to get to know other TED Translators. The facilitators reported that they were under pressure trying to provide support and develop problem-solving skills, as some students found TED and Amara complicated (Beaven, Comas-Quinn, Hauck, de los Arcos and Lewis, 2013).

In addition, other recent studies have investigated the use of TED talks and open content in translation training and practice. In a study by Comas-Quinn and Fuertes Gutiérrez (2019), advanced students were introduced to translation and subtitling, and the use of open content to maintain their language skills after graduation through translation in a volunteer project. The students translated the subtitles of TED Talks of their choice, reviewed and provided feedback on two of their peers' translations. Findings showed that most participants enjoyed the activity, particularly being able to choose the talk they would like to translate and interact with other students and volunteers by asking questions and getting advice regarding the linguistic and technical aspects of subtitling. However, few students found the technical aspects of the activity challenging and did not enjoy the unpredictability of working in an open community. In another study, Comas-Quinn (2019) implemented, evaluated and refined several activity designs for using TED Translations in language and translation education to offer students and instructors with effective ways of interacting with TED talks. Participants in these online volunteer translation communities developed many participatory, digital, and technological skills, improved their language skills and gained experience in translation and subtitling.

To summarize, prior studies have utilized numerous technologies in translation pedagogy and practice such as mobile devices, ERASMUS+DigiLing, Discussion Boards and PaperShows, online collaborative translation using Google Docs, Crowdin, and MOOCs. But the literature revealed lack of

studies that utilized social media such Twitter, Facebook, What's App, Instagram, Telegram, or Skype in translation pedagogy and practice, contrary to the foreign language literature which revealed a plethora of studies that investigated the use of social media in teaching and learning a variety of skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in a variety of languages, in and outside the classroom.

Although many individual translators, translation instructors, groups, agencies, departments, and organizations in Saudi Arabia have created a Twitter account, a study by Al-Jarf (2020) in which she examined Twitter accounts of a sample of language and translation instructors in Saudi Arabia found that those instructors mainly use Twitter for making announcements. Instructional tweets are very few. Some tweet English language learning tips and links for the students. Retweets and queries by student followers are very few.

Since I started my Twitter account in 2012, my student followers have been asking me to give translation courses online to help them develop their translation skills while studying and maintain their language and translation skills after graduation. Since 2016, I have been using my Twitter account to tweet language learning and translation tips and exercises for my followers who can comment on the tweets and ask questions about translation. It is the aim of this study to explore my Twitter translation practice environment and whether it has any impact on participants' skill development and attitudes. Specifically, the present study aims to explore the following: (i) the process of teaching translation via Twitter; (ii) the kinds of translation tasks, topics, issues and problems tweeted; (iii) my role as an instructor on Twitter, and my followers' role; (iv) interaction between my followers and myself (requesting followers to do something, giving and receiving feedback, followers' interaction with each other, frequency of interaction with translation tweets, forms of addressing followers, rapport and compliments, language used and follower-initiated tweets); and (v) participants' views and my views as an instructor on the benefits of and challenges encountered in practicing translation via Twitter.

Findings of the present study will be based on a content and interaction analysis of a sample of translation tweets, comments and replies. A system for analysing the tweet content and interaction was designed by the author and used. Findings will be also based on a questionnaire-survey with the participants to explore their attitudes towards using Twitter as a pedagogical tool and translation issues tweeted, and their views on the advantages and drawbacks of using Twitter as a channel for instructor-followers' communication and interaction. Quantitative results of the tweet content analysis together with a qualitative analysis of the followers' responses to the questionnaire-survey will be reported.

Results will shed light on an open pedagogy through Twitter that connects learners in a Twitter community outside the classroom which offers valuable opportunities to engage students and graduates in meaningful tasks that add value to their translation competence and performance, and relate well to a situated and experiential translation pedagogy.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1. My Twitter account

My Twitter account (https://twitter.com/reimaaljarf) was created in June 2012. It has 4,332 followers, with a total of 4,449 tweets, and 392 photos and videos. My tweets cover language learning and translation tweets, educational and self-improvement tweets, tweets about my publications, conferences, talks, some language book exhibits and some of my educational trips.

2.2. Participants

The population of my study consisted of 4332 followers. Anybody interested in translation could join my Twitter translation community. However, for purposes of the present study only active participants, i.e. those who replied or commented on my translation tweets were selected. Thus, the final study sample consisted of 315 active participants or 7% of the total follower population. 241 or 77% of the sample were female and 74 or 23% were male; 62 or 20% used a nickname; 12 or 4% have a Ph.D. degree and 8 active participants were translation groups and agencies. Some participants are students majoring in translation, linguistics or English at some Saudi and Arab universities. Some are

translation and/or English instructors. Participants are all native speakers of Arabic with English as their target language. They have a variety of academic levels (undergraduate, B.A., M.A. and Ph.D.), they have different proficiency levels in English and varying degrees of translation experience.

2.3. Tweet sample

The sample consisted of 150 tweets that required the followers to perform a translation task with their replies. Another sample of 300 awareness-raising and background knowledge tweets that consist of Arabization and translation rules, grammatical structures, prefixes, suffixes and roots, meanings of technical terms and equivalents to commonly used English words in daily Arabic discourse.

III. PROCEDURES

3.1. Tweet material

I tweeted two types of tweets: The first required followers to perform some tasks such as identifying the source and target texts, locating translation errors in words, phrases, sentences and short texts and correcting them (See Figures 1 & 3 in the Appendix). I also tweeted explanations of tasks that were difficult for the followers (See Figure 2 in the Appendix). These tweets aimed at enhancing followers' translation skills and enhancing their translation competence and performance. The second type of tweets aimed at raising students' awareness and providing them with background knowledge. Examples of those are: (i) Arabic meanings of selected prefixes, suffixes and roots with examples (See Figure 4 in the Appendix); (ii) translation tips on stylistic, syntactic, semantic and cultural issues encountered in translation; (iii) meanings of technical terms in several fields; (iv) Arabization techniques; (v) detailed explanation of translation problems published using TwitLonger; (vi) a variety of specialized online dictionaries and glossaries; (vii) machine translation tools on the internet; (viii) images of some of my conference translation presentation slides; and (ix) links to my books and research papers on translation and interpreting. Several Hashtags were used to make it easy for followers to locate certain tweets: #say it in Arabic; #translation skills; #translation errors; #self-learning; #searching skills.

The translation tweet material, i.e. texts with errors were selected from ads, airline magazines, street signs, students' assignments and exams and those in common use in daily conversation in Arabic.

Translation tweet material is not related to a specific course. It was selected based on the author's 26-year experience teaching different translation, linguistics, contrastive analysis, stylistics, semantics, English grammar, vocabulary, specialized terminology, Arabization and culture courses.

3.2. Followers' and instructor's tasks

Followers were required to correct translation errors in the phrases, sentences and texts. Some responded to my questions and re-tweeted their responses for feedback. Followers with faulty responses had to think over their responses, and re-tweet them until they reached an acceptable level. Some asked translation questions. I made comments on each response. I would point out the location and types of errors. I did not provide correct translations right away even when some participants tweeted questions (See Figures 3, 5 & 6 in the Appendix). I tweeted prompts, tips and resources while followers were thinking and working on their responses to help them gain knowledge and reach a correct answer. My aim was to foster independent thinking. I reinforced correct responses by giving words of encouragement.

Participation in my Twitter translation community was voluntary. Any follower could make comments, reply and ask questions. No exams were given, and no grades assigned. No participation certificates were given either.

IV. DATA COLLECTION

4.1. Tweet content analysis

First, the author skimmed through the tweets and each comment and reply. Then a system for analysing and classifying the tweet content, comments (replies) and interaction between the participants and myself was created by the author. The system consisted of the following categories:

(i) **Instructional tweets:** Those that focus on translation tasks that required followers to locate translation and linguistic errors and correct them, checking information in dictionaries and resources, and explanations of answers when followers cannot reach a correct answer (See Figures 1, 2 & 3 in the appendix).

(ii) **Tweets that raise followers' awareness and provide background knowledge** necessary for translation such as: (a) English and Arabic singular and plural rules; (b) English words commonly confused *(accept/except; allusion/illusion);* (c) specialized terms and their Arabic equivalents; (d) Common foreign words used in the flow in daily speech by Arabs; € Arabization techniques; (f) Translation rules and tips such as paying attention to parallel structure, collocations, starting an Arabic sentence with the verb. Here followers do not perform any tasks. They just read (See figure 4 in the appendix).

(iii) **Interaction analysis**, i.e., (dialogue) between the instructor and followers, consists of:
  - *Requesting students to do something* such as checking the meanings of a word in a dictionary, checking a rule, reading another follower's response, rephrasing an answer, changing word order, paying attention to syntactic and morphological structures.
  - *Giving and receiving feedback*: making comments, giving suggestions (alternative translation) and ideas for improvement.
  - *Followers' interaction with each other*: responding and commenting on each other's replies or opinions.
  - *Frequency of interaction* with translation tweets. Those include the number of *Impressions* (number of times a tweet is shown to people, no matter how), *Engagements* (any interaction to an account and content), *Likes, Retweets* and *Replies*.
  - **Forms of addressing students**: *dear, formal address, hey guys, smart translators*.
  - *Rapport and compliments*: words of encouragement, use of emotions, greetings, thanking, best wishes.
  - *Non-verbal communication*: Use of smileys and images.
  - *Language used*: English and/or Arabic; formal and/or informal; Standard and/or colloquial.

(iv) **Student-initiated tweets**: Those include requesting information about resources, judging a translation, how to improve translation skills, recommending books on translation, how to apply for an M.A. or Ph.D. in translation and so on.

(v) **Miscellaneous:** photos of an ad, screenshot of a translated text, dictionary entry, images of word lists and their equivalents, redirecting followers to a TwitLonger, website, dictionary entries.

Each tweet was classified under one category only, then tallied and frequencies and percentage were computed. For reliability and validity purposes, a sample of tweets was categorized, tallied and quantified for a second time after two weeks, to check inconsistencies in analysing, classifying and quantifying the tweets. Both analyses were compared, and discrepancies were solved.

4.2. Assessing the effect of the Twitter translation practice

A questionnaire-survey survey was used to assess participants views of the effectiveness and shortcomings of the translation practice via Twitter. The survey used the following open-ended questions: (i) Did you benefit from the translation tweets? Why? Why not? What did you learn? What are the shortcomings of using Twitter for translation practice? (vi) Did Twitter make a difference in translation practice? All responses were tallied and summarized. Results are reported qualitatively. The author also kept a log of the benefits and challenges of the daily interactions with the followers.

V. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Results of the content analysis of the translation tweets in each category were computed in frequencies and percentages, whereas followers' responses to the questionnaire-survey were categorized and are reported qualitatively. It was not possible to use a pre- and post-test to assess the effectiveness of the translation practice via Twitter as the account is not part of, nor related to a formal course, and no exams and no grades are involved. Therefore, the number of Impressions, Engagements, Likes, Retweets and Replies to each tweet in the sample was obtained from my Twitter account analytics.

VI. RESULTS

6.1. Tweet analytics

Results of the content analysis of the tweets showed that for translation task tweets, the typical number of Impressions was 2391 (range 176 to 11158), the typical number of Engagements was 388 (range 3 to 3623), the typical number of Likes was 4 (range 0 to 24), the typical number of Retweets was 1 (range between 0 to 11), and the typical number of Replies was 3 (range 0 to 24). As for the awareness raising tweets (vocabulary, grammar, Arabization tweets and so on), the typical number of Impressions was 2536 (range 576 to 4474), the typical number of Engagements was 88 (range 28 to 694), the typical number of Likes was 11 (range 3 to 24), the typical number of Retweets was 10 (range 2 to 25), the typical number of Replies was 0 (range 0 to 4). These results show that the number of Impressions, Engagements, Likes, Retweets and Replies varied greatly within and across the translation task tweets and the awareness-raising tweets. There were more Replies (comments) in the translation tasks, and more Likes and Retweets in the awareness-raising Tweets as the latter required reading only.

6.2. Interaction in my Twitter translation community

I requested followers to translate words, phrases, a short text, answer a question or judge the translation or grammatical correctness of a phrase, judge the accuracy of an Arabic equivalent, identify translation errors and correct them. My tweets contained greetings and words of encouragements such as *Salam Alaykom, thank-you notes, best wishes, Great/Good job! Keep it Up! Excellent answer! Good for you! Bravo!* Participants were respectful of each other and of the instructor. Some responded to a compliment with the corresponding greeting or used colorful smileys to show emotions. Some had a good sense of humor in their responses.

Follower-initiated tweets were evident in limited occasions where they made comments and compliments, requested information about resources or judging a translation for an assignment, how to improve translation skills, asking for books on translation and how to apply for an M.A. in translation.

In most tweets, the forms of address were mostly formal, with occasional informal expressions such as use of *Dr, Prof., dear followers, May Allah bless you,* and colloquial Arabic expressions. Standard Arabic is the main language of communication in my tweets; English was used in less than 40% of the tweets. Arabic was mainly used for tweeting questions, tasks and explanations, word meaning and translation. Occasional announcements about my keynote addresses, public and Periscope lectures were tweeted in English and/or Arabic. Colloquial, non-standard Arabic was mostly used in followers' Replies.

As for interaction between my followers and myself, the number of dynamic (active) participants is relatively low (7%) compared to the total follower population of my account and the number of Retweets, Likes, and Replies. Interaction was less than I expected probably because I do not know most of the participants personally and many participants do not know each other. Some use a nickname or just their first name without nothing about their background in their bio. The low level of interaction probably reflects a low level of interest in the issues tweeted, being busy with work, family or studies. Some feel shy, hesitant or inadequate to make a comment in public that might be incorrect. Commitment on their part was not high, probably because exams, grades, credit and participation certificates are involved to compel them to participate and interact with tweets.

There was no consistency in who replied to the different tweets. Some participants would reply to few tweets here, others would reply to few tweets there and would not reply again. Following and unfollowing my account was very common. Followers' reactions differed from tweet to tweet as reflected in the amount of Replies, Likes and Retweets mentioned in section 6.1 above, depending on the topic, novelty, familiarity, difficulty level and acquaintance with instructor, and respondent's calibre. It was not possible to predict which topic would receive high Replies, Likes and Retweets.

6.3. Followers' Views

Responses to a questionnaire-survey showed that followers had positive attitudes towards translation practice via Twitter. They described my account as enriching, specialized, inspiring, unique, exquisite, useful, helpful, fun, they like it, it helped them brush up their knowledge, and provided extra practice. They found the hashtags helpful in locating the tweets. They found the topical language and translation resources and translation issues tweeted useful and helpful. They indicated that the Twitter practice environment was supportive, encouraging and secure for making mistakes. Abdullah thinks that I sharpened followers' translation skills and improved their Arabic language. Lulu likes the way I break down complex information into smaller, simpler units that makes them eager to know more. Saif felt that I consolidated information by referring to words that are ambiguous or words that are often confused. Malak added that I helped followers think from different perspectives. Graduate students indicated that they liked sharing my research papers, books, and articles about my experiences as a student with followers. I was inspiring to them. My tweets helped them in writing specialized articles for their graduate translation courses such as standardization in translation. The followers asked me to publish my old notebook in which I collected prefixes, suffixes and roots while studying for the GRE in a book. Further comments that participants made are below:

- Nora: *"You created a warm climate between followers and yourself and among the followers themselves."*
- Sultan: *"There is suspense in the way you present information (I looking forward towards coming tweets)."*
- Mira: *"We learn and enjoy what you tweet, and you push us to check references and you encourage student translators to check your account."*
- Eman: *"You ask a question and let us brainstorm for a day."*
- Sarah: *"Most words are not new for me, but you group words and connect them in a unique way that helps us see relationships and connections."*
- Aram: *"I liked how you relate the semantic and pragmatic meaning of a word each time you introduce a word".*
- Ghadah: *"You simplified information and gave examples that showed how theory can be applied".*
- Lana: *"You really benefit both novice and professional translators! The information you give is important for translators, clear, precise, to the point, the gist."*
- Amal: *"You don't give only information but ask questions! Turning the notifications on for your account shows how important it is!!"*
- Rawan: *"You give information and ask questions that motivate translation students to search for the answer."*
- Madawi: *"You teach different translation strategies and emphasize the importance of context in translation."*
- Khadija: *"you helped me maintain my language skills after graduation through translation in a volunteer project."*
- May and Moudi: *"Meanings of prefixes, suffixes and roots tweeted are easier to understand from your account than looking them up in a dictionary. You show how the meaning of prefixes, suffixes and roots is not fixed but changeable according to context. You show the meaning of affixes and roots in a smooth, fun way."*
- A translation instructor: *"I teach medical translation and your tweets helped me a lot."*

Furthermore, some followers suggested the integration of other technologies to help make up for the limitation in tweet length (formerly 140 characters). They also recommended using more visual resources such as Periscope and videoconferencing in translation practice via Twitter.

6.4. Instructor's views

As an instructor/facilitator, I found interaction with my followers to be fun. The Twitter translation environment was inspiring for me. I compiled 3 books. I also gave lectures about some translation topics through Periscope. It kept me thinking, all the time, of translation topics to tweet.

One of the challenges of serving as an instructor/facilitator in a Twitter community is that it is a 24-hour commitment. It is challenging to deal with a heterogeneous group of followers, many of whom are unknown to me, have varying needs, and proficiency and translation skill levels. It is time-consuming to respond to each and every follower who expects a quick comment from me. It is difficult to keep up with the speed and number of tweets and retweets on the part of the followers. Due to limited tweet length (formerly 140 characters), I had to prepare an explanation, extra examples and convert them into images (See figures 1,2, 3 & 4 in the Appendix).

Since followers are used to rote memorization, they ask for direct answers from me rather than trying several times, although I tried to teach them how (the process) to reach a correct translation. Some did not want to check a dictionary, especially for Arabic words. They insisted that I give the answer directly. Some did not read other followers' responses to a question. A follower would ask a question that was answered earlier, respond to a question which was answered long ago, or tweet a response like the one that I commented on earlier and ask for my feedback.

Although the experiment proved to be beneficial and effective in enhancing active followers' translation skills, there were few limitations. It was difficult to define the translation needs, English and Arabic proficiency levels or translation background of participating followers in a large heterogeneous group, who have different interests, areas of specialty, translation experience, and educational level. Since the account is not related to any course, topic selection was a challenge, as I did not know which translation issues are relevant to, suitable for and appealing to them. I tried to vary the tweet topics to keep the followers interested. I would tweet texts with translation errors for a while, then tweet prefixes, suffixes and roots for some time, then switch to Arabization tweets and so on.

Since I started tweeting translation Tweets in 2016, I have not been regular in tweeting due to my busy schedule. I tweet whenever I have the time. Some weeks I tweeted more than others. I do not have a schedule for, nor a detailed list of issues that I want to tweet. I do that out of convenience. When I am busy, I tweet topics that require reading only. When I have time, I tweet ads with translation mistakes to be corrected or give a lecture via Periscope.

Another disadvantage of using Twitter for translation practice is inaccuracy in locating and accessing a tweet on a specific issue. Although I used several hashtags, clicking on, or searching for tweets related to a hashtag would not show all the tweets under it. One would also get other people's tweets under the same hashtag. In this case, one may need to go through all of the tweets one by one, which is tedious and time-consuming.

Sometimes I felt that I could not clarify problematic points to all followers and that face-to-face contacts and explanations are indispensable, in which case a gesture would make the point clear and would save time and effort.

Finally, some followers asked for help in homework which was beyond the aim of the experiment. Others would post a text or send me a translation and ask me to correct it. Such requests should be handled carefully especially, in this day and age, in which mobile devices have made it easy to cheat on exams.

VII. DISCUSSION

Findings of the present study are consistent with findings of other prior studies that integrated other types of technology in translator education, such as mobile devices (Bahri and Mahadi, 2016), ERASMUS+DigiLing (Nitzke, Tardel and Hansen-Schirra's, 2019), Discussion Boards and

PaperShows (Takewa , 2013), the online localisation platform Crowdin (Kudla, 2017), online collaborative translation (OCT) in Google Docs (Kitjaroonchai, Kitjaroonchai and Phutikettrkit, 2018), MOOCs (Beaven, Comas-Quinn, Hauck, de los Arcos and Lewis, 2013), translating and subtitling TED talks (Comas-Quinn and Fuertes Gutiérrez, 2019; Comas-Quinn, 2019). Such studies found those technologies effective in improving translators' skills.

The present study is also consistent with prior studies in the challenges of online translation communities. Like this study, facilitators in Beaven, Comas-Quinn, Hauck, de los Arcos and Lewis' (2013) study were under pressure trying to provide support and develop problem-solving skills in students, as some students found the Amara and TED platforms complicated. Few students in Comas-Quinn and Fuertes Gutiérrez's (2019) found the technical aspects of translating and subtitling of TED talks challenging and did not enjoy the unpredictability of working in an open community.

Likewise, results of the questionnaire-survey showed positive attitudes on the part of the participants towards the interactive Twitter translation practice. This result is consistent with findings of prior studies using other forms of technology in translation education such as Kitjaroonchai, Kitjaroonchai and Phutikettrkit (2018), Takewa (2013), and Beaven, Comas-Quinn, Hauck, de los Arcos and Lewis (2013).

The insufficient interaction between the instructor and her followers, as Nowell (2012) indicated, may be attributed to fear of socializing with instructors in digital environments, and to instructors' discomfort with online social interactions with students. Both students and instructors may struggle to cross the boundaries surrounding instructors' private and professional lives. Rambe's (2012) findings suggested other factors contributing to insufficient interaction like the prevalence of formal authoritative (or hierarchical) discourses, few informal liberating (horizontal) discourses, emerging peer-based collaboration and limited student engagement with theory. Krutka, Nowell and Whitlock (2017) added that defects in course organization and facilitation, mismatches between students and instructors' expectations of social media, which social media they like to use, and teachers' limited experience of how social media might be effectively utilized in their classrooms contribute to insufficient interaction.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study analyzed the content of a sample of translation tweets on the author's Twitter account. Both participating followers and the author, as instructor, expressed positive attitudes towards Twitter as a tool for interactive translation practice. Twitter created opportunities for in-depth peer-to-peer and follower-instructor interaction. It supported interactive knowledge creation and sharing in social media learning environment. Despite that, few shortcomings were pointed out such as the bulk of replies and comments, and the heterogeneity of the followers which can be overcome by creating a separate Twitter account as a supplement to a specific translation course, followed by students enrolled in that course, with tweets and extension activities related to the topics and skills taught in the course. An outline of the translation topics and issues to be tweeted can be made based on a need's assessment of the students.

To make the best out of Twitter as a quick an effective social medium, translation instructors in Saudi Arabia should be encouraged by their departments to sign up for a Twitter account and to follow each other. Instructors with more focused accounts, higher interaction and instructional focus may talk about their experience and colleagues who are new to social media, those with few tweets, or those who do not know which translation instructional issues to tweet, and how to tweet them.

To increase the interaction among translation instructors and their student followers and to make translation instruction and practice via Twitter more beneficial for students, instructors, as Rinaldo, Tapp and Laverie (2011) indicated, can engage students in conversations about the Twitter translation community, in experiential learning, and in direct communication with other student followers to generate discussion and interest in the translation topics and activities. To enhance translation teaching and learning experiences among student followers and instructors using social media, a combination of face-to-face teaching and Twitter-based teaching is the best mix. Twitter

accounts can be integrated with e-learning tools of an Online Management System such as Blackboard, or Moodle for further discussions. Instructors who wish to integrate social media into the delivery of undergraduate classes can also take Barr's (2013) recommendations for integrating multimedia into consideration: the need for students to see the reasons for using technology, enhanced access to resources, variation in the learning activities, an appreciation of the instructional reasons for using technology, and the need for comfort, i.e., facilitating familiar learning activities.

In addition, Twitter can be used as a platform for crowdsourcing as in the translation of Wikipedia articles, in which some translation students, at some Saudi colleges of translation are involved. Online translation crowdsourcing at Saudi colleges of translation is still open for further investigation. Finally, the instructional uses of other social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype and Telegram, as online open translation communities can be investigated by researchers in the future.

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APPENDIX

Screenshots showing texts with errors, questions, explanations, interaction and feedback, number of Likes, Retweets & Replies

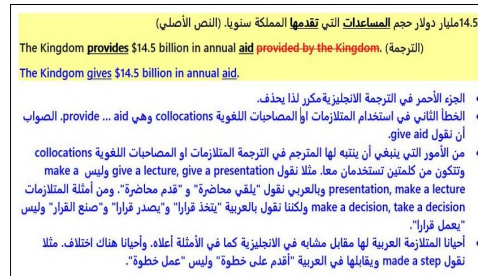Figure 1: Two texts with translation errors.

Figure 2: Explanation and error correction for text in Figure 1

Figure 3: Sample questions about translation errors

Figure 4: Prefixes with examples and meanings

Figure 5: Common translation errors & correct equivalents

Figure 6: Sample responses and interaction