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This volume was conceived with the aim of bringing new perspectives and offering new insights into the relationship between translation and collaboration not only to researchers and scholars, but also to practitioners and all those who, for various reasons, are interested in studying and/or working in the field of translation. The book has two sides: theory and academic research on the one hand, and professional practice on the other. It consists of thirteen chapters and is divided into three parts. Of the thirteen contributions, five are written in English and eight in Italian. The decision to publish a bilingual Italian-English volume is due to the desire to maintain the plurality of voices, as well as languages, of the authors whose contributions are presented here. The first part of the volume (Theory and Practice of Collaborative Translation) focuses on theoretical topics, and addresses central themes such as collaboration in translation and the relationship between human translators and digital translation technologies. In the second part (Training and Professional Practice), the key words are translation practice and translation didactics. While the first chapter deals with new forms of collaboration adopted in the field of audiovisual translation, the other four look at translation and collaboration in the context of university training. From education, the last part of the book (The Professional World) turns to professional practice, with four contributions written by Italian professionals working in the field. Topics such as the current challenges of translation practice, the world of literary translation from so-called 'minor languages', videogame localisation, technical communication and translation are addressed. The book aims to illustrate some facets of the complex and articulated world of collaborative translation.
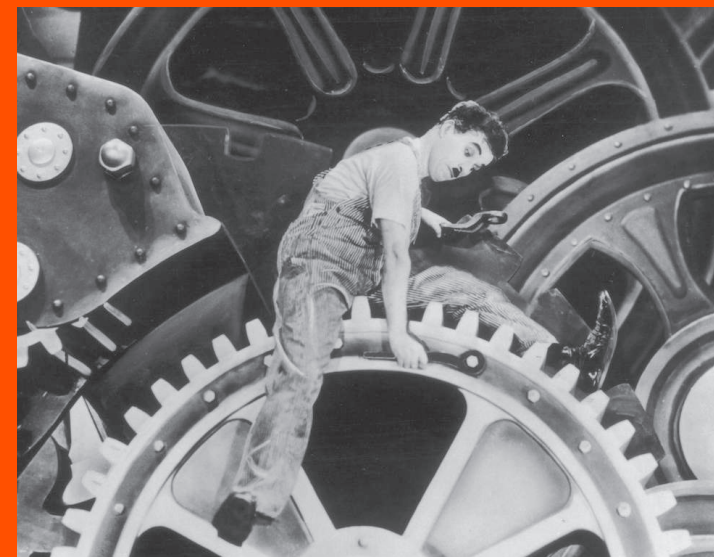
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Studies in Linguistics and Communication

COLLABORATION IN TRANSLATION: FROM TRAINING TO PLATFORMS AND PUBLISHING

M. AGORNI – G. DE BONIS (Eds.)

COLLABORATION IN TRANSLATION

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MIRELLA AGORNI
GIUSEPPE DE BONIS (Eds.)

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MIRELLA AGORNI
GIUSEPPE DE BONIS
(*eds*)

COLLABORATION IN TRANSLATION

*From training to platforms
and publishing*

PAOLO
LOFFREDO

Proprietà letteraria riservata

On the cover:
Chaplin in Modern Times

Peer-to-peer discussion in distance learning: an experience of Padlet-based collaborative translation

Maria Elisa Fina[*]

Abstract

This study aims to present an experience of EN>IT collaborative translation in a class of third-year students of a BA-level degree course in languages using the real-time collaborative web platform Padlet. The students were first provided with key theoretical knowledge of translation, and translation assignments were regularly delivered via the Moodle platform. For each translation assignment a Padlet was set up, in which the students were required to identify and solve translation issues through peer-to-peer discussion. The study illustrates a number of preliminary observations about this form of collaborative translation with a few examples from the Padlet-based discussions.

Keywords: collaborative translation; distance learning; peer-to-peer discussion; translation skills; Padlet.

1. Higher education in the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy

Along with affecting public health and lifestyle, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented disruptions to all private and public sectors, forcing workers to change their work routine and adopt solutions to continue providing services in the safest possible way. Education has been amongst the most crucial issues of the pandemic (for a full account, see Owusu-Fordjour, Koomson, Hanson, 2020). Karalis (2020, 126) stresses the fact that, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data (2020), at the end of March 2020 more than 90% of the students worldwide were outside educational structures. He believes that such an unprecedented worldwide disruption is a consequence of the massification of education that has taken

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place over recent years. The UNESCO urged governments to take measures to restore educational activities, and started collaboration with countries "to find hi-tech, low-tech and no-tech solutions to assure the continuity of learning".

The impact of such disruptive outcome on students has been – and probably is being – investigated by universities themselves. For example, a pilot explorative study in Italy (Siciliano, Ganfornina Ramírez 2021) surveyed the opinions and feelings of students at Italian universities about online teaching and found that 56.7% of the students reacted negatively to online teaching, and that mood was affected in 79.6% of the students, while performance decreased for 46% of the students. Furthermore, traditional face-to-face teaching was found to be preferred by 53%, while a blended mode would be preferred by 44%. Among the positive aspects of online teaching, students mentioned time-space flexibility (46%) and the wide range of digital platforms for online teaching (32%).

Another explorative survey carried out at the University of Bologna (Luppi et al. 2020) involving students at that institution showed a high degree of satisfaction regarding the online teaching experience (2020, 49) and signalled minor difficulties in managing IT tools. In general, students found the online environment more relaxed and informal, and the use of the chat as a simple way of communicating with the lecturer (2020, 52). However – and expectedly – students reported the impossibility to interact with the rest of the class as one of the major downsides (Luppi et al. 2020, 53), along with difficulties in keeping concentration for long (2020, 52). As for interaction with the lecturer, in line with findings by Lassoued, Alhendawi, Bashitialshaaer (2020), many students expressed the need to see the lecturer in the webcam and suggested alternating slide sharing with moments in which the webcam is turned on (2020, 51-2).

At Ca' Foscari University of Venice online teaching was started a week after the closure of all educational institutions. Differently from the tendency observed by Karalis (2020, 125), according to which formal education seemed to lose its formal aspects in favour of "characteristics of non-formal education (such as flexible and ad hoc solutions, differentiation in media and teaching methods, changing daily schedule)", at the Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies schedules were maintained unaltered and all lecturers were instructed to stick to specific practices and guidelines so as not to create confusion among the students. Despite this, the shift to online teaching was inevitably accompanied by debates over the multiple implications of this new teaching mode, focusing on the need

to adapt course materials and in some cases exams as well, and on issues related to interaction, especially in the case of subjects in which interaction with the students and *among* the students are essential components of the learning process.

The shift to online teaching has been accompanied by regular training sessions aimed at supporting lecturers in setting up and managing online classes and exams via the Moodle platform and video-conferencing software. Additional training was provided in the summer months preceding first semester 2020-21, with training sessions focusing on possible uses of digital tools such as Padlet and Kahoot. The core aim of this training was to support lecturers in the dual teaching mode, according to which reduced groups of students would be in the physical classroom and the rest would be attending the lessons on Zoom. Indeed, such dual mode posed crucial issues relating to lecturer-student interaction as well as interaction between the group connected from home and the group in the physical classroom: for example, the latter would not be able to hear the questions asked by the former.

As a lecturer of translation, I was mainly concerned with preserving teamwork and peer-to-peer discussion as these are fundamental practices for the students to improve their analytical skills, step out of their comfort zone, and develop a translation-oriented mindset. To this purpose, traditional group work activities usually held in the physical classroom were moved to the Web-based collaborative platform Padlet. In the following section, collaborative translation will be discussed.

2. Collaborative translation

The concept of collaborative translation is generally used in a broad sense to describe translation as a collective work, focusing on the interaction between different agents involved in the translation process.

However, the term acquires different senses depending on the different, complex modalities of collaborative practices taking place in different contexts, as collaboration may take place between two or more translators or between the translator and authors, editors, reviewers, and other professionals in other fields (Neather 2019).

The concept of collaborative translation is grounded in social constructivist theories, according to which "learning is a social activity and knowledge is constructed through collaboration between the individual and the social environment" (Gaballo 2009, 004592). Academic research in this area has

begun only recently and has focused mainly on the impact of new technologies on translation practices, which gave rise to "collaborative practices mediated through the web [that] are highly diverse and vibrant in nature" (Jiménez-Crespo 2017, 18). As Baker notices, research has mainly focused on the role of technologies such as translation memories (TM), cloud computing and wiki platforms in (re)shaping translation practices in both the commercial and volunteer sectors. As far as education is concerned, collaborative translation was first introduced in classrooms by Kiraly (2000) and was then used by Pavlović (2007) to investigate directionality in translation. Kenny (2008) investigated text-based asynchronous computer conferencing in an online translation module and found that this type of collaboration produced less successful results as compared to discussions and cooperative forms of interaction; Huertas Barros (2011) explored students' attitudes to teamwork in the translation classroom; Vandepitte et al. (2015) described the collaborative forms of learning at different stages in the translation processes in a multilateral international project in technical communication, the Trans-Atlantic and Pacific Project (TAPP); more specifically, they explored the empirical data that the project may provide to investigate whether collaborative learning brings benefits to translation training.

In this study, collaborative translation is investigated as the interaction of more translators working together – or 'co-translation' (O'Brien, in Neather 2019) – and is based on the approach described in Gaballo (2009). Drawing on Vygotsky's idea that knowledge involving judgment is best acquired through peer-to-peer communication (1978), Gaballo (2009) draws an analogy between knowledge involving judgment and the activity of translating: indeed, translation involves the ability of making decisions and judgements about several issues – e.g., target readership, style, equivalence, textual features (Pym 2003) – an ability which will always depend on the translator's sensitivity to context and perspective (Katan 2016). As a result, she draws on Schrage's description of collaboration as "the process of shared information" (1990) and highlights the importance of collaboration especially in translation assignments, as through collaboration "students can learn to look at translation issues from different perspectives and examine ideas that they may not have considered on their own" (Gaballo 2009, 004592). Thus, through collaborative practice students create a "shared artifact", that is "the target text that trainees gradually complete out of a source text through peer negotiations" (2009, 004592). The reports provided by her students show a remarkable change in attitude towards translation assignments, along with improvement in their translation competence.

3. Testing Padlet for collaborative translation

We will now illustrate our experiment with Padlet-based collaborative translation. First, the reasons underlying the choice of Padlet will be explained. Next, student preparation in terms of theoretical background will be described, and a brief overview of the type of translation assignment will be provided. Finally, the aim of the study will be illustrated.

3.1 The choice of Padlet

Padlet was chosen for collaborative translation for several interrelated reasons. One is that in the previous academic year (2019-20) the Moodle forum proved to be unsuccessful in involving students. Most students judged navigation through the various posts as user-unfriendly and found it difficult to keep track of the whole discussion. Thus, to encourage participation it was deemed important to offer the students a tool able to reproduce a familiar, social-network-like environment in which they could feel comfortable and consequently more confident. Thus, Padlet was considered a potentially valid tool for preserving the interactive nature of the course, reducing formality, but also for reducing the fear of making mistakes or of intervening inappropriately. Indeed, teaching translation requires not only a great amount of student-teacher interaction, but also of peer-to-peer instruction, by means of which students can enhance analytical skills and develop critical thinking. However, these requirements – which normally tend to meet students' resistance also in non-pandemic conditions – were objectively compromised by the problems related to distance learning, such as impossibility to manage tens of small groups of students in Zoom breakout rooms, technical issues that limited students' intervention (unstable connection, problems with mics or webcams, or noisy environments) and, last but not least, students' natural fear of doing wrong when facing new challenges.

This last aspect posed the crucial issue of the extent to which the lecturer was supposed to intervene in the Padlet-based discussions: the need to supervise and guide the students in the discussion inevitably clashed with the risk of making them feel observed and assessed, which in the worst case would push some of them to give up intervening in the discussion. This issue was easily solved thanks to our MA student, who was employed as a tutor in the course not only to clarify students' doubts about the course contents, but also to guide the students in the discussion by providing tips when necessary.

Padlet has been extensively experimented for collaborative forms of

learning in higher education (DeWitt, Alias, Siraj 2015; Beltrán-Martín 2019; Frison, Tino 2019; to name only a few). To the best of my knowledge, this study represents the first experiment of collaborative translation involving Padlet.

3.2 The study

The test involved around 100 third-year students of the "English Language 3" class in the BA degree course in Languages, Civilisation and the Science of Language at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. The course (30 hours) was held in the second semester of academic year 2020-21 and had been previously planned as a blended course: 40% of the 30 hours were held as asynchronous lessons on Moodle, while the remaining 60% would be held face-to-face in the physical classroom. However, due to Covid-19-related restrictions, the synchronous lessons were held on Zoom. It is essential to clarify that the above-mentioned BA degree course is *not* focused on Translation Studies. Indeed, in the "English Language 3" course the students approach translation practice supposedly for the first time and have no previous knowledge of translation theory.

The students were first provided with essential theoretical knowledge, which includes key notions about translation, the actors involved in the translation process, Quality Standards for translation (Scarpa 2008), the four criteria identified by Scarpa (2008) for translation quality assessment (based on Chesterman 1997), the four phases of the translation process, source text preliminary analysis based on Nord's extra-textual and intra-textual factors (1992), model reader, translation approaches (literal translation vs paraphrase), and translation procedures (based on Newmark 1988). Each theoretical item was matched by practical activities: the students were first trained to carry out the ST preliminary analysis from a translation perspective so as to identify the function of the target text in the target culture, the model reader, and possible translation issues; then, they were trained to compare ready-made translations with their source texts and recognise the translation procedures adopted and, in parallel, they were given translation assignments in which they were required to select appropriate translation strategies. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to imagine a model reader in terms of age, qualification, social role, and previous knowledge of the ST topic.

Translation assignments were weekly delivered via the Moodle platform and involved translating from English into Italian short texts promoting cultural heritage or popularising medical science. The texts selected for practising translation are not complex in terms of vocabulary,

but they contain features that relate specifically to EN>IT translation and that challenge the students at several levels, such as lexical repetition (as opposed to a preference for lexical variation in Italian), cohesion (implicit logical-semantic relations between sentences), geographical names, cultural references, measurement systems, sporadic use of specialized vocabulary, issues related to the time of publication of the ST and the need to update information, register (the tendency of Italian equivalent texts towards a higher degree of formality), organisation of information, etc.

Given the high number of students involved, the students were divided into three sub-groups and for each translation assignment three identical Padlets were set up. The layout chosen for this activity (among those offered by Padlet) was the column layout (Figure 1).
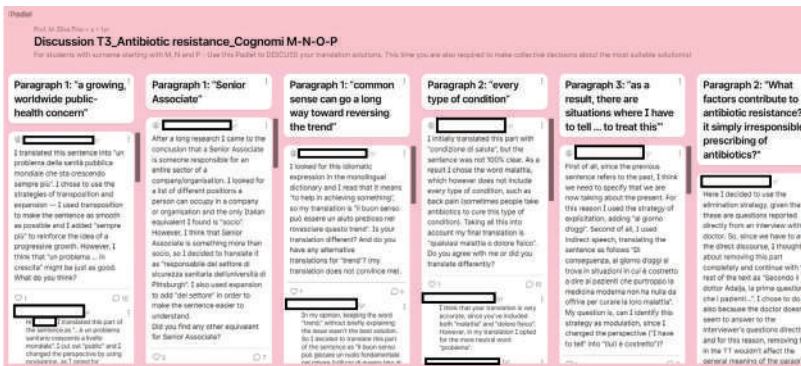

Figure 1. Example of Padlet for collaborative translation

The first two columns were used for the ST preliminary analysis and were pre-modified by the lecturer with the headings 'Function of the TT in the target culture' and 'Model reader of your TT' respectively. The students would post autonomously the translation issues they wished to discuss with their classmates, adding as many columns as needed (one column = one translation issue). The column layout was deemed the most user-friendly for translation discussion, as it shows the translation issue on top; below that, the main post is displayed, while the replies from other users appear below the main post in chronological order.[1] The tasks they were required

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[1] The students had been previously instructed on how to sign up to Padlet, add columns, add posts under the column and reply to their peers' posts.

to complete involved carrying out a preliminary analysis of the ST from a translation perspective, identifying potential translation problems, proposing and discussing translation solutions. In particular, they were encouraged to indicate the translation procedures adopted, motivating their choices and providing Web-based evidence when relevant.

In line with Gaballo's view, the collaborative translation practice presented in this study consists in "creating a shared space where divergent thoughts and different views coalesce in a relationship of interdependence that propels knowledge construction and boosts individual and collective translation competence" (2009, 004592). It is important to clarify that, for a number of reasons, the experiment has not been conceived in a way so as to target specific translation sub-competences (PACTE 2003). As mentioned above, the degree course is not focused on Translation Studies: as a result, the competences that the students acquired in their first and second years are not translation-oriented. In addition to this, the high number of students and the online mode made it difficult to define a common ground as a starting point for building specific translation competences, as the class was highly diversified in terms of both hard skills (mastery of source language and target language, sensitivity to context, etc.) and soft skills (e.g., self-confidence in sharing and discussing ideas). Thus, the course objectives were conceived in the more general perspective of *creating* an approach to translation. In practical terms, the aim of the experiment was to favour peer-to-peer discussion among students as a means for acquiring translation skills by consolidating knowledge of both the source language and the target language, enhancing translation-oriented analytical skills, developing sensitivity to context, and practising linguistic research both in print material and online resources. In the following sections we will illustrate a number of aspects that emerged from a preliminary analysis of the Padlet-based discussions, along with a few examples.

4. Preliminary results and examples from the Padlets

The analysis of the Padlet-based discussion is still at its earlier phase and is quite complex due to the volume of data involved. As mentioned in the previous section, the students showed varying levels of sensitivity to language and different attitudes to both individual and group work, and this diversity makes it difficult to detect main trends in their approaches to collaborative translation assignments. Nevertheless, a number of aspects can be observed.

A preliminary analysis of their discussions shows that the students mainly used the Padlets for clarifying meaning, discussing lexical choices, and obtaining feedback on the strategies adopted. In general, the students tended to post a single portion of the ST with the proposed translation and to ask for feedback about the aspect(s) that generated uncertainty or difficulty in translation.

The gradual acquisition of the theoretical background over the semester is visible in the students' posts and replies to posts. Indeed, the translation strategies adopted by the students tend to be mentioned more frequently and accurately in the latest translation assignments compared to the earlier ones. This might be due to a growing confidence in linking theory to practice, probably resulting from the Moodle-based activities in which the students were required to spot and label the translation strategies adopted in pre-translated texts, as well as to the long discussion sessions held during the synchronous lessons.

Another important aspect is that, although the students shared their translations and justified their choices, they did not seem to get to an agreed version of the target text. The students generally expressed agreement, disagreement, or they just compared their proposed translations, but from their discussions it is not clear whether agreement/disagreement implies acceptance/rejection of that translation solution in one's own TT.

We will now analyse a few Padlet posts[2] to get an insight into peer-to-peer discussion. Example 1 belongs to ST4, which is taken from Rick Steves'[3] guidebook of London and is focused on London markets:

Example 1
ST1: Antique buffs, foodies, people-watchers, and folks who brake for garage sales love London's street markets. […]

The object of peer-to-peer discussion is the translation of the expressions "antique buffs", "foodies", and "people watchers", but due to space constraints we will focus on "people watchers" only. Here follows part of the discussion (emphasis added in all the excerpts):[4]

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[2] The students' names appearing in the examples have been replaced by 'X'.
[3] Rick Steves is a popular American travel writer and the founder of *Rick Steves' Europe*.
[4] Posts containing redundant views have been omitted. The name of the authors of the post have been omitted.

1a. […] after long thinking I decided to translate the sentence as: "*curiosoni e gente che si ferma a perlustrare i mercatini delle pulci*." […] What do you think?

1b. Hi! I struggled with these terms too, because they don't have a direct translation in Italian. The only translation I could think about for "people-watchers" was "*osservatori attenti*", but it does not suit the content of the text and it has a different meaning. I like X's option "*curiosoni*" because it is in line with the original author's style. […]

1c. I actually opted for "*i più curiosi*" because the term "*curiosoni*" is usually paired with something strange and bizarre, or with animals.

1.d Hi X. I see your point but, maybe, as we know that Steves[sic] style is quite particular and even unconventional, here, "*curiosoni*" wouldn't sound that strange. It could be an effect that the author would opt for.

1.e […] I translated that part with "*guardoni*" because "*osservatori attenti*" maybe is too formal. Can you help me?

1.f […] I think your translation option "*guardoni*" is not entirely appropriate. The word "*guardoni*" in Italian conveys a negative meaning, while I do not think that the compound noun "people-watchers" used in the text alludes to anything negative.

As can be seen, although the students do not get to an agreed final solution, they propose their own provisional solutions and share their perplexities, which they justify in more or less convincing ways. Their observations, though generally imprecise or not detailed enough, seem to show awareness of the fact that a literal translation would not reproduce the same effect as the one produced by the author's colourful style in the ST (1b and 1e), but they also show awareness of the need to take into account connotative meaning in the target language. This leads some of them (1c, 1d and 1f) to 'criticise' the solutions proposed by their mates, although they do not support their ideas with web-based evidence.

The second example concerns ST3, which is an interview on antibiotic resistance taken from a website that popularises medical science for a non-expert audience:

Example 2
ST2: Dr. Amesh Adalja, […] says that while the threat of growing antibiotic resistance is immediate and dire, common sense can go a long way toward reversing the trend.

The translation issue discussed by the students is the sentence "common sense can go a long way down towards reversing the trend":

2a. I looked for this idiomatic expression in the monolingual dictionary and I read that it means "to help in achieving something", so my translation is "*il buon senso può essere un aiuto prezioso nel rovesciare questo trend*". Is your translation different? And do you have any alternative translations for "trend"? (my translation does not convince me).

2b. In my opinion, keeping the word "trend,"[sic] without briefly explaining the issue wasn't the best solution. So I decided to translate this part of the sentence as "*il buon senso può giocare un ruolo fondamentale nel ridurre l'utilizzo di questo tipo di farmaci*". I used the explicitation and expansion strategies, since I thought that the message wouldn't have been clear enough to my model reader (without this brief explanation). In addition, in order to emphasize the fact that common sense is important in this context, I used the expression "*gioca un ruolo fondamentale*". […]

2c. Now that I think about it you're right, the sentence is not very clear. I will use explicatory addition too, thank you X!

2d. […] I really like your suggestions! However, i[sic] translated it as follows "*usare il buon senso può fare passi da gigante verso l'inversione di questa tendenza*". In this case I opted for adaptation strategy in order to solve cultural issues between the ST and the TT, then I used the "equivalence's strategy"[sic] to translated[sic] this particular idiom. What do you think? is[sic] it a good translation?

2e. I also opted for "*il buon senso può giocare un ruolo fondamentale nell'inversione di questa tendenza*", […] Although,[sic] I do not consider necessary the addition of information presented by X, as the topic is made explicit in the previous sentence; therefore I consider it a futile repetition.

2f. My translation was slightly different from yours, but I totally agree with your solutions! As X, I do not think that it's necessary to add further information because it seems pretty clear that we are still referring to the previous sentences.

This discussion shows the students' attempts to use the relevant metalanguage for describing translation strategies ("explicitation", "expansion", "equivalence strategy", etc.) so as to theoretically support their translation choices. Expectedly, the strategies are not always labelled correctly and very often the students tend not to describe in detail the linguistic changes made in the TT compared to the ST. In terms of peer-to-peer discussion,

comments 2e and 2f are interesting as they instil doubt about the actual necessity and usefulness of the explicitation strategy proposed in comment 2b. Unfortunately, such criticism is not followed by a reply from the student who suggested adopting explicitation, but other students reading this discussion will plausibly – and hopefully – take some time to ponder the issue before making a final decision.

The third and final example is taken from ST1, which is an extract from a Web-based text promoting UNESCO sites in the United Kingdom. We will focus on the following sentence:

Example 3
(ST1): Step back in time at William the Conqueror's imposing Tower of London […].

The students discussed how the expression "step back in time" should be translated:

3a. "*Torna indietro nel tempo visitando l'imponente Torre di Londra di Guglielmo il Conquistatore*". I'm not sure about my translation because, adopting transposition, the meaning might have changed.

3b. Hi, I would translate "step back in time" into "*fate un SALTO indietro nel tempo*" since it is a more common expression in Italian.

3.c Hi! I translated "step back in time" into "*tornate indietro nel tempo*" but I was also thinking of translating it into "*tuffatevi nel passato*". Maybe it is too far from the original text. What do you think?

3.d In my opinion, in italian[sic], it is possible to say both "*passo*" and "*salto*" because after this[sic] words we find the specification "in time". The meaning doesn't change.

3.e I translated the passage writing "*immergetevi*". Do you think I overtransated[sic] the sentence?

3.f I agree with you, X! '*Fate un salto indietro nel tempo*' is a more common expression in Italian, clearly understandable for the reader. However, I was thinking about the fact that 'un salto' could be a bit too much[sic] colloquial for a text. Maybe I can be wrong, but I have this doubt. What do you think?

3.g You have a point there. Maybe it is indeed quite informal, even though it's also a catchy expression that suits the function of the text. I also like the option suggested by X: "*tuffatevi nel passato*".

3.h Hi everyone! I translated the passage writing "*per tornare indietro nel passato*". What do you think? Is it too far from the source text?

3.i I agree with X for the translation into "*salto indietro...*" since it's a common expression that all the italian[sic] people should know and should understand when related to the[sic] time. I think that also "*tuffo/tuffatevi*" may be a good translation if it's coherent to the the[sic] model reader we've chosen: obviously if we've thought to[sic] an informal translation target at[sic] "common people" reading, for example, a tourism flyer[sic] it will be very catchy in my opinion.

3.k I do agree with X when she suggests that "*salto*" is a bit more informal, although I don't think it is too informal, so I would say that both "*salto*" and "*passo*" are plausible options. Moreover, I like what X suggested ("*tuffatevi*"), since I believe it can be a good compromise.

Comments 3c, 3e and 3h are worth highlighting, as they show beginner translators' classic, natural 'fear' of detaching from the ST, which is clearly visible in the questions "Do you think I overtranslated the sentence?" and "Is it too far from the source text?" The students presumably realised that the conventions that characterise this text type in the Italian culture require the use of specific expressions that perform persuasive effects on the reader. As a result, they look for creative solutions *("Tuffatevi nel passato"*, *"Immergetevi nel passato"*), but they feel the need to be 'reassured' about the appropriateness of such translation choices. Also worth noting are the references to the (model) reader in comments 3f and 3i, which could well be a sign that the students have become aware that in translation they are supposed to meet not their personal taste or the lecturer's taste, but the target receiver's expectations.

5. Conclusions and future steps

The study is at the very first stages and much needs to be done, from developing a method for classifying and analysing the data, to interpreting results in terms of translation competence acquisition. However, preliminary observations are sufficient to identify positive and negative aspects involved in this type of collaborative translation.

Starting with negative aspects, although the activity has been conceived and designed so that students can acquire skills and knowledge in a more informal environment and through interaction with their mates, the circulation of incorrect or imprecise information in the Padlets might lead to ambiguity or to the acquisition of misconceptions. Similarly, weaker

students, especially when lacking self-confidence, might feel discouraged from contributing to the discussion out of fear of making mistakes or not being able to keep up with more skilled students. Furthermore, inactive students might also copy the most popular solutions in their translation assignments without carrying out accurate reasoning and self-evaluation. On the positive side, it is also true that less confident students or non-attendees might still benefit the Padlet discussions during individual study[5], for example by using it to compare their own ideas with those shared on the Padlet. The problems relating to circulation of incorrect or imprecise information, as well as the problems relating to difficulties in resolving doubts was easily managed thanks to the course tutor and to the discussions held in the synchronous lessons. The student tutor also held short Zoom sessions on demand, in which students had the chance to clarify their doubts on both translation theory or practice. Furthermore, the main translation issues characterising each translation assignment were discussed in the synchronous lessons, during which the students had the chance to ask for feedback about their translation solutions.[6] Finally, this form of collaborative translation could be a useful means for the lecturer to detect gaps in knowledge, misconceptions, or inappropriate approaches to translation. For example, a quick reading of one of the Padlets was enough to understand that students did not have a clear idea of the difference between the explicitation strategy and the expansion strategy, or that in ST4 they were not taking into account the ST author's unconventional style.

The main problem faced in this activity was the high number of students in the class, which makes it difficult – if not impossible – to track participation of each student in a non-time-consuming way. We may reasonably argue that Padlet-based discussions would better suit much smaller classes in which students can self-select into few sub-groups, with each sub-group having their own Padlet to use for discussion. This would certainly facilitate data collection and classification, along with progress tracking and continuous assessment.

The limitations of this paper lie in the inability, at this stage, to provide an accurate analysis of the Padlet-based discussion so as to draw hypothesis on the the actual outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills acquisition. The next steps of this study involve an in-depth analysis of the discussions and

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[5] The Padlets are always available to all students for the whole academic year.

[6] In compliance with Ca' Foscari's guidelines, the synchronous lessons were recorded and were made available to the students for at least seven days.

the collection of student feedback on this form of collaborative translation, which would be aimed at shedding light on the actual effectiveness or non-effectiveness of the approach, and on its strong and weak points. Indeed, as Vandepitte *et al.* (2015, 138) stress, "[…] there is not yet empirical evidence that the collaboration is an appropriate means to acquire higher levels of competences necessary for the various translation stages."

Given the limitations of this study, and in the light of the negative and positive aspects highlighted above, the methodology certainly needs re-thinking before taking a second attempt: it would be interesting to replicate the test with a *small* group of students, to be selected on a voluntary basis at the end of the course, when they are supposed to have acquired enough knowledge, practice, confidence, critical thinking and motivation to carry out collaborative translation aimed at producing an agreed version of the TT. Furthermore, this study opens up a variety of perspectives, such as for example the investigation of the style of English adopted by the students in their discussions, along with considerations about possible outcomes of this activity if the Padlet-based discussions were held in Italian rather than in English.

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