The Significance of Translation Projects in the Curriculum of the Undergraduate Program of Translation at the University of Sulaimani

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Abstract— **This study examines the significance of translation projects in the undergraduate translation curriculum at the University of Sulaimani, focusing on their role in developing subject-specific and generic skills and competencies. Drawing from the principles of the Bologna Process and Problem- and Project-based Learning, the study investigates the benefits of translation projects among 74 translation students in the Department of Translation, College of Languages, University of Sulaimani. In doing so, a questionnaire and a mixed-methods approach of quantitative and qualitative data analysis are utilized. The findings demonstrate that translation projects are instrumental in enhancing students' translation-related skills, including text analysis, problem-solving, and reflection on translation choices. Furthermore, the findings also reveal that these projects foster critical thinking, creativity and teamwork, aligning with the Bologna Process's emphasis on student-centred learning and the acquisition of 21st-century skills. Accordingly, this study highlights the importance of translation projects not only as an academic requirement, but also as a valuable tool for preparing students for professional translation works, bridging the gap between theory and practice and contributing to the development of essential soft skills necessary for the modern labour market.**

Index Terms— **Translation project, Translation commentary, Translation annotation, Problem-based learning, Project-based learning, Problem-solving, Bologna Process Culture, Conspicuous Consumption, Food, University students.**

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the key requirements of undergraduate degrees in translation is that students have to complete their own translation projects or conduct research projects in translation. Munday (2016, p. 303) focuses on this requirement and makes a clear distinction between translation projects (translation commentaries or translation annotations) and research projects in translation (i.e. MA and PhD thesis or dissertation). A student who undertakes a translation project selects, analyses and translates a source text (ST) and then writes reflective comments on his/her translation choices that s/he made in the target text (TT), whereas a student who conducts translation research carries out a thorough analysis and interpretation of translation theories and might use empirical data to propose new insights into the field of Translation Studies. Since most of the undergraduate translation programs at universities, including those in Iraqi Kurdistan, require students to do translation projects, this study is intended to focus on this type of requirement.

The available works within Translation Studies provide excellent literature on the process of conducting research in translation. For instance, in addition to many book chapters and sections about researching in translation, two major works that are globally followed by students and researchers are: Williams and Chesterman's (2002) *The Map: A Beginner's Guide to Doing Research in Translation Studies* and Saldanha and O'Brien's (2013) *Research Methodologies in Translation Studies*. However, translation projects did not receive such attention and only certain works can be found (Adab 1994 and 1996; Schäffner, 2001; Almanna, 2016; Sewell, 2002; Shei, 2005; Garcia Alvarez, 2007; Munday, 2016; and Shih, 2018).

A very crucial point concerning translation projects is that the significance of these projects has not been investigated thoroughly from the perspective of those students who attend undergraduate translation programs in which undertaking translation projects is compulsory. This is particularly true for Kurdish students who study translation at the undergraduate level at the universities of Iraqi Kurdistan. Reviewing previous studies has revealed that only Shih (2018) studied the advantages of translation projects from Kolb's (2014) experiential learning cycle. However, the benefits of translation projects can be investigated from the perspective of other learning approaches and from the perspective of undergraduate (Kurdish) students, i.e. the students' experience in terms of the benefits of translation projects. As a response to this gap in the literature, this study, through the perspectives of Problem-based Learning (PBL) and Project-based Learning (PrBL), aims to explain the significance of translation projects from the perspective of undergraduate Kurdish students. In doing so, this study hypothesises that students, based on their experience, believe that translation projects are beneficial. To test this

hypothesis, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1- Are the translation projects beneficial according to students' perspective?
2- What are the benefits of translation projects for students?

II. TRANSLATION PROJECT AS A TERM

As is the case in Translation Studies that there is often more than one term for a specific translation item or phenomenon, several terms are used by different translation scholars to refer to translation projects. This variation depends on the content, aim and format of translation projects.

A number of translation scholars use "translation commentary" (Sewell, 2002; Shei, 2005; Garcia Alvarez, 2007; Munday, 2016; and Shih, 2018), while some others employ "translation annotation" (Almanna, 2016) or "annotated text for translation" (Adab 1994; and 1996 and Schäffner, 2001). Further, some other scholars opted for "translation diaries" (Fox, 2000; Martinez and Hurtado, 2001). However, undergraduate and postgraduate programs of translation at universities generally use "translation projects" (University of Durham, 2021; London Metropolitan University, 2021; and University of Westminster, 2021).

Variation in using translation terms is in itself a phenomenon within the field of Translation Studies and often these terms are quite confusing for students. Hence, for the purpose of this study, the above-mentioned terms need to be clarified and defined. Translation commentary refers to comprehensive comments that a student provides for the problems that s/he faced in translating an ST and their solutions; translation annotation or diary refers to individual comments on individual translation problems and solutions; and translation project refers to the body of an academic work that includes a student's translation commentary or translation annotation in relation to a translation that s/he provides for an ST. A slightly similar term to translation commentary is "commented translation" which is used by Galán-Mañas and Hurtado Albir (2015) and Presas (2012). Galán-Mañas and Hurtado Albir (2015: p.71) define commented translation as a "document in which students can identify problematic fragments they have encountered when translating a text, explain the process they have followed to resolve problems, specify the sources they have consulted and the time they have spent on the task, etc." If this definition is compared to the definitions of translation commentary, it is then noticeable that the shared elements, such as seeing translation as a problem-solving process, between translation commentary and commented translation are much more compared to the differences.

Given that the above-mentioned terms refer to almost a similar academic work and/or share similar features in terms of content, aim and format and that translation project is used as an umbrella term, this study employs *translation project* and thoroughly defines and explains this type of project in the following section.

III. WHAT IS A TRANSLATION PROJECT?

In addition to the lack of consensus among translation scholars concerning employing a unique term for translation projects (see Section 2), another problem with translation projects is the absence of a globally accepted definition.

The three major works that exist so far in the literature of Translation Studies for defining translation terms do not define the translation project or its related terms (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997; Delisle et al., 1999; and Palumbo, 2009). Some translation scholars refer to translation projects marginally in their works without delving into introducing and defining them (Fox, 2000 and Munday, 2016). This is also true for the online course descriptions of those university translation programs that incorporate translation projects in their curriculum. What can be usually found is that the undergraduate translation programs provide a brief explanation of translation projects and set their requirements on how these projects can be carried out by students (London Metropolitan University, 2021).

In comparison to what have been said before, some other scholars tried to provide valuable details about the translation project or its related terms. Shei (2005, p.357) defines a translation project as "a student composition required to accompany a translation task, explaining the student's analysis of the text and the context, the problem-solving procedures, and other task-related thoughts." Similarly, Almanna (2016, p.8) refers to translation annotation as "critical notes offered by translators on their translations" and stresses that annotations aim to "defend the choices made by the translator." Further, Shih (2018, p. 308) introduces translation commentary as "a hybrid academic essay that requires students' critical reflection on their process of producing a piece of translation." Building on these existing definitions and some others proposed by other translation scholars (Sewell, 2002; and Garcia Alvarez, 2007), a translation project can be defined as an academic work in which a student analyses and translates a source text and then provides theoretically-supported reflective notes or comments on the translational choices that s/he made within the target text.

Translation projects have a specific type of format. They usually start with an introduction which contextualises and analyses the source text, the translation of the source text, the translator's notes concerning the translation problems and concluding remarks. For instance, Munday (2016, pp.306-314) mentions some extratextual and intratextual aspects (e.g. register, readership, etc.) that need to be considered in analysing the ST and in producing the TT. Detailed explanations about the content of translation projects can be found in Almanna's (2016) *The Routledge Course in Translation Annotation: Arabic-English-Arabic* which explains a wide range of topics with practical examples.

Speaking particularly about the format of translation projects that are carried out at the Department of Translation in the University of Sulaimani, it is worth mentioning that the department requires a particular format on translation projects and this format has been precisely explained in the department's guideline for translation projects. A translation project at this department has to have four main constituent parts, namely: the translation preface, the source text and the target text, translation annotations and the conclusion. The translation preface, in addition to introducing the source text and the

project itself in its first section, has another three sections. In the second section, the student has to provide his/her thoughtful reasons for choosing the ST for his/her project. This requirement helps the student to think about his/her motivations for translating the ST which in turn helps him/her to decide how to translate it. Then, in the next section, the student has to analyse the ST thoroughly, focusing on any linguistic and extralinguistic features that are important to be considered in the process of translating. In doing so, applicable theoretical frameworks proposed by translation scholars have to be used such as Reiss (1971/2004), Bell (1991), Nord (1991), Hatim and Mason (1990) and Colina (2015). The last section of the translation preface focuses on the translation process in which the student has to formulate his/her translation brief for translating the ST as well as describe the process of translating the ST in detail. The second part of the project has to present the ST and TT in a way that a given paragraph in the ST has to be aligned with its translation in the TT. Further, the translation problems in the ST and their solutions in the TT are numbered and underlined. After that, the third part of the project is the translation annotations. For each annotation, the student has to provide critical comments regarding the validity of the translation problem and the appropriateness of the translation solution. Moreover, the translation procedure(s) that has been utilized for solving the translation problem has to be mentioned. Students are recommended to support their comments with concepts and ideas from the existing theories of translation. The last part is the conclusion in which the student has to reflect on what s/he has learned in completing the project.

Given the productive format of translation projects and the interconnected tasks that students have to carry out to complete these projects, a number of translation scholars mentioned the advantages of these projects. These advantages are discussed in the following section.

IV. THE BENEFITS OF TRANSLATION PROJECTS

In the Kurdistan Region, universities increasingly align with the principles of the Bologna Process (BP) to modernise higher education. The University of Sulaimani is one institution that meticulously implements the core principles of an outcome-based approach, which is highly advocated as the Bologna Process. Particularly speaking, within the University of Sulaimani, the Department of Translation highly adheres to student-centeredness principles and an outcome-based approach. The students are put in the centre of the learning process. The translation activities; therefore, reflect the changes that have been taking place in recent years within the framework of the Bologna Reform Process. One of the fundamental changes is to make the students active participants in the learning process. Students are no longer passive recipients of information, but rather active participants who co-construct knowledge, skills and competencies through active engagement.

At the Department of Translation at the University of Sulaimani, the main focus of a student's final year is a translation project. Working collaboratively in small groups, students select an English source text and embark on the task of translating it into Central Kurdish. This immersive project provides students with the opportunity to confront real-world translation challenges and develop their problem-solving skills. Throughout the translation project, students come across a range of linguistic, cultural, and contextual problems inherent in the translation process. They take time to reflect on these issues and develop methods to tackle them efficiently, deepening their understanding of translation theory and practice. As such, this project can be called both problem-based Learning and project-based Learning. Problem-based Learning is part of the shift from the teaching paradigm to the learning paradigm (Barr and Tagg, 1995). According to Schwartz, problem-based learning is widely used in the field of higher education (Schwartz, 2013, p.1), and is a "student-centred approach in which students learn about a subject by working in groups to solve an open-ended problem" (Nilson, 2010, p.51).

On the other hand, project-based learning is an active student-centred form of instruction which is characterised by students' autonomy, constructive investigations, goal-setting, collaboration, communication and reflection within real-world practices (Kokotsaki et al., 2016, p.1). The main difference between PBL and PrBL is that whereas students in problem-based learning are primarily focused on the process of learning through solving problems, project-based learning needs to culminate in an end product (ibid, p.2). In the translation projects conducted by the fourth stage students of the Translation Department, both purposes of learning and an end product are merged. In other words, the students learn and gain translation competencies and will have a project at the end of the process.

The pedagogical benefits of problem-based learning and project-based learning are numerous. They empower students to sharpen their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, while also gaining invaluable subject-specific knowledge. Moreover, they foster teamwork, ignite the students' passion and enthusiasm, and enable a deeper understanding of the material. Through problem-based learning and project-based learning, students acquire essential 21st-century skills such as creativity, communication and critical thinking.

Translation projects, widely recognized as effective methods in both problem-based and project-based learning, offer numerous benefits to students, as evidenced in the literature. They promote the development of critical thinking, writing, and translation skills, enhancing students' overall academic and professional capabilities (cf. Shei, 2005). Furthermore, these projects facilitate objective discussions about translation, a crucial aspect of translator competence (cf. Kussmaul, 1995). In addition to supporting the demonstration of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), translation projects equip students with essential decision-making tools, empowering them to approach challenges with confidence and expertise. They also nurture self-reflection, fostering the development of self-regulated learning habits and encouraging students to take ownership of their learning journey (cf. Johnson, 2023).

In the current era, the rise of AI tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini has transformed the landscape of higher education. Through translation projects, students can enhance their Information Technology (IT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) competencies. While the direct use of these tools for translation may not always be permissible, they can assist students in

clarifying challenging excerpts of the source text (ST), enriching their overall understanding and skillset.

Despite the recognised benefits of translation projects in enhancing students' skills and competencies, there remains a notable gap in Translation Studies literature: the lack of focus on students' perspectives regarding the advantages of these projects. The existing researches predominantly reflects the viewpoints of theorists, academics, and scholars, often overlooking the valuable insights that students can provide. Addressing this gap is essential to fully understand the advantages of translation projects from the learners' standpoint. By exploring students' experiences and perceptions, we can gain a deeper appreciation of how translation projects not only impart essential skills but also empower students as future translators. This research aims to exhibit the benefits of a translation project from the perspective of students themselves.

V. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data for conducting this study has been derived from a questionnaire survey that has been designed specifically in order to answer the research questions. The questionnaire is intended to capture as much as possible the students' perspective about doing the translation project. It was designed by using Google Forms as this online form helps the researchers to easily and concurrently disseminate the survey to all the targeted participants and directly collect the responses (see Appendix). The participants only need to sign in to their emails in order to participate in the survey and their responses will be anonymously collected by the researchers so that the participants complete the questionnaire freely without any hesitation or stress concerning the consequences of their responses.

The questionnaire consisted of an introduction and three sections. The introduction provides a short overview of the topic of the survey and asks participants to accurately fill in the questionnaire. The first section collects quantitative data concerning the year of accomplishing the translation project by the participants. The second section consists of 19 statements. Based on the five levels of the Likert's scale (1932), the participants are required to provide their responses to these statements as follows: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. The third section provides an optional open-ended question which allows participants to talk about their experience in relation to the benefits of doing a translation project.

The participants of the survey were the fourth stage students who completed their translation projects in 2023 and 2024 at the Department of Translation, College of Languages, University of Sulaimani. The fourth stage students of 2023 belong to 2019-2020 cohort and the fourth stage students of 2024 belong to 2020-2021 cohort. The number of the fourth stage students in 2023 and 2024 is 58 and 69 respectively, totaling 127 students overall. The questionnaire was sent to all of these students using email and social networking platforms.

These students are enrolled in an undergraduate program, namely Bachelor of Arts in Translation and Interpreting and this programme runs according to the principles of the Bologna Process and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The curriculum of this program is purposefully designed to enable graduates to work as professional translators and interpreters. These students took 240 ECTS credits which is distributed equally to eight semesters over four years. The translation project carries 10 ECTS credits and students are required to complete it towards the end of their fourth year. But before doing the translation project, the students are enrolled in a number of modules related to English and Kurdish language and culture, English and Kurdish literature, linguistics, translation and interpreting (University of Sulaimani, 2024). This entails that the students are equipped with theoretical frameworks and practical experiences - which constitute what they need to complete their projects. Accordingly, all of these points constitute the selection criteria for choosing these students exclusively as participants in the survey (Saldanha, and O'Brien, 2013).

After receiving the students' responses, the results of each statement are calculated quantitatively by the Google Form itself to indicate percentages and then the researchers analyse the results qualitatively in the following section.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it is apparent in the following figure, a slightly different number of the fourth stage students of 2023 and 2024 answered the questionnaire and submitted their responses. Overall 74 students submitted their responses.
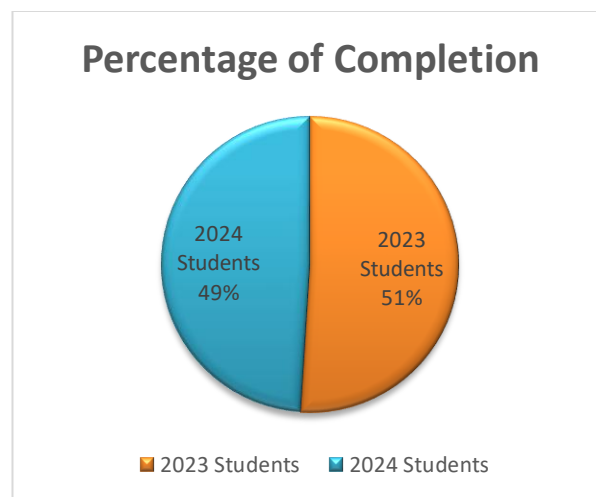

Figure 1: Number of Students Completed the Questionnaire

The results of the students' responses indicate that translation projects play a crucial role in developing subject-specific and generic skills and competencies among the undergraduate students od the Department of Translation. This outcome aligns with the principles and requirements of the Bologna Process and ECTS (outlined in the *ECTS Users' Guide 2015, A Guide to Formulating Degree Programme Profiles, Including Programme Competences and Programme Learning Outcomes*). The BP emphasises the importance of equipping students with a balanced combination of subject-specific expertise and transferable competencies throughout their academic journey. Out of the 74 students who participated, the

majority indicated that the translation projects were particularly beneficial in several key areas.

Starting with subject-specific skills and competencies, the majority of the respondents found the translation projects beneficial in helping them select suitable source texts, with 62.2% of the respondents agreeing, 21.6% strongly agreed and only 16.2% remaining neutral (see Fig. 2). This result demonstrates that the significant majority of the fourth stage students found the project helpful in making informed decisions about their source text choices. This can be interpreted as active involvement of the students in the process of translation through making intentional choices from the starting point of the task. Furthermore, 54.1% of the students agreed and 32.4% strongly agreed that the translation projects helped them reflect on their reasons for making their ST choices. This finding indicates that the projects not only engaged students in translation tasks but also encouraged them to think carefully about the texts they chose to translate, highlighting the project's role in fostering reflective practices among students. This data similarly indicates that the students were involved in evaluating the complexity, relevance and cultural significance of the STs before translating them.
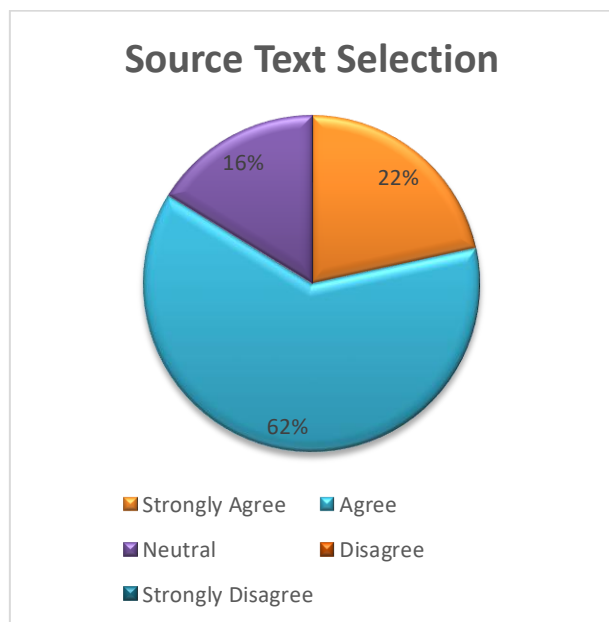

Figure 2: Responses for Source Text Selection

The projects significantly enhanced students' ability to analyse the source texts with a translation-oriented perspective, as evidenced by 48.6% strongly agreeing and 37.8% agreeing with this statement, while only 13.5% remained neutral. This finding highlights the project's effectiveness in developing the students' analytical skills. It can also be interpreted as that the students approached the source texts critically, and identified key linguistic and non-linguistic features, cultural references and the stylistic elements of the source texts before the process of translation. Moreover, the project was beneficial in aiding the students in understanding key translation-related concepts and their application in text analysis (see Fig. 3).
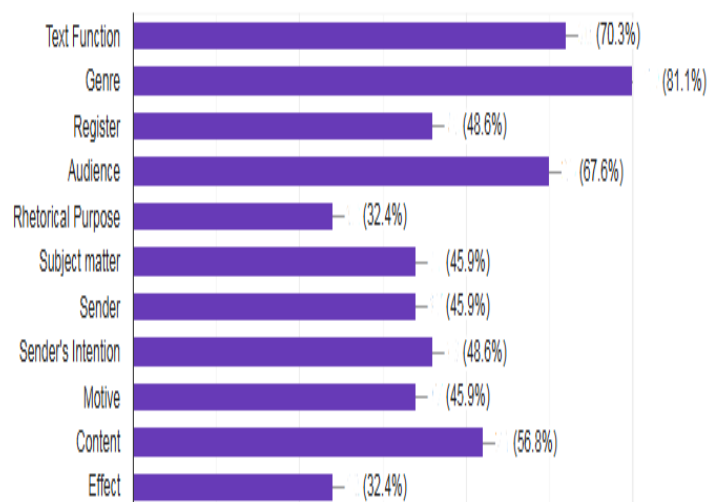

Figure 3: Responses for Translation-oriented Text Analysis Concepts

The project also facilitated students' learning in constructing their own translation briefs and translating their source texts according to these personalised briefs, with 54.1% agreeing, 27% strongly agreeing, and 18.9% remaining neutral. These results suggest that the project is effective in teaching students how to develop a clear framework for their translations, ensuring they have learned to consider the purpose, audience and specific requirements for each task. Furthermore, the fact that the majority of the participants reported improvement in this area indicates that they gained valuable skills in organising and planning their translations effectively.

It is worth mentioning that the project is also helpful in aiding students identify translation problems and skillfully employ tailored translation procedures to overcome them. The results presented in the following figure provide clear evidence concerning this skill.
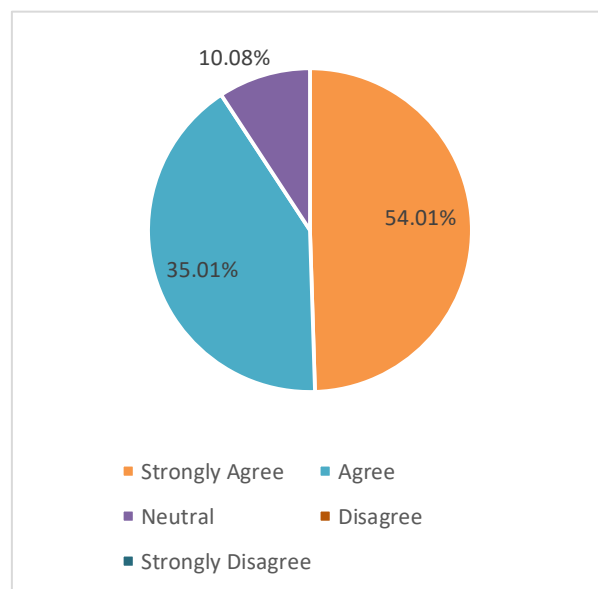

Figure 4: Responses for Identifying Translation Problems and their Solutions with Procedures

The results in Fig. 4 demonstrate the effectiveness of the project in equipping students with essential translation-related problem-solving skills that are crucial in the translation process. This outcome suggests that students engaged with the translation process on a deeper level, indicating a solid understanding of translation theories and concepts. It also demonstrates that students possess not only theoretical knowledge about translation challenges but also the practical skills necessary to apply this knowledge effectively in real-world scenarios. Further, the majority of the respondents (91.9%) reported that the project helped them to make careful translational decisions during the process of translation. This further highlights the positive role of translation projects in developing students' translation skills. The project is not only useful in aiding students to make rational decisions but also provides a valuable opportunity for them to justify their translational choices and decisions (see Fig. 5). This aspect of the project encouraged students to engage critically with their work, fostering a reflective practice that is essential in the field of translation.
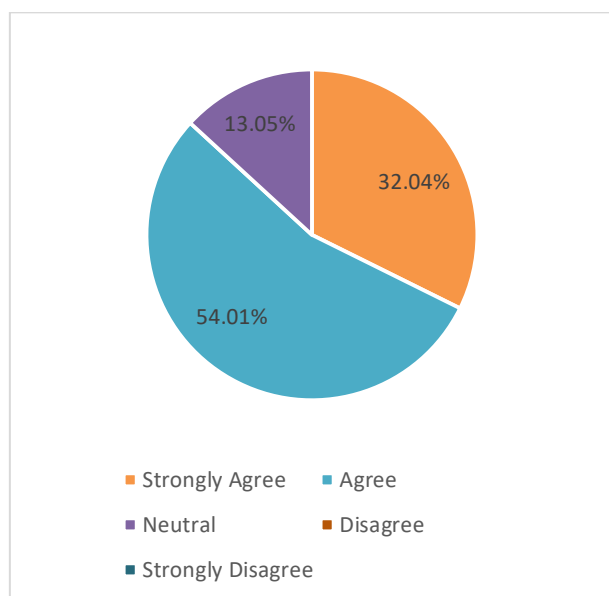

Figure 5: Responses for Justifying Translational Choices

The abovementioned results signify the students' deep understanding of the translation process and the factors influencing their choices. They demonstrate that the students engaged with the translation process reflectively and rationally. This reflective engagement suggests that they are not merely executing tasks but are actively analysing and evaluating their decisions based on a thorough comprehension of translation theories and principles.

The translation project additionally improved the students' skills in writing translation annotations to address the translation problems they faced during the process of translation. The majority of the respondents (91.9%) either agreed or strongly agreed with this aspect, only 5.4% remained neutral and 2.7% disagreed. This overwhelming majority indicates that the project effectively helped students articulate their thought processes and reasoning when confronting

translation challenges, which is a critical skill in the field. The presence of 5.4% neutral responses and 2.7% disagreement indicates that only a small minority of the students may not have experienced significant growth in this area or may not have fully engaged with the annotation process.

The results of the survey furthermore indicate that the translation project is a significant and meaningful practical experience for the students as it equips them with valuable competencies to manage other translation tasks in the future. A large number of the respondents either agreed (56.8%) or strongly agreed (37.8%) with this aspect of the projects, with only 5.4% remaining either neutral or disagreed. This high level of agreement suggests that the project effectively bridged the gap between theory and practice, allowing students to apply their knowledge in a real-world context. In addition, it is apparent that through the project, the students developed essential skills which are important for their future tasks and professional activities.

The respondents demonstrated that the project is a valuable tool for creating glossaries, as depicted in Fig. 6 below. The results reflect a strong acknowledgement among students that the project was instrumental in enhancing their ability to compile terminology, which is a crucial skill in the translation field. In addition, the creation of glossaries based on their translation experience indicates that the students engaged in reflective learning. By identifying and documenting key terms, they had the opportunity to think critically about their translation choices and understand the nuances of the source and target language. This reflective practice is vital for their development as translators as it encourages deeper engagement with the source and target texts.
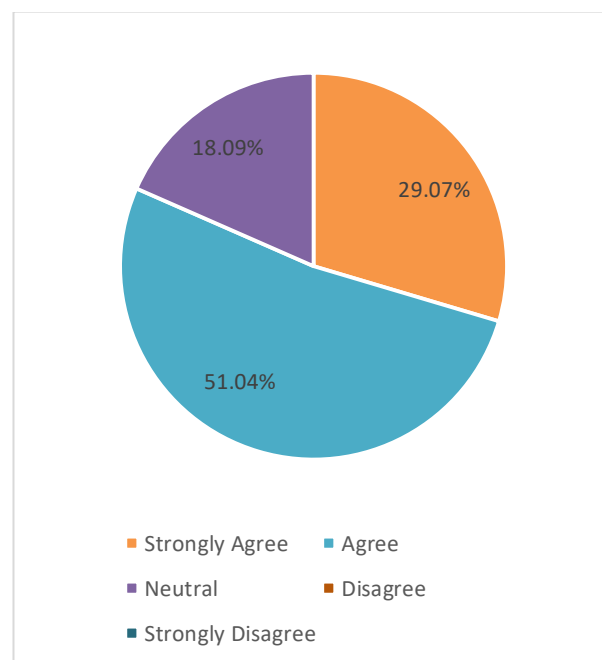

Figure 6: Responses for Creating Glossaries

Alongside the subject-specific skills and competencies which are directly related to the field of Translation Studies, the translation projects significantly improved generic skills and

competencies. Generic skills and competencies (transversal/soft skills and competencies) are a significant requirement of the Bologna Process (Lakohoff et al., 2010, p. 63). These skills are often called 21st-century skills and are essential to prepare students for the labour market and professional environment. Based on the results of the survey, the translation projects enhanced several generic skills and competencies of the students.

The data of the current study reveals that 43.2% of the respondents agreed and 35.1% strongly agreed that the translation project enhanced their teamwork skills. Although 16.2% of the respondents remained neutral and 5.5% disagreed, the high levels of agreement indicate that a significant number of students recognized the importance of collaborative work in improving their ability to function effectively within a team. Collaborating with classmates on the translation project likely provided valuable opportunities for engaging in collaborative learning. This experience not only nurtures teamwork skills but also promotes essential competencies such as communication, negotiation and conflict resolution. These skills are vital for students as they prepare to work in diverse teams in their future careers. Moreover, the emphasis on collaborative learning and teamwork aligns with the primary objectives of the Bologna Process, highlighting its relevance in modern educational frameworks.

The survey results exhibited that the translation project helped the students learn how to be creative in translating texts. The data shows that 40.5% of the respondents agreed and 37.8% strongly agreed that the translation project fostered their creativity in translating texts. This overwhelming majority indicates that the project was indeed effective in developing creativity among the participants. It furthermore indicates that the majority of the students not only recognised the significance of creativity but also effectively applied it in their translation projects. In contrast, 16.5% of the participants remained neutral and 5.5% disagreed. This could stem from varying levels of comfort with creative tasks, personal preferences for structured tasks or lack of confidence in their creative abilities. In addition, more than 90% of the participants indicated that their research and consultation skills have improved, as they frequently sought information from books, the internet and experts. This result indicates that the translation project has been effective in promoting active learning and information-seeking behaviours. It also shows the skills and competencies of the students to synthesise information from various sources.

The use of technological tools in translation has become a vital generic skill, significantly enhancing both the efficiency and accuracy of the translation process. In today's labour market, proficiency in translation technology is highly essential. As far as the data of the current study is concerned, the translation project also played a vital role in developing skills and competencies in utilizing technological tools. This can be seen in the results of the following figure.
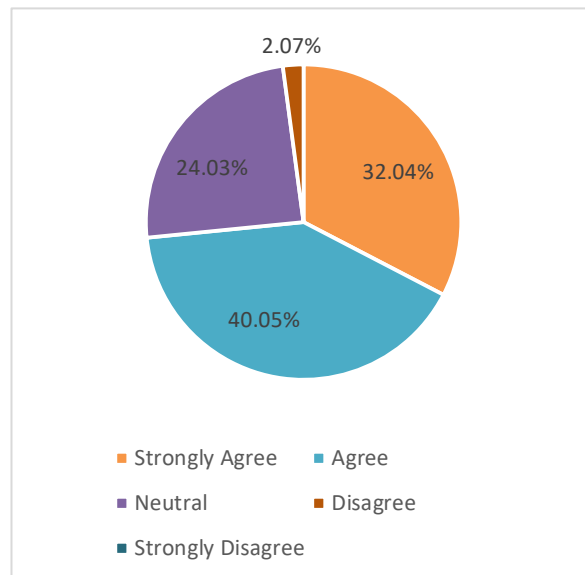

Figure 7: Responses for Using Technological Tools

The results in Fig. 7 demonstrate that the project successfully integrated technology into the learning process, aiding the participants to improve their digital literacy, which is essential for the modern translation market. The 24.3% of the participants who remained neutral might indicate that, while they did not strongly feel that their technological skills were enhanced, they may not have experienced a significant decline or negative impact either. This could suggest that these participants already possessed a certain level of competence with technological tools before the project, or that the project did not significantly challenge their existing skills.

Reflective thinking is another important genetic skill which was developed by the majority of the participants (see Fig. 8). Reflective thinking is a crucial generic skill in translation. Reflective translators are more capable of identifying potential errors and they ensure that their work is contextually appropriate.
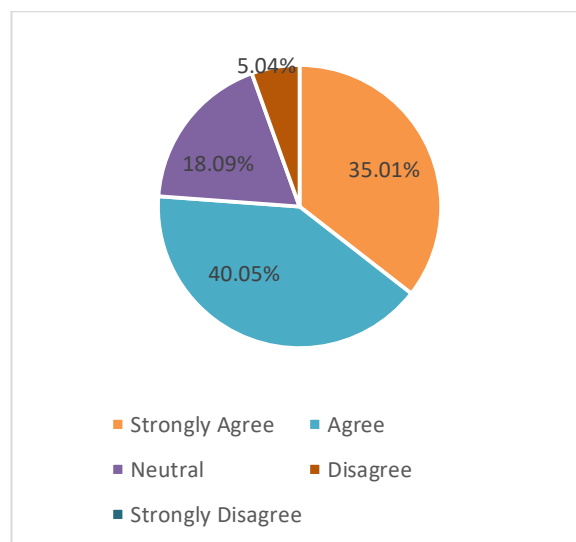

Figure 8: Responses for Improving Reflective Skill

As illustrated in the above figure, a large proportion of the participants developed reflective thinking. This indicates that the project was effective in fostering a crucial generic skill such as reflective thinking, which is essential for maintaining high-quality translations. The 18.9% of the respondents who remained neutral suggest that not all the participants experienced significant development in this area during the project. This could point to differences in prior experience, with some participants possibly already possessing strong reflective skills, or it might indicate that reflective thinking was not emphasized equally across all the tasks. The small percentage of the participants who disagreed (5.5%) could reflect individual differences in learning or engagement with the reflective aspects of the project. It may also suggest that a few participants either did not grasp the importance of reflective thinking or found it challenging to apply during the project.

The translation projects also increased students' enthusiasm and passion for translation, with 43.2% agreeing, 35.1% strongly agreeing, 18.9% remaining neutral and 2.7% disagreeing. This finding is a clear indicator of how engaging a practical translation task like a translation project can be, and it highlights its positive role in developing the student's intrinsic motivation for their field. Passion and enthusiasm are critical for sustained success in the field of translation. The 18.9% of the participants who remained neutral might indicate that the project did not fully resonate with all the participants on a personal or emotional level. The minimal disagreement (only 2.7%) may suggest that the project was generally well-received and successful in creating a positive learning environment.

Critical thinking is a vital edu-preneurial skill, as it empowers individuals to assess, analyse, and make informed decisions—key aspects of entrepreneurial education (edupreneurship). It is also one of the eight core lifelong skills emphasized by the European Commission and the Bologna Process. According to the data, 78.4% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the translation project enhanced their critical thinking regarding translation-related decisions. This finding exhibits that the students were not merely translating words, but were actively and reflectively engaged in the translation process. By fostering critical thinking in a practical, real-world context, translation projects align well with the objectives of the Bologna Process which emphasizes critical thinking as one of the eight core lifelong skills. Participants are likely to carry this skill forward into future academic, professional, and personal endeavours, contributing to their overall lifelong learning trajectory.

The survey concluded with an optional open-ended question, asking the students to mention other benefits of the translation project that they have personally experienced. The data obtained for this section is all positive since the answers further underscored the benefits of translation projects.

CONCLUSIONS

The translation project serves as an effective vehicle for cultivating a blend of subject-specific and soft skills, preparing students to navigate the complexities of the translation profession and contribute meaningfully to their future workplaces while embodying the core principles of the Bologna Process.

The results of the survey clearly demonstrate the multi-dimensional benefits of the translation project within the frameworks of PBL and PrBL. The final-year translation project conducted at the Department of Translation at the University of Sulaimani nurtures not only translation-related subject-specific competencies but also essential 21st-century soft skills crucial for professional success. Students reported significant improvements in their analytical abilities, problem-solving skills, teamwork, and communication, all of which are vital in today's globalized and rapidly changing work environment. Moreover, the project encourages creativity and critical thinking, allowing students to approach translation tasks with an innovative mindset and adapt to various linguistic and cultural challenges. By engaging with real-world texts, students develop research skills and the ability to consult relevant sources and experts, further enhancing their competencies. The project also emphasizes reflective practices, prompting students to assess their translation processes and decisions critically, which fosters a culture of continuous learning and self-improvement. These comprehensive outcomes align seamlessly with the objectives of the Bologna Process and the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe Project. The Bologna Process advocates for a student-centred approach to learning, promoting employability, and a focus on learning outcomes. By prioritizing these elements, the translation project prepares students to become adaptable and skilled professionals ready to meet the demands of the global job market.

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APPENDIX

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