

Translation teachers are suggested to reflect on the applied translation studies with special focus on new perspectives and procedures in translation training. Teachers should look for ways to help students become autonomous and independent in their learning. The focus on project learning is closely related to interpersonal competence which is the translator's ability to work with other professionals involved in the translation process and the students could enhance their interpersonal competence by working with other classmates in the translation process. Translation teachers must make use of new methods and syllabi based on student-centered curriculum and involve them more in classroom activities.

Team work would make students motivated and the teacher could

facilitate the learning by creating positive relationship between the students.

Material developers are also suggested to design tasks and activities that are project-oriented and try to develop materials that need team work to be completed in translation practice. With the availability and feasibility of project-based learning, material developers are expected to make good use of team work as a mediator to help support students' learning process in and outside the classroom both cognitively and emotionally.

**The study confirmed that student-centered activities create more responsibility for the students and project works involve students more in the task so that they can delve into the task and exert more effort. Indeed, students who were doing the task collaboratively created a better translation because they could pinpoint the difficulties and work more meticulously on the translation**

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was .29 (a large effect size according to Cohen's 1992 guidelines). It means that the difference between the two groups was large.

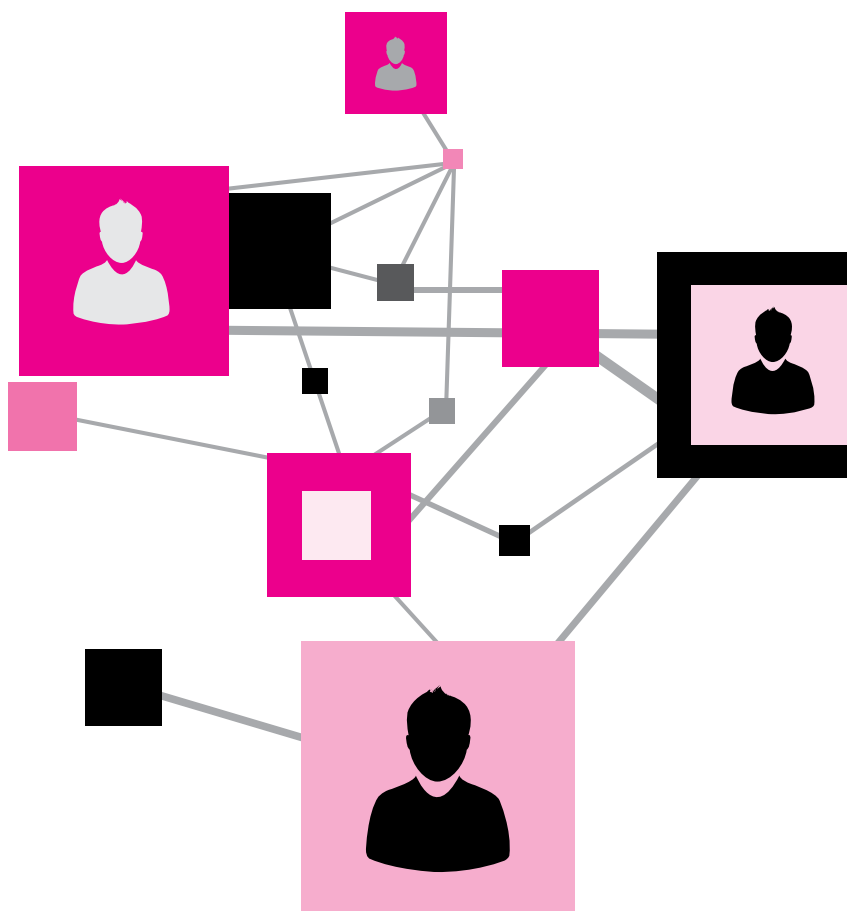
Moreover, as for the second research question, more qualitative data were gathered from the semi-structured interviews conducted with five students who were exposed to the team work. Altogether, the major themes that emerged from students' responses to the questions included: 1) novelty of project-based learning, 2) effectiveness, 3) more willingness to involve in translation practice, 4) developing cultural and professional knowledge, 5) more responsibility, 6) higher motivation, and 7) emotional relationship with other members of the same group.

## 5. Reflection

The focus on team work helps students not only in collaborative learning but also in their everyday life, raising their awareness of the importance of team work. The students were able to manifest their capacities in their roles as individual differences help students to make use of their own potentialities, and this in agreement with the research carried out by Hurtado-Albir (1999) who concluded that students come to our classes with capability, experience and also diverse expectations about translation. Previous studies on project-based learning also confirmed that students' abilities to work in a team is not exclusively developed by organizing students in teams since they will only acquire interpersonal competence through practice and reflection (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).

The study confirmed that student-centered activities create more responsibility for the students and project

works involve students more in the task so that they can delve into the task and exert more effort. Indeed, students who were doing the task collaboratively created a better translation because they could pinpoint the difficulties and work more meticulously on the translation. Students learn that success is not just a matter of competition but it can be a concern for new findings in the field of translation studies to encourage fostering a new learning culture, that is, project-based learning. Project works enhance the relationship between the students and with the teacher, and they can think of new methods in the context of classroom to facilitate the collaborative learning and teaching procedures.



difficulties (conceptual, terminological, stylistic or any others). They tried to read and analyze closely the comparable and auxiliary texts, as well as the detailed information obtained in the pre-transfer analysis phase. Thus, the translator attempted to provide a solution to the conceptual problems that might have arisen, became familiar with the style, and determined the function of the translation and the translation strategies to be applied in the process.

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The editor/reviser also read the original text and the documents that had been found to familiarize themselves with the field of the text. Then, they studied the specific requirements of the translation commission to get to know the requisites as regards format and text function. Next, they compared and revised the original text and the translation and made all the necessary content changes. When in doubt about any aspect of the translation, they checked with the translator and the documentation specialist before making a decision.

The task given to the students was a text for translation including 100 words, and at least one hour was allotted for doing the task. Prior to the treatment, a translation test was administered to the students

in both control group and experimental group and following the treatment, another translation test was given to the students and the translations were evaluated by two raters to observe the inter-rater reliability. We, during the treatment, went over each group and assessed the student members in each group using assessment criteria.

Finally, we gathered data from five students in the experimental group by means of face-to-face interview sessions held. Different students from the three groups were chosen based on availability sampling. We tried to select students based on the different roles they had in their groups. The interview sessions took 20 minutes and the students were free to speak in either English or Persian language.

As the first research question concerning the significant difference between team work and individual work in translation practice, initially, each test was assessed by two raters, and in this way the inter-rater reliability of scores was also taken care of. The final results obtained from the study confirmed that there was a significant difference of the post-test scores for subjects in the experimental and the control group, after controlling for scores on the pre- test administered prior to the intervention. That is, students who were in the experimental group outperformed students who were in the control group and this is in line with the social-constructivist educational approach that an active involvement in translation practices, and a collaborative learning environment would promote interaction among students and increase their creativity and motivation (Kiraly, 2005). The effect size was also checked, as indicated by the corresponding partial eta squared value. The value in this case



**Students who were doing the task collaboratively created a better translation because they could pinpoint the difficulties and work more meticulously on the translation**

We, first, administered a proficiency test to make the students homogeneous in terms of language proficiency. Then, during the next session, they administered a Translation Test to make the students homogeneous in terms of their translation competency. Following these steps, we divided the students into two groups including the control group and the experimental group. Each group contained 15 students majoring in Translation Studies. The students were taking their courses of Translation of Advanced Texts. The control group passed the course based on the conventional translation pedagogy through which students were required to translate the text individually, and we evaluated their translations, providing each of them with the appropriate and needed feedback.

The experimental group also contained 15 students, and we employed project-based pedagogy to teach the students in this class. The students were divided into 3 main groups and each group consisted of five students. The students worked with the help of each other in each group to provide the translation task. The treatment sessions lasted for four weeks from October 2016 to November 2016. The students took the main roles including 1) project manager, 2) documentation

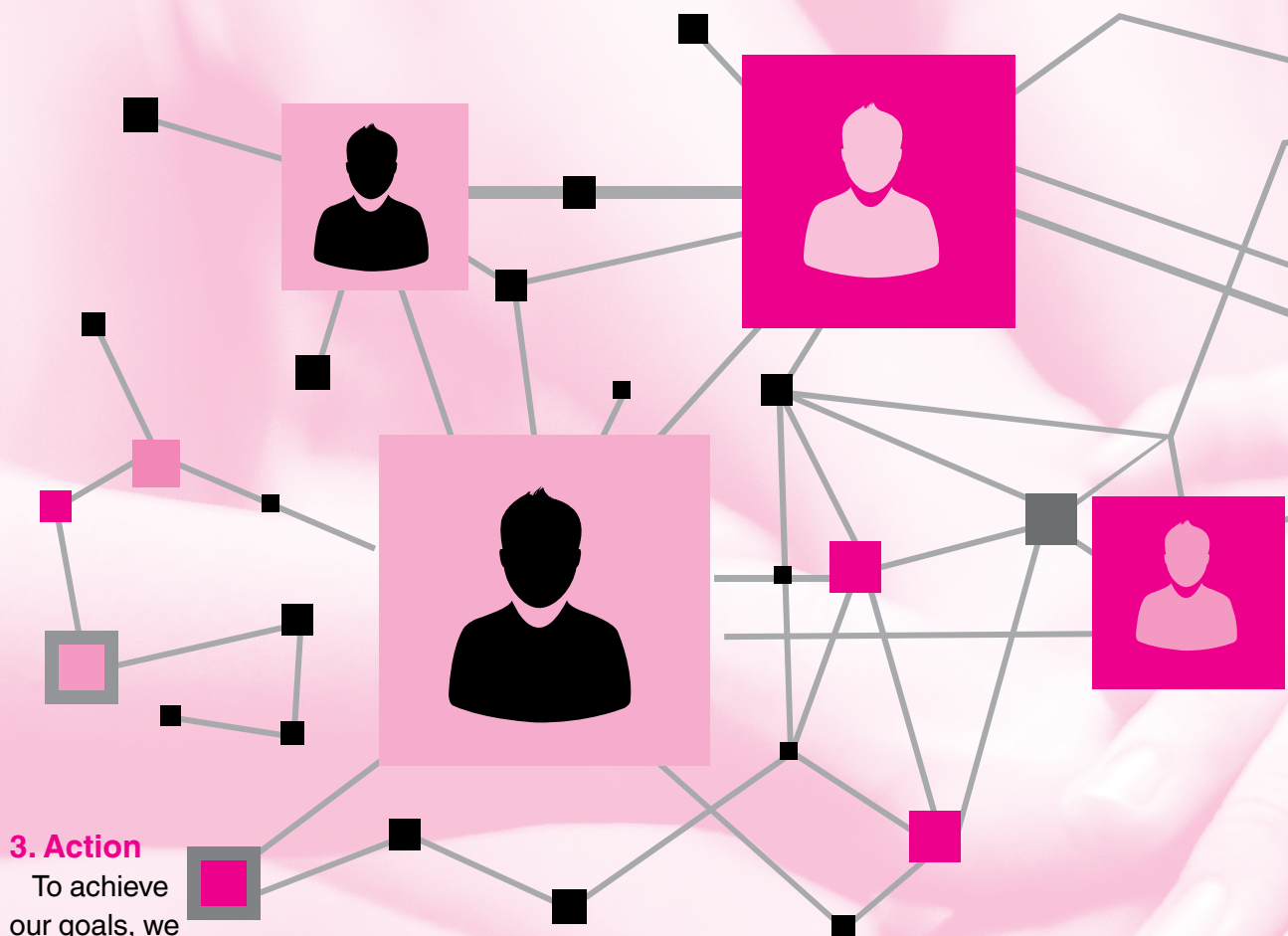
specialist, 3) terminologist, 4) translator and 5) editor.

#### **4. Observation**

As we observed during classroom practice, the project managers in the group assigned tasks, roles and responsibilities and set the schedule for the translation project, with clearly defined stages, deadlines and delivery date, in accordance with the client's brief. Moreover, they coordinated and supervised all the work being done; and responded to the inquiries and problems of the team members, communicating with the client if necessary. The documentation specialists in each group tried to search for and select the documentation to assist translators in solving problems and difficulties or in their lack of specific knowledge in the given topic. Indeed, documentation specialists selected paper and electronic resources whose quality would be assessed according to their usefulness or adequacy to address the difficulties posed by the translation.

The terminologist prepared glossaries of the source language text and other texts with the terms and expressions that may be of use to translators in the two working languages (e.g. if translating some academic transcripts, the terminologist not only gathered a list of subjects in the text and their translation, but they also searched for other subjects relevant in the field and include them in the vocabulary bank). Moreover, they tried to delimit the theme(s) or sub-theme(s) of the original language; to consult, use and select information and documents provided by the person/s in charge of the documentation stage. The translator read the source text attentively with a view to identifying the main problems and





### 3. Action

To achieve our goals, we selected 30 students majoring in translation studies from Imam Reza University of Mashhad. All of the students were senior undergraduate BA students and had already passed Translation of Simple Text course and they were taking Translation of Advanced Texts course. The students were both male and female and they were in their semester five or six. They had one semester experience with translation practice. However, at first stage, the homogeneity of the participants was made based on their scores on the NELSON Proficiency Test. Moreover, five students were selected for interview based on availability sampling.

In so doing, we also opted for necessary instruments. The first instrument was the 50-item Nelson English Language Proficiency Test, with an acceptable estimate of reliability coefficient ( $R = 0.82$ ) (Hashemian, Roohani & Fadaei,

2012). The second and third instruments were tests of translation taken from “*Mozaic 2 Reading*” textbook, written by Wegmann and Knezevic (2007) written for intermediate students which were distributed to the students prior to and following the treatment phase. The fourth instrument was the rubric suggested by Khanmohammad and Osanloo (2009) that was used to measure translation quality. The total score devoted to this rubrics is 100. The last instrument utilized by the study was semi-structured questions, asking the participants regarding what the translation students think about their improvement in translation using team work. The content validity of the questionnaire were checked by two experts in the field of translation who had been teaching translation courses at Imam Reza University of Mashhad and Islamic Azad University of Quchan.

2) What do the students think about the team work and project-based learning in translation pedagogy?

## 2. Planning

Informal investigations show that Iranian university students often think that team work does not have to have a pre-planned program. To tackle this problem, we made use of a project-based model suggested by Maruenda-Bataller and Santaemilia-Ruiz (2016). Based on this translation model, the class is divided into groups of five students, each assuming one of the following roles (see Figure 3.1). The group members include: 1) project manager, 2) documentation specialist, 3) terminologist, 4) translator and 5) editor. *Project managers* (PMs) are at the center of the whole translation project. They ensure that the translation team works effectively; they also develop project strategies, clarify roles and responsibilities and set the goals for the translation team.

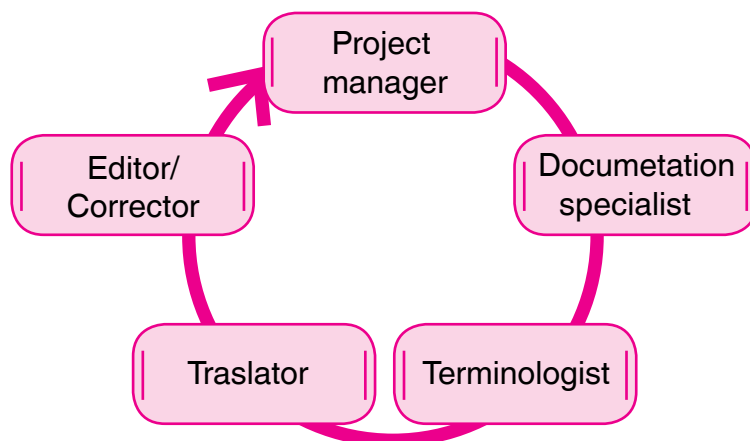


Figure 1. Main roles in translation team (Maruenda-Bataller and Santaemilia-Ruiz, 2016)

Interpersonal competence is the translator's ability to work with other professionals involved in the translation process (terminologists, translators, proofreaders) and other actors (clients, authors), and includes such qualities as ability to work in a team, negotiation skills and leadership skills (Kelly, 2008, p. 15).



## 1. Introduction

In the context of our country, helping students realize that works can be done much easier and better through collaboration and project works is a big problem. Translation is recently seen as a professional endeavor, which promotes “learners’ autonomy and responsibility towards group work and quality” (Maruenda-Bataller & Santaemilia-Ruiz, 2012, p. 97). Far from the traditional transmissionist approach to translation pedagogy, researchers in translation studies are in favor of creating a collaborative learning environment by means of simulated translation commissions (Kelly, 2005). During the translation trainee courses, they develop a pedagogy that gives prominence to the translation process rather than only the outcome. Therefore, we tried to adopt what is commonly known as ‘project-based learning’ (Kiraly, 2005) which is in line with action research, assigning responsibilities to the participants who are involved in the learning and teaching operations (see Edge, 2001). These projects draw us closer to what really works in the translation classes.

Gile (2009) emphasizes that translation teaching should be similar to the real practice of translation. Since the 1990s the most innovative approaches, which focus on students as the main agents of the learning process, have been developed in the field of Translation Training (Kiraly, 1995; 2000). It goes without saying that in the field of translation, there is an urgent need for practice - oriented translation pedagogy. Research has shown that students taught by practical teachers achieve more than their peers who are taught by less practice - oriented instructors (Sanders & Horn, 1998).

The key principles of the social-

constructivist educational approach include an active involvement in authentic professional practices, a collaborative teaching environment that promotes interaction among students as well as an active participation in the learning and teaching process (Kiraly, 2005, p. 51). Indeed, since professional translation is by nature a social activity, we believe that encouraging teamwork in the classroom is a good way to prepare students for it. In order for teams to work cooperatively, Johnson and Johnson (1994, p. 21-23) highlight the following essential requirements: positive interdependence, joint responsibility, stimulating interaction, interpersonal and team abilities and team assessment.

**Project works enhance the relationship between the students and with the teacher, and they can think of new methods in the context of classroom to facilitate the collaborative learning and teaching procedures**

The present study follows the interpersonal competence model suggested by Kelly (2005). Based on this model translation practice is assumed to be a collaborative activity and teamwork has become more and more important for present-day translators, which justifies the need to implement this methodological solution in education as well as studying its use in translator training. The study tries to address two major questions including:

1) *Is there any significant difference between team work and individual work in translation practice?*



# Team Work Versus Individual Work in Translation Practice: A Project-Based Action Research

Masoomeh Fatemy (MA)

Department of English, Quchan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Quchan, Iran

Ghasem Modarresi (PhD)

Department of English, Quchan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Quchan, Iran

Email: qasem.modarresi@gmail.com

## چکیده

تحقیق حاضر بر یادگیری پروژه‌محور تکیه دارد که طی آن دانشجویان به‌طور فعال در فرایند ترجمه شرکت دارند، و این امری است که در اقدام‌پژوهی بر آن تأکید می‌شود. در نظام آموزشی ما، دانشجویان برای انجام تکالیفی با یادگیری پروژه‌محور، در کلاس، از دانش و مهارت برخوردار نیستند. برای مواجهه با این مشکل، ما ۳۰ نفر دانشجوی کارشناسی رشته مطالعات ترجمه را انتخاب کردیم و در طی جلسات کلاسی با آن‌ها، آنچه را که در کلاس، پس از واگذار کردن مسئولیت‌های هر فرد روی داد، مشاهده کردیم، نتایج نشان داد که بین دو گروه تفاوت معناداری وجود دارد. در خصوص تفکر دانشجویان درباره کار تیمی و پروژه محور در آموزش ترجمه، نتایج حاصل از مصاحبه نشان داد که کار تیمی ۱. جدید است، ۲. مؤثر است، و ۳. تمایل دانشجویان را برای درگیر شدن در فعالیت ترجمه بیشتر می‌کند. یکی از کاربردهای این تحقیق این است که کار تیمی می‌تواند بیش از مباحث نظری باعث افزایش فعالیت عملی در ترجمه گردد تا اینکه صرفاً روی مباحث نظری کار شود.

**کلیدواژه‌ها:** پروژه‌محوری، ترجمه تیمی، ترجمه انفرادی، اقدام پژوهی

## Abstract

The present study focuses on project-based learning through which students actively participate in the translation process, through which responsibilities are assigned to the participants involved in the learning and teaching operations. In our educational system, students are not still accustomed to accomplishing tasks as a project in their classroom. To tackle this problem, we selected 30 senior undergraduate BA students majoring in translation, dividing them into two groups, and during the classroom sessions, we observed what was going on in the classroom after these roles were assigned to the students. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. Moreover, some of the students were interviewed to see what they thought about project-based learning. As we interpreted, the major themes that emerged from students' responses included: 1) novelty of project-based learning, 2) effectiveness, and 3) more willingness to get involved in translation practice. A practical implication is that project-based learning can enhance translation practice based on the most recent translation models.

**Key words:** project-based learning, team work, translation pedagogy, translation practice





**Coordinator: Mehdi B. Mehrani**  
Assistant professor of ELT, English  
Department, University of Neyshabur  
Email: [Mehrani@neyshabur.ac.ir](mailto:Mehrani@neyshabur.ac.ir)

## Guidelines for Publishing in Action Research

We have recently specified a special column in *Roshd FLT Journal* for publishing small-scale research studies that teachers conduct in their own classes. We intend to publish at least one action research report in each issue of *Roshd FLT Journal*. Thus, we encourage you to submit the reports of your classroom research to be published in our “Action Research Column”.

We accept papers on the basis of their relevancy to our readers, simplicity, readability, and freshness of viewpoint. Your papers do not have to follow the standards of scholarly, academic research papers. We do not use complicated statistical analyses, technical terms or footnotes. Thus, write in a simple, plain and easy to understand manner. Please cite all of your sources within the text, and provide a list of references at the end of your article. When writing your paper, please include the following information in your report:

- Your research questions and your plan for answering the research questions
- The actions that you did over a period of time in order to answer the questions
- Your evaluation of the effects of the actions and any evidence that support your evaluation
- Your conclusion and suggestions for other teachers

To be accepted for publication, your articles need to:

- Be maximum 2500 words, including references
- Be on a topic of relevance or interest to Iranian language teachers
- Include an abstract of no more than 200 words, and a list of references

We are looking forward to your action research reports. Should you have any inquiries about how to prepare a report of your action research, you can send an email to Dr. Mehrani at the following address: [meh.mehrani@gmail.com](mailto:meh.mehrani@gmail.com)