

## Wikipedia Translation: Creating Authentic Translator Training Environment and Enriching Arabic Content

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to present a new approach in translator training in which students undertake collaborative genuine translation projects. Wikipedia is selected as the repertoire of source material for the purpose of creating authentic training environment in which students experience translating for actual users and enriching Arabic content by increasing the number of Arabic articles in this famous international encyclopedia. An account is first given of the social constructive learning approach (Kiraly, 2000) in translator training and the state of Arabic Wikipedia compared to other languages. The article proceeds to describe the different stages of implementing Wikipedia translation projects and reports students' responses to their unique experience. Results are suggestive of the efficiency of the constructivist, collaborative education paradigm in empowering students to independently build up professional translation competence and the promising potential of Wikipedia translation in creating natural training environment and enriching Arabic spatial knowledge.

**Keywords:** Constructivist learning, project based learning (PjBL), Arabic Wikipedia, authentic training environment, translation competence

### 1. Introduction

Translator training represents a predominant paradigm in translation studies that has been developing since the 1970s. Several translator training approaches have been developed and ideas for classroom didactics have been proposed (Kiraly, 2000). The two main issues covered in translator training studies are the competences we need to teach and the way to teach them (Kelly, 2005). The work on identifying translation competences aims to guide and support translation curriculum design so as to qualify students as professional translators. On the same line, many researchers such as Gile (2009), Robinson (2003) and Kiraly (2000, 2005) are concerned with teaching approaches that best serve to develop these competences in a given training context. Kiraly (2000) was the first one to suggest the adoption of the constructivist approach in translator education. This learning theory shapes not only classroom practice but curriculum design, course and lesson planning and assessment as well. He proposes to adopt project based learning (PjBL) in which students collaboratively undertake genuine translation projects. During the various stages of project implementation, students attempt to acquire, find, apply the knowledge they need to fulfill the project. They are empowered to be in charge of their own learning and to independently develop different translation competences.

Translation teaching practices in the context where we belong are highly traditional and transmissionist. Traditional teaching approaches adopted by translation instructors are teacher-centered in which students are assigned a passive role and instructors shape the learning of students and control the distribution of knowledge. Usually students translate a text selected by the teacher who would later make corrections and provide 'correct' renderings for students' incorrect translations. Instructors adopt what Kiraly (2005) calls the WTNS approach (who'll take the next sentence). Students take turns translating source text sentence by another and the instructor ultimately gives what is supposed to be the 'correct' translation. In such contexts, translation becomes a matter of finding linguistic equivalents and chunks replacement. The purpose of in-class instruction is to complete a task or to get an assessment score rather than to fulfill a real client or user need. What students do in class does not reflect the nature and scope of their future career.

Rather than maintaining the natural complexity of professional translational activity as a social, inter-cultural and interpretive process, the specific function of the classroom is to decontextualize and disembodify the learning process, and for the teacher to distribute knowledge in increments, which are supposed to combine to yield some sort of 'translator competence' in each individual student's mind. (Kiraly, 2005, p. 1101)

The outcomes of such teaching approach are very limited and do not go beyond the walls of the classroom.

In an attempt to bridge the gap between training practices and professional competences and to move towards student-centered teaching approaches, we adopted Kiraly's constructivist learning approach (2000) and incorporated (PjBL) in translation modules offered in University of Science and Technology (UST) in Yemen. The present study provides a description of project implementation process and students' perceptions on this new teaching approach. The impetus for conducting the present study stems from Kiraly's call (2012, p. 93) for the evaluation of translation teaching methods and approaches;

[I]t is clear that much work is yet to be done to establish the viability of the approach beyond the scope of my own classes. For example, team-learning processes that have led to successful project work need to be observed and described to show how and why the approach works. Systematic surveys of student attitudes regarding their emerging competence and self-confidence as semi-professional translators and as increasingly

experienced team members would also contribute significantly to our understanding of the value of this approach.

The aim of the present study is to provide an evidence on the efficiency or otherwise of applying genuine translation practice in translator training, and to assess the advantages and disadvantages involved. The study also seeks to highlight the feasibility of Wikipedia translation in developing translation competence and increasing the number of Arabic Wikipedia articles. More on the state of Arabic Wikipedia is given in the sections that follow.

### **Translation competence**

Kelly (2002, p. 14) defines translation competence as the “macro-competence that comprises the different capacities, skills, knowledge and even attitudes that professional translators possess and which are involved in translation as an expert activity.” Kelly’s translation competence model (2005, pp. 32-33) is multi-componential; it includes communicative and textual competence, cultural and intercultural competence, subject matter knowledge, professional and instrumental competence, attitudinal or psycho-physiological, interpersonal and strategic competence.

Other efforts compatible with Kelly’s in the area of translation competence are the studies conducted by The Process of Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation (PASTE) group (2003,2008, 2011a, 2011b) to identify translation competences. The model developed by PASTE comprises six inter-related areas of competence, namely bilingual, extra-linguistic, knowledge about translation, instrumental, psycho-physiological, and strategic with the latter being identified as the dominant one.

In the period between 2006-2009, the European Master’s in Translation (EMT) worked on redefining the set of skills and competences that would qualify trainees to work independently upon obtaining their degrees. Though more detailed, EMT model emphasizes translation competences identified by Kelly (2005) and PASTE (2003). EMT translator training programs are expected to qualify trainees to provide translation service, master language and intercultural issues, conduct information mining and efficiently use technology. Graduates of these programs should be prepared to work as professional translators who are able to produce and revise translations, tackle technical problems, apply translation technology, communicate with other translators, and interact with clients. Due to the technological and societal changes impacting translation process and translation industry, EMT has worked on producing a new translation competence framework that would preserve EMT *wheel of competence* produced in 2009 and simultaneously incorporate a new set of competences and skills needed by future translation graduates. The new EMT competence framework (2017) comprises five main areas of competence as shown in Figure 1 and 35 skills (know how).

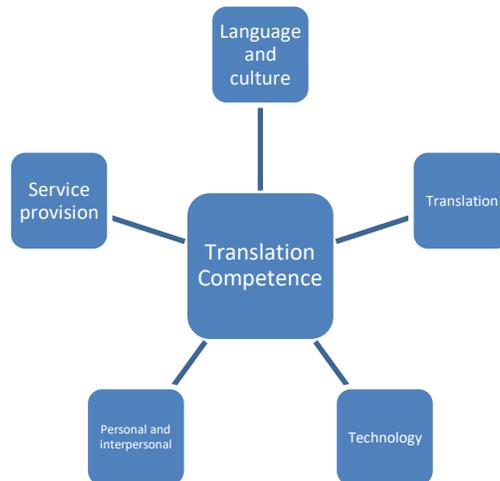


Figure 1: EMT translation competence framework 2017

Translator training programs are expected to accommodate all these skills in order to qualify trainees to handle real translation assignments in professional situations and not to stick to traditional translation teaching approaches which view translation as a mere linguistic activity. Authentic translator training involves an extra linguistic, interpersonal component that translation trainees need to develop. Kelly (2005, p.33) defines interpersonal competence as

...the ability to work with other professionals involved in translation process (translators, revisers, documentary researchers, terminologists, project managers, layout specialists) and other actors (clients, initiators, authors, users, subject area experts), as well as team work, negotiation skills and leadership skills.

According to Hurtado Albir (2007, p. 168) interpersonal competence is manifested in “the skills that allow one to interact well with other people, whether individuals or groups.” These people could be translators working in the same team, field experts, revisers or clients. A translator with interpersonal competence knows what piece of information is needed and the source from which it could be obtained. In today’s world, translation has become a collaborative practice and team work activity in which interpersonal component represents an essential success requirement (Barros, 2011). Traditional teaching approaches do not serve to develop trainees’ interpersonal competence nor prepare students to be market-ready. It becomes necessary to make use of modern educational theories and apply effective teaching approaches in lifeless translation classrooms.

## 2. Social-constructivist learning approach

Kiraly (2000) views learning as a social-constructive activity that takes place through learners' personal experience. This approach is based on project based learning (PjBL) which relies on the notion of learning by doing. Projects can be defined as "relatively long-term, problem-focused and meaningful units of instruction that integrate concepts from a number of disciplines or fields of study" (Blumenfeld, Soloway, Marx, Krajcik, Guzdial, & Palincsar, 1991, p. 370). PjBL emphasizes factual learning by making students do what they are supposed to learn. According to Blumenfeld et al. (1991, p. 371),

Project-based learning is a comprehensive perspective focused on teaching by engaging students in investigation. Within this framework, students pursue solutions to nontrivial problems by asking and refining questions, debating ideas, making predictions, designing plans and/or experiments, collecting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, communicating their ideas and findings to others, asking new questions, and creating artifacts.

Kiraly (2000) explains the distinguishing features of PjBL that should be maintained so as to insure the achievement of intended goals.

- PjBL is a student-centered approach in which students enjoy a degree of freedom to choose their project, plan their work, select appropriate work strategies and decide how to present the results of their project.
- Students are autonomous learners. They learn by implementing the project by themselves and solving any problems that arise. The project starts with a compelling mission for which students need to carry out in-depth investigation to obtain the needed knowledge.
- Fulfilling the project and reaching the planned results depends on the collaborative undertaking of work. Tasks should be assigned to all team members who share the responsibilities and credits.
- Effective communication and coordination between team members on one side, team and their supervisor on the other is the key for project success.
- Students constantly revise their work in coordination with their supervisor who plays the role of a guide and facilitator.
- Students are encouraged to develop their technological skills and make use of information technology tools in collecting information, communicating with team members and presenting findings.
- The completed project is meant to be publicly published and presented to reach the intended recipients.

In translator training context, students undertake authentic, collaborative translation projects in the service of a real-world client or user. Students are empowered to take charge of their

learning. They work on real translation projects for which they have submission deadlines. In the process of working, students are exposed to the various problems (linguistic, transfer, subject matter, technical) that professional translators face. Through collaborative work and discussions with their instructor, they learn how to tackle these problems and to search for the information needed to complete the assignment. By involving students in authentic, professional translation practice “students would be developing the skills and competences that would prepare them to tackle new projects of ever-increasing difficulty within and eventually outside the academic setting” (Kiraly, 2012, p. 84). They would be aware of the challenges, pressures and dilemmas professional translators experience, and develop their skills and sense in making the appropriate decisions to complete the project. Kiraly (2012, pp. 84-85) describes his approach as “transformationist, collaborative, experiential, and learning-centered.” It serves to expose students to “a broad sample of authentically situated and multi-faceted learning activities in real (and not just realistic) working environments” (p.83) which stimulate translation sub-competences through first-hand experience.

Engaging students in authentic translation practice for the benefit of real clients apparently fulfills the objectives of training. Kiraly (2005) further emphasizes the benefits of this teaching approach:

- Students become highly motivated compared with tasking them to do classroom assignments.
- Learning environment becomes natural as students translate texts to be used by a client in mind.
- Students are given the opportunity to reach a semiprofessional level in translation.
- Students’ self-confidence is promoted as they work according to professional criteria.
- Upon graduation, students become prepared to work independently in the market having developed and practiced the relevant competences.

It is important to bear in mind the essential requirements of social-constructivist educational approach. Kiraly (2000, p. 36) highlights that:

True collaborative learning does not mean simply dividing up the work on a task, a mere division of labor. It is instead the joint accomplishment of a task with the dual learning goals of meaning-making on the part of each individual group member.

The division of work does not necessarily create collaborative learning unless all team members participate in work completion. The role of teachers is to insure that all students are actively and responsibly involved in the decision making process concerning the construction of meaning and the production of the target text and that the final product is the result of team’s efforts. Teachers act as guides, consultants and assistants who scaffold students joint work.

Collaborative PjBL has been introduced in translator training in different training programs. Barros’ study (2011) provided evidence on the efficiency of team work translation practice.

Similarly, Defeng Li, Chunling Zhang and Yuanjian He (2015) from the university of Macau incorporated PjBL in translation teaching and concluded that “all the elements of PjBL fit in very nicely with the goals and objectives of today’s translation training programs” (p. 16) and the perceptions of students toward this learner-centered approach were highly positive. A very recent study conducted by Mahboubeh Moghaddas and Masood Khoshsaligheh (2019) in Iran reported some challenges in implementing PjBL in transmissionist settings such as Iran. However, it was shown that students’ teamwork skills, critical thinking abilities and translation quality improved significantly.

#### 4. Wikipedia and Arabic content

Wikipedia is a free content encyclopedia that anyone can read and edit. Wikipedia as a multi-lingual project began with English language on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and two years later, 2003, the Arabic language joined the community. The belief of founding Wikipedia was that nobody knows everything but everybody has some kind of knowledge that he/she can share with other people. The good trait that characterizes Wikipedia is that it enables users to work collaboratively on the same article or document, and if a mistake is made, it is not difficult to revert back and correct it. Recent statistics show that Wikipedia comprises 40 million articles in about 293 languages including Arabic. (Wikipedia, n.d.c)

Celebrating its sixteenth birthday, Arabic Wikipedia is still lagging behind in terms of the number of articles available compared with other languages like English and German. Arabic Wikipedia includes 966,789 articles (Wikipedia, n.d.b) which may seem a large number, but in fact it is still relatively small compared to the number of Arabic language speakers in the world. Arabic is the fourth most used language on the internet today, but unfortunately the online content that is available in Arabic represents only 6%. (Nabeel, 2019)

In Table 1, a comparison can be made between some of the most common spoken languages around the world and the number of articles published in each language in Wikipedia. The number of articles published in Arabic Wikipedia is so humble compared with other languages like German. Speakers of Arabic are more than 400 million (Wikipedia, n.d.a) while German is spoken by only 132 million (Devlin, 2018). However, the number of Arabic articles is 966,789 while there are 2,357,083 Wikipedia articles in German. (Wikipedia, n.d.b)

Table 1: Statistics of some of the most edited Wikipedia by language in descending order according (Wikipedia, n.d.b)

Language	Articles	Active users
English	<u>5,957,400</u>	<u>133,972</u>
German	<u>2,357,083</u>	<u>18,693</u>
French	<u>2,148,792</u>	<u>18,924</u>
Spanish	<u>1,552,405</u>	<u>17,608</u>
Chinese	<u>1,078,530</u>	<u>8,185</u>
Arabic	<u>966,789</u>	<u>5,047</u>

According to Abdullah (n.d), there are many reasons that stand behind the poor state of Arabic Wikipedia:

- Technical reasons; a considerable number of Arabs still have problems with the process of editing and publishing articles in Wikipedia.
- Diglossia and language issues; Arabs are not used to communicate in standard Arabic and in some Arab countries the two main colonial era languages, namely French and English, are prevalent.
- National identity; the Arab world is a region which has already witnessed a rise and decline in nationalism, and does not feel that its culture is marginalized or under threat.

Areej Mowasi (2015) lists a number of suggestions to enrich Arabic online content including creating Arabic web pages, blogs, developing interactive content and Arabizing programming languages. As for increasing Arabic Wikipedia articles, Mowasi strongly recommends translating available articles into Arabic and emphasizes that voluntary translation would significantly contribute to enriching Arabic Wikipedia.

One of the leading efforts to improve the state of Arabic Wikipedia is House of Wisdom 2.0 translation initiative that was first launched in 2017 by Ideas Beyond Borders organization (IBB). More than 100 translators from different Arab countries like Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia translate many articles every month and voluntarily upload them to the Arabic Wikipedia and make them available to Arab users. IBB founder said that through this non-profit project, more than 900 articles and 12 books were added and the ranking of Arabic Wikipedia was lifted from 19<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> (Nabeel, 2019). Recent statistics show that Arabic version today occupies the 16<sup>th</sup> rank (Wikipedia, n.d.b). Articles added by IBB have been visited over 8.5 million times and Arabic Wikipedia is expected to be the next Wikipedia version to break 1000000 articles. (Lubbock, 2019)

Another successful project for adding articles to Arabic Wikipedia is DADD initiative. This initiative was released in August, 2015 by a group of Arab student volunteers in Dortmund University, Germany. It aims to enrich the Arabic Wikipedia through translating different articles from English into Arabic. The initiative Wikipedia page contains about 300000 collected articles in different fields - engineering, psychology, philosophy, languages, astronomy, literature ...etc. Volunteers are invited to participate by translating these articles or any other articles they want into Arabic or by improving the quality of existing Arabic articles. The voluntary activities of DADD initiative resulted in making significant achievements and adding more Arabic spatial content (see Figure 2). (DADD, n.d.)



Figure 2: DADD initiative achievements in 2019

## 5. Wikipedia and translator training

The use of Wikipedia as a platform for translator training inspired translation instructors early in this decade. In 2011, María Calzada-Pérez started *Aprendices de traducción con la Wikipedia* at Universidad Jaime I, by tasking students to translate Wikipedia articles from Spanish into English (Al-Shehari, 2017). Experimenting with Wikipedia in translation classroom was also embraced by Julie Macdonough Dolmaya (2013) who assigned a Wikipedia translation project from French into English as part of a BA Introduction to Translation course. She found Wikipedia a potential teaching tool in translation education.

Piotr Szymczak from the University of Warsaw made Wikipedia translation project part of students' credit requirement. In his paper on Wikipedia translation (2013), Szymczak gives a detailed account of the educational approach introduced by Bain (2004) which dovetails Kiraly's social constructivist paradigm in education (2000). Bain's approach (2004) is based on the concept of natural critical learning that helps students construct rather than receive knowledge. Students are given authentic tasks that confront them with problems, challenges and quandaries which evoke critical thinking to find solutions and make decisions. "Natural critical learning environments provide an archetypal transformationist framework where the trainees are invited to shape and create their own learning environment and experience with collaborative assistance from the instructor." (Szymczak, p. 62)

While asserting that modern translator training is based on authentic, adapted real-life texts, Szymczak (2013) emphasizes that authentic materials do not necessarily create natural learning environments. Real-life texts could be stimulating but they do not help trainees feel the sense of professional responsibility and self-concept. On top of that, "stimulated projects fall short of recreating the actual pressures of real translation" (p. 62) in terms of responsibilities, workload, deadlines and satisfying clients. Szymczak (2013) confirms that successful translator training should be based on genuine translation projects fulfilled for real world clients. In practice, however, the question of feasibility is normally raised by instructors. "Clients may be justifiably

wary of such arrangements, which threatens to diffuse responsibility, compromise data confidentiality, and still result in inferior translation quality” (p. 63). In an attempt to bridge this gap, Szymczak (2013) creates a natural translation learning environment by asking students to translate Wikipedia entries as part of formal translator training. Embracing Wikipedia translation combines “the productive thrill of genuine translation with more leisurely pace of academic assignments” and at the same time provides “a safe environment tailored to the trainees’ capabilities” (p. 63). By the same token, the present study is concerned with undergraduate translator training at UST where many students are not expected to manage translation assignments for real clients which makes Wikipedia articles a convenient source for practice materials as maintained by Szymczak (2013).

Khaled Al-Shehari (2017) confirmed the feasibility and productivity of Wikipedia collaborative projects in translator training as they contributed to the development of trainees’ professional competence including the adoption of translation technology and personal/online communication with peers and experts. The student-centered approach enhanced students’ motivation and performance as they were given the chance to select texts and publish them for genuine readership. Al-Shehari further explains:

The pedagogical value of using genuine texts is worth noting here because students are not able to be anything less than rigorous with their editing and proofing of the translations; they need to go through all of the genuine style and content features that Wikipedia requires. In a traditional translation classroom, students do not have to be concerned with any of the post-translation editorial work, such as applying style guides or inserting hyperlinks. (pp. 367-368)

Early in 2018, we visited Al-Shehari’s project page on Wikipedia (see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:School\\_and\\_university\\_projects/University\\_of\\_Durham\\_A\\_E\\_Translation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:School_and_university_projects/University_of_Durham_A_E_Translation)) and we were immediately hooked. We were trying to change the conventional format of translation courses and embrace new approaches in translator training. The project inspired us to integrate Wikipedia in translation assignments. Al-Shehari encouraged us to use Wikipedia for the purpose of developing students’ translation competences and described the underpinnings of the project.

In this study we mainly intend to describe the method and requirements of project implementation at BA level and to link project contribution to the development of students professional, interpersonal competence with enriching Arabic Wikipedia.

## 6. Project design

We had the first thoughts on using Wikipedia entries in translation practice late in 2017 and started collecting information on how to implement the project. We were aware that translation courses imparted at UST were of traditional nature and it was apparent that

students lacked in interest and motivation. Wikipedia translation project inspired us to take a new path in training sessions. As mentioned earlier, similar projects were implemented at different degree levels (BA and MA) on credit and non-credit bases. We decided to start the project with undergraduate translation students before moving to MA level and to make it part of credit requirement. At undergraduate level, it was not possible to get students motivated and committed to the project without including it in their summative assessment. We first thought that students could undertake the project as their graduation project which carried three credits. However, this would have violated Translation Program (TP) study plan which required seniors to conduct a graduation research. TP offered a number of translation courses in which students did translation practice with different text types (technical, political, literary, legal, commercial). A course on Revising and Editing Translation was offered in the last semester for senior students. The aim of the course was to develop professional competence by translating, revising and editing different texts that were covered in earlier courses and getting students engaged with the extra-linguistic aspect of translation. We thought that this course was appropriate to carry out Wikipedia translation project as students had already done considerable amount of translation practice in previous courses and could handle a translation project independently. At the same time, students would move from the traditional in-class translation to semi-professional practice.

As with other similar projects, students were given the freedom to choose Wikipedia articles but their selections had to be assessed and approved by the instructor before they started translation. The project was part of students' credit requirement, and it was important to make sure that the selected articles were comparable in terms of length and difficulty level. Some entries were suggested by the instructor in response to the wish of some students who found it difficult to make an appropriate choice.

Students were divided into teams of four each, and team members were assigned part of the article to translate from English (L2) into Arabic (L1). The project work plan was incorporated in the 14-week course plan so as to make sure that the articles would be translated and uploaded by the end of the course. Group work sessions were held every second week. Team members used to meet and revise, edit, and proofread their translations. They used to have fruitful discussions on translation problems and possible solutions. They also checked terminology consistency and harmony between parts translated by different group members. After the completion of each team's article, teams were coupled by the instructor to conduct peer-editing. Each team checked the work of another team, and gave feedback and suggestions for improvement. Students had the chance to act as professional translators by translating, revising, proofreading and working in a team. They also acted as the recipients and target readers of translations and commented on target text weakness and comprehension difficulties. The role of the instructor was that of a supervisor and facilitator who used to give feedback, comment on translation and suggest ideas to tackle challenges such as consulting a particular source or referring to a translation or field expert. It was important also to make sure that all members were equally engaged. The discussions between team members, different teams and the instructor represented the vital part of the project which served to develop students' translation competences including professional and interpersonal.

The last phase of the project was the assessment given by the instructor. A meeting was held with each team separately for the purpose of reviewing the whole translation. The purpose was not to correct translations but to comment and give feedback and highlight parts that should be checked, fixed or reconsidered. The aim of the project was to create a natural learning context where students constructed their learning experience in a safe environment. It was important to make students feel safe to fail, try again and learn from their mistakes, and therefore, assessment sessions were penalty-free and teams were given the chance to correct mistakes and improve their work. The final assessment and assigning grades for the project was done after the article was published in Arabic Wikipedia. At that point, translation quality was assessed in terms of accuracy, language and style. Some corrections were made and necessary modifications introduced by instructors.

### **7. Technical aspect**

There were two components of the project. The translation part was manifested in selecting the text, translating, revising and proofreading and the second part was uploading the translated articles to Arabic Wikipedia pages. The former part was smoothly tackled by students with the assistance of the instructor. The latter part, however, was more of technical nature about which neither students nor instructors had an idea. To solve this problem, we got in touch with Google Developers Group (GDG) which operates in Yemen to “spread technological awareness in Yemeni society” and to make people “know the best ways to exploit as possible from technology” (GDG, n.d). GDG had a record of conducting training sessions on different technical issues including translating and editing Wikipedia. The idea and purpose of the project was related to GDG, and we agreed to conduct a training session to demonstrate how to get Wikipedia articles translated and published. The training helped instructors and students learn how to tackle many issues like Wikipedia coded language, rules of publication, editing articles, making functional hyperlinks with other articles and adding citations. Students practiced using Wikipedia translation tool and google translator toolkit. The training also shed light on the poor state of Arabic Wikipedia compared with other languages and the need to enrich it with original and translated pages. This technical part added a unique component to the project and helped students develop extra-linguistic skills they would surely need for their future career. Students cared not only for producing quality translations, but also publishing translations to reach real users. Students were also motivated to engage in a voluntary act that would contribute to knowledge distribution and promoting the state of their mother tongue. In project sessions that followed the training, students were highly motivated to actively contribute to Wikipedia and they showed remarkable interest to complete translations and get them published.

## 8. Students' perceptions

During the different stages of project implementation, it was possible to elicit students' responses on Wikipedia translation experience. Nevertheless, there was a need to make students explicitly reflect on the project and share the advantages and disadvantages. After all teams had completed their projects, we had a meeting in which students were given the chance to freely express their opinions on working as a team and undertaking a genuine project. In general, students' perceptions were highly positive. They related that the experience was exciting as it was the first time to translate a genuine text for real users. The idea of getting their translations published and read by people made them highly motivated to be careful in their work, keen on receiving and discussing feedback, and strict with revision and corrections compared with their performance in assignments intended for obtaining grades or passing exams. They added that the project fostered their self-concept as translators and the sense of professional responsibility. Their aim was not to get work done but to produce quality translations. As for developing their translation competences, students said that, unlike regular classroom assignments, the project served to improve their working languages and develop competences they would need as professional translators. As translations were produced to reach real users, they were a good platform to discuss translation theories, concepts and strategies in a practical context. Translating Wikipedia articles represented not only an authentic and stimulating practice, but a professional experience that exposed them to "the real challenges of future career". However, students explained that they were still at a stage where they could not "fully trust" their work to be delivered to readers. They were only used to instructors reading and assessing their work. Knowing that Wikipedia was an open source that could be corrected and edited by anyone at any time made students feel quite safe that even if their translations were not perfect, there was always a chance for improvement.

Another aspect of the project that students were interested in was the collaborative work. Students enjoyed working together and interacting with team members. They liked the idea of distributing work as it meant less time and effort for team members. At the same time, they explained that group discussions with team members, another team and their instructor were very productive and made them learn from each other. During these meetings "creative and diverse ideas were generated" and "quality source texts renderings were produced." Some students pointed out that they preferred team work as they managed to obtain better grades. As for interpersonal skills, collaborative undertaking of the project helped them to develop a new set of skills. They had to coordinate their work and solve conflicts, make plans, assign roles, arrange for meetings, present and discuss problems and set deadlines. They also had to communicate with instructors, expert translators and subject matter experts. The project created a natural professional context in which teamwork and interpersonal skills represented an essential component.

This was the first time to use genuine texts as part of formal training but the outcomes were more than expected. Project results are compatible with Szymczak's (2013) finding that "Wikipedia assignment successfully creates a transformational experience within a natural critical learning environment, and that it goes some way towards making up for the shortcomings of formal training as opposed to in-house training" (p.66).

Students' comments and responses showed that they overwhelmingly appreciated the experience they had. They also supported integrating the project with other translation modules. However, they highlighted that some improvements should be done before implementing the project again. They appreciated giving them the freedom to select a topic that interested them but the selection process was not easy. Some topics were rejected by instructors as they did not meet the requirements of the project, and teams had to spend more time searching for other topics. Groups were heterogeneous in terms of students' level and personality, and coordinating roles and tasks of each member was sometimes difficult. Students with strong personality used to control group work and decisions. Good students explained that sometimes one or two members would carry most of workload as other members failed to complete their tasks. Another problem was that students were busy with other courses and sometimes it was difficult to arrange for team meetings. The technical aspect of the project relevant to editing skills and publishing articles was also addressed by students. They had no previous experience working with Wikipedia translation tool, using the visual editor and making hyperlinks. Besides, they did not have enough time to practice what they were taught in the training session.

### 9. Future amendments

In this section we will present some suggestions to manage the drawbacks of the project. Some of them we have already started applying with a new set of collaborative Wikipedia projects. To reduce time spent on selecting articles, it would be wise to offer students a range of options to choose from. A good list of English articles needed to be translated into Arabic is actually developed by DAAD initiative. This list offers students a wide range of articles from different fields which are missing in Arabic Wikipedia.

The performance of some teams was slow and weak and the revision and editing of their translations was laborious in terms of correcting translations, fixing language mistakes and improving style. Some of the published translations were not of good quality and still in-need for improvement. Therefore, it is useful in future projects to form teams in coordination with instructors to make sure that each team includes students with the necessary skills to fulfill the project. More efforts should be exerted to follow up groups progress and manage the flaws of collaborative work. To ensure that all members are equally engaged in the assignment, we have decided to change assessment process and to allocate grades for individual performance of each team member as well as for the whole project. This would motivate students to work hard on their source text parts, and to support other members to excel in their tasks.

In the second experiment we had with a new batch of translation students, we asked them to create accounts on Google Docs where each student could place his/her translation to be discussed and modified by other members. This saved students a lot of time as they were able to work together online without having to arrange for meetings. Instructors were also able to access these documents to follow up and to give feedback from office or even home. A record of any changes made by any member was automatically created. Students developed more technical skills which were required for professional translators.

Despite the benefits gained from collaborative practice, students (especially distinguished ones) should be also given the chance to work individually, and to demonstrate their distinction. Some students related that professional translators do not work in groups all the time, and that

individual work helped them manage their time more efficiently and produce high-quality translation. Combining teamwork with individual assignments would result in mitigating the limitations of each practice and students would get the benefits of different learning approaches. Furthermore, instructors should refrain from establishing a routine in their teaching approaches because students lose interest and get bored quickly. Assigning different tasks would keep students engaged and motivated.

With regard to the technical aspect of the project, it is important to bear in mind students and instructors workload as they have other courses and tasks to be accomplished. Time is not always available to receive the necessary relevant training. To solve this problem, our plan is to prepare a software manual for translating and editing Wikipedia articles in cooperation with technical specialists. The manual would cite links for useful tutorials. This step is expected to save the time spent on training and on trying to learn or find technical solutions.

### Conclusion

The present study aimed to present an authentic translator training approach and to demonstrate its efficiency in developing translation, professional and personal competences. The selection of Wikipedia articles as a source material proved to hit two targets: Creating a natural training environment where students experience real translation practice with all the challenges involved and enriching Arabic spatial knowledge and promoting the status of Arabic Wikipedia by adding more Arabic articles to the international encyclopedia. The statistics of translated pages' visits (between 2000 and 90000 visits) provided an evidence that the new uploaded articles did fulfill a need and attracted many Arabic readers. The success of the project was also manifested in students' positive response despite some limitations that should be mitigated in future projects. However, we recommend to conduct systematic surveys for instructors and students to fully elicit the advantages and limits involved which would further contribute to the success of the approach.

Genuine translation projects need to be implemented in other educational scenes in order to establish PjBL efficiency as a dynamic training approach. Our ambition is to get in touch with other universities in Yemen to spread the idea of the project, to establish links with existing similar educational projects, and to cooperate with useful initiatives like DADD which would further contribute to promoting translator training and enriching Arabic content. The success of the project encourages us also to implement it with other available online resources such as TED - a conference organization that spreads ideas in Technology, Entertainment and Design. Engaging more with authentic resources would further contribute to fulfilling the objectives of the study in hand.

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