The Use of Collaborative Writing Technique in Developing Students' Abilities in Translation

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Abstract

According to Gilbert (2021:31), collaborative techniques offer a natural environment that supports the enhancement of interactive skills. One of the appropriate teaching strategies to improve students' translation ability as well as enhance their motivation, confidence, critical thinking, and so forth in pair or group discussions. As a result, students can produce a good piece of translation with their cooperation with their peers. Translation as a resource-based learning activity requires a new methodology that develops students' competencies such as linguistic, transfer, and digital competences (Kelly, 2005:45). These competencies include the various capacities, skills, and knowledge to translate, as well as the attitudes that professional translators or student-translators possess.

The current study is to enhance the translation skills of Iraqi EFL college students by employing collaborative writing as a technique. 88 third-year students were selected as the study's sample in order to fulfill its objectives. The collaborative writing technique in translation was the intended treatment for forty-four students in an experimental group. The remaining 44 pupils were placed in a control group, which uses individual translation. Accordingly, the results show that the experimental group members' performance in group translation was superior to the control group members' performance in solo translation.

Based on the findings, the collaborative writing technique has been found to be effective in improving the translation skills of EFL learners. Therefore, it is recommended that:

(1) Collaborative Writing Technique should be applied in the classroom to make learners enjoy their learning.

(2) Apply this technique online / offline with all types of translation.

(3) Further and similar studies may be conducted with other different skills, or other field in translation, samples and conditions.

Key Words: translation, collaborative writing technique.

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استخدام أسلوب الكتابة التعاونية في تنمية قدرات الطلاب في الترجمة

م. انغام طالب صالح جبر

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كﻚ

وفقًا لجيلبرت (٢٠٢١:٣١)، تَوفر أساليب الكتابة التعاونية بيئةً طبيعيةً تَعزز مهارات التفاعل. ومن استراتيجيات التدريس المناسبة تحسين مهارات الطلاب في الترجمة، وتعزيز دافعيتهم وثقتهم بأنفسهم والتفكير النقدي لديهم، وغيرها من المهارات في المناقشات الثنائية أو الجماعية. ونتيجة لذلك، يمكن للطلاب إنتاج ترجمة جيدة بالتعاون مع أقرانهم. تتطلب الترجمة، كنشاط تعليمي قائم على الموارد، منهجية جديدة تَنمي كفاءات الطلاب، مثل الكفاءات اللغوية، وكفاءات النقل، والكفاءات الرقمية (كيلي، ٢٠٠٥:٤٥). تشمل هذه الكفاءات القدرات والمهارات والمعارف المختلفة اللازمة للترجمة، بالإضافة إلى المواقف التي يتحلى بها المترجمون المحترفون أو المترجمون الطلاب

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى تعزيز مهارات الترجمة لدى طلاب الجامعات العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من خلال استخدام أسلوب الكتابة التعاونية. وقد تم اختيار ٨٨ طالبا من السنة الثالثة كعينة للدراسة لتحقيق أهدافها. كانت تقنية الكتابة التعاونية في الترجمة هي العلاج المقصود لأربعة وأربعين طالبا في مجموعة تجريبية. ووضع الطلاب الـ ٤٤ المتبقون في مجموعة ضابطة، والتي تستخدم الترجمة الفردية. وبناء على ذلك، أظهرت النتائج أن أداء أعضاء المجموعة التجريبية في الترجمة الجماعية كان متفوقا على أداء أعضاء المجموعة الضابطة في الترجمة الفردية. وبناء على هذه النتائج، وجد أن تقنية الكتابة التعاونية فعالة في تحسين مهارات الترجمة لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لذلك، يوصى بما يلي: تطبيق تقنية الكتابة التعاونية في الفصل الدراسي لجعل المتعلمين يستمتعون بتعلمهم. تطبيق

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هذه التقنية عبر الإنترنت/دون اتصال بالإنترنت مع جميع أنواع الترجمة.
يمكن إجراء دراسات أخرى مماثلة على مهارات مختلفة أخرى، أو مجالات أخرى في الترجمة،
وعينات وظروف أخرى

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكتابة التعاونية، الترجمة.

1.1 Problem of the Study

Translation is a challenge for English–speaking Iraqi college students, especially in the early learning phases. Translation is seen as a collection of issues of various types that need appropriate and feasible answers. Since Arabic and English are members of two distinct linguistic families—Germanic and Semitic—problems will undoubtedly occur.(Qassim, n.d.:2) Therefore, the collaborative writing technique is recommended as a potential solution to this challenging and troublesome topic.

Sociocultural theories of learning, particularly Vygotsky's idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), are the foundation of collaborative writing. According to Vygotsky (1978), cooperative learning or interaction with more experienced peers help students reach higher developmental stages. In collaborative writing, students go beyond what they could create on their own by negotiating language choices, debating meaning, and co–constructing texts.

Swain's (2000) Output Hypothesis, which emphasizes that generating language forces learners to process language more thoroughly, lends additional credence to collaborative writing. Students who write collaboratively are forced to explain their ideas, defend their decisions, and settle arguments, which improves their language awareness.

These theories support functionalist methods in translation training, which prioritize audience and communication purpose over formal equivalency. Professional translation settings, where translators frequently collaborate in groups, confer with peers, and go through revision cycles, are replicated by collaborative writin

1.2 Aim of the Study

The current study aims at using the collaborative writing as a technique to develop EFL learners' abilities in translation.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of those who translate by working collaboratively (experimental group) and those who work individually (control group).

1.4 Limits of the Study

The current study is limited to:

1. Iraqi EFL 3rd. Year students \ Dept. of English Language \ College of Basic Education \ Mustansiriyah University during the academic year 2023-2024.

2. Selected texts that translated by the sample.

1.5 Value of the Study

1. The current study is expected to be valuable for EFL learners to help them translate accurately and fluently.

2. It may also be helpful for instructors who teach translation in developing suitable methods in teaching EFL translation skills and abilities.

1.6 Definition of Basic Terms

1.6.1 Translation:

Like other forms of art, translation is difficult to perfect (Zengin & Kacar, 2011:51). It seeks to convey context and meaning from the source language to the target language. The learner must be proficient in both the source and target languages. In addition to considerable originality and imagination in terms of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic features, translation can be viewed as a complex process requiring a great degree of creativity and imagination as well as thorough command of the source and target languages.

1.6.2 Collaborative Writing Technique:

Because it makes it easier for students to create texts in groups or pairs, collaborative writing is a useful way to teach writing. Implementing a variety of activities in the classroom is necessary to help the students refine their thoughts. Carson and Leki (1994:23)

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 What is Translation?

Since translation is undoubtedly a human activity, the material being translated into the target language must have the same linguistic effect as the original language and be written in a rhetorical style meant to impress or persuade readers. However, this cannot be created without the use of creativity and mental abilities that define the human mind. Therefore, it is irrational to believe that computers can assist in translation. When translating from Arabic to English or the other way around, there are some grammatical issues with both languages. Arabic learners ought to be aware that English and Arabic grammar differ, making it impossible to translate one another directly.(Qassim, n.d.: 3–4)

The process of translating a text from one language into an equivalent version in another is crucial because it allows for the creation of highly developed international societies regardless of the cultural differences or similarities between the people involved, as well as the degree of their superiority and civilization.

2.1.1 Translation Skills

Any translator starting out in the translation industry needs to have four key macro-skills. These include research, writing, reading comprehension, and analytical abilities. Numerous sub- or micro-skills that must be mastered are included in these macro-skills. These abilities are the outcome of the researcher's requirements assessment analysis. An inventory of specific translation skills and sub-skills was created, and a panel of experts in linguistics, translation, TEFL, and

course design was asked to identify which of these they believed to be fundamental translation skills and whether or not first-year English majors at the Faculty of Education required them. Jurors were also asked to add to the list any translation skills they thought were fundamental.

2.1.1.1 Reading comprehension:

We do not consider our work to be separated into stages while we are translating. Following our initial translations, a number of automatic processes take over, enabling us to translate more rapidly while also making us less aware of what we are doing. Reading causes a person's brain to process a lot of information in quick bursts that appear to occur all at once.(Abdellah, 2010:33) Syllables, words, phrases, paragraphs, sections, chapters, and texts are given life by a succession of graphic signs (graphemes), which the eye examines sequentially (from left to right in the case of many Western languages, but also from right to left or from top to bottom). When we attempt to recreate the sentence's potential structure—that is, the relationships between its constituent parts—we are engaging in syntactical mental processing of the read verbal content. On the other hand, it is pragmatic in character when it deals with the logical fit of the potential meanings to the verbal co-text and the general context, and it is semantic in nature when it determines the pertinent areas within the semantic field of any particular word or sentence.(ibid)

Therefore, it is recommended that student-teachers and inexperienced translators become proficient in the following fundamental reading comprehension skills:

-read for the major concepts and gist.

-read for more information.

-use one or more structural analysis hints, such as prefixes, suffixes, roots, word order, punctuation, sentence structure, etc., to determine the meaning of new words and expressions.

-use one or more contextual analysis tools to determine the meaning of new words and expressions, such as synonyms, antonyms, examples, etc.

-define the author's style, including literary, technical, scientific, instructive, persuasive, argumentative, etc.

Determine the text's language level (standard, colloquial, religious, etc.).

-identify cultural allusions in the text's word choice.

2.1.1.2 Researching Skills:

"If you do not know the meaning of a word, look it up in the dictionary," is the most often given piece of advice to translators, according to Enani (2002:8). Because the definite article implies that both the speaker and the hearer are familiar with the dictionary, it is the most prevalent and ambiguous. According to him, a translator should consult a variety of dictionaries, including bilingual dictionaries, historical dictionaries, dictionaries of current English, idiom dictionaries, specialized dictionaries (such as dictionaries of common errors, idiomatic usage, slang, and terminology), encyclopedic dictionaries, neologism dictionaries, miscellaneous dictionaries, and monolingual dictionaries.

2.1.1.3Analytical Reasoning Skills:

There are two stages to the translation process: analysis and synthesis. In order to completely comprehend the pro-text, the translator consults it during analysis. The pro-text is projected onto the reader during the synthesis stage, which is when the translator considers who the meta-text's typical reader will be. The following techniques are suggested for students to employ during the analytical phase:

−define the text's concepts' beginnings, ends, and connections between each other.

−find the meaning that fits the circumstances the best.

−determine which target language structure "best" reflects the original.

−find the "best" coherent elements in the target language that reflect the original, as well as the transitions between concepts.

2.1.1.4 Composing and Production skills:

The interpretation−based mental construct now aims for an external realization. Osimo (2002: 67) proposes two close−up range sub−stages in this actualization stage. The goal of one outline is coherence, while the other is expression. After completing their interpretation, the translator needs to do two things:

1. to convert the mental material generated by interaction with the proto−text into speaking acts, externalizing the collection of impressions brought about by the text perception;

2. to convert a collection of speech acts into a text (the meta−text) so that this product is coherent in and of itself. He uses the following terms to identify turning points in the transition from mental content to written text:

−identifying redundant elements;

−identifying elements that are helpful in distinguishing the material to be communicated from comparable contents;

−identifying terms (lexicalization) and paying attention to their coherence (inner linkages);

Prepositions and other function words; sentence complexity; linear word order; part of speech; final form; and choice of grammatical structure (ibid:70)

2.2 Collaborative Writing Technique

2.2.1 Overview

Two or more individuals working together to write, revise, and compose a document's entire content based on their ideas is known as collaborative writing (Spring, 2007). According to Barkley et al. (2005), group members write a paper together in collaborative writing since the class was split up into groups.

Each of them participate in the following:

– initial stage (brainstorming ideas),

–second stage (gathering and organizing information the ideas into an outline),

– third stage (drafting the writing),

– fourth stage (revising)

–fifth stage (editing the writing into a good writing), which are the stages of writing process. According to McDonough et al. (2015), students who take responsibility for each step of the collaborative writing process produce writing of a higher caliber. According to Barkley et al. (2005), group projects at every step of collaborative writing can result in better writing than solitary projects.

Furthermore, children who are taught to write jointly outperform those who are trained to write alone, according to Gousseva–Goodwin (2000) and Storch (2005). This indicates that using a collaborative approach helps pupils produce writing of a higher caliber. The process by which two or more students work together to produce a piece of writing in which group members' cooperation and contributions are crucial is the fundamental component of collaborative writing. Thus, the writing will be better than it was previously, and it will also lead to social contact between students and teachers. As facilitators in the collaborative writing process, teachers must explain to groups or pairs of students how to review each other's work, look for assistance from others, and discuss and negotiate writing–related tactics (Kessler et al., 2012).

2.2.2 Benefits of Collaborative Writing in Translation

1. Improved Accuracy and Quality

   Research consistently shows that collaborative writing results in texts with fewer grammatical errors and better organization. Storch (2005) found that students working in pairs produced writing with higher grammatical accuracy and more complex structures than those writing alone. In translation tasks, peers can spot errors or awkward renderings that an individual might overlook.

2. Enhanced Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Collaboration requires learners to justify their translation choices, evaluate alternatives, and negotiate meaning. This process enhances their critical thinking skills, making them more reflective and analytical translators.

3. Increased Motivation and Engagement

Collaborative activities often boost learner motivation. Responsibility is shared, reducing anxiety while increasing accountability. Students may feel more invested in the final product because it represents a collective effort.

4. Exposure to Multiple Perspectives

Translation is inherently interpretive. Collaborative writing exposes students to diverse viewpoints and interpretive strategies, deepening their understanding of both source and target cultures.

5. Professional Skills Development

In the translation industry, teamwork is common. Collaborative writing in the classroom mirrors real-world practices, helping students develop soft skills such as negotiation, teamwork, and project management.

Students who practice collaborative strategies are more likely to be open-minded and to have less ego and selfish feelings when they work together to improve their writing. In the end, writing in English can be viewed as a joyful and selfless endeavor. (ibid)

Additionally, the teacher challenges the students to successfully converse with others. In some ways, this can make teaching and learning more meaningful than they were previously, and students can benefit greatly from this. The advantages are:

First: They can obtain additional knowledge on the necessary processes for writing a text.

Second: Because kids must write appropriately and collaboratively, they can improve their writing abilities.

Third: They can write, share, and revise a notion in groups. It is crucial to understand that students can improve their knowledge and skills while simultaneously expanding their vocabulary through the creation of narrative writings.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design of the Study

In order to improve the translation proficiency and collaborative attitudes of English majors, the researcher in this study investigated the application of a collaborative writing technique. Quasi–experimental design was used in terms of pre–posttest procedure where two intact groups were randomly selected to assign an experimental group and a control one. The design as well as the data collection and data analysis followed a quantitative approach.

3.2 Materials

3.2.1 Pre/ Post Test Texts

Two English texts—one for the pre–test and one for the post–test—were given to the participants to translate into Arabic. The first piece, which served as the pre–test, contained 87 words about "The Importance of Bees." Another 177–word text on "The Importance of Protecting Forests" from the (storylingoo cite) was used for the post–test. These books were chosen to serve as the primary exam

resources. As a result, translation students can comprehend these materials with ease.

3.2.2 Translation skills list

To evaluate the participants' translation quality, the researcher created a list of three main categories: terminology/culturally specialized themes, accuracy/target language quality, and grammar/spelling/punctuation. For every score and category, there are guided explanations accessible. The first area, "Accuracy/Target Language Quality," is mainly concerned with how loyal the target text is to the original text message and how easy it is to read and comprehend. When performing its textual functions, it also takes into account the genre, target audience, text type, and other elements. Ensuring correctness in the target content is one of the main goals of any translation process

3.2.3 Construction of the Test:

After dividing the participants into experimental and control groups, the experimental group spent three weeks translating the assigned texts for two hours each, for a total of six hours, using collaborative learning activities. During this period, the students in the experimental group were divided into smaller groups of three. One student in each group served as the terminologist, another as the translator, and a third as the proofreader of the translated text for the provided translation assignment.

By the end of the three weeks, each group had translated two different works and gained experience as terminologists, translators, and proofreaders. In short, the experimental group members took on different roles during the first week, which is thought to have given the experimental group a real-life translation experience. Meanwhile, the control group's three translation jobs were identical texts, and the same teacher used the traditional translation teaching approach, with each student working alone to complete the task. After the students finished

translating, they voluntarily read their translations aloud, discussed possible revisions in class, and the teacher provided the final, accurate translation while the students fixed their mistakes.

3.2.4 Findings:

By comparing the post-test results of the control and experimental groups, an independent samples t-test was used for the statistical analysis of the collected data in order to examine the efficacy of the collaborative learning activities used during the translation course.

Table (1)

Statistics of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Results for the Control and Experimental Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test Control Group	44	5.01	1.50
Post-Test Control Group	44	5.04	1.83
Pre-Test Experimental Group	44	4.90	1.52
Post-Test Experimental Group	44	14.57	1.40

The experimental group's mean pre-test scores were 4.90, while the control group's mean were 5.01. As seen in Table 1, the mean values in both groups rose to 5.04 for the control group and 14.57 for the experimental group.

Table (2)Independent Samples T-Test Results

Test	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Post-test	Control	44	5.04	1.83	−20.49	.001
	Experimental	44	14.57	1.40		

Table 2 shows that the experimental group's post-test mean score was 14.57, while the control group's was 5.04. The subjects' scores in the two groups had a p-value of.001. The difference between the experimental and control groups was determined to be statistically significant when p < 0.05.

Table (3)Paired Samples T-Test Results

Test	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Pre-test	Experimental	44	4.90	1.52	22.88	.001
Post-test	Experimental	44	14.57	1.40		

Table 3 demonstrates that once the collaborative learning approach was used, the experimental group's subjects' mean scores increased from 4.90 to 14.57. The difference between the experimental group's pre- and post-test scores was determined to be statistically significant (p < 0.05) based on the p value of.001. According to the statistical analysis of the collected data, students in the experimental group who received three weeks of instruction using the collaborative learning method had a significant rise in their translation performance scores. However, for the subjects in the control group who received training using the traditional translator training approach, the difference between the pre- and post-test results was not significant (p =.738 > 0.05). Therefore, in contrast to traditional teacher-authority-based translator training, the quantitative results of the study support our hypothesis by demonstrating the statistically significant contribution of the collaborative learning approach, which provides an active learning environment to translation skills.

4. Conclusion

Based on the current study's findings, it can be said that teachers may empower students' translating abilities and foster their ability to collaborate with others, which will help them behave less selfishly. This can be achieved through the use of collaborative writing. Along with

their peers, students can support one another and grow their own motivation for translation. After employing this collaborative writing style, translation is regarded as a positive experience. This method also helps students choose the appropriate words to translate a text without hesitation or fear of what other people might think or recommend. For both teachers and students, using collaborative strategies has grown in importance. This collaborative approach is viewed as intriguing because English is not our native language. Nonetheless, it is our duty as teachers to motivate our pupils to use English and write in it in their daily interactions.

One effective instructional strategy for improving translation abilities that has been backed by research is collaborative writing. Critical thinking, accuracy, and cultural awareness—all essential skills for professional translators—are fostered by encouraging students to collaborate in negotiating meaning, evaluating language choices, and taking audience demands into account. Its efficacy is supported by empirical data, which demonstrates gains in student confidence, motivation, grammatical accuracy, and translation quality. Additionally, group writing assignments help students get ready for the realities of the workplace, where peer assessment and teamwork are commonplace. Teachers of translation should think about include collaborative writing in their curriculum as a professional development exercise as well as an instructional strategy.

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Appendix (A)

Text 1

The Importance of Bees

Bees are one of the most important insects in the world. They play a vital role in pollinating plants, which is essential for the production of food and other crops. Bees are also responsible for producing honey, which is a valuable food and medicine.

Unfortunately, bee populations are declining around the world. This is due to a number of factors, including habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. The decline of bees is a serious threat to our food security and ecosystem health.

We can all do our part to help bees. We can plant bee-friendly flowers in our gardens, avoid using pesticides, and support local beekeepers. We can also learn more about bees and share our knowledge with others.

أهمية النحل

النحل من أهم الحشرات في العالم. تلعب دورا حيويا في تلقيح النباتات، وهو أمر ضروري لإنتاج الطعام والمحاصيل الأخرى. كما أن النحل مسؤول عن إنتاج العسل، وهو غذاء ودواء قيم.

لسوء الحظ، تتناقص أعداد النحل في جميع أنحاء العالم. يرجع ذلك إلى عدد من العوامل، بما في ذلك فقدان الموائل واستخدام المبيدات الحشرية وتغير المناخ. يشكل انخفاض أعداد النحل تهديدا خطيرا للأمن الغذائي وصحة النظام البيئي.

يمكننا جميعا المساهمة في مساعدة النحل. يمكننا زراعة أزهار تجذب النحل في حدائقنا وتجنب استخدام المبيدات الحشرية ودعم مربي النحل المحليين. يمكننا أيضا معرفة المزيد عن النحل ومشاركة معرفتنا مع الآخرين.

Appendix (B)

Text 2

 The Importance of Protecting Forests

Forests are one of the most important ecosystems on Earth. They provide us with a number of essential benefits, including:

1- Clean air and water: Forests filter air and water pollution, helping to keep us healthy.

2- Climate regulation: Forests help to regulate the climate by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and releasing oxygen.

3- Habitat for wildlife: Forests provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals, many of which are endangered.

4- Recreation: Forests provide opportunities for recreation, such as hiking, camping, and fishing.

Unfortunately, forests are being destroyed at an alarming rate. This is due to a number of factors, including deforestation for agriculture,

mining, and development. The loss of forests is a serious threat to our environment and our well-being.

We can all do our part to protect forests. We can reduce our consumption of paper and wood products, recycle and compost, and support organizations that are working to conserve forests. We can also educate others about the importance of forests and the threats they face.

أهمية حماية الغابات

الغابات هي واحدة من أهم النظم البيئية على وجه الأرض. توفر لنا عددا من الفوائد الأساسية، بما في ذلك:

١.الهواء والماء النظيفان: تصفية الغابات لتلوث الهواء والماء، مما يساعد على الحفاظ على صحتنا.

٢. تنظيم المناخ: تساعد الغابات في تنظيم المناخ عن طريق امتصاص ثاني أكسيد الكربون من الغلاف الجوي وإطلاق الأكسجين.

٣.موطن الحياة البرية: توفر الغابات موطنا لمجموعة واسعة من النباتات والحيوانات، العديد منها مهدد بالانقراض

٤. التنزه: توفر الغابات فرصا للترفيه، مثل المشي لمسافات طويلة والتخييم والصيد.

لسوء الحظ، يتم تدمير الغابات بمعدل ينذر بالخطر. يرجع ذلك إلى عدد من العوامل، بما في ذلك إزالة الغابات من أجل الزراعة والتعدين والتطوير. يعد فقدان الغابات تهديدا خطيرا لبيئتنا ورفاهيتنا.

يمكننا جميعا المساهمة في حماية الغابات. يمكننا تقليل استهلاكنا للورق ومنتجات الخشب وإعادة التدوير والتسميد ودعم المنظمات التي تعمل على الحفاظ على الغابات. يمكننا أيضا تثقيف الآخرين حول أهمية الغابات والتهديدات التي تواجهها.