"We don't just Translate Texts": Students' Perceptions towards the Effectiveness of Project-based Learning in a Translation Course[1]

Sudatip Prapunta[2], Prince of Songkla University, Trang Campus, Thailand

Abstract

This research study aims to explore students' perceptions and reflections on the effectiveness of project-based learning (PBL) in a Thai-English translation course in the EFL context. The participants of this study included forty-nine students who were enrolled in the Thai-English translation course. The participants were asked to produce a Thai-English text and a video clip with English subtitles as a project. At the end, they were asked to complete an online questionnaire with the closed-ended and open-ended responses related to their perceived challenges and effectiveness of PBL. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the quantitative data. To complement the data in the survey, the qualitative data from the open-ended responses were coded using content analysis. The findings revealed that the majority of the participants perceived that the project was rather difficult due to the limitations of their semantic and syntactic knowledge in English, thereby causing translation errors. The participants also strongly perceived that a native speaker played a crucial role in editing their translation work and improving the quality of their text and viewed PBL as an effective pedagogical approach in terms of enhancing their English language and translation skills. In addition, they believed that they could develop their cooperation, teamwork, and presentation skills. These results can indeed offer novel evidence and pedagogical implications to implement project-based learning in EFL translation courses.

Resumen

Este estudio de investigación tiene como objetivo explorar las percepciones y reflexiones de los estudiantes sobre la eficacia del aprendizaje basado en proyectos (ABP) en un curso de traducción tailandés-inglés en el contexto del EFL. Los participantes de este estudio incluyeron cuarenta y nueve estudiantes que estaban inscritos en el curso de traducción tailandés-inglés. Se les pidió a los participantes que produjeran un texto tailandés-inglés y un videoclip con subtítulos en inglés como proyecto. Al final, se les pidió que completaran un cuestionario en línea con las respuestas cerradas y abiertas relacionadas con los desafíos percibidos y la eficacia del ABP. Se emplearon estadísticas descriptivas para analizar los datos cuantitativos. Para complementar los datos de la encuesta, los datos cualitativos de las respuestas abiertas se codificaron mediante análisis de contenido. Los hallazgos revelaron que la mayoría de los participantes percibieron que el proyecto era bastante difícil debido a las limitaciones de su conocimiento semántico y sintáctico en inglés, lo que causaba errores de traducción. Los participantes también percibieron firmemente que un hablante nativo desempeñaba un papel crucial en la edición de su trabajo de traducción y en la mejora de la calidad de su texto y vieron el ABP como un enfoque pedagógico eficaz en términos de mejorar su idioma inglés y sus habilidades de traducción. Además, creían que podían desarrollar sus habilidades de cooperación, trabajo en equipo y presentación. Estos resultados pueden ofrecer evidencia novedosa e implicaciones pedagógicas para implementar el aprendizaje basado en proyectos en los cursos de traducción de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Introduction

Project-based learning (PBL) has been extensively considered a comprehensive pedagogical approach that can promote active learning and encourage students to develop their knowledge and skills in authentic contexts (Echeverri, 2015; Kiraly, 2000, 2005, 2012; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019). Consequently, several scholars have designed and implemented pedagogical practice through PBL in second and foreign language teaching and have affirmed that the implementation of PBL can encourage students to practice and enhance their English communicative skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing), content knowledge, technological skills, and other crucial skills necessary in the language classroom (Nanni & Pusey, 2020; Poonpon, 2017; Puangpunsi, 2020; Slater & Becket, 2019).

Promoting PBL can motivate and empower students to actively engage in the translation process with professionalism and create authentic translation projects closely supported by their language teachers at the tertiary level (Kiraly, 2000, 2005, 2012; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019). With the aim of developing English language and employability skills, several programs and universities in Thailand have attempted to provide students with English language teaching and learning in more authentic contexts in order to enhance essential skills needed in their future workplaces (Huebner, 2019). To improve employment opportunities, students or graduates who aspire to work for international companies or English-speaking organizations are required to apply their English language knowledge and skills in translation as part of their jobs. Still, it seems that the grammar-translation approach has been used to teach in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, especially in Thailand, for several decades (Wongranu, 2017). Translation is regarded as a

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[2] sudatip.p@psu.ac.th, 0000-0002-8637-1122

complicated process in language learning due to the lexical, grammatical, and cultural differences between the source and receptor language (Larson, 1998). Still, it is challenging for EFL graduates or students to interpret and translate an error-free text from their mother tongue to the target language, regardless of their level of English language proficiency (Wongranu, 2017). As a result, the traditional pedagogical practice should be shifted to a new paradigm of promoting PBL in translation courses. Thus, teachers are required to design and adjust their lessons and teaching approach accordingly, focusing on the application of English as a global language and communicative competency as well as integrating digital technology in foreign language education in the digital age of Thailand 4.0 policy (Kotchasit et al., 2017).

PBL has thus been implemented in the Thai-English translation courses where the researcher currently works as the lecturer. The ultimate outcome of the course is to help students achieve sufficient knowledge and skills in the English language and translation and to equip them with a set of translation strategies that can be applied before using digital technology in order to complete their authentic translation tasks and projects. Teachers thus play a crucial role in creating a collaborative learning environment that encourages students to actively engage in challenging activities and to gain meaningful learning experiences in real world contexts. The current study examines perceived effects and the potential implementation of PBL in the EFL translation classroom. The lesson plans and translation activities have been specifically implemented in order to meet students' expectations, academic performance, as well as the major objectives of the course learning outcomes (see the details in Appendix 1). Investigating EFL students' perceptions is thus crucial in understanding what difficulties and challenges they encounter and how they perceive PBL as a fostering factor in improving their English language and translation skills at the tertiary level in order to developing new university curricula. Although the benefits of PBL is widely recognized and the learner-centered approach has been encouraged to be promoted further in language curricula during the recent years, few studies have been conducted to implement and investigate the innovative pedagogical practices and explore the advantages of PBL in EFL translation courses (Insai, 2018; Insai & Poonlarp, 2017, Li et al., 2015; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019).

Thus, the current study intended to address the following research questions:

RQ1: *What are the students' perceptions towards difficulties and usefulness of doing the translation project?*

RQ2: *How do the students view the effectiveness of the project-based leaning approach in learning English?*

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework of PBL in Translation Courses

Project-based learning is regarded as an innovative pedagogical approach that encourages and empowers students to actively construct their learning and to integrate their skills and knowledge in authentic, professional contexts (Kiraly, 2000, 2005, 2012; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019). As proposed by Kiraly (2000, 2005, 2012), pedagogical translation practice has shifted from a teacher-centered to student-centered approach. Kiraly (2005) indicated that instead of identifying the errors in students' translation drafts and providing solutions to their translation problems, the teacher is supposed to regard the translation process as a creative developmental course and an experience-oriented construction process that foster students' application of their translation skills and the knowledge necessary in their future careers and to implement innovative teaching practices based on particular perspectives. As a result, he proposed an empowerment approach through assigning students to do authentic translation projects with the purpose of increasing the students' opportunities to gain experience and improving their problem-solving skills in professional contexts.

Drawing on the social constructivist approach, Kiraly (2000) reconceptualized translation pedagogy according to the following major principles:

- Students perceive the world differently. Creating a collaborative translation project empowers students to apply their skills and knowledge in the learning process.
- Promoting collaborative projects can encourage students to construct and acquire knowledge.
- Students are required to internalize and reflect on what they have learned and acquired through doing meaningful projects.
- Based on Vygotsky's (1994) notion of the Zone of Proximal Development, students construct knowledge and develop problem-solving skills through consulting with skillful, experienced teachers and more proficient peers, who have a crucial influence on the student's knowledge construction and acquisition.

- In order to situate learning in authentic contexts, learners are required to do a challenging project, visualize themselves gaining learning experiences, and act as professional translators.
- In order to acquire translator competence, students should be equipped with translation technologies to familiarize themselves with authentic practices and act as active agents in their community.

Steps of doing the translation project

Translation projects have different steps and procedures that vary in content and complexity. Larson (1998) identified the number of translation steps that are applicable in the EFL classroom. Initially, translators have to carefully analyze the source text. In order to achieve certain objectives, the translator determines the meaning of the text in the receptor language to create an equivalent translation. Secondly, translators begin drafting and rewording the initial draft several times. Thirdly, the evaluation of the translation work is required in order to ensure that the translated text is accurate, clear, and natural. During this process, the source language text needs to be carefully compared with the target language text in several aspects in order to avoid any additions, deletions, and mistranslations. Next, the translators revise the drafted work based on the team's feedback and suggestions by rewording the draft, adding additional information, and creating consistency in the text. Fifth, the consultants that are involved in the translation project edit the text by focusing on the accuracy of content, naturalness of style, and possible effects on the target language audience. In order to produce a final draft, translators are required to discuss with the team and decide how to make a revision based on the consultants' feedback and suggestions.

Although several studies of Kiraly (2000, 2005, 2012) and Larson (1998) have been widely cited in translation education, little research has drawn on integrating the PBL approach in translation pedagogy and translation project procedures in EFL translation courses. Shifting from the traditional read-and-translate method to process-based and professionally-oriented translation pedagogy is essential and beneficial for developing language students' translation skills and to further implement PBL in translation courses and curricula. Additional research on challenges and effectiveness of PBL needs to be conducted to better understand how it affects language learning process of EFL learners at the tertiary level. Thus, both scholars' academic works have formed the bases for this study. Their pedagogical approach is applicable in promoting PBL in EFL translation courses to shift from a traditional teaching method to a modern and challenging one. Based on Kiraly's (2000) social constructivist approach, students acquire knowledge and develop problem-solving skills through working with more proficient peers and teachers. The implementation of PBL helps create holistic learning experiences in authentic, professional contexts.

Benefits and challenges of PBL implementation

Based on a review of the literature, implementing PBL in translation courses is essential in developing EFL students' English language and translation skills as an innovative pedagogical practice in the midst of a rapidly changing learning environment in foreign language education. Drawing on Kiraly's conceptual framework, a number of recent studies have started to apply this innovative approach and affirmed several major benefits of implementing PBL in EFL translation courses during the recent years (Insai, 2018; Insai & Poonlarp, 2017, Li et al., 2015; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019). For example, through collecting qualitative data from open-ended questionnaires and group interviews, Li et al. (2015) incorporated a PBL project in a business translation course as experimental translation teaching process and explored EFL Chinese students' perceptions of its benefits in fostering their translation knowledge and skills. The results of their study indicated that the participants greatly favored doing a translation project as it helped them develop their knowledge of the topic in the business context and improve their teamwork and collaboration as well as their presentation skills. Using a mixed-methods approach, Moghaddas and Khoshsaligheh (2019) implemented PBL in an EFL Iranian translation class and a number of the 21 participants reported that, despite facing challenging learning experiences, they improved their translation quality, critical thinking, and teamwork skills. In line with Kiraly (2000, 2005), the researchers also concluded that PBL replaced the conventional teacher-centered approach, thereby creating a sense of autonomy and meaningful learning experiences among the EFL learners.

Even though the positive impact of PBL on language education is widely known, there is still insufficient understanding about how it enhances EFL learners' English language skills in translation courses. One of the studies exploring this topic, is the qualitative research investigating 21 Thai undergraduates' perceptions of the PBL effects of peer editing in a collaborative translation project, conducted by Insai and Poonlarp (2017), revealing that peer editing effectively developed the quality of the students' translation work during the revision process and enhanced their collaborative skills with their team members. Nonetheless, as EFL learners, the participants encountered several linguistic challenges and difficulties, specifically committing

semantic and grammatical errors while translating the Thai texts into English. Similarly, Wongranu's (2017) study, which investigated the types and causes of Thai-English translation errors made by 26 third-year English major students, revealed that the most frequently found errors were syntactic and semantic errors, including miscellaneous errors such as misspelling, under-translation, and unnatural translation. In addition, the EFL participants tended to make syntactic errors because they applied the read-and-translate approach during the translation procedures with inadequate revision and also had low self-confidence and anxiety in translating the texts from Thai into English. Thus, implementing authentic translation and group work is crucial for enhancing collaborative learning in EFL translation courses.

To conclude, much empirical evidence has affirmed the effectiveness of implementing PBL in developing the translation skills and knowledge of EFL university students in translation courses. Consequently, language teachers play an important role in designing and implementing purposeful and meaningful projects in order to motivate students to develop their language and translation skills. In spite of several advantages of PBL, the traditional read-and-translate and error-analysis approaches are still more likely to be applied as major pedagogical practices in translation education. The trend of promoting PBL in EFL translation courses in tertiary classrooms is more likely to continue increasing (Insai, 2018; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019).

Applying online translation tools in EFL contexts

Google Translate (GT) has been regarded as one of the most effective online translation tools and is widely used by EFL learners in foreign language education. Based on extensive research, several empirical studies have investigated students' perceptions of using GT in assisting them in completing their writing or translation tasks. Nevertheless, few empirical studies have been conducted to analyze the impact of GT use on the quality of writing tasks produced by EFL learners. As one of the studies focusing on this subject, the research done by Cancino and Panes (2021) applied a linguistic approach in order to assess the impact of GT on 61 EFL learners' writing quality, and reported that using GT to assist with the writing process resulted in several benefits in producing the writing task in terms of the number of words written, syntactic complexity, and accuracy. Similarly, by investigating the effect of using GT on the quality of undergraduates' Chinese-English translated texts, Tsai's (2019) major results revealed that the EFL participants had positive attitudes toward using GT in their English writing activities in terms of allowing them to access a wider range of semantic and syntactic features and to develop their writing skills.

In response to assessing the quality of GT in translating 54 abstracts from Thai into English, Tongpoon-Patanasorn and Griffith (2020) indicated that the level of comprehensibility and usability in general were moderate and that the major errors frequently found in the abstracts translated using GT were capitalization, punctuation, and fragmentation. In addition, in their findings, they proposed a model for the editing process and suggested that using GT in the Thai-English translation is appropriate for human translators that possess some relevant experience and knowledge necessary on the particular topic. As illustrated by Cancino and Panes' (2021) empirical findings, it is challenging for language teachers to implement an appropriate teaching approach with the integration of GT that will allow EFL students to be exposed to GT and increase their self-confidence or cognitive demands while writing the text in L2.

However, based on the extensive research conducted in this area, despite several advantages of PBL in language education, scarce research has been undertaken to promote PBL in EFL translation courses (Insai & Poonlarp, 2017; Insai, 2018; Kiraly, 2000, 2005; Li et al., 2015; Moghaddas & Khoshsaligheh, 2019). Thus, it is challenging and beneficial in promoting the conceptual and methodological advancements of PBL in translation teaching and enhancing students' English proficiency and translation skills in the EFL context. The current study aims to address the gap by implementing the action research on PBL in the translation course and exploring the challenges and effectiveness of the pedagogical practice.

Method

Research design

The research design of the study was the mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, 2018). In this design, the 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and two open-ended survey items were utilized to elicit students' perceptions of the effectiveness of PBL in the translation course. The rationale for this approach was that the quantitative data provided a general understanding of the EFL students' perceived difficulties and usefulness of doing the translation project. The open-ended survey responses were qualitatively coded and provided a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of PBL in the translation course. Particularly in applied linguistics, Riazi (2016a) argues that conducting the mixed-methods research has been applied as a holistic methodology or potential tool to those studies aiming at

expanding the scope of their study. Consequently, it can be argued that applying the purely quantitative research approach in the current study may be superficial and could inadequately draw on the collected data and analysis of the research problems addressed in the current investigation.

Contextualizing the research settings

In Thailand's higher education, translation courses in several universities are likely to be included as one of the compulsory courses in a foreign language curriculum. Possessing English language and translation skills is necessary and considered the key attribute of the 21st century skills required in academic and professional contexts. Nevertheless, based on the English Proficiency Index, the level of Thai adults' English skills remains very low (Education First, 2021). Thailand's educational system and graduates' skills are not likely to match the current labor market requirements, particularly in terms of professional, clerical support, and technical occupations (Vandeweyer et al., 2021). In response to reducing the current skill mismatch, according to Thailand's Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan, 2017-2022, students must be infused "with systematic and creative analytical knowledge and skills, and preparedness for building on all kinds of skills, including working and life skills, that are vital for labor market participation" (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2017, p.19). To some extent, taking the translation courses can help students develop their linguistic, cultural, syntactic, and pragmatic knowledge and effective use of the target language in different cultures. In addition, to further develop courses and curricula, the current study has been thus conducted to explore students' perceptions of and reflections on PBL implementation in a Thai-English translation course.

Participants

The participants of the study were 49 sophomore business English students enrolled in a three-credit translation course for the 15-week learning module. The students were divided into groups of three to four and the topic was to do the translation project in order to promote a product or local business in their community. According to Insai and Poonlarp (2017), diverse students with mixed abilities are more academically effective than homogeneous ones in terms of improving the quality of work through peer editing and teachers' guidance while doing collaborative translation projects.

Implementation of PBL and evaluation

The design and implementation of PBL in Appendix 1 illustrate the detailed weekly lesson plans and describe the students' and teachers' roles in the Thai-English translation course. PBL was proposed and implemented in the Thai-English translation course as a compulsory subject in the business English curriculum of a public university in southern Thailand. Apart from studying translation principles, strategies, and translating several kinds of texts and genres, the students were also assigned a translation project which consisted of two parts. First, the students were assigned to create a Thai-English text as a mid-term project. They were allowed to apply online dictionaries and translation tools such as GT, but they had to revise and edit their works with their group members. After they completed writing their translation tasks, both Thai and American instructors evaluated and assessed the students' texts of the translation project. By applying the holistic componential approach (Williams, 2013), the scoring rubrics consisted of: 1) the component assessing functional and textual adequacy (40 points), 2) the component assessing the target language in terms of linguistic, textual, reasoning, and strategic competencies (40 points), and 3) the component assessing terminology/research (20 points). To rate the translated version of the text, a native speaker lecturer was asked to edit the students' translated work and (see Figure 1) and provided with the scoring rubric for grading the text (See Appendix 3). The scorings of three components (100 points) evaluated by both instructors were combined and summarized.
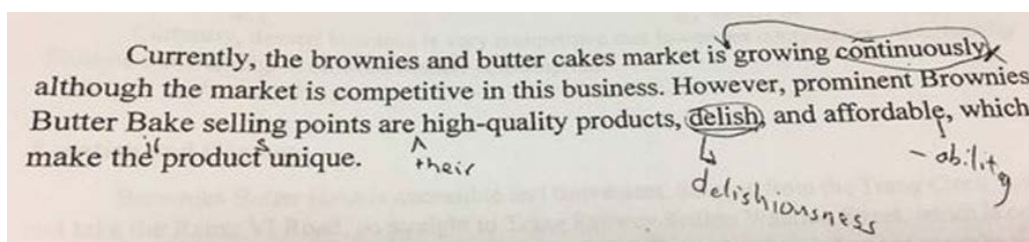

Figure 1: Example of the translated work edited by a native speaker lecturer

After receiving feedback from the native speaker, students made some amendments and submitted the final draft of their translation work. Finally, the students' Thai-English texts were rated by both Thai and foreign

lecturers. Second, they were assigned to produce a video clip with Thai-English subtitles as a final project (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Example of a video clip with Thai subtitles for students to translate into English.

Research instruments

The instrument of the study was an online questionnaire (See Appendix 2) which identified the informed consent and research objectives. Before administering it, the questionnaire was checked by three experts in the field of EFL and translation education in order to examine its content and face validity. After receiving constructive feedback, the wording of the questionnaire question and sequence of the question were revised and improved to ensure that the participants could understand and answer them. Three experts were consulted and approved it. The survey was piloted on a sample of 25 junior business English students in the previous batch. In terms of questionnaire reliability, the value of Cronbach's Alpha ranged from 0.7 to 0.8, which indicated a satisfactory level of construct validity and internal consistency (Taber, 2018). The results of the pilot study helped the researcher eliminate ambiguous and irrelevant items, develop the clarity of item wordings, and rehearse procedures for administering the actual questionnaire (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012).

Data collection and analysis

Purposive sampling was employed. To be eligible for this study, the participants needed to be sophomore students majoring in Business English, complete the Thai-English translation course, and do the project-based activities in the course. The online questionnaires were sent to the student's email at the end of the semester. Two specific short-answer questions in the questionnaire were used to elicit respondents' short responses (Dörnyei, 2007). In this study, 49 students responded and returned the online survey. A total of 39 survey respondents (79.5%) provided complete open-ended survey comments. According to Riazi (2016b), the case study exploring the classroom may use various methods of data collection such as course syllabuses, student scores, and tasks. In order to investigate the classroom as a case study, this study utilized several data collection methods such as the lesson plan, students' translated tasks, and video clips with Thai-English subtitles.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the summary of quantitative data. The 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to investigate three major sections: demographic information, the perceived difficulties, challenges, and benefits of doing a translation project, and open-ended survey questions regarding the perceived benefits and effectiveness of PBL. Instead of solely relying on quantitative data, the open-ended survey questions provide richer and in-depth data. As Dörnyei & Dewaele (2022) indicated, illustrative quotes can allow researchers to be prepared for unexpected issues or problems. After administering the online survey, the closed-ended data from the online survey were analyzed to determine the percentile, mean, and standard deviation (S.D.) using SPSS version 22.0 for *Windows*. The scale used for the data interpretation regarding the respondents' perceptions toward the questionnaire statements can be seen in Table 1.

Score Range	Interpretation
4.51-5.00	extremely high
3.51-4.50	high
2.51-3.50	moderate
1.51-2.50	low
1.00-1.50	very low

Table 1. The 5-point scale for the interpretation of the mean score

To complement the quantitative data and gain a more comprehensive perspective of the complex research questions, the open-ended survey responses were qualitatively analyzed using content analysis (Lune & Berg, 2017). Coding was employed to establish categories from the individual response and inductive analysis was performed to combine categories into broader themes. Initial codes were inductively coded after the responses were carefully read to reveal the recurring issues from the responses. The frequencies of categories and themes were counted and reported in parenthesis with the percentage (e.g., F13/33.33%). In some cases, one response was coded with more than one code. In order to identify the inter-rater reliability, two experts in EFL instruction reviewed the coding of themes and categories and an exemplary quote. The examples of quotes were presented in italics and quotation marks in the Findings section using the code. For instance, S1 refers to Student 1.

Findings

Quantitative results

The two first items in the online questionnaire were designed to investigate the EFL students' perceived difficulties or challenges of doing their translation project which included creating the text and video clip. The findings for each statement are illustrated in Table 2.

Statement	N	Strongly agree	Agree	Moderately agree	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
I think creating a Thai-English text is difficult.	49	10.20 %	51.02 %	38.77 %	3.71	0.64	High
I think creating the video clip with English subtitles is difficult.	49	8.16 %	40.81 %	51.02 %	3.57	0.64	High

Table 2. Perceived difficulty of doing the translation project

As shown in Table 2, most of the students (51.02%) agreed that creating a Thai-English text was difficult, whereas most of them (51.02%) moderately agreed that creating a video clip with English subtitles was difficult. Concerning the means of the agreement on the difficulty of creating a Thai-English text, the majority of the respondents perceived that creating a Thai-English text and the video clip with English subtitles was difficult with a high level of agreement (X=3.71, S.D.=0.64, X=3.57, S.D.=0.71, respectively). These results also indicated that the respondents perceived that creating the Thai-English text was more difficult than creating the video clip with English subtitles.

The six items in the following section were designed to examine the respondents' perceived usefulness of the translation project in terms of enhancing their English language and translation skills. The findings for each statement are shown in Table 3.

Statement	N	Strongly agree	Agree	Moderately agree	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
I think the native speaker's editing of my translation work is useful.	49	69.3 %	26.5 %	18.40 %	4.65	0.56	Very High
I think doing the translation project is useful.	49	57.14 %	36.73 %	7.02 %	4.45	0.64	High
I think that the process of doing the translation project is useful.	49	48.97%	36.73%	14.28%	4.35	0.72	High
I think doing the translation project is challenging.	49	22.44 %	65.30 %	12.24 %%	4.10	0.58	High
I think doing the translation project is successful.	49	24.48 %	57.14 %	18.36 %	4.06	0.65	High
I feel motivated to improve my English skills by doing the translation project.	49	16.32 %	61.22 %	20.44 %	3.92	0.67	High

Table 3: Perceived usefulness of the translation project in enhancing their English and translation skills

As shown in Table 3, the majority of the students (69.3 %) strongly agreed and prioritized the editing of their Thai-English texts by the native speaker lecturer as useful. Within the construct concerning the translation project's effectiveness in enhancing their English and translation skills with its means score, the results indicated that the item "I think that the native speaker's editing of my translation work is useful" received the highest level of agreement (X= 4.65, S.D.= 0.56), followed by the second rank, "I think that

doing the translation project is useful", and the third ranked, "I think that the process of doing the translation project is useful"(X = 4.45, S.D. = 0.64, X= 4.35, S.D. =0.72 respectively). To conclude, the participants perceived that doing the translation project, particularly in the editing performed by a foreign teacher during the process of the translation, was useful and challenging.

Qualitative results

The open-ended survey asked questions about what aspect of the translation project benefited the participants the most (See Appendix 2). The participants' responses in the open-ended responses were syntactically edited to form complete sentences; however, they were semantically equivalent to the original content. The qualitative data from the open-ended survey responses from the 39 students (79.5%) revealed several benefits of producing the Thai-English text and creating the video clip. Two-thirds of the participants positively reflected that doing the translation project helped them improve their writing skills in English (F13/33.33 %). Some of the students were aware of the limitations of their grammatical knowledge and sentence structure.

> *I could convey messages in the written text more clearly.* (S12)

> *I learned how to use grammar and write correctly.* (S14)

> *Receiving the feedback from the teacher helped us correct errors in our written text and learned how to string sentences more correctly.* (S21)

> *Due to making a lot of grammatical errors, our group members learned and tried to improve the quality of our written text in English.* (S32)

In addition, almost two-thirds of the participants perceived that doing the translation project could help them develop their translation knowledge and skills (F12/30.76%).

> *Doing this project helped improve translating skills from Thai into the English language.* (S3)

> *In translating texts, we learned from our mistakes that we could not employ the literal translation. Instead, we understood the nature of the target language and translated more naturally and understandably.* (S32)

> *Doing this project helped us learn how to use translation tools, realize mistakes in translation, and study more to improve translation skills.* (S37)

By doing the project, five participants revealed they were able to develop their cooperative skills with local businesses in their communities (F5/12.8%).

> *The most challenging part was interviewing the business owner related to our project.* (S4)

> *We had the opportunity to work and interact with the entrepreneur in our local area and gained hand-on experiences.* (S14)

Four participants positively reflected that they improved their vocabulary skills in English (F4/10.2%).

> *I could enhance knowledge in vocabulary use because of making a lot of mistakes in word choices.* (S8)

> *I learned how to use vocabulary, particularly in business contexts related to my project.* (S27)

Four participants believed they were able to develop teamwork skills (F4/10.2%).

> *We allocated tasks based on our team members' specialized abilities and skills to complete the project.* (S16)

By producing the video clips with English subtitles, three participants reported that they improved their speaking and presentation skills (F3/7.69%)

> *By learning that English language usages of written and spoken languages were different, we tried to present our project to be interesting and professional.* (S21)

> *I conveyed verbal messages, used gestures, and felt more confident.* (S36)

One participant was aware of the project benefit in terms of *"practicing cutting and editing the video clip."* (F1/1.25)

Based on the open-ended survey responses of the second question, the participants reflected on why they perceived PBL as an effective learning approach. The most prevalent theme in the participants' responses was applying knowledge in practice (F17/43.5%).

> *Doing the project was a well-rounded learning, not only translating texts.* (S1)

> *PBL was an effective approach because students could learn by doing.* (S4)

> *We could apply knowledge in different contexts.* (S9)

> *By doing this project, we applied technology knowledge and skills.* (S10)

> *It helped us develop our soft skills and apply them in the future career.* (S20)

> *It allowed us to improve several skills instead of studying in class only.* (S27)

This approach helped us apply learning in real situations and realize our mistakes in several aspects. This helped us grow and tried to improve ourselves. (P37)

The second theme related to the benefits of PBL for developing English language skills (F11/30.55%). Almost two-thirds of the participants said that the PBL approach was an effective teaching approach because they could integrate and acquire their English language knowledge and skills in several aspects at the same time.

Receiving constructive feedback from the native-speaker teacher helped us realize our overlooking issues and errors in English language uses. We then learned how to avoid making such errors and improved our skills which was very useful in learning English. (S3)

I could practice and develop my English language skills in reading, writing, and speaking (S15)

It allowed us to practice doing written and spoken tasks and integrate several English communicative skills, so it was effective for sure. (S36)

The final theme in the responses was improving translation skills (F10/25.64%). The participants felt that PBL provided them with opportunities to practice and improve their translation abilities and skills.

We translated texts and developed our skills by correcting our mistakes in translation, which resulted in the better quality of our translated tasks. (S12)

We applied translation techniques and practiced translating texts to be more accurate and natural, so it was a very effective approach. (S23)

By using this method, I learned that not only did I translate texts and understand it by myself, but the foreigner had to understand my translation works as well. (S24)

Translation was one of the important skills for Business English students; thus, enhancing translation skills was necessary and could influence students' success in communicating in international business contexts. (S32)

Translating quotations in the interview scripts or contents in business contexts helped us learn and gain new knowledge in vocabulary use. (S34)

Discussion

Based on the major findings of the study, it appears that the participants had highly positive attitudes toward implementing the PBL approach in improving their English language and translation skills in the translation course. Although the use of peer editing in the project helped to improve the students' collaborative learning and writing skills, they faced several linguistic difficulties in creating a Thai-English text and the video clip with English subtitles while doing the translation project. In line with Insai and Poonlarp's (2017) findings, the participants of the current study reported that they made several semantic and grammatical errors while doing the translation project due to their limited knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. These problems finally resulted in mistranslation of the text and subtitles in the target language. Consistent with the study by Wongranu (2017) regarding the causes of Thai-English translation errors, the participants of the present study perceived that creating the text was difficult; therefore, they made several errors in their translation process. In addition, with regard to carelessness and low confidence, it seems that some of the participants did not pay attention to interpreting inferences or choice of words while translating the work from the source text to the target language. In addition, based on integrating quantitative and qualitative findings, it appeared that some of the participants perceived that they did not have sufficient proficiency in grammar and vocabulary; consequently, they did not fully exert an effort to translate their tasks but tended to complete their work for submission regardless of the quality of the translation work.

Insai and Poonlarp (2017) reported that the participants were likely to translate their tasks by applying a word-for-word translation, thereby causing the content of their translation project to be unnatural and unprofessional. Some of the participants indicated that they tended to use inappropriate language in the target language because the genre and language used in the translated texts and subtitles were rather different in terms of formality and technicality. The language used in texts is supposed to be more formal than language used in English subtitles. Thus, the participants were required to use formal and written language in translating their texts, whereas they could use informal and spoken language in translating their subtitles.

Based on the qualitative data that emerged from the open-ended questionnaire concerning the perceived effectiveness of PBL, it appears that the participants were overwhelmingly positive about the editing of the native speaker lecturer, particularly in improving their writing skills and the quality of their translated tasks. Consistent with Insai and Poonlarp's (2017) findings, the participants of the present study revealed that they were able to improve their writing skills and the quality of their final products. Some of the participants in this study also reported that they were more aware of using different writing styles or genres in the written and spoken texts after receiving the teacher's constructive feedback. In line with Kiraly's (2000,

2005, 2012) findings and those of Moghaddas and Khoshsaligheh (2019), the participants of the present study perceived that teachers can play an important role in constructing knowledge and in enhancing the students' acquisition of the language while participating in a translation project. The translation process is complicated due to semantic, syntactic, and cultural differences between the source and target language (Larson, 1998). Consequently, it is challenging for EFL participants to complete writing tasks with few grammatical and semantic errors. With teachers' support, students are expected to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills in writing in order to produce translated texts with accuracy, clarity, and naturalness of the target language.

Further evidence for the assumption that the participants greatly benefited from PBL in terms of improving their English and translation skills is that most of them tended to have positive perception of creating a video clip with English subtitles. By making the video and subtitling, they were more aware of the genre or writing styles used in English subtitles, which is rather different from creating texts. Regardless of the syntactic and semantic difficulties in creating Thai-English subtitles, no participant reported that he or she encountered technical problems or challenges in making the video clip. Instead, they were satisfied with their authentic learning experiences and the quality of their finished subtitles.

In line with Kiraly (2000, 2005, 2012), students felt motivated, and empowered, and they increased their self-confidence after doing the collaborative translation projects with the reader or client in mind. In this study, the participants revealed that their project was challenging and successful because it could significantly contribute to promoting a local business through social media or the *Facebook* pages of the local business presented. To conclude, based on the integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings, it appears that, despite encountering semantic and syntactic difficulties or challenges, the key findings of the present study indicated that the students could foster the English communicative and translation skills necessary for their academic and professional purposes by doing such an authentic project.

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

The findings revealed that the majority of the participants encountered linguistic challenges in terms of making grammatical and semantic errors and in making the target language sound unnatural. Due to their linguistic and cultural limitations, it seemed that they were heavily influenced by their mother tongue, thereby causing mistranslations. In order to help them improve their writing and translating skills, teachers may assign students to analyze the grammatical and semantic errors frequently found in their translation work or projects so that they are more aware of these errors and try to avoid making them.

Based on the open-ended survey responses, the students reflected that they tried to correct and avoid errors in their translating works during the translation process after receiving editing and constructive feedback from a native-speaker lecturer. This would help them improve their English language proficiency and problem-solving skills in translating. It is suggested that teachers may play a crucial role in working as a facilitator or mentor that provides students with consultation on how to write texts and how to subtitle their video clips. Teachers can also cooperate with a native speaker lecturer in editing and evaluating students' translation tasks using the same scoring rubric. By doing this, students could become more aware of their grammatical errors, word choices, and of the cultural differences between the source and target languages that can cause confusion for the target audience.

In order to implement project-based translation pedagogy in the EFL classrooms, it would be fruitful if students, particularly business English students, were assigned to create an authentic translation project with a specific genre of texts necessary for their future job market demands, such as translating company profiles, press release documents, and consumer-oriented texts. In order to promote autonomy and self-instruction, students' hands-on experience can come from translating a variety of texts and genres in class, and from real world experiences in out-of-class context.

To develop students' technological and digital literacy skills, language teachers can introduce and equip them with user-friendly translation software and programs frequently used in creating video clips with English subtitling. Even if some students perceive project as difficult, teachers can showcase samples of high-quality video clips or projects successfully performed by their seniors. Students thus may feel motivated and visualize that they are able to produce successful, interdisciplinary translation projects as a model. This could enhance their attitudes toward creating meaningful and innovative projects, which can eventually contribute to locally owned businesses in communities. Indeed, by doing the well-designed translation projects, students will be able to enhance their English language, translation, and digital literacy knowledge and skills in the English as a foreign language context.

Although the number of participants in this project was rather small and the results cannot be generalized, the key findings confirm several advantages and challenges in implementing the project-based learning approach in translation courses in EFL contexts. Consequently, translation projects should be designed and adapted based on the situation and context in which the students are embedded. The topics or themes of the project may be related to other disciplines, depending on the students' majors. Further studies should be conducted with a larger number of participants in order to investigate students' perceptions of the semantic and syntactic features of language use, which help them improve their English language and translation skills after the implementation of project-based assignments. In addition, language teachers and researchers may design and conduct pre-tests or post-tests in order to examine how, and the extent to which, students can improve their English and translation skills, knowledge, and competency. Further, the translation strategies, translation learning tools, and digital dictionaries in the students' translation process while doing a project can be investigated, as well as how they can be applied. This will contribute to equipping language students with an effective pedagogical approach and useful translation learning tools in order to improve their English language and translation skills in the digital age.

Ethical Considerations

The current study was conducted and approved by Human Research Ethics Committee of Prince of Songkla University, Hai Yai Campus, with the approval code of PSU IRB 2019-NL 018.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1

Lesson Plan and Implementation of Project-based Learning

Weeks	What the teacher does	What students do
1-2	- Announce the objectives and process of doing a translation project entitled "Promoting a Local Business".	- Form a group of three to four students and choose the potential business. Analyze the SWOT analysis of the particular business.
3-4	- Check whether the business selected is potential and doable. Make comments on the students' initial draft in the Thai language.	- Collect data and make the initial draft in the Thai language. Obtain the teacher's approval.
5-6	- Check the initial draft in English. Schedule appointments between the native speaker lecturer and students for revision and editing.	- Translate the text from Thai to English. Submit the Thai-English text to the native speaker lecturer for editing.
7-8	- Check and evaluate the final draft and report. Summarize the translation errors frequently found, both semantically and syntactically.	- Make a revision based on the comments of the native speaker lecturer and complete the final draft. Analyze the translation errors and solutions. Submit the Thai-English text to the Thai lecturer.
9-10	- Suggest on how to begin producing the video clip on the particular topic.	- Draft scripts and prepare questions for the interview. Prepare the recording and technological devices.
11-12	- Provide guidance on how to approach and interview the owner. Check the drafted script for the interview.	- Complete the revised script. Contact the owner for interviewing, shooting, and recording.
13-14	- Check the final draft of the script to ascertain whether the words or phrases used in the spoken script are concise and clear.	- Check typo and translation errors. Cut the video clip with English subtitles. Ensure that the content in the clip is in alignment with the contents in the subtitle.
15	- Provide constructive feedback and comments on the students' video clip posted on the group Facebook. Ask students to reflect on the benefits and contributions of their translation project.	- Post a video clip on the Facebook group for this course. Vote and comment on your favorite clip under the post. Evaluate and reflect on the perceived usefulness and contributions of doing a translation project. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, post your video clip on the Facebook Group for the course, rather than presenting in class.

Appendix 2

Online Questionnaire Items

The closed-ended questions are as follows:

Perceived Difficulties of Doing the Translation Project

Statement	N	Strongly agree	Agree	Moderately agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I think creating a Thai-English text is difficult.						
I think creating the video clip with English subtitles is difficult.						

Perceived Usefulness of the Translation Project in Enhancing their English Language and Translation Skills

Statement	N	Strongly agree	Agree	Moderately agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I think the native speaker's editing of my translation work is useful.						
I think doing the translation project is useful						
I think that the process of doing the translation project is useful.						
I think doing the translation project is challenging.						
I think doing the translation project is successful.						
I feel motivated to improve my English skills by doing the translation project.						

The open-ended survey questions are as follows:

1. What is the major benefit of doing the translation project entitled "Business in Trang"?

2. Do you think that doing the translation project is regarded as one of the effective approaches in learning English?

3. Why do you think that applying the project-based learning approach is the effective approach in learning English?

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Appendix 3

Scoring rubric assessing the students' English language evaluated by the native speaker lecturer

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Component 2 (ILOs 2 and 3): Target language
Competencies: Linguistic, textual, reasoning, strategic
Weighted value: 40

Grade	Description Criteria: quality of typography, grammar and usage, readability, idiomaticity, cohesion, consideration of text function (informative, explanatory, directive, persuasive) and target readership expectations and requirements	Value range	Score
A-, A & A+ Very high level of competency Very high degree of declarative, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge	Indicators: Virtually no TL errors. The text reads as if it was originated in TL and meets target readership's expectations regarding text function and genre (very few, if any, typographical, grammatical and usage errors). Demonstration of very high degree of knowledge of TL and TL textual/rhetorical features and conventions and of monitoring for error.	32-40	
B & B+ High level of competency High degree of declarative, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge	Indicators: A few minor TL errors. The text generally reads as if it was originated in TL and generally meets target readership's expectations regarding text function and genre, but there some awkward expressions and calques and occasional typographical, grammatical and usage errors. Demonstration of high degree of knowledge of TL and TL textual/rhetorical features and conventions and monitoring for error.	28-31	
C & C+ Emerging competency Moderate degree of declarative, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge	Indicators: A number of typographical, grammatical and/or usage errors, some of them significant. SL typography, grammar, lexicon, and usage shows up in the translation and adversely affects readability. Cohesion between propositions is sometimes defective. Several typographical, grammatical and usage errors. Demonstration of moderate degree of knowledge of TL and TL textual/rhetorical features and conventions and monitoring for error.	24-27	
D & D+ Marginal competency Limited degree of declarative, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge	Indicators: Many typographical, grammatical and/or usage errors, some of them major. SL and rudimentary typography, grammar, lexicon, and usage show up in the translation in several instances and affects readability significantly. Cohesion between propositions is often defective. Demonstration of limited knowledge of TL and TL textual/rhetorical features and conventions and of monitoring for error.	20-23	
F Competency not demonstrated Very low degree of declarative, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge	Indicators: Too many typographical, grammatical and/or usage errors, a number of them major. SL typography, grammar, lexicon, and usage dominate and adversely affect readability through the translation. In no way is it an example of an acceptable TL text Cohesion between propositions is highly defective. Demonstration of very low degree of knowledge of TL and TL textual/rhetorical features and conventions and monitoring for error.	0-19	