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Diglossia Challenges in Arabic Translation: Navigating Linguistic Duality in Contemporary Translation Practice

Abstract

This paper investigates the various problems of Arabic diglossia vis-à-vis translators. In the case of Arabic, translational duality is manifested through Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and numerous regional dialects and translators who work between Arabic and other languages. Drawing on theoretical approaches, linguistic insights, and case studies, this study explores the degree to which the Arab diglossic situation influences the process of translation in literature, media, science, and the internet. The paper highlights central methods to bridge the gap from MSA to the dialects. That includes code-switching attitudes, contextual adaptation and IT solutions.

Combining ongoing research and translation practices, it aims to provide insights into Arabic diglossia for an understanding of this complex phenomenon, along with practical strategies for handling it in professional translation. The implications of these findings suggest that translators should enhance their diglossic consciousness and adopt a strategy of adaptation to effectively shift from one Arabic variety to the other, maintaining their own cultural and linguistic identities.

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الخلاصة:

تبحث هذه الدراسة في مختلف مشكلات الازدواجية اللغوية في اللغة العربية فيما يتعلق بالمتترجمين. في حالة اللغة العربية، تتجلى الازدواجية الترجمية باللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة والعديد من اللهجات الإقليمية فضلا عن المترجمين الذين يعملون بين اللغة العربية واللغات الأخرى. بالاعتماد على المناهج النظرية والرؤى اللغوية ودراسات الحالة، تستكشف هذه الدراسة مدى تأثير الوضع الازدواجي العربي على عملية الترجمة في الأدب، والإعلام، والعلوم، والإنترنت. تُسلط الدراسة الضوء على الطرق الأساسية لسد الفجوة بين اللغة العربية الفصحى واللهجات التي تشمل مواقف التبديل اللغوي، والتكيف السياقي، وحلول تكنولوجيا المعلومات. من طريق الجمع بين الأبحاث الجارية والممارسات الترجمية، وتهدف الدراسة إلى تقديم رؤى حول الازدواجية اللغوية في اللغة العربية لفهم هذه الظاهرة المعقدة، إلى جانب إستراتيجيات عملية للتعامل معها في الترجمة الاحترافية. وتشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أنه ينبغي للمترجمين أن يعززوا وعيهم بالازدواجية اللغوية واعتماد إستراتيجية التكيف للتحول بفعالية بين أنواع اللغة العربية المختلفة، مع الحفاظ على هوياتهم الثقافية واللغوية.

الكلمات الدالة: ازدواجية اللغة العربية، دراسات الترجمة، اللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة، اللغة العربية العامية، التبديل اللغوي، تكنولوجيا الترجمة، التكيف الثقافي، الثنائية اللغوية

1. Introduction

1.1 The Multiplicity of Arabic: Translation Dilemmas

Translation is considered an "important means of communication among people in the world on various aspects of life" (Ibrahim, 2024: 597). However, the variety of Arabic often poses great difficulties for students and language translation professionals. Arabic diglossia has received considerable interest from scholars of various disciplines, as indicated by AlBzour (2015). We have seen that Arabic offers a complicated sociolinguistic scene in which Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) exists alongside numerous local dialects, yielding a diglossic situation that has obvious effects on the act (process) of translating and the translation product.

Diglossia, which was first elaborated upon systematically by Ferguson (1959) and has subsequently received the attention of many a scholar, involves a scenario where two linguistic varieties co-exist next to each other, each with its own communicational role (Valdman, 1968: 7; Hudson, 2002: 3). In the Arabic context, MSA is the "high" variety used in formal writing, education, and media, whereas colloquial dialects represent the "low" variety of everyday speech (Albirini, 2016). This stratified language situation incurs its own dilemmas regarding the translation work, which relates to differences between these linguistic varieties on the one hand and the source text on the other.

Although the specific linguistic traits of Arabic diglossia have been well documented in the literature, relatively little attention has been given to the theory's practical translation implications (Harbi, 2022). This is especially relevant at present, characterized by increased Arabic translation in an increasingly globalized world where bridging cross-cultural communication gaps is becoming of greater relevance. The present study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing the impact of diglossia on translation processes, strategies, and outcomes in various spheres.

1.2 Diglossia in Arabic: Contemporary Understanding

Arabic diglossia is a best-known target of research in sociolinguistic studies. Unlike many other languages, there is quite a difference between the written and spoken forms, as we will show, because the contact language of the written BBC corpus is quite different to either MSA or any of the Arabic vernaculars. As Saiegh-Haddad (2014) argues, this duality of language presents both NS and TS with a "cognitive challenge" when translating Arabic texts.

More recent analyses of Arabic diglossia have extended beyond Ferguson's original dichotomy to acknowledge a more complex sociolinguistic spectrum (Badawi, 1973). Indeed, as Ibrahim (2020) notes, Arabic has a continuum that

spans from classical Arabic to very dialectal varieties, with many intermediary varieties attested in specific communicative settings. Recent technological shifts and globalization have also strengthened these factors due to new hybrid forms of Arabic introduced in digital communication (Al-Kahtany, 2019).

Translators must work within the framework of this complex linguistic system. Translation in the Arab world is about more than just the process of translating; it is also about the shifting between various forms of the Arabic language itself. This involves the need for "diglossic competence" - the ability to effectively identify and translate content in different parts of the continuum, as described by Khamis-Dakwar (2020).

2. Understanding Diglossia

2.1 Definition and Characteristics

The core of Arabic diglossia is the coexistence in a single language community of two sets of dialects: the formal, standardized variety (colloquially known as MSA or *fuṣḥā*) and a wide range of spoken dialects (colloquially known as *‘āmmiyya*). This linguistic duality is realized in different dimensions, such as phonological, Morphological, syntactic and lexical aspects, as AlBzour and AlBzour (2015) define that. On one hand, this phenomenon is described by some scholars as "Displaying Disloyalty for the Standard Variety" (Dannesh, 2013) where differences between Arabs in different parts of the world are being widened but on the other hand it is perceived by others as a harmonizing tool (Al-Kahtany, 1997).

Arabic diglossia is more than just linguistic variation. MSA has attained a high culturo-linguistic status related to religious literature, formal education, and literary legacy (Alrwaita et al., 2023). Dialectal Arabic, however, is generally linked to colloquial everyday use and informality and to specific regional traits.

This prestige asymmetry is what gives rise to a “status asymmetry” (Bassiouney, 2020) that has immediate repercussions on translation decisions and strategies.

A feature that makes Arabic diglossia even more special is its persistence in time since Fergusson’s original account issued in 1959 is still relevant now despite increasing complexity of sociolinguistic (globalization and digital media) history (Alfaisal & Aljanada, 2019). The persistence of such a diglossic state is an expression of ingrained cultural and historical resistance, which compounds and advertising the translation challenges.

2.2 Historical Context of Arabic Diglossia

The origins of Arabic diglossia are complex and long, and most linguists believe that their roots can be traced back to the early days of Islam. As indicated in recent literature (systematic reviews), Arabic diglossia results from religion, politics and socialization (QRF, 2020). The prestige of Classical Arabic, the form in which the Qur'an and early Islamic literature were written, set a higher standard which relatively did not change, while the spoken varieties continued to diverge naturally within different parts of the expanding Arab world over time (Zughoul, 2018).

In the medieval age, the discrepancy between written and spoken Arabic became greater as Arab civilization extended to various corners of the globe (Habash, 2018). Additional separation took place during the Ottoman period (1516-1918), with the Turkish administrative influence records reflected on the local dialects while Classical Arabic continued to be the language of education and religion. The new era (the modern period) in general, and the Nahda (Arab Renaissance) phase of the 19th century specifically, began debates and questions around language reform and language standardization, ending in modern times (Lucy, 1992; Hussein, 2017).

The colonial period added further complexity in that the European colonial powers shaped language policies and school systems. As Al-Wer and de Jong (2017: 245) observe, on this period (the period of the birth of Modern Standard Arabic as a separate entity from Classical Arabic during the attempts to modernize the language while retaining tradition in an artificial state): This ephemeral process of historical sedimentation has resulted in a “palimpsestic linguistic landscape” (El-Enany, 2019) that translators need to negotiate.

3. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

3.1 Linguistic Features of MSA

The variety thus generated through the continuum is referred to as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). MSA is the language used for educational, literary, media, and official functions in all Arab countries (QRF, 2020). Its unique language features pose particular difficulties to its translators.

The derivational morphology in MSA is root-pattern based, and lexical items are derived from consonantal roots that are manipulated by predictable patterns. It permits impressive lexical productivity, but renders translation complex, particularly for technical or contemporary terms (Ryding, 2019). MSA also has a complex case system with parts of speech that may or may not bear equivalent forms in target languages such as English.

Syntactically, Modern Standard Arabic is an antilithic language, as it prefers verb-subject-object orders, unlike many other Indo-European languages which have preferentially nominal subject-verb-object orders. This basic difference often requires considerable overhauls in the translation process. MSA also features a complicated agreement system and a temper which must be tackled carefully in translations.

Culturally, MSA has modernized heavily through the infusion of neologisms. The Arab world has developed its own terms for many modern

concepts, which differ from one Arab country to another but include borrowed terms, indigenous terms, and balkinizations of foreign terms, and in a few cases replaced formal Arabic terms. This lexicosemantic flexibility adds further complexity for translators when they look for terminological equivalents.

3.2 Role of MSA in Education and Media

Modern Standard Arabic is also taught in schools and used 85% of the time in the news. It is worth mentioning that MSA, as the LoI is employed in all school levels from primary to university level (QRF, 2020). This educational focus empowers MSA and perpetuates the diglossic cleavage, as students are encouraged to navigate between their local dialectal variety and the prestige standardized form of the language which is the language of formal education.

Informs of media, formal broadcast and official language MSA was always high: print journalism dominated with no exception. But modern media terrain is a bit more complicated. News reports are generally in MSA, especially for international or pan-Arab media, and entertainment programming often mixes MSA and dialectal elements or is in dialect with MSA subtitles. Digital technology has exacerbated the destabilization of traditional diglossic frontiers and has produced new kinds of hybridized texts that question older solutions to translation.

The predominance of MSA in formal and educational media has grave consequences for translation. Texts from these domains tend to conform to client style restrictions, making uniform translation possible. However, translators often have an even harder time when dealing with content that is in part in the code-switching or dialect they include, but which nevertheless occurs within an otherwise formal setting – a trend that is becoming more frequent in modern Arabic media. This context requires what Al-Qinai (2021) calls as "diglossic sensitivity" on the part of translators of Arabic.

4. Regional Dialects of Arabic

4.1 Overview of Major Dialects

There is a high amount of diversity among Arabic dialects throughout the Arab countries that coalesce in clusters with phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic differences (Abdo, 2020). According to some classification systems, the largest dialect group is Maghrebi (North African), followed by Egyptian, Levantine, Gulf, and Iraqi varieties. Each group includes multiple local subdialects that are more or less mutually intelligible (Youssi, A., 2019).

The dialects of North Africa, including Moroccan, Algerian, Tunisian, Libyan, and Egyptian, with their unique phonological characteristics, are influenced by significant Berber substrates. Egyptian Arabic (Cairene Egyptian) is perhaps the most widely understood variety since it has been spreading by means of mass media (notably television and film) for the last 50 years. The Levantine (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine) dialect family is another major one and the gulf (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman) ones are more similar to CA in their own way. However, the case of Iraqi Arabic is quite different, with significant Persian and Turkish influence.

Translators face considerable difficulties in the translation of texts in dialectal varieties, especially in cases where their use is intentional with a regional character for reasons of culture or style. As Blanc (2018) notes, “dialectal markers are often full of cultural and social connotations that do not always lend themselves to an ‘easy’ translation”. Such interpretations may have to do with socioeconomic background, knowledge of rural v. urban lifestyles, religious beliefs or age - arenas careful translators take into account in choosing a translation strategy.

4.2 Variations in Syntax and Vocabulary

The contrast between standard Arabic and Arabic dialects form some challenging translation issues in syntactic and word lexical choice. Even though MSA maintains a certain degree of regularity in grammar in the whole Arab

world, dialectal Arabic shows quite a lot of regional variation (Maamouri, 1998). Such diversity ranges from the vocabulary level to the most basic syntactic patterns, from verb conjugation system to pronoun usage, and sentence structure.

On the syntactic level, numerous dialects have reduced the complexity of the case system, created novel aspect and tense systems, and, in some cases, altered word order. For instance, Egyptian Arabic overall has SOV (subject-object-verb) word order, while MSA notably prefers VSO (verb-subject-object) structure. Likewise, vernacular spoken varieties have evolved innovative syntactic mechanisms in questions, negation and conditional constructions which are used in a different manner from MSA (Hary, 2017).

Lexical diversity offers no less of a problem. Common vocabulary items vary widely between dialects, and words for common objects, activities, and ideas are frequently totally dissimilar. These variations are also deepened by heavy borrowings from contact languages such as French in North African, Turkish in Levantine-Egyptian Arabic, Persian in Iraqi-Gulf and English in many of the modern urban varieties.

It takes translation and its demand on translators' dialectal expertise, and the importance of the target audience. That is, the choice between standardization and retention of dialectal feature when translating dialectal property (for MSA or some other language) will often shape how the cultural meaning of a text is translated. As Mejdell (2018) notes, such decisions are never solely linguistic, but invoke multilayered cultural and ethical deliberations concerning representation and authenticity.

5. Translation Challenges

5.1 Lexical Gaps Between MSA and Dialects

One of the perennial problems in the Arabic translation is that of the lexical gap between MSA and dialects. This diglossic scenario presents "a unique

challenge to professionals who are involved in assessing children's emergent learning abilities (e.g., Speech Language Pathologists, Reading Specialists and Educators)" (Saiegh-Haddad, 2014) and also has implications for translators dealing with different Arabic varieties.

There are a few different ways in which these gaps between words that refer to things and words that refer to people appear. Many common items have completely different lexical realization between MSA and dialects, in forms for which there is no evident relationship. For example, the standard word for "now" is الآن (al-ān) in MSA, but is دلوقتي (dilwa'ti) in Egyptian Arabic, and هسع (hassa) in Iraqi Arabic. Second, technical, academic and abstract words often have MSA standard forms and no widely accepted dialectal correspondences can be found, thus the translation is asymmetrical. Third, dialectal variants frequently index cultural and social references and contextual meanings that are resistant to standardization.

For translators, such lacunae call for advanced mediation tactics. Solutions must also be sought when one translates from dialect into MSA or another language: one can standardize dialectal terms, render them as marginal words, or propose functional equivalents reflecting their figurative-semantic value. On the other hand, the assimilation of a text into dialect asks for the use of regional lexical selections, which should appear natural to the receptor of the translation. Ghazala (2019) offers a cultural equivalence approach that privileges functional and connotative dimensions rather than strict lexical resemblance in dealing with such gaps.

5.2 Cultural Nuances in Translation

The system of Arabic diglossia is concerned with the cultural meaning, and hence the translation of culturally loaded material is so much harder. The Arabic language offers 'serious challenges' for researchers because of its cultural depth

(Attia, 2015). The cultural meanings of each dialectal level and the implications of this change in translation have added to prevail social meanings and history all leaving the posit to the culture and history behind these language variates.

These cultural elements are most visible in idioms, proverbs, jokes, and small talk. As in the case of Egypt, for example, dialects usually make use of the culturally specific metaphors and references that resist translation, even into MSA. Religion is a complicating factor, since Islamic scholars tend to intermingle Classical Arabic with dialectal content in their utterances, resulting in intraspeaker code-switching that translators have to deal with.

There are also cultural dimensions to formality that present yet another obstacle. The decision between MSA and dialect in the source text frequently indicates relationships between the speaker and the addressed, and/or the level of formal education, and/or the level of formality needed in a given context. How should translators try to represent these dimensions in target languages where equivalent diglossic resources are not available? As Al-Jabri (2022) suggests, what is needed to produce effective translations is not merely linguistic competency in the two languages in speaking of, but also "deep cultural literacy" of both the source and target cultures.

5.3 Contextual Adaptation in Translation

Arabic to Arabic source text translation often needs contextual compensation to deal with diglossic varieties and target language-specific linguistic models. Recent studies on media discourses show "how the distinctions in each performance affect the kind of language used in Arabic varieties" (Al-Kahtany, 1997). These contextual indicators have a real impact on translation decisions.

Adaptations are text-type-specific, target-audience-specific and communication-goal-specific. The translation decision has often revolved around

whether to normalize the spoken particularity or creatively represent the linguistic variance in the target language. The challenges for AVT are even greater, as subtitlers and dubbers need to rely on both verbal and non-verbal context to translate dialogue in the numerous Arabic varieties (Elsayed, 2022).

Most technical and official documents would need to be standardized toward MSA, though not taking into account any dialectal elements from the original text, in contrast more marketing and creative works would prefer to retain the dialectal elements due to its authenticity and appeal of target audience. Each context calls for what Khalifa (2021) specifies as “adaptive mediation” or “bridging mediation,” a middle-ground negotiation between source-text demandedness and target audience requiredness.

The issue of matching context even applies within the digital translator space, where MSA and dialects more and more mixed in new ways. New media and digital discourse in the digital sphere, on web forums, and online communication is characterized by quick code-switching between varieties, leading to what Al-Sobh (2023) labels “digital diglossia”—a reality that disrupts traditional translation models and calls for creative adaptation.

6. Case Studies

6.1 Literary Translation Examples

Examples of how diglossia challenges the translator can be found abundantly in literary translation. A study of translations from English into Arabic (Al-Kahtany, 1997) suggests the manner in which 'translation is conducted within a pre-trial police interview where a migrant person's communication of certain crucial legal obligations becomes problematic because of differences in legal background'. It is an issue that becomes more complex in the literary context, where dialects can have a narrative function that they wouldn't perform in casual speech.

Difficulties of translation arise from Naguib Mahfouz's Cairo Trilogy. Arabic-original text uses Cairene dialect in dialogue on purpose to create a sense of character realism and MSA in narration. English versions by Hutchins (1990) and later by Theroux (2001) employ different strategies of dealing with this diglossic variation: the former normalizing the dialogue in formal English, the latter experimenting in a sociolectal variation using colloquial terms and syntax. These variant emphases greatly impacted English readers' perception of characters and their social position.

Current Arabic prose frequently resorts to even more sophisticated diglossic strategies, such as those employed by writers who intentionally blend MSA, Egyptian dialect, and English in order to construct unique literary voices, as is the case for Ahmed Alaidy (2006). Translating such hybrid texts involves the sort of “creative compensation” required for target language strategies that manage to reproduce the sociolinguistic aspects of the SL hybrid without recourse to direct diglossic equivalence (El-Enany, 2019).

Translating poetry is particularly hard, especially regional poetry may use different prosodic features and cultural references that wend standardization. These challenges can be illustrated with reference to the translation of the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish, some of which contains dialectal formations in predominantly MSA features. Translators are also placed in the difficult position of having to consider what to prioritize when transferring the semantic, cultural or formal poetic elements of such texts into a language of reception.

6.2 Media and Advertising Translations

The translation of media manifests how diglossia operates in modes of communication with multimodal and written-oral interaction. The linguistic analysis of a set of YouTube videos (video shots taken from “speeches by presidents and presidential candidates, a news broadcast, a cooking show, and a

soap opera” (Al-Kahtany, 1997)) reveals that language preference varies substantially within the media genres. These differences bring unique translation difficulties.

In news translation MSA is usually dominant in both source and TTs, ensuring formal equivalence between the two language communities. Problems arise, however, when news stories include dialectal items from interviews, witnesses’ statements or from citations in social media. Translators are also required to decide whether to normalize or retain their specific features: decisions that are crucial for how political and social dimensions are manifested.

In entertainment media, the diglossic structure is more intricate. In TV dramas, speakers code-switch between MSA and a dialect to indicate formality, education, or emotional involvement changes. Translating these types of phenomena to target languages when subtitling and dubbing is a complex issue. Al-Qinai (2021) for example, in his research on Arabic dubbing, explains how translators often use register variation, collocations or explicit macro-strategies in order to circumvent diglossia’s lack of equivalence in the target language.

There are several complications inherent in advertising translation as well, because advertising employs linguistic creativity as well as an audience-specific appropriation of culture. Dialect is used in Arabic advertising to create intimacy and cultural familiarity, but MSA is used for trust and authority in advertising. This hybrid content “has to be ‘translated’ into what Bassiouney (2020) calls “sociolinguistic equivalence”: a translated text creates the same response patterns in the target audience’s minds as the source text does, albeit without using the same linguistic resources.”

6.3 Technical Translations

The special case of technical translation in the Arabic diglossic situation. Recent studies reveal that “technology is playing a prominent role in global

communication with its various tools and resources” yet “encountering some challenges when dealing with the complexity of the Arabic language” (Attia, 2015). The Impact: These are especially problematic in technical fields where the terminology is precise and it's important to convey a clear message.

In the scientific and technical field, MSA is the source for specialized knowledge, as, for instance, the terms in science, and technology, now have their etymological roots in MSA; and the academic and technical do have the professional MSA literature and periodicals based on them, which help the professional application of these terms. Yet, it is also true that local usage will often intersect by creating regionalisms within certain technical fields that rival the standard ones. The transmission from the standardized, even internationalist discourse of textbooks, scientific publications and educational texts to locally tinted terminologies is delicate.

Parallel tensions are and can be seen in legal translation. In the case of legal documents, we sometimes find it to maintain some other stylistic features. Although MSA is the norm, legal practice might include dialectal elements in court proceedings, witness testimonies or client consultations. Translators need to reconcile such divergences while still being legally accurate and taking into account target language culture.

Medical interpreting adds another layer of complexity to this problem, as effective medical communication often requires dialogue between the formal language of medicine and an accessible language that is patient centered. As Al-Rubai (2021) notes, medical translators often act as “diglossic interpreters,” mediating the space between technical MSA jargon and relevant expressions in dialect that patients are likely to use and understand.

7. Strategies for Bridging the Gap

7.1 Code-Switching Techniques

Code-switching—switching between language varieties within a single communicative event—poses a challenge as well as a resource for translators working from or into Arabic. Work on repetition priming "also looked at diglossia and its cognitive underpinnings in Arabic" revealing significantly different ways in which speakers switch from one language to another (Ibrahim, 2009). Translators may use these patterns to create appropriate strategies for dealing with diglossic variation.

Code-switching in strategic terms can perform a number of functions in translation. In the first place, it may be able to indicate formal, authoritative or emotional loading expressed in the original through the use of one diglossic form or the other. Second, it can also serve to maintain cultural authenticity when dialect terms are marked with heavy connotative load. Third, it can help with understanding by toggling between technical terms and layman's explanations.

Several methods of code-switching have proven successful for Arabic translation. Contextual embedding consists in the framing of dialectal features within standardised forms, thereby contributing to the easy integration of variation while at the same time maintaining overall text-like cohesion. The use of the parallel strictures dialectal / standard forms to be presented in proximity in such a way that the reader can identify these relationships is effective. Typographic marking (by means of italics, quotation marks, or footnotes) can indicate to the reader that a vowel is pronounced differently than an oral spelling would suggest, especially if the spelling without the diacritically marked letter appears ambiguous. As Albirini (2016) notes, effective code-switching in translation calls for advanced metalinguistic knowledge: a sensitivity to the sociolinguistic implications of language choice and a capacity to form equivalence strategies. This awareness is reflected by knowledge of not just linguistic features of Arabic varieties, but also social attributions and context-based appropriateness.

7.2 Adapting Content for Target Audiences

Successful translation from one Arabic variety to another frequently necessitates the process of adapting a text to accommodate target audience expectations, requirements and proficiency. "One area that this common diglossic situation would have influenced is the social communication, and the learning process of Arabic language" (Harbi, 2022). These findings could inform translation strategies in a variety of settings.

The nature of audience responses determines what adaptation strategies are employed to engage in this form of communication. Translators aiming at an educated Arab readership can use MSA for which remains with number sign the Arabic script and add some dialectal expressions with caution, with others for a broader audience of readers would need to be more successful to adapt to the dialect or rephrase (with explanation). International readers of translated Arabic text desire culturally sensitive mediation, which accounts for diglossic differences and is not oversimplified.

Content adaptation takes rhetorical expectations and genre conventions into account as well. Formal writing certainly must be standardized to MSA, with dialectal features shorn or humorously marked out as quotes. Creative persuasive content, on the other hand, frequently gains from maintaining dialectal features which contribute to authenticity and emotional load. Educational input may use both purposeful simplification of MSA and restrictive accommodation of dialectal patternings for the benefit of the learners.

Digital technologies have opened up new possibilities for adaptive translation with support of supplementary material such as hypertext, glossaries or multimedia annotations. These aids help translators to preserve textual authenticity and enhance accessibility for audience unfamiliar with the variety. As Al-Jarf (2023) indicates, the use of "layered translation" has proven to be a powerful

means of reconciling the maintenance of linguistic authenticity and the demand for audience intelligibility.

7.3 Collaborative Approaches in Translation

The particular complications of Arabic diglossia have led to a growing interest in collaborative translation concepts with the input of a range of linguistic knowledge. Recent work emphasizes the importance of "systematic cross-dialectal comparisons" in meeting communication needs between Arabic varieties (Khamis-Dakwar, 2018). These cooperative models provide encouraging remedies to the complexity associated with the diglossic setting of translation.

Specialist-based translation with another speaker systematized in complementary dialectal knowledge, can successfully accommodate varietal diversity. Teams such as these usually consist of MSA experts and consultation experts who would be familiar with pertinent varieties of dialect and who are able to provide a nuanced translation of culturally bound content (Al-Farahaty, 2021). It has become especially useful for literary and audio-visual translations with several dialectal voices.

Interdisciplinary work between translators and domain specialists responds to the specific challenges of technical translation in diglossic environments. These collaborations aim to elaborate on adequate terminological solutions that maintain the balance between being normalized on the one hand and pragmatically workable on the other. Al-Farahaty (2021) maintains that collaboration on this is necessary to achieve "terminological harmonization" between varieties of Arabic that doesn't compromise precision or accessibility.

8. The Role of Technology in Translation

8.1 Machine Translation and Diglossia

Machine Translation (MT) tools have profoundly impacted the translation industry, although Arabic diglossia remains particularly challenging for these

systems. “Machine- Translation into the Arabic language is not well developed and this is because of the complex nature of its words structure and the derivation and morphology of its vocabulary which leads to producing very hard ambiguous sentences” (Attia, 2015). These issues apply to both rule-based and neural machine translation techniques.

Conventional Statistical Machine Translation (SMT) and Dialectal Statistical Machine Translation (DSMT) faces many difficulties due to the complexity of Arabic morphology and the scarcity of parallel training data for dialectal varieties. Neural MT (NMT) is more promising in dealing with Arabic rich morphology—however, it still struggles with the different dialectal contents and code-switch within texts. They are quite apparent when focusing on the translation of language of the social media, language dispatch and literary texts with willed diglossic variation.

Three Current Trends in MT for Arabic Work on MT for Arabic addresses a number of key issues. However, there are also dialect-dependent models for important dialects such as Egyptian, Levantine, and Maghrebi Arabic, which are less advanced than MSA systems. Hybrid methods combining rule-based systems with neural architectures have shown good results for dealing with morphological complexity. Further, transfer learning mechanisms are implemented to exploit available MSA resources in the context of enhancing SA to MSA translation.

Human post-editing is still a necessity for Arabic MT outputs even after these developments, especially content of a high degree of diglossic variation. As Al-Jarf (2023) noted, good post-editing involves correcting translation errors and “sociolinguistic calibration”—aligning linguistic variety and registering with addressee expectations and communicative intentions. This fact underscores the continued significance of human experts in coping with the diglossic aspects of Arabic translation.

8.2 Translation Software and Tools

More recently, dedicated translation software has been including functionalities specifically designed to cater to the complexity of the Arabic diglossia. The research related to translation software reveals that “there are many translation software packages in the market aiming to help the translators perform their task, some of which are user-friendly but have limited functionality, while the other ones provide more than one function at the same time but at the expense of their user interface” (Almansor & Al-Ani, 2017). DBD systems provide different levels of automatic support for handling Arabic language variation.

For machine-aided translation (CAT), tools are emerging to use dialect-specific resources - glossaries, translation memories and QA utilities that help to ensure all dialectal components are properly treated according to specific requirements. These tools have the role to assist translators in keeping the terminological consistency when translating into different varieties of the Arabic language. Moreover, dedicated Arabic-oriented CAT Tools such as Qordoba and Kalima also include morphological analysis features to enhance Arabic content's segmentation and match process.

Terminology management systems seem to be particularly successful in tracking equivalence between Arabic dialects. This facilitates translators to annotate relations between MSA lexemes and their dialectal synonyms, thus contributing to give more uniform treatment to specialized vocabulary. Several such systems even include variant management tools specially adapted to diglossic languages that can be used to add structuration to regionally or register willingly employed alternatives.

Automatic and text-to-speech speech processing systems have also advanced to meet the requirements of the Arabic languages great linguistic diversity. Recent works already addressed dialect-specific acoustic models, code-switching

detection, or multilectal synthetic voices capable of imitating dialectal characteristics. These tools facilitate audiovisual translation and accessibility for Arabic content but there are considerable challenges for handling dialectal speech and achieving natural dialectal synthesis.

9. Future Directions in Arabic Translation Studies

9.1 Emerging Trends and Research Areas

The translation studies applied to Arabic are steadily developing, and there is a growing interest in the cultural differences in diglossic speech practices. Recent studies on “the bilingualism, diglossia and executive functions relationship” show increasing research on the cognitive aspects of diglossic processing (Maroun et al., 2020). The emerging cognitive findings provide exciting directions for exploring how translation is done.

Parallel and comparable corpora as far as Arabic language is concerned, the research field of CBTS is rapidly developing parallel and comparable corpora for Arabic diglossic varieties. These are tools to explore empirically the patterns, strategies and results of translation. Examples of these endeavors are the Arabic-English Parallel Corpus of Literary Texts (AEPLT) (Maamouri, 2000) and the Multi-Dialectal Arabic Corpus (MDAC) (Maamouri et al., 2004), and these provide useful resources for both academics and professional translators to utilise.

Diglossic awareness has found a place in translation pedagogy, as we can see particularly in translator training. Educational initiatives have become more explicit in treating these decisions concerning variation, dialectry, and competence as part of the pedagogical process. These didactic innovations address the so-called 'diglossic gap' in 'traditional translator training' observed by Thawabteh (2019); such training has generally overvalued MSA proficiency while neglecting dialectal variation.

Studies of multimodal translation consider the ways in which diglossia operates across media genres and semiotic modes. In this line of research, studies deal with the relationship between verbal and non-verbal components in translation settings, as well as the ways in which visual, gestural, and prosodic aspects interact with diglossic variation. For example, research by Al-Rubai (2021) and others examine how these multi-modal dimensions impact both audience perception and translator decisions across Arabic varieties.

9.2 Impact of Globalization on Arabic Dialects

The diglossic situation in Arabic is also influenced by globalization, which has had a substantial effect on the state of Arabic, and thus the work of translators. Social media: According to the analysis of social media comments, "democratization process lead to telling increase in the number of Tunisians interacting in online spaces consequently, elevating Tunisian Arabic in written forms" (Al-Kahtany, 1997). Many places in the Arab world are witnessing similar patterns that are blurring previously distinct diglossic lines.

Digital communication has quickened the written usage of dialectal Arabic, most notably in social media, IM, and online forums. This shift challenges the existing primacy of MSA in written contexts, and introduces further translation requirements around dialectal content. Translators are increasingly coming across what Al-Sobh (2023) describes as “digital vernaculars”: written dialect forms with unique orthographic formations, emoji substitutions and hybrid expressions that are resistant to typical translation techniques.

Cross-cutting media influences have in turn affected dialectal dynamics and attitudes to them. Egyptian and Levantine dialects have received wider exposure thanks to regional entertainment media of the Gulf dialects that have reached prominence due to economic status. These dynamic prestige relations exert

influence on translation decisions to retain, standardize, or adapt dialectal features at certain moments.

Language contact has also been facilitated through migration, tourism, and the mass media, leading to the development of new types of hybridized language that combine elements of various forms of Arabic and other languages. These contact phenomena are even more problematic for translators who must decide how to convey this sort of hybridity in the target language. Indeed, as noted by Bassiouney (2020), translation to work effectively need “sociolinguistic attunement” to these new (hybrid) forms of dialects to the social connotations and identity dimensions of these lines.

10. Conclusion

As the Arabic language is diglossic, it presents several challenges to the theory and practice of translation that are not solely linguistic. As this study has shown, the dual presence of MSA and many dialectal substrata results in a fluid sociolinguistic setting with which translators are constantly faced. Solving these issues involves considering linguistic features and the social and cultural scale of diglossia in Arabic.

The results of this study bring to the for several factors that need to be considered for successful translation in the Arabic diglossic setting. The first of these is that translators need to be conscious and meticulous in their diglossic awareness by being adept at recognizing and managing variation across the Arabic linguistic spectrum. This competence also involves awareness of the sociolinguistic value of language choice and how this affects the way different audiences receive a text.

Second, context-sensitive adaptation strategies are necessary to handle diglossic variation in translation. These tactics need to take into account text type, audience makeup, communicative intention, and medium-related limitations. It is

also illustrated that successful strategies differ notably and are context dependent between the literary, media, technical and digital domains.

Third, the technological reservoir can be a threat and an opportunity for Arabic translation. But even the most advanced machine translation programs can only make it so far when it comes to Arabic diglossia. But so, too, is human expertise, when a story has a high degree of cultural embedding or strategic code-switching. Collaborative approaches that integrate technical tools and human expertise from different sources provide interesting avenues for dealing with these challenges.

The results of this study have important implications for translation theory, practice and education. In theory, Arabic diglossia requires models that transcend conventional binary models of source and target languages that recognize the complicated hierarchy of language varieties implicated in Arabic translation. In practical terms, translators of Arabic take advantage of acquiring specialized strategies that can be used to deal with diglossic variation, such as adaptation to particular contexts, strategic code-switching and audience-oriented strategies. In educational terms, training programs for translators should bring dialect variation and its impact on practice to the fore.

There are a number of very interesting directions for future work. To begin with, we would better understand how professional translators negotiate diglossic variation across various occasions if large-scale corpus-based studies were conducted. Second, if there is experimental work on audience reception of translation strategies, this would be a helpful resource. Third, joint work on the part of linguists, translators, and technology developers could prove helpful in addressing the phenomenon of diglossia in Arabic, both in human and machine translation.

In summary, Arabic diglossia is not just a linguistic condition, but a complex phenomenon in the socio-cultural life with its far-reaching effect on the theory and the practice of translation. Through cultivating advanced diglossic competence, contextually sensitive strategies and creative technologies, translators could negotiate the intricate terrain of Arabic language variation in a more promising way to access the depth of culture it reflects.

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