

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON RETRANSLATION PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN TRANSLATOR TRAINING

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Abstract: *Project-based learning (PjBL) as a part of a learner-centred constructivist approach has been a subject of interest in translator training. However, there hasn't been any research on how retranslation might be incorporated into project-based learning in translator training or on what students think of a project-based learning which mainly deals with retranslation. While retranslation is frequently used within the scope of literary translation for the translation of a text several times by different translators and in different historical and socio-cultural contexts, the use of retranslation for educational purposes has not been considered in translator and interpreter training programs of Turkey. Therefore, this study presents a case study with a qualitative research design which examines the perspectives of Turkish students regarding the implementation of the retranslation project-based learning (RPjBL) in translator training. It seeks to report on students' views through a qualitative analysis of a focus group discussion and students' retranslation project reports. The main findings of this study include that RPjBL had beneficial outcomes on the increase of students' awareness and motivation towards translation and the development of understanding of the translation process. More importantly, it was found that RPjBL was perceived as a learning opportunity by students in terms of preparing themselves for their future profession. Students especially emphasized that RPjBL provided an authentic practical translation task and contributed to students' improvement of mother tongue and foreign language. Apart from this, however, heavy workload, time limitation and less guidance were identified as drawbacks of RPjBL in student's views. The conclusions of this study suggest that RPjBL offers possible new avenues for students' learning and empowerment, though its implementation needs some improvement. Further studies might be carried out to assess students' performance in RPjBL and the use of various types of retranslation as RPjBL.*

Keywords: *project-based learning; retranslation project-based learning; translator training; students' perspectives*

1. Introduction

Along with the exponential growth of new approaches to educational settings, translator training has also changed in recent years to train students better for their future profession. A multitude of approaches and trends have been offered to develop students' translation competence together with its diversified definitions, integration of information and communication technologies into translator training programs with the purpose of preparing students for the

rapidly changing industry, initiate academy-sector interaction/cooperation to create more realistic learning environments. Dorothy Kelly in her *Handbook for Translator Trainers* (2005) sums up the history of translator training by highlighting these views and particularly the move away from the traditional teacher-centred models to the constructivist and learner-centred models in translator training. As proposed by Kiraly (*A Social Constructivist*), a social constructivist approach to translator training helps build translator's knowhow skills. In his view, students construct their own learning through authentic translation practices, solving problems, taking responsibility in teamwork or individually which, in turn, expands their critical thinking and translation abilities. He later advocates that students' learning should be facilitated in situated translation projects which will involve real clients or recipients as he believes in personal experience (Kiraly, "Project-based Learning"). This will "break the stranglehold of the "who'll take the next sentence" teaching technique in translator education" (Kiraly, "Project-based Learning" 1110). He regards "authentic project work" as an "empowerment approach" which is one of the goals of the constructivist approach ("Project-based Learning" 1102).

Kiraly's project-based learning (PjBL) is of paramount importance because training today's students as future professionals requires empowering them with such an innovative approach that differs from traditional transmissionist approaches. Indeed, PjBL offers an alternative and effective framework for translator training because it helps students to learn in line with their individual abilities, needs, preferences and learning styles.

When it comes to translator training in Turkey, although major steps have been taken to move away from traditional ways of teaching and many new approaches such as technology based learning have been integrated into training programs, there are still many courses with traditionally designed syllabuses in which "the teacher attempts to 'train' translators by having them practice translating on their own at home and then correcting their homework one sentence at a time" (Kiraly, *Handbook for Translator* 1100). The translation tasks are usually corrected in class time sentence by sentence, in Kiraly's words with "the 'who'll take the next sentence' (WTNS) approach" (*Handbook for Translator* 1100) or the teacher giving overall feedbacks weekly to students. What emerges is the need for a change towards a more learner-centred approach which avails students of learning by doing or experiencing, researching, reflecting and taking their own responsibility. In this sense, integrating PjBL into translator training seems to be worthy for adding an element of constructivist learning approach. Therefore, the focus of the present study is to explore the views of students on the implementation of PjBL that mainly includes retranslation. Though some suggestions were made for the use of retranslation in translator training as "practical learning activities" by Evans (199), PjBL combined with retranslation hasn't been

implemented. In order to benefit from retranslation practice and bring a novelty to PjBL, “retranslation project-based learning” (“RPjBL”) was utilized in this case study. Additionally, students’ perspectives on RPjBL were investigated. This study attempts to address the following questions:

- 1) How do the students perceive retranslation activities and RPjBL?
- 2) What are possible beneficial outcomes of RPjBL in translator training?
- 3) What are possible drawbacks of RPjBL in translator training?

2. Project-based learning in translator training

Moving away from traditional or prescriptive teacher-centred transmissionist approaches in teaching translation has paved the way for student-centred, function and process-oriented teaching approaches in translator training. As one of these student-centred approaches, project-based learning mainly focuses on learners who construct their own learning (Kiraly, *A Social Constructivist*). In project-based learning, the process generally involves a number of tasks to be completed by students or questions to be searched as teamwork or individually which help to increase motivation, communication and collaboration among students. Students are required to search and find solutions for problems arising during the projects, take responsibility for their learning at every step of the process, present their findings and reflect on their projects in a certain period of time. When offered a diversified and an authentic learning environment via PjBL, students might develop their critical thinking and decision-making abilities, which also offers them a chance to attain autonomy. Li, Zhang, and He argue that “so, students will need to expand their minds and think more critically, an ability which is often identified as lacking” (3). Furthermore, since most of the students are already familiar with IT tools in today’s world, PjBL allows them to use and explore technology more in the process. As explained by Fernández-Prieto and Sempere Linares (2010), project-based learning arises mainly from the idea that translation projects are seen as learning experiences for students because, while students deal with several problems such as translation-related problems, technical problems, and team-work problems in a given project, they develop different types of competences (141 qtd. in García González, Veiga Díaz 116).

Several studies point out benefits of using PjBL in translator training (Kiraly; Li, Zhang, and He; García González and Veiga Díaz; Moghaddas and Khoshsaligheh). Drawing on social constructivism, Li, Zhang, and He investigated the effectiveness of PjBL in teaching of business translation in the Chinese context. Rather than a translation-oriented project which focuses on practice and completion of translation tasks, they implemented a research-oriented project in which students learn in the process while engaging in a deep understanding of the problems arising. They gathered the data through

reflective journals, a questionnaire survey and two focus groups with the purpose of revealing students' reception and perception of PjBL. Their findings indicated that “all the elements of PjBL fit in very nicely with the goals and objectives of today's translation training programmes” (16). By the same token, students reported several areas of growth as a result of PjBL such as the improvement of critical thinking and presentation abilities, communication, collaboration, research, technological and teamwork skills.

Moghaddas and Khoshsaligheh also provide empirical data with their implementation of a PjBL in an advanced translation course. They aimed at exploring the effectiveness of PjBL in the Iranian context and adopted a quasi-experimental study. Using both qualitative and quantitative data, they found that students had positive attitudes towards this method before and after the implementation. Students' critical thinking abilities, teamwork skills and translation quality also improved. On the other hand, some challenges were observed due to the nature of the local educational context for the English-Persian translation class. They concluded that the project-based learning is “an effective and applicable method which helps prepare the students for the professional market” (205).

As the literature suggests, in the constructivist approach teachers act as a facilitator or merely a guide in the teaching process. This role is summarized by Kiraly as follows:

In helping them [learners] enter and maintain the conversation that will lead them into the profession's inner circle, the teacher's role will change from that of someone who attempts to package reality into neat, easily digested chunks for consumption and later regurgitation by learners into someone who can help novices find and make their way into the active centre of a community of professional practice. (“Preparing Students Today” 112)

The implications of such constructivist educational settings for PjBL are clear in Kelly's words: “a pedagogical event with highly realistic, and if possible genuine, translation Project” (18), yet, it is also “a considerable teacher intervention” (14). It is noteworthy that the teacher's figure of authority doesn't vaporize, although PjBL places utmost importance on learners' own effort. In other words, PjBL might be a very demanding teaching method for teachers because of the fact that it necessitates preparing various materials, giving feedback to students on a regular basis, monitoring each student's progress and keeping their progress records, offering guidance when they face problems, and using a variety of assessment tools instead of traditional ways. Therefore, teachers are always there, but it is crucial to emphasize that, rather

than being the centre of knowledge transfer, they position themselves as the supporter or coordinator of students' learning process.

Pertinent to the benefits of PjBL mentioned above, the implementation of PjBL with an additional dimension of retranslation in the Turkish context with the purpose of investigating its possible outcomes and drawbacks is worthy of serious attention. Although PjBL is commonly used in translator and interpreter programs in Turkey, it has not been combined with retranslation. Retranslation is also a wide-spread translation phenomenon within the scope of literary translation and has not yet been used for training purposes.

3. Creating an alternative way of learning: employing RPjBL

Retranslation is defined as “second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language” (Koskinen, Paloposki 294), which means that several target texts for a source text might emerge due to a variety of reasons at one time or in different periods in the target language. Although retranslation is a widely discussed practice that has been studied from a number of perspectives (Paloposki and Koskinen; Tahir Gürçağlar; Koskinen and Paloposki; Deane-Cox; Berk Albachten and Tahir Gürçağlar, “Introduction”, “The Making”) since it was first introduced in the 1990s, it hasn't been adopted in the educational settings or implemented as a translation project in translator training apart from several suggestions of Evans.

One related study conducted by Evans suggests using retranslation as a practical activity in the classroom, finding retranslation as closely related to the goals of translator training by referring to translation competence. Although no empirical data was provided, suggestions made in the study for diversified uses of retranslations to train students are noteworthy. Evans explains that Pym's minimalist translation competence could be regarded as a sturdy base for the notion of retranslation. Pym's succinct definition of translation competence has two aspects:

- a) the ability to generate a series of more than one viable target text (TT1, TT2 ... TTn) for a pertinent source text (ST);
- b) the ability to select only one viable TT from this series, quickly and with justified confidence. (Pym 489)

In line with this definition, for Evans, a translator is required to be able to choose between two translations or retranslations of a source text based on a critical reading process and explain reasons behind these choices. Furthermore, “the student must be able to find ways to translate differently from the current translation and justify those choices, or, should she or he use the same solutions, justify why they are optimal” (Evans 203). In his view, all these aspects indicate that retranslation offers a critical approach to translation

training and, thus, the researcher proposes a number of retranslation activities to develop students' understanding of translation dynamics, promote their critical reading and translation abilities.

Among the retranslation exercises proposed by Evans, there are “reading exercises” which don't include translation practice, but merely reading practices. The goal of incorporating a reading activity of already translated texts into the syllabus is to help students analyse, describe and comment on different translations “using relevant metalanguage” (Evans 204). The differences arising in translation could entail a plethora of in-depth analyses in terms of the author, translator, publisher, the *skopos* (Vermeer 227) of the text, the target readers, translation norms, social, political and historical conditions when the text was translated, critiques of the translation and many more. Presumably, the main benefit of this exercises would be what a “translation-oriented analysis” tries to achieve the most (Nord 1-17). The second retranslation exercise is named “stealth retranslation” by Evans because students are given a text to translate at home or in class but they aren't informed that it is already a translated text. When they complete their task of translation, this time, the students are provided with its retranslation, which allows them to compare and contrast their own translation decisions with other translators' decisions. For reflection, they could also be asked to write short comments, commentaries or reflective journals, which will lead to introducing a variety of different solutions, analyses and decisions to the students. The next type of exercise is called “retranslation proper” (Evans 205). In this type, both the source text and the target text are given to the students and they are required to produce a retranslation which will be different from the first target text(s) and to write a commentary as reflective practice. Commentary writing “forces students to engage with other translators' work in a way that is critical” (Evans 206) and helps students learn from decisions and solutions of other translators by analysing, comparing and contrasting translated texts. Evans further maintains that all these retranslation exercises constructively conform with the goals of translator training.

If seen as a training ground for students, a project accompanied by different retranslation tasks and a written commentary or report might form a potentially highly effective learning platform for students as this study aims to reveal. Therefore, in the following sections, details of the implementation of retranslation project-based learning (RPjBL) as well as its qualitative results are presented, and then discussed.

4. Methodology

This study deploys a case study research design with a qualitative approach since it tries to gain insight into students' perspectives on RPjBL. Focus group methodology was used as a means of collecting data on the students'

experiences of RPjBL because it seeks to “generate ideas for the purpose of devising recommendations for future change and improvement in student learning” (Breen 464). Besides, students’ retranslation project reports were gathered in order to gather richer data. Thus, students were required to complete their retranslation project and, finally, write a report before submitting their projects. Reports, as reflective learning tools, were expected to be prepared by student groups in a similar way to translation commentary writing.

Initially, an undergraduate class of 63 first-year students at the department of English Translation and Interpreting (ages of 20–30) at Trakya University were informed and invited to participate in the study in the first week of the second semester. Students were also informed about retranslation tasks, RPjBL and its nature during that week. They were asked to form groups of 8 students. 6 students with irregular attendance and 9 students doing double or minor in the program were excluded as they were not willing to participate. 6 different focus groups of 8 students were formed. After the students’ consent was obtained, the study was conducted during a compulsory course entitled “Comparative Text Study II”, specifically designed for RPjBL, which had 14 sessions and two hours each week in the second semester of 2020 at a public university.

4.1. Implementation of RPjBL

Implementing RPjBL necessitated introducing various retranslation tasks to students. In order to have different training approaches which would include retranslation tasks and a project, a translation-oriented RPjBL was incorporated into the syllabus of the “Comparative Text Study II” course. This course was taught in the second semester of the first year of the four-year BA Program as a continuation of “Comparative Text Study I” at the department of Translation and Interpreting at Trakya University. “Comparative Text Study I” introduced the students to basic concepts of translation studies such as target text and target audience, commission, commissioner, text function, and translation equivalence. They also gain awareness in terms of text types as categorized by Katharina Reiss, the skopos theory put forward by Hans Vermeer, and the translation-oriented text analysis model proposed by Christiane Nord. When it comes to the “Comparative Text Study II” course, students work on textual analysis of both source and target texts. Thus, implementing RPjBL in the “Comparative Text Study II” course would be suitable for more practice and doing translation tasks.

It is also significant to emphasize that Li, Zhang and He make a distinction between translation-oriented and research-oriented projects (5-6). According to them, the essence of a translation-oriented project is to complete a translation task and thus understand translation dynamics. On the other hand,

research-oriented projects aim to understand translational issues by doing in-depth investigations. In this sense, the task of RPjBL utilized in this study was to complete a retranslation project, namely a “translation-oriented project” or “retranslation proper”.

A weekly schedule was designed specifically for implementing RBjBL (see Table 1 below). One of the students was chosen as group leader for each group. Then the students started to search for a source text (in English) that was translated into Turkish more than once. As Öner Bulut suggests, “more room should be made for in-class and out-of-class activities that aim at identifying, building and improving research competence in translator training courses” (3165). Thus, students were advised to choose a text type according to their preferences. In the second week, group leaders presented their research, chosen source texts and target texts with their brief explanations of text type, author, translator and publishers etc. In weeks 3-7, students read the source text and retranslations (two target texts) and analysed them. Then, in week 7, a discussion session was organized in order to see the progress reports and understand the problems arising. In weeks 7-12, students retranslated a chapter or a part of the text into Turkish, and in the last week they summarized their projects and did a presentation. Students were required to write a report (around 1,000-1,500 words) at the end of the semester for their project.

Apart from the project to be used as a learning tool, students were introduced to two “stealth retranslations” and to “retranslation proper” exercises during the course. They were also required to write short translation commentaries. According to Öner Bulut, “translation commentary writing can be argued to have strong potential for helping translation students perceive/define themselves as problem-solving and decision-making agents with rights and obligations in any translation situation” (23). Thus, before implementing RjPBL, which was mainly a “retranslation proper”, introducing different retranslation tasks to students was necessary (see Table 1).

Table 1. Weekly schedule

Weeks	The lecturer	The Students
<u>Week 1</u>	Introducing the retranslation project	• Organizing groups and searching for the source text and retranslations
<u>Week 2</u>	Explaining retranslation project-based learning and guiding students	• Presenting the chosen source texts and target texts

Week 3-6	“Stealth retranslation” exercises (providing technical text/theatre plays as source texts and target texts) In-class discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translating the text into Turkish • Reading and analysing retranslations • Writing a commentary and discussion
<u>Week 7</u>	Offering feedback and suggestions for progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting progress reports of students’ projects as a group
Week 8-12	“Retranslation proper” exercise (providing short stories/poems/advertisements/brochures and their retranslations) Online class discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and analysing retranslations • Retranslating the text • Writing a commentary and discussion
<u>Week 13</u>	Organizing group sessions for presenting their translations in their RPjBL and reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting findings and project reports
<u>Week 14</u>	Giving feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizing and submitting retranslation project final reports

As students engaged in “stealth retranslation” and “rettranslation proper” activities, they became familiar with retranslations. After week 7, the fight with the ongoing pandemic of coronavirus (COVID-19) caused the course to be taught in line with the public university’s distance education program. Weeks 7-14 ran online, which enabled interactive sessions that were as effective as in-class activities. The last two weeks were planned as presentation, discussion and feedback weeks to enable students express themselves, present the problems they face, discuss their progress, get teacher/peer feedback and finalize their retranslation project reports.

4.1.2. Gathering and analysing data

Three focus groups were invited for online discussion to collect data in the 15th week, but only one focus group volunteered. This group included 5 female and 3 male students. Discussions were conducted through the use of the public university’s distance education program after the last week. The researcher explained to the students how the focus group process would be and acted as moderator. Video recordings were made. Focus group discussions lasted for almost half an hour. The researcher used questions to guide the focus group and gather participants’ views on the implementation of RjPBL (Table 2).

Table 2. Questions used for the students’ focus groups.

Question 1	Have you done any retranslation activities or a retranslation project before as a part of your courses or a retranslation required by an employee? If yes, please explain how.
Question 2	What are the benefits of RPjBL?
Question 3	What are the challenges you faced during RPjBL?

To analyse the data gathered from the focus group discussion, the researcher transcribed the content of the discussion from the video. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) was used to describe recurring patterns, and main themes were derived from the discussion. Another data gathering tool utilized was students’ retranslation project reports. The latter were examined – by the students together with a researcher – to identify their main themes so as to understand whether they overlap with the themes gathered from the focus group discussion.

5. Findings

5.1. Focus group discussion

Only one focus group participated in the discussion due to the fact that some students from the groups were hesitant about participating in such a discussion. Since the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic unexpectedly caused face to face education to switch to the distance education program of the university, it became difficult to reach the students and thus, only one group – all of whose members were voluntary and available – took part in the discussion. The findings were grouped into four main themes as a result of thematic analysis. For each one, the viewpoints of the students¹ were provided as they contained remarkable data.

5.1.1. Awareness and motivation: At the beginning of the discussion, all the students in the focus group mentioned that they had not heard of retranslation, nor done retranslation tasks or RPjBL before. When it comes to the benefits of RPjBL, one of the most salient issues emphasized in the discussion was the increase in students’ awareness and motivation towards RPjBL. Most students commented that retranslation activities and particularly projects were interesting and creative, leading them to know themselves, their needs and their

¹ The students answered the questions in English and the researcher chose to retain the English original in the quotes from students throughout the study.

skills better. Hence, RPjBL seemed to arise interest and awareness in students as stated by a student:

S-1: I can honestly tell that at first, I thought that I could never pass the course or finish the given tasks... I was afraid. Yes, I spent more time and energy in this course. Then came the retranslation project and it was with no way through but somehow it gave me pleasure. After all, I became aware that our literary world was full of with retranlations, started to search about them and saw how creative were translators. I will try to be more creative like them.

This view was also reiterated by another student in a similar manner but with an emphasis on increased self-confidence:

S-2: Yes. Retranlation project forced us to be creative and I realized that I might be creative if I really focus on something like that. I felt that I can translate better and become productive in translation, just as professional translators did in retranlations!

While students shared the opinion that retranlations motivated them, another student specified that the senses of discovery and curiosity were important elements for students in RPjBL:

S-3: Indeed, this is the first time we did something interesting, like digging the target texts and discovering small items there... The project was demanding in terms of searching, reading, presenting, translating and comparing. This made us full of works to do each week and finishing it was like bringing all the archeological findings together. Exhausting, but discovering a lot about translation process and dynamics was the reason for me to take the course more serious. I don't know, we were all curious about this. We kept saying what is next, what is next...

5.1.2. *Understanding the translation process:* The students underlined the importance of understanding the translation process when discussing how RPjBL was actually channelizing them to reflectiveness. Two students pointed out that they regard the retranslation process as follows:

S-4: When we learn that we're actually dealing with different retranlations, we gradually started to do analysis and comparisons. What fascinated me the most was the idea of understanding translation process more. I mean, it was something real, practical and really

enjoyable for us. It was a sense of wonder or competition. I was thinking how might other translators have translated the same text or what could be their decisions and my decisions.

S-1: Yes, actually thinking process in the project widened our horizons because we were rethinking our translations and other translator's translations. It was good to analyze skillful translators' translations closely. I learned many things about professional translators, their lives, which texts they translated or even how they became translators! Dealing with the translation processes and strategies, knowing human translators and different or professional ways of looking at things were great.

Similarly, a few students remarked that they did a lot of reading and critical thinking for the sake of completing the project. This also seemed to raise their awareness of the importance of reading and researching in the translation process. A student's answer echoes the idea of professionalism as she stated that she put a lot of effort into understanding the translation process:

S.8: In my opinion, the most beneficial point was facing sentences which were quite different², which made me think why and how they were different than my sentences. I thought about some sentences for hours and hours, I was lost at some point. While I was reading the source text and retranslations, I had to engage in close readings. All the time my dictionary was at my hand. I noticed that I needed to read more Turkish and English books if I want to understand the process because professionals do that. Only if you grasp the way properly, then you can translate better.

5.1.3. A learning opportunity: In the focus group discussion, it was observed that students' perception was that RPjBL was applied in the course to prepare them to be good translators. Thus, the project was a learning opportunity created especially for them and they benefited from it. Two of the students, who mostly remained silent during the discussion, indicated that, in order to be good translators, they need to learn more about languages and cultures, and that the project was useful for them in this sense:

S.4: I agree with you. Thanks to the project, we did many textual analysis and comparisons and so I learned English grammar and

² The student refers to the practice of comparing the source text, retranslations and his translation.

vocabulary better and some idioms. Learning new vocabulary is important for me and the project was a learning opportunity because I need to be competent in both languages when I graduate.

S.2: Obviously I thought that I knew English very well before the project. I understood that translating requires knowing the target language and culture at the highest level and the retranslation project was a good way to show me what I don't know. A lot of things... You know... new words, usage of language, customs and many more in that target language. If you ask me, the project reminded us that we were in need of developing ourselves continuously if we want to be good or expert translators in the future.

S.1: Of course, we always need to learn. All in all, we are students but the project was like a facilitator, a way of learning, I guess. A reminder for us that there is a long way before us, before we become good translators and many things to learn!

In short, the students expressed their need for learning by reading, comparing and practicing, which, in turn, resulted in the increase of awareness and motivation towards the translation process. Moreover, understanding the translation process more was crucial for them because they thought that being a good translator requires them to have this competence. In this sense, it was clear from the discussion that RPjBL was regarded as a learning opportunity by the students to prepare themselves for their future profession.

5.1.4. Heavy work load, time limitation, less guidance: While the discussion continued, several students expressed their negative opinions about RPjBL. These students mostly complained about the heavy work load, which wasn't usual for them when compared to the other courses in their program. Time limitation and less guidance were the other negative aspects, according to the students. Indeed, all these negative views are combined as a **theme** because they seemed to be three highly related sub-categories in the students' discussion, difficult to differentiate from each other. In this context, a student complained that, because of working hard for the project, there wasn't much time left for the other courses. In his words:

S6: By means of retranslation activities, I obtained a translatorial eye for making systematic comparisons between texts and considering semantic or lexical aspects, translation strategies, religious allusions, cultural elements, and other contextual elements in translation. But the project took much of my time, waiting my friends to complete their

parts was boring and revising the project again and again and waiting for lecturer's feedback were time consuming for us. So, you see, I couldn't focus on the other courses as I wished. We usually don't have so much work in our courses. Doing that project was really a heavy work load together with other courses of mine and responsibilities.

Moreover, one student reported that she felt stressed because of the deadlines and work load given to them. She clearly noted how she was overwhelmed by the project:

S7: Retranslation activities became good tasks for learning many things about translation but the content of the course was very intense and I hardly handled them. Time limitations caused me feel always in rush and stressful in the project. I had always something to do, comparing, writing, translating, revising, presenting, reporting. I couldn't catch up most of the time with the deadlines, my friends were faster than me.

In the same vein, another student mentioned that what they didn't like about RPjBL was having less guidance from the lecturer in addition to the requirements of the project. One interesting remark of a student exemplifies this:

S5: Yes, indeed. Normally, there would be more time to talk to lecturer in class, but we did so many retranslation activities that we were always busy, doing translation and comparison. So, there wasn't much time for feedback or the fun part. I wish there were less students in class or less activities.

To summarize, the students generally perceived retranslation activities and particularly RPjBL positively. Student comments briefly pointed out that the students enjoyed RPjBL and found it interesting. RPjBL was beneficial for improving their understanding of the translation process, raising their language level and awareness. One of the students' frequently highlighted points was that RPjBL provided a learning opportunity to prepare themselves to be good translators. In other words, for them RPjBL might be interpreted as an empowerment approach. On the other hand, such a course content designed for RPjBL brought them more tasks to do when compared to the traditional teacher-centred learning. As a result, they emphasized that heavy workload and time limitation were among some drawbacks of RPjBL. Furthermore, getting less guidance from the lecturer was one of the students' prominent complaints. As for the reasons for these drawbacks, several ideas might be derived from the students' comments: getting accustomed to the traditional classroom

teaching, rather than working in a group and succeeding as a group, not spending much time and effort for completing a project, and not having a lecturer all the time around them. From these highlighted views, it might be understood that RPjBL became compelling for the students. All these drawbacks could easily be overcome by running this course in two semesters with fewer students or, possibly, running it later in the program.

5.2. Students' retranslation project reports

In this study, the translation project reports were regarded as reflective learning tools for encouraging students to express their ideas about the project. The main objective of the report was to engage students in a deep reading process, to develop awareness of translation, and to increase critical thinking abilities while helping them to understand the framework of RPjBL. Thus, the students were encouraged to write commentaries weekly after retranslation activities of different text types and, at the end of the course, a report was required for the retranslation project. 6 different groups presented their findings in 15 minutes in the 13th week. After receiving feedback, groups finalized and sent their project reports in the last week.

The main findings of students' reports can be summarized as follows:

- a) RPjBL provides authentic practical translation tasks;
- b) RPjBL helps to improve the mother tongue and foreign language skills.

Students frequently mention in their retranslation project reports that RPjBL provided them authentic practical translation tasks. Two reports mentioned that most students enjoyed doing the project because it was new to them. Four reports suggested that students started to expect such projects in their other courses because they felt more active by taking part in a project for the first time. Most importantly, the reports revealed that the students regarded the retranslation project as beneficial for improving their command of both mother tongue and foreign language. In all 6 reports, the students emphasized, excitingly, that they had gained a better understanding of their mother language (Turkish) and foreign language (English). They claimed that they did more translation-oriented text analysis and textual comparisons to do their project and this process allowed for the improvement of their mother tongue and foreign language.

6. Conclusions

This study investigated students' perspectives on RPjBL, which was thought to potentially offer students a different practice and learning opportunity, as Kiraly suggests using "authentic project work" as an "empowerment approach"

(“Project-based Learning” 1102). Given that the “translation profession is project-driven, and professional translators are engaged in temporary (in contrast to open-ended) projects which are unique and distinguishable from each other” (Moghaddas, Khoshsaligheh 192), this study set out to exemplify how retranslation might be used for educational purposes in translator training as a RPjBL, and sought to understand what students think of it. It presented a case study in which a specific course syllabus was designed by the researcher for implementing RPjBL. Students were expected to maintain their own retranslation projects in six different groups and present their project reports in the 14th week. A focus group was invited to an online platform for the discussion phase. To attain its goal, this case study employed a qualitative approach and the data was gathered both from a focus group discussion and from the students’ retranslation project reports.

A thematic approach was applied to the analysis of the discussion and the results of the focus group discussion could be classified into four main themes. “Awareness and motivation”, “understanding the translation process” and “a learning opportunity” stood out as three beneficial outcomes of RPjBL. These themes pointed out that RPjBL was effective in translator training in terms of helping students to see themselves as future professionals. On the other hand, one theme, which referred to the heavy workload, time limitation and less guidance, projected the students’ negative views on RPjBL. This view seemed to be a direct result of the fact that the students weren’t used to assuming their own responsibility for learning and presumably they hadn’t become independent learners; yet, as first-year students at the program in a crowded classroom they always required more lecture guidance. Thus, the implementation of RPjBL with fewer students and in two courses (i.e., spanning two semesters), rather than in one course (in one semester) could have been more effective.

The views from the students’ retranslation project reports attested to the beneficial outcomes of utilizing RPjBL and offered a first-hand impression of how the students perceive RPjBL. The students agreed that RPjBL was an authentic practical translation task by emphasizing their need for such novelties in their training program. They also reported that RPjBL was useful in terms of improving their knowledge of both mother tongue and foreign language given that textual comparisons were effective in their learning. In other words, RPjBL provided an opportunity for the students to reflect on their translation practices and language levels.

In short, this study revealed that RPjBL offers possible avenues for furthering students’ learning of the translation process, providing the opportunity for reflection on their translation practice and increasing their language knowledge. It is also beneficial for raising students’ awareness and motivation towards translating. Ultimately, RPjBL provides authenticity for

students and, most importantly, empowers students for being active learners in the process, which fits into the context of a learner-centred constructivist framework in translator training.

The current study had several limitations, one of which was having only one focus group discussion. Though 6 groups were invited, only the participants of one focus group agreed to a discussion. It would be more enlightening with more focus groups as well as quantitative data, such as surveys. Moreover, the unexpected need to move courses to an online platform due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) might have contributed to distracting students' attention and lessening their motivation to do their tasks collaboratively and follow the course as required. In addition, a significant limitation appeared to be the relatively high number of students, which made it difficult for the lecturer to monitor and guide the groups properly. Therefore, the current study might be extended with smaller groups of students and with more retranslation tasks over a longer period of time. A further study might be conducted to assess students' performances in RPjBL as well as PjBL and compare the results to gain a deeper understanding of the use and effectiveness of RPjBL.

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