The role of social media comments in clarifying the meaning of posts and its impact on the readability of automatic translation

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Abstract:

This paper aims to study the readability of comments in social media platforms (SMP) before the automatic translation (AT) of contents. It assumes that the comprehension of posts and their translations after that depends on the number of positive and negative comments. It follows the paths of readability of those comments before translating to know their role in revealing the mystery of the posts. And how this affects translation and its tools in those sites, given that comments often work as translation.

The paper expects that posts exposed to the largest possible number of negative and positive comments will achieve a large readability but a small amount of translation. Conversely, for posts exposed to the largest number of comments, which will achieve the smaller readability and a large amount of translation.

Keywords: readability, comments, social media platforms, automatic translation, posts.

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1. Introduction:

Translating the content of social media websites used to be a challenge for both translators and readers before the emergence of automatic translation tools. The main task at that time was how to translate all of this massive data in order to satisfy readers, meet their needs, and keep up with the progress in the information flow field.

However, with the introduction of automatic translation tools on social media sites which often replace the subject this reader to s translator, it has become necessary totudy. Especially since they now have access to this translation tool, choosetext to be automatically translated and read afterwards. All of this has become another more complex challenge than before.

It is not hidden from us today that the trend of social media users and their interest has shifted towards reading comments, as they are more interactive than posts, and this will undoubtedly have a significant impact on translating posts since comments often function as translations, as they interpret and explain.

Formulating the problem:

The research paper answers the following question: How do comments affect the comprehension of posts and automatic translation?

Hypotheses of the study:

- Assuming that comments generally increase readability, or indicate it due to the new trend towards reading .them.
- .The possibility of comments often replacing translation and thus reducing the role of the latter
- .the number of comments and vice versa Translation may decrease with an increase in

Goals of the study:

The study aims to:

- Highlight the role of comments in determining the readability of social media posts (using Facebook as a .(model.
- comment Explore the integrative and divisive relationship betweens readability and automatic translation in social media sites.
- Demonstrate the readability in social media sites before and after thetranslation .
- criteria Identify the content that is most and least susceptible to automatic translation based on comment.

2. <u>Methods:</u>

The method used in this study is the quantitative analytical method to discuss the role played by 140 comments on short posts of the category (0-1000 words), where these posts were distributed to 10 individuals, on July 04, 2023 to find out how the comments on them contribute to understand their content for those individuals.

On the other hand, another post was presented to the same sample of people, but this time the post was of the category (3,000-10,000 words) to have an idea on the impact of comments on the process of understanding the post, noting that this type of post does not receive a large number of comments.

Two variables were taken into account, which are the number of comments and that of individuals.

- For the first sample of posts, 15 comments were added each time after which new individuals who understand the post are enrolled, and so on with all posts up to the last post with 30 comments added.

- As for the second sample, the process was reversed, as each time a post was given with fewer comments than the previous one, and the decrease in the number of individuals was recorded, down to zero.

3. The background of study :

3.1. Readability before translation:

Social networking sites have always attracted readers due to the diversity of their content and because "the use of social media is extensively increasing worldwide." (Rafiq, Andleep, Tufail Khan, & Arif, 2019) .It has become difficult to determine the tendencies and orientations of readers in those sites that inject hybrid material "as soon as the reader enters the gates of the internet, he is faced with a tremendous amount of forums , platforms, websites, electronic libraries, personal and institutional e-magazines covering all literary ,technical and scientific specialties." (Annouz, 2021, p. 158) All of this would - inevitably - change the reading habits of the pioneers of social networking sites as it is known that "Reading and translation are interrelated to one another ." (Sharif, 2017, p. 40). The first cannot be separated from the second. Where reading increases understanding of the texts we want to translate because " In order to fully comprehend the source text and produce a satisfactory version in the target language text (TLT), translators need to read SL text carefully. " (Sharif, 2017, p. 41)

But today on social media, reading posts has become dependent - to a large extent - on reading comments, which now control the whole reading process due to the interaction that accompanies it, while the process of " reading comments and commenting are more common on social media sites. » (Stroud, Van DUYN, & Peacok, 2016, p. 2) .

And since the comments are focused more on reading the short publications than the large ones, due to the reduction of the first of them both time and effort, the study imposed the role of those comments to be studied. In order to know this, we must shed light on the contents to which these comments are exposed.

3.2. The Nature of Social Media Contents:

3.2.1.   The Posts :

Posts are the main driver of interaction on social networking site and "not all social media content is created equal. Some posts might make you smile, while others will 'stop the scroll' and make you think." (Kiely, 2022) .Others require to spend long hours reading them to understand their contents and decipher their puzzles. This depends on the form and content ofthose posts presented bythe research as follows :

3.2.2. Long form Posts :

It comes to our minds that readers often dislike reading long publications, and this   means that "You should write short, bite-sized content to satisfy your readers' short attention, spans, right ? " (Kagan, 2017)

However, in an analytical study of 10% of the most shared articles on socialmediasites, the purpose of which was to find out if the short contents were more shared or the large ones, the result of that study was shown in the following charts:

Figure: 01 *The Long Form Posts Sharing*
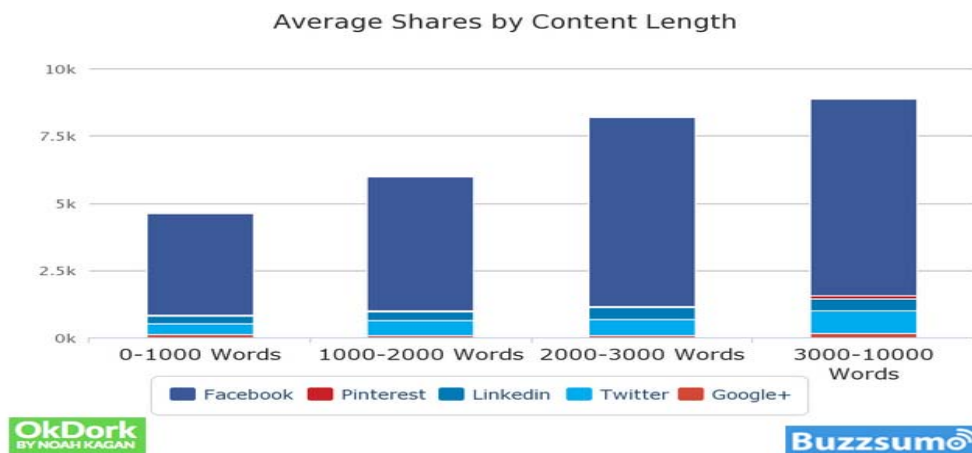
Source: *okdork.com/ Kagan, 2017*

Through a simple reading of the above columns, it appears that the publications with the most word content of (3,000 to 10,000 words) are the most shared among the pioneers of those sites, but it cannot be certain that the relatively long content is the most read for the following reasons:

- "This tell us that most people just aren't willing to create in depth, well-researched articles packed with insights. they just <u>don't want to put in the time and effort</u>." (Kagan, 2017)
- Considering long publications on social networking sites as a burden on the reader who "long texts scare him, and even voice messages on his phone get on his nerves if they exceed a minute." (Habib, 2021)

- The absence of the element of interactivity from long posts because "taking an 'interactive first' mindset is a great way to help you keep social media engagement at the forefront of your content creation process." (Kiely, 2022) and this is rarely found in relatively long publications.
- The other reason that is most striking is the lack of signs of interaction with those long texts represented in the comments, especially when compared with the short publications, and this appears through signs of admiration and comments.
- The preoccupation of the pioneers of social networking sites with focusing on other content   like picturesand "videos that are the most entertaining because "entertainment aspects are the major reason for the popularity of video sharing websites". (Kopf, Stefan , & Wolfgang , 2012, p. 681)

3.2.3.   Short form posts:

"Short form-content refers to written content of less than1,200 words. It includes short blog posts, social emails and infographics." (Kingsnorth, 2022)

 the trend for these short posts is a challenge and a race track for content creators ,Todaybecause "In 2008, a study found that users read only half the information on pages with 111 words or less." (Sidoff, 2018)

reasons for this are the following Perhaps thes:
- Theshort posts do not take much time of the readers in social networking sites, thus "short-form content is an effective way to get information out there without requiring your audience to commit to a lot of time.» (Lindsey, 2022)
- Consideringshort posts moreinteractive with readers and addressing them than those long   possts   that address and discuss ideas.
- The dynamiccommunity nature because "we live in an on-the-go society."
  (Lindsey, 2022) and we are also in the ever-changing world of speed, in which the need has become very urgent for everything that is short in order to keep pace with more.
- Short contents are characterized by ease, simplicity, lack of ambiguity, they increase the enjoyment of reading and more contact with the content because, especially since the "reading for pleasure is so much more than just a form of play or escapism-it is also a way of connecting with text." (Clark & Rumbold, 2006, p. 6)
- Approval of short texts and their suitability for the scanning process carried out by the eye, as it has been referred in "Jakob Nielson's seminal web usability study. From 1997 showed that 79 percent of web users scan rather than read. (Wilson, 2019)

4.   Results and Discussion:

4.1. The impact of comments on posts:

4.1.1.   Increasing comprehention:

"Commenting is different from sharing news on social media." (Almgren & Olsson, 2016, p. 70)
which increases the understanding of the ,Where comments are loaded with positive and negative meanings published content more and more, so the amount of information expressed in the number of comments is not an easy matter to pass over,it constitutes the volume of understanding of these posts. And as the shorter posts were the most interactive, they received the largest number of comments, as shown in figure.1

Figure:02 The Role of Comments in Increasing Comprehension of (0-1000 words) Posts.
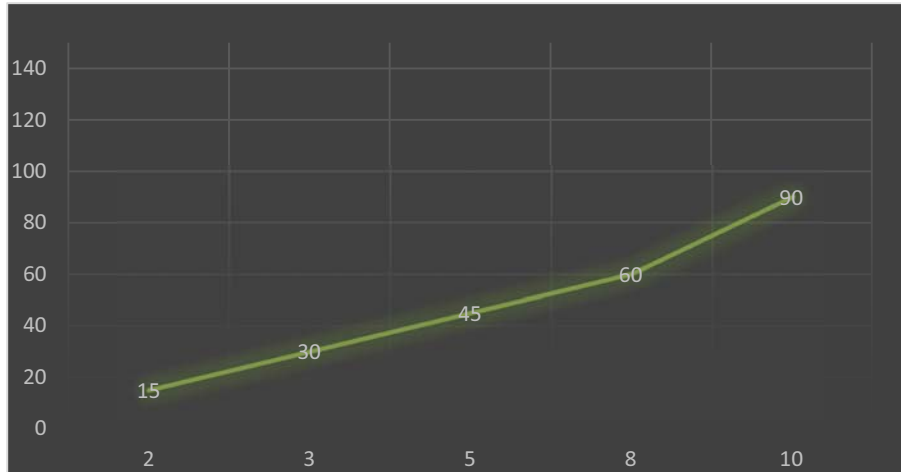
**Source:** *Facebook Posts and Comments 2023*

Note:

   The above graph represents the contribution of the number of comments in increasing the number of people Adding every 15 comments increases the number of people who have understood thoseposts. Thestudy shows that:

   Every 15 comments can increase understanding for 01 person, 02 people, and 03 people. Meanwhile, 30 comments at once can increase understanding for 02 people.
And if we consider that 90 comments correspond to a 100% understanding rate for the sample, the recorded understanding rates will be according tothe following figure:

Figure :*03 Percentage of understanding Posts by Number of Comments*
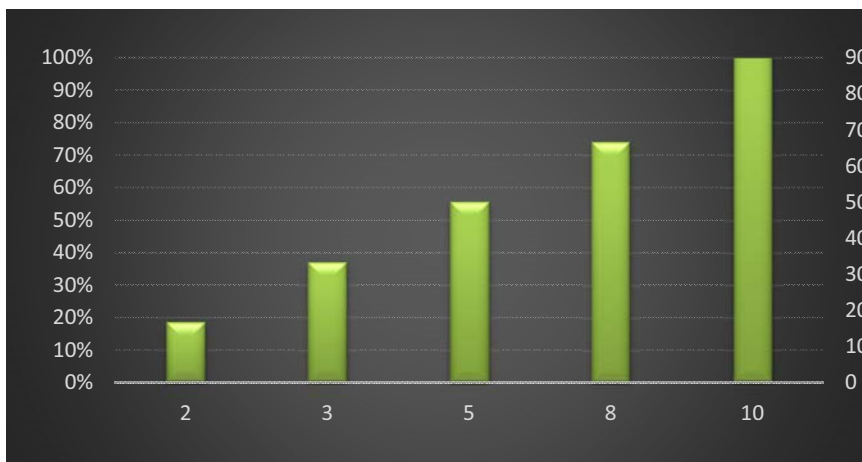

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Note :

The above bar charts show that the percentage of understanding short posts is directly related to the number of comments. Therefore, comments have a pivotal role in understanding this type of posts .It is evident that only 90 comments gave 100% understanding.

4.1.2. **Decreasing Comprehension** :

It is known that the level of understanding decreases if the publications are not accompanied by comments that contain interpretations, and analyzes of what those posts have because"we can assume that a post may stimulate more likes, once it has more comments; perhaps increasing its impressions, views, or virality ·" (Shahbaznnezhad, Rebecca, & Rachidirad, 2021)

if the number of comments decreases, that admiration decreases, and with it the understanding of the ,And vice versa This is shown in the figure below .post as a whole decreases:

Figure *03: The Role of Comments in Decreasing Comprehension of (3000-10000 words) Posts*
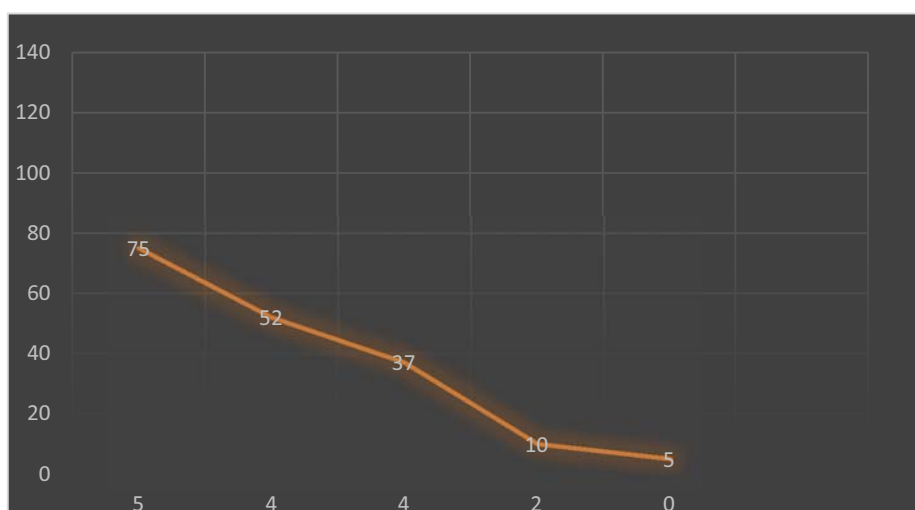
Note:

The graph above represents the total number of comments, which amounted to 140 comments, in addition to posts with a large number of words, ranging from 3,000 to 10,000 words, as they were arranged from the largest comment ,which is the first post with 75 comments)to the least comment (which is the last post with 5 comments)

,It appears, through the above graphic curvethat postsranging between 3,000 and 10,000 words receive a small number of comments, as the number of the latter reached 75 comments, which indicates a lack of interaction with this type of postsis what Social media users don't due to its consumption of a lot of time and effort, and perhaps this want.

When tracing the trajectories of the graph, we find that 75 comments contributed to the communication of understanding to 05 individuals out of 10 of the sample that is under study.

reached 52, we find that the number of individuals who understood the second And when the number of comments post decreased this time to become 04 individuals out of 10 the same sample, while we find in another postwith 37 comments the same number of understanders, which is 04.

However, when viewing a fourth postcontaining only 10 comments on the same sample, we find that understanding has reached only 02 out of 10 of the studied sample.

If 75 comments give an understanding rate of 50%, and 05 comments givean understandingrate of 0%, then the percentages of understanding can be represented as follows:

Figure :04 *Percentage of Declining Comprehension According to The Number of Comments.*
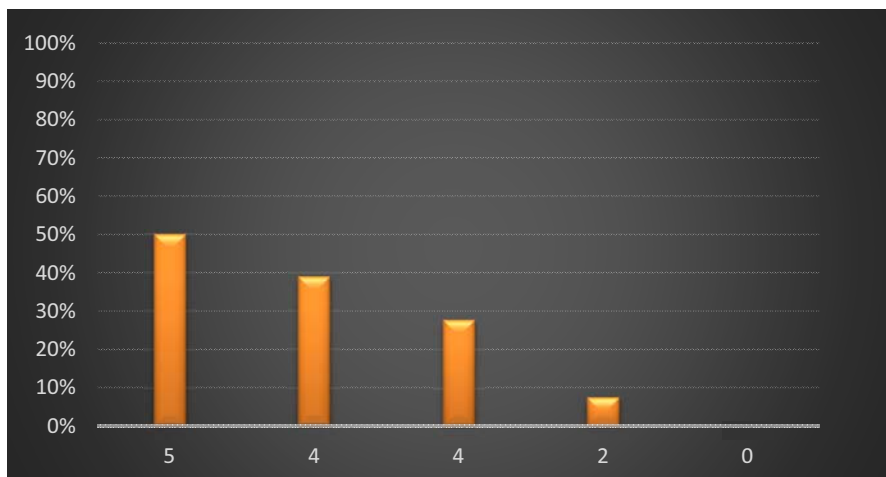
Note:
The percentages show that the decline in comprehension of relatively long posts is clearly due to the decline in the number of commentsnn ,so that thedecline in the number of the latter for this type of posts, which is relatively long, process of reading is crucial in the and understanding them afterwards.

5. Conclusions and findings :

Through all the above analyzed data, it is clear that the comments have a major and pivotal role in interpreting, justifying, and clarifying the meanings inherent inthe posts ,asthe study reveals the following results :

- The greater the number of comments, whether the postsare small or large, the greater the number of individuals who have understood those published contents, as shown in Curve 01. The results showed that an increase of only 15 comments in each post would add one to two individuals from the sample of individuals under study. While the results indicated that 30 comments are sufficient to increase two individuals out of the total number of individuals.

- And vice versa, the fewer the number of comments, the fewer the number of individuals who understand those publications. As shown in figure 03. Where did the results show that the decrease in comments from 75 to 52 contributed to a decline in understanding among one member of the study population? While the number of individuals declined to double that number (02 individuals) as soon as the number of comments decreased by about 40 comments. While the result of the 05 comments gave 00 individual.

The results indicate that comments have an essential role, especially in the reading process before translation through:

- Forming an appropriatecomprehension mass before the translation process, and this givesthe possibility of translating these postsfree translation by using the automatic translation tool and -with correct and error .comments together.

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