

## PROJECT – BASED LEARNING IN TRANSLATION STUDIES NXËNIA PËRMES PROJEKTEVE NË STUDIMET E PËRKTHIMIT

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### PERMBLEDHJE

Ky punim paraqet procesin dhe rezultatet e një aktiviteti të nxënies përmes projekteve të ndërmarrë nga studentët e seksionit të Përkthimit në Degën e Gjuhës dhe Letërsisë Angleze të Fakultetit të Filologjisë të Universitetit të Prishtinës. Studentët e vitit të dytë, të cilët ndjekin lëndën Përkthim joletrar, inicuan projektin për përkthim simultan. Rezultati i këtij aktiviteti ishte se studentët ia dolën të siguronin pajisjet dhe hapësirën e nevojshme për përkthim simultan. Në anën tjetër, studentët e vitit të tretë, të cilët ndjekin lëndën Teori dhe praktikë e përkthimit, inicuan projektin për përkthim të një filmi. Si rezultat, filmi u shfaq në klasë. Qëllimi i fundit i këtij punimi ishte të demonstronohet se motivimi i madh i studentëve jo vetëm që rrit rezultatet e tyre, por shërben edhe si forcë shtytëse për të gjetur zgjidhje adekuate për situata të ndryshme me të cilat ballafaqohen ata, si dhe kompenson mungesën e infrastrukturës.

**Fjalet kyce:** filmi, përkthimi, simultan, sfida, i gjindshëm

### SUMMARY

The paper presents the process and outcomes of a project-based learning activity undertaken by the students of the Translation and interpreting section of the Department of English Language and Literature of the Faculty of Philology at the University of Prishtina. The students of the second year attending Non-literary translation course initiated the project of simultaneous interpreting. The outcome of this activity was that the students managed to provide the equipment and the space necessary for simultaneous interpreting. The students of the third year, attending Theory and practice of translation course initiated the project of translating a film. The outcome was the film presented in class. The ultimate aim of the paper is to demonstrate that strong motivation of students not only increases their result, but also serves as the driving force in finding adequate solutions for different situations they encounter and, in addition, compensates for the lack of infrastructure.

**Key words:** film, translation, simultaneous, challenge, resourceful.

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### Introduction

Department of English Language and Literature of the Faculty of Philology at the University of Prishtina offers Bachelor studies in English language and literature. This notion includes possibilities for profilisation of students in three different sections. Apart from programme of Philology, which has been the main section since the establishment of the department, (3) students are offered opportunities to choose the programme of Teaching and the programme of

Translation (4). All three programmes are accredited programmes. The module of translation contains the following courses: Non-literary translation, Literary translation, Theory and practice of translation I and II, Professional translation practice I and II. Apart from these, the Department offers courses which aim at equipping students with knowledge and skills required in coping with translation tasks. This programme prepares professionals for the labour market, and gives way to their further academic

advancement. This paper will reveal the features of the process, experience and results of the students' work, as well as benefits from the activities involving learning based on projects undertaken by the students of the Translation section.

During the classes, students get to know all kinds of translation, techniques, strategies and procedures applied during the translation process in order to be prepared for different contexts and situations in the field of translation studies and practice facing the pressure, difficulties, challenges and problems of different nature.

Interactive teaching, learning through assignments and project-based learning are part of the teaching process in the Programme of translation. Students of the third year, attending the course of Theory and practice of translation I and II, learn all kinds of translation. They translate different texts in Albanian and English, both as source and target languages. Upon submitting their assignments (translated texts), students have debates and discussions with their colleagues on their work, where they express their opinions, give comments, suggestions and critics on their translations. This method of communication helps them set free from pressure and fear from translation or failure. They learn to be self-critical, and develop their self-confidence and self-evaluation and self-correction skills, which help improve the quality of the translated text. These interactive and cooperative methods of work make students aware of all kinds of challenge they may face during the translation process and thus fear not failure and make efforts in overcoming translation difficulties.

The students themselves state that despite the difficulties in their work during translation process, the open and sincere discussions and debates help them remove doubts they have regarding themselves as translators and their work. These debates make classes more productive, creative, challenging and functional. Thus, a more relaxed study and work environment is created. Consequently, students become aware of the fact that translation is a

very difficult path full of challenges, yet they learn and are encouraged to face challenges and overcome difficulties. In addition, they understand that success in their work requires hard work, wide knowledge, being very-well informed, self-confidence, commitment and love for their work apart from the talent needed.

### **Project-based learning**

Project-based learning is a process in which students go through an extended process of inquiry in response to a complex question, problem, or challenge. These projects are planned, managed and assessed to help students learn key academic content, practice collaboration, communication and critical thinking skills, and create high-quality, authentic products and presentations (5).

Project-based learning:

- is organised around an open-ended driving question or challenge – these deepen students' learning by focusing on significant issues, debates, questions and/or problems.
- creates a need to know essential content and skills
- requires inquiry to learn and/or create something new
- requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and various forms of communication – students have to learn to work as a team and contribute to a group effort. They must listen to others and make their own ideas clear when speaking, be able to read a variety of material, write or otherwise express themselves in various modes and make effective presentations.
- allows some degree of student voice and choice – students learn how to work independently and take responsibility when they are asked to make choices. This opportunity helps to increase students' educational engagement.
- incorporates feedback and revision – students use peer critique to improve their work to create higher quality products.
- results in a publicly presented product or performance.

In project-based learning students gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and standards at the heart of the project. Projects also build vital workplace skills and lifelong habits of learning. Projects can allow students to address community issues, explore careers, interact with adult mentors, use technology, and present their work to audiences beyond the classroom.

### **Students' projects**

In addition to the translation of written texts and difficulties with different terminologies, students are guided into the techniques of translation of spoken texts. Challenged by the lack of infrastructure, yet very enthusiastic, students of the second year attending Non-literary translation course initiated a project on simultaneous interpretation.

On the other hand, motivated and being challenged during the course, the students of the third year attending Theory and practice of translation I & II course initiated the project for the translation of a film. Having accumulated experience in different kinds of translation, the students showed readiness and will to undertake this initiative. Even though they had the opportunity to translate documentaries as part of course assignments, the students did not have any experience in translating films.

### **Students' age and gender distribution**

The first group consisted of 14 students. 7 of them were female, and 7 others were male. The age of the students involved in the project was 19-20.

The second group consisted of 12 students. 9 of them were female, whereas 3 were male. The age of the students involved in the project was 20-21.

### **Methodology and procedures**

#### **Project I - Simultaneous interpreting**

Having in mind that our faculty does not possess any adequate space or equipment for this activity, students showed their readiness to undertake the necessary measures to implement it. In lack of resources they had to overcome a

number of obstacles. Being aware of the difficulties ahead, they engaged all their potential, resourcefulness and creativity in order to successfully implement their project.

The outcome of this activity was that the students managed to provide the equipment and the space necessary for simultaneous interpreting and thus go through a new inspiring and challenging experience for them. The experience of facing such reality for the first time, and the constant feeling of failure prevention were the force that kept them moving on. Students admit to have believed it was impossible to be achieved, however they challenged themselves in this field and realised that they need practice.

The whole project was developed in the classroom. In order to implement it as they had planned it, they needed two rooms for simultaneous interpretation. They connected the two rooms through the tools they brought with them. They placed the laptops, microphone and headphones in one room and the loudspeakers in the other room. The first room was used by one student carrying out the interpretation of different audio materials downloaded from the internet, and the other room was used by the rest of the group who were listening to the interpretation through loudspeakers. The length of interpretations was 1-2 minutes. Upon completion of interpretation, the students-interpreters would join the group and altogether would discuss the whole process: the interpreter would describe the mental process he/she went through, whereas the rest of the group would provide feedback regarding the interpretation.

#### **Project II - Translation of a film**

The students planned and implemented the whole project through team work and shared responsibilities. They chose the film which they considered to be challenging enough. The outcome of it was the film presented in the classroom. The screening was attended by themselves and the second year students of the Translation section, who highly praised the work that had been done.

From the students' point of view, the film was good, interesting and attractive for translation. They first read the text and tried to understand the context. Then they watched the film in order to visualise concepts and understand the language used in the film. Special attention was paid to the intonation used by the characters of the film. They were forced to make many adaptations in meanings in their work. The most challenging and difficult process was that of translating idioms. They also faced difficulties in finding equivalents in Albanian, always being careful to transmit the content of the message in the most faithful and natural way for the reader/viewer. Despite the challenges and difficulties it caused, this experience was very useful for students and their work.

### Tools

During the simultaneous interpretation, students themselves provided the technology for simultaneous interpreting, such as: laptops, microphones, headphones and loudspeakers. During the translation of the film, students used different helpful resources for translation, different print and electronic dictionaries.

### Expectations and outcomes

It should be mentioned that the final projects enabled us, their instructors, as well as the students realise that the work of the students went beyond most optimistic expectations. The problems anticipated as threats which for their work were overcome in an interesting and rather creative manner.

To illustrate the expectations and outcomes, below are presented some of the problems the students faced and the solution they applied:

#### Expressions:

English:	Albanian:
<b>I'll be damn.</b>	Ah, mos qofsha.
<b>Like smoke through a keyhole.</b>	Sa hap a mbyll sytë.
<b>Let's hit the silk.</b>	Të lëshohemi me parashutë

### Adaptations:

In the film, the name of Sonny Jim, a well-known and brave character in the American history, appears. However, this name is unknown to the Albanian reader/viewer. Therefore, to bring this element as close as possible to the Albanian reader/viewer and to adapt it to the Albanian reality, the students used the name of the Albanian hero "Azem Bejta" in the same context. This enables better understanding and transmitting of the given context.

When "Kanievl", the name of the person skilful with cars, appears in the film, the students used the name of Michael Schumacher, World Champion in Formula One racing, in order to best illustrate the given context in the film.

"I'll keep that in mind, as I approach the decrepitude."

was translated by  
"Do e kem në mendje, teksa i afrohem moshës së thyer."

because decrepitude means the quality or condition of being weakened, worn out, impaired, or broken down by old age, illness, or hard use. (thefreedictionary.com).

"I kept tags on her, in case you've decided..."

was translated as  
"E kam vëzhguar, në rast se ke vendosur të..."

because keep tags on (informal) means to observe carefully (thefreedictionary.com) (6).

"How did you see it playing out Carter?"

was translated by  
"Si e ke menduar të ndodhte Carter?"

'I remember the first time. There was no tippy toeing around.'

was translated as  
"Më kujtohet hera e parë. Nuk kishte sjellje andej-kendej."

because Tippy toeing means the art of dancing behind a taller person (urbandictionary.com) (7).

**Instead of a conclusion**  
Project-based approach to language learning gives meaning to the learning that goes on in a classroom. Students develop language and literacy skills by working on a product that will exist beyond the classroom walls (1).

Benefits from project-based learning are multiple, especially when undertaken by the students themselves. Project-based learning can be a valuable addition to a foreign language teacher's repertoire of activities that are focused on long-term linguistic goals and lifelong learning skills. The parable goes: "If you give a person a fish, he/she has a meal for a day. If you teach a person to fish, he/she has a meal for life." (2) Considering themselves as "owners" and managers of the project, students feel more motivated and responsible for work. Challenges, cooperation and interaction develop their skills for initiation, resourcefulness and creativity. In addition to satisfaction, the achieved success increases their self-confidence and encourages them in their future work, increased initiative, and self-confidence to face bigger challenges.

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