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Perception of translation tasks by Kazakhstani secondary school EFL learners

Given the often-neglected status of translation activities in English language teaching (ELT), this pilot study aims to introduce and evaluate the use of translation as a task in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. To achieve this, the student-based approach of micro-evaluation of tasks by Ellis (2018) was employed. 12 EFL learners from a Kazakhstani secondary school were invited to translate and dub an 8-minute-long Kazakh cartoon into English. Based on a follow-up survey, the learners reported an expansion of English vocabulary, broadening cultural knowledge, and enhancing problem-solving, communication, and translation skills as the primary outcomes of the audio-visual translation (AVT) task. Overall, the student-based evaluation indicated that the AVT task fostered high engagement and motivation among learners, leading to successful task completion. By highlighting translation as a viable tool in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language, the findings of this study have the potential to make valuable contributions to both language pedagogy and translation studies.

Keywords: task-based language teaching, translation in language teaching, translation tasks, audio-visual translation, micro-evaluation of tasks.

1. Introduction

Translation played a significant role in English Language Teaching (ELT) for a considerable period. However, it gradually disappeared from classrooms with the emergence of the communicative approach, which superseded the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), the dominant language teaching methodology before the 1960s (Danan, 2010). Traditional approaches associated with GTM, such as dictation, reading aloud, and drills, were cast aside in favor of communicative methods (Kaye, 2009). Nevertheless, recent years have witnessed a reevaluation of translation's pedagogical value (Cook, 2010; Hall & Cook, 2012; Kerr, 2014, 2015; Widdowson, 2014), leading to a gradual resurgence of translation tasks in language teaching.

In addition, proponents of translation in language teaching (TILT), like Illés (2011) and Howell (2017), repositioned translation as a communicative language learning activity which aligns well with task-based language teaching (TBLT), the latest development in the communicative approach. Despite these insights, there is a significant gap in the literature, particularly in TBLT, where explicit examples of translation activities are lacking (Cook, 2010). The present small

scale study aims to address this gap by introducing an audiovisual translation task and evaluating the perceptions of Kazakhstani secondary school EFL learners' of this instructional approach.

Mahmoud (2006) emphasizes the importance of carefully considering specific learning objectives, proficiency levels, and potential challenges associated with different task types when introducing translation tasks in the EFL classroom. The decision to implement a cartoon translation and dubbing task with Kazakhstani secondary school learners is justified based on extensive research. This choice is further substantiated by evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of audiovisual translation (AVT) tasks in enhancing language skills, such as pronunciation, oral expression, and cultural comprehension (Danan, 2017; Fernández-Costales, 2021; Tavalan, 2019). Furthermore, the non-routine nature of the translation task and the requirement for well-planned collaboration in the group project should foster class interaction and active involvement in language learning (Danan, 2017).

This research employs the methodology of task micro-evaluation, as proposed by Ellis (2018). This small-scale approach involves inviting a specific group of learners to provide self-reports about their experiences with the AVT task through a structured questionnaire. Importantly, the present study does not aim for broad generalizations across a wider population but, instead, seeks an understanding of EFL learners' engagement with the AVT task within the Kazakhstani EFL context.

Therefore, the present study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What attitudes do learners hold towards translation in language teaching?
2. What are the learners' overall perceptions of the AVT task?
3. What are the outcomes of the AVT task as perceived by the learners?

Before delving into learners' AVT task evaluations, this paper provides a brief overview of the history of pedagogical translation, discusses translation as a communicative activity, and summarizes current research on translation as a pedagogical task in language learning. Subsequently, the methods for translating the Kazakh-English cartoon are described. Lastly, the paper discusses the findings of the micro-evaluation in relation to the existing literature on the topic and explores potential explanations for them.

2. Translation tasks – a theoretical framework
2.1 An overview of translation in language teaching

The use of translation in English language teaching has experienced cyclical patterns, closely tied to the prevailing teaching methods of the time (Topolska-Pado, 2010). During the dominance of the grammar-translation method (GTM), translation played a central role in foreign language classrooms. In GTM, translation primarily served as a tool to practice newly acquired grammatical

structures by translating specific sentences designed to illustrate various aspects of grammar (Malmkjær, 2010). However, in the mid-20th century, the principles and objectives of GTM faced significant criticism in ELT literature, prompting calls for pedagogical innovations (Cook, 2010; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). GTM was labeled as an "outdated, unmotivating and unimaginative language teaching methodology" (Illés, 2011, p.49). Consequently, contemporary language teaching shifted towards the Communicative Approach, commonly referred to as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which prioritizes the development of effective second language (L2) communication. CLT emphasizes engaging learners in meaningful activities tailored to their individual needs and preferences (Mahmoud, 2006). Additionally, it underscores the importance of developing oral proficiency while minimizing the use of learners' native language (L1) (Danan, 2010). Moreover, the use of L1 is considered counterproductive to L2 acquisition and can lead to dependency (Carreres, 2006). Consequently, the Communicative Approach advocated for monolingual, English-only instruction and interaction, thereby excluding the prominent features of GTM, such as L1 reference and translation, from the EFL classroom (Cook, 2010; Hall & Cook, 2012; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004; Littlewood & Yu, 2011).

The disappearance of translation activities from language teaching cannot solely be attributed to their association with GTM or the use of learners' L1; there are additional objections persisting to this day. One objection is that translation activities are perceived as time-consuming and tedious, both for teachers (in terms of correction) and learners (in terms of task completion) (Duff, 1989). Another concern is that translation activities often involve unnatural, artificial sentences, leading learners to mistakenly assume direct one-to-one correspondence between languages (Kononova, 2011). Additionally, translation is seen as separate and fundamentally different from the four language competence skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), thus consuming valuable time which could be spent developing those skills (Malmkjær, 2010). Lastly, it is acknowledged that translation activities may not be suitable for all learners and teachers. For instance, young and lower-level learners may find translation challenging as they need to consider the meaning and various linguistic elements such as form, register, style, and idiomatic expressions (Kaye, 2009). Moreover, translation activities require teachers with a sophisticated knowledge of learners' L1 and culture, which can be impractical in a multilingual classroom setting.

Despite the myriad arguments against the inclusion of translation activities in language classrooms, there has been a growing body of research in recent years advocating for a reevaluation of the role of translation in language teaching (TILT) (Cook, 2010; Hall & Cook, 2012; Kerr, 2014, 2015; Widdowson, 2014). Current research suggests that modern translation activities differ significantly from the traditional grammar-translation method, which was characterized by non-interactive, teacher-centered classrooms with limited activities beyond the translation of uninteresting and irrelevant texts (Mahmoud, 2006). Proponents of

TILT recognize that translation activities can facilitate comprehension of the target language (L2) by allowing learners to compare structures between their L1 and the L2 (Widdowson, 2003). Also, translation is presented as a valuable tool for acquiring new vocabulary in the L2 and enhancing learner engagement and motivation (Illés, 2011; Csizér & Illés, 2020). Proponents believe that the benefits of translation activities can contribute to more effective language learning. Additionally, recent TILT advocacy has presented translation activities as tasks, suggesting a role for translation within task-based language teaching. Howell (2017) demonstrates how standard translation activities can be adapted to align with a task-oriented and communicative teaching approach. Thus, communicative translation approaches significantly differ from grammar-translation exercises and, when used creatively, can offer learners meaningful language practice.

2.2 Translation tasks and task-based language teaching

TBLT is a communicative approach to language teaching which enables learners to engage in authentic communication using the target language through various tasks (Douglas & Kim, 2014). Task-based teaching focuses on fostering learners' language competence by emphasizing task completion over solely practicing language forms, as often seen in more traditional methods like the GTM (see Section 2.1.). The successful accomplishment of tasks serves as the fundamental organizing principle in task-based language teaching.

According to the standard and widely accepted definition in TBLT theory, "a task is […] an activity in which meaning is primary, there is some sort of relationship to the real world, task completion has some priority, and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome" (Skehan, 1996, p. 38). Considering these principles of a task, it becomes apparent that translation activities fulfill all the criteria outlined in the definition. Translation activities not only focus on the linguistic features of the text but also encompass its overall meaning and intent. Illés (2011) argues that translation goes beyond semantics and requires translators to use their linguistic expertise and schematic knowledge. Moreover, translation is a real-world activity spanning various domains, including business, government, media, literature, and academia. In translation activities, achieving accurate and comprehensive completion is paramount, as the goal is to effectively transfer meaning. Additionally, the success of a translation activity is determined by its outcome, emphasizing its outcome-oriented nature. To sum up, translation activities prompt learners to consider the communicative function of the source-language text, adapt the translation accordingly, and ensure accuracy and completeness in the process.

As argued earlier, translation activities align with all the fundamental principles of a task, meeting the criteria established by conventional definitions. Therefore, there is no valid reason translation activities should not be recognized as a diverse type of task capable of achieving the goals of TBLT. Henceforth, this paper will refer to translation activities as tasks. However, it is noteworthy that the existing

TBLT literature lacks explicit categorization of translation as a task (Cook, 2010). Consequently, research efforts exploring translation activities as tasks and investigating learner attitudes toward them have been limited. The next section will provide a detailed discussion of these research endeavors, shedding light on the current state of knowledge in this area.

2.3 Theoretical and empirical studies on translation tasks

Numerous scholars have made significant contributions to the discourse on the effective integration of translation tasks within communicative language teaching methodologies. Cook (2010) explores the value of translation as a communicative language learning activity, advocating for a reassessment of its role in language teaching. Similarly, Widdowson (2014), along with Hall and Cook (2012), argues for the place of translation in language teaching, emphasizing the need for a well-defined approach which considers the specific pedagogical context and learners' needs. They advocate a balanced approach incorporating both translation tasks and other communicative tasks. Their perspective aligns with the categorization of translation as one of the several types of communicative tasks discussed in section 2.2. Additionally, authors such as Illés (2011) and Kerr (2014, 2015), shed light on the potential contributions of translation tasks to the development of language skills and cultural knowledge. More recently in TILT literature, Howell (2017) refers to translation as cross-language mediation, stressing its importance in enhancing linguistic, intercultural, and interpersonal competences. Together, these theoretical works contribute to the growing understanding of the role of translation tasks in communicative language teaching and underscore its potential value in TBLT.

Furthermore, empirical studies on the impact of translation tasks on language learning outcomes provide evidence of their effectiveness. These empirical works consistently demonstrate that translation tasks can significantly enhance various language skills, including vocabulary acquisition (Laufer and Girsai, 2008), reading comprehension (Alaboud, 2022), and cultural knowledge (Olk, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2011). In addition, research conducted by Barnes (2017), Burden (2005), Fernández-Guerra (2014), Danan (2017), and Shoeib (2016) has revealed positive learner attitudes toward translation in EFL classrooms. Collectively, these empirical findings underscore the value of integrating translation tasks into language teaching approaches.

To ensure the successful implementation of translation tasks in the EFL classroom, Mahmoud (2006) emphasizes the significance of careful consideration regarding specific learning objectives, proficiency levels, and potential challenges associated with different translation task types. The choice of translation task type significantly impacts its effectiveness in language learning. For instance, AVT tasks, which involve adapting audiovisual media content to different linguistic and cultural contexts (Bolaños-García-Escribano & Díaz-Cintas, 2020), consistently prove their efficacy in fostering the development of language skills

such as pronunciation, oral expression, and cultural understanding (see Danan, 2017; Fernández-Costales, 2021; Tavalan, 2019). Research on AVT highlights its capacity to encourage lively class interaction and active engagement in language learning. The performance aspect of AVT tasks can also boost motivation due to the non-routine nature of the experience (Danan, 2017).

Despite the growing body of research on AVT, this area still requires further investigation. More studies are needed to examine the effectiveness of AVT in different educational contexts and among diverse learner populations, for example in Kazakhstan, and within the secondary school context. Currently, research in this field has focused on university students enrolled in translation and language programs, resulting in a noticeable gap in the literature regarding the use of AVT in earlier stages of education (Fernández-Costales, 2021).

3. Methods
The present study introduces a translation task in the EFL classroom and evaluates learners' perceptions of this task. To achieve this, an AVT task was implemented in an authentic classroom setting with secondary school EFL learners. Ellis's (2018) student-based micro-evaluation approach was employed to investigate learner engagement with the AVT task. A follow-up questionnaire collected learners' feedback, and the quantitative survey data was subjected to statistical analysis. The study extended over one week, and participation in both the AVT task sessions and the survey was entirely voluntary.

3.1 Participants
The study involved 12 participants, all of whom were Grade 11 learners attending a secondary school in Kazakhstan. The group was evenly split between male and female learners, comprising 6 boys and 6 girls. Given that all selected learners were 18 years old (M=18, SD=0), parental consent forms were not required. The research participants self-reported English proficiency levels ranging from pre-intermediate to intermediate based on their assessments. The choice of school was determined by the language teacher's interest and the availability of class time for the AVT task.

3.2 Procedure: Task phases
The AVT task involved translating an 8-minute-long Kazakh cartoon into English, followed by dubbing it. This task spanned three sessions, each lasting 45 minutes, adhering to the structural framework of TBLT, encompassing pre-task, main task, and post-task stages (Willis, 2007). To ensure objectivity, the language teacher introduced the task with a neutral stance, refraining from expressing explicit positive or negative opinions about the AVT task to prevent any potential influence on participants' perceptions. This neutrality was particularly crucial given that neither the learners nor the teacher had prior experience with cartoon translation in an EFL classroom.

3.2.1 The pre-task phase

The pre-task phase played a pivotal role in establishing a solid foundation for the AVT task. It involved a comprehensive and systematic approach, commencing with an in-depth discussion between the teacher and the learners. This discussion explored the intricacies and concepts of translation, which was a significant step, considering the learners' limited exposure to translation and their unfamiliarity with cartoon translation in a language classroom context. Topics covered during the discussion included basic principles of effective translation, a comparison of Kazakh and English language structures, and practical guidance for translating from Kazakh to English.

Moreover, the learners received detailed instruction essential for the AVT task, which introduced them to the terminology of audiovisual translation, including concepts like dubbing, voiceover, verbal/visual codes, and other related aspects. This exposure not only enriched their linguistic repertoire but also acquainted them with the fundamental elements necessary for the upcoming task.

Equipped with the necessary background knowledge, the learners collectively began watching the chosen Kazakh cartoon, immersing themselves in its content. This immersion sparked lively discussions regarding the central theme of the cartoon and the distinct roles played by each character. Through this interactive dialogue, a profound understanding of the context and characters developed – a vital requirement for effective translation.

Lastly, after viewing the cartoon and gaining a comprehensive grasp of the task, the learners collaborated to strategize the necessary steps for completing the AVT task. This collaborative planning not only fostered teamwork but also instilled the confidence to anticipate potential challenges and devise suitable solutions.

3.2.2 The main task phase

In the main task phase, the learners engaged in a variety of individual, paired, and collaborative activities. The initial step required each learner to transcribe the dialogue from the cartoon individually. Afterwards, they were asked to compare their transcriptions with those of their peers to identify discrepancies or variations. Through discussions and collaborative efforts, they harmonized these differences, resulting in a consistent and unified text suitable for translation. The transcribed text included a total of 480 words.

Following individual transcriptions, the learners were divided into six groups, each tasked with translating the dialogue of different characters from the cartoon. During this phase, they were permitted to use online dictionaries. The cartoon featured six distinct characters: a helicopter, a leopard's grandfather, a leopard, a woodpecker, an eagle, and an author. Once the translations were completed, the learners had the opportunity to discuss and share the challenges they encountered during the translation process. Certain learners highlighted difficulties related to translating culture-specific words, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions.

Subsequently, the learners, along with the teacher, worked together to address the translation challenges they had encountered. Their initial focus was on culture-specific words. This need arose from the inherent disparities between languages, where each language holds unique cultural concepts distinct from those in other languages. To successfully address the challenge of translating culture-specific items into English, transliteration was employed. For instance, the word "қымыз", signifying a fermented dairy product made from mare's milk and holding cultural importance as a national beverage in Kazakhstan, was transliterated as "qymyz". However, due to the time constraints of AVT, the decision was made not to provide an explanation of this item within the dubbed cartoon. This strategic choice underscores the delicate balance between preserving cultural authenticity and accommodating practical limitations, particularly considering that English lacks a direct equivalent for this beverage.

When translating proverbs, the learners took a creative approach instead of pursuing literal translations. Their focus was on capturing the essence of the proverb due to the challenge of finding exact English equivalents. The learners conducted research to identify the closest English matches for Kazakh proverbs. For instance, the Kazakh phrase "керек тастың ауырлығы жоқ", meaning "there is no gravity of the desired stone", was ingeniously adapted to "burden of our own choice is not felt" in English. This translation highlights the idea that self-selected tasks often feel less burdensome, emphasizing the manageability of self-driven efforts. Learners' proactive research demonstrates their commitment to translating proverbs and conveying intricate cultural concepts across different languages.

Regarding the main character's name, the learners decided to retain its original, "barys". They justified this decision by emphasizing the lack of an equivalent representation in English. The type of leopard portrayed in the cartoon is a snow leopard found exclusively in the mountains of Central Asia, particularly in Kazakhstan. This species holds great significance in Kazakh culture, symbolizing bravery and courage. A literal translation of the name would have been simplistic and inadequate in capturing the true essence of "barys" for the Kazakh people.

After completing the translation, six learners, three girls, and three boys, volunteered to dub the cartoon, while the remaining learners observed the process. The assignment of characters for dubbing was based on the volunteers' gender and voice characteristics. Voice samples were recorded using the voice recorder on an iPhone 11 Pro smartphone. Once recorded, the samples were edited using the Perfect Video application, which made it possible to apply various sound effects. Additionally, the application was used to synchronize the audio track with the cartoon video. The choice of software for the dubbing task was driven by the availability of the programs, as the voice recorder was pre-installed on the teacher's smartphone, and Perfect Video is a free application accessible through the Apple Store. The selection of these programs considered their user-friendly interface and ease of use, ensuring a smooth learning experience for the learners.

As a result of the main task phase, the learners completed the translation and dubbing of the cartoon. The final product, the dubbed cartoon, was prepared for upload. Permission was obtained from the necessary parties to share the dubbed cartoon on the English teacher's YouTube channel. The link to the cartoon is provided in the references section. It is worth noting that the participating learners had no prior experience in performing voiceovers before this dubbing task.

3.2.3 The post-task phase

The post-task phase marked the culmination of the AVT task, serving as a pivotal stage for reflection, presentation, and evaluation. With the successful translation and dubbing of the cartoon accomplished, the learners were ready to showcase their achievements, presenting their translation project to the teacher. This presentation displayed the dubbed cartoon and offered valuable insights into their translation choices.

The review session extended beyond the presentation itself. The learners engaged in introspection regarding the vocabulary encountered during the AVT task. They thoughtfully compiled a concise glossary, capturing the new words and phrases they had assimilated throughout the process. This post-task glossary stood as a testament to their expanded vocabulary and a valuable resource for their future endeavours.

To conclude the AVT task, a post-task questionnaire was administered. This survey aimed to capture the learners' genuine viewpoints and reflections, offering a space for them to express their thoughts on the translation project. The learners were guaranteed anonymity and explicitly informed that there was no expectation for them to provide positive responses to ensure authenticity in their feedback. Their responses served as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the new task and were strictly intended for research purposes.

3.3 Instrument

The decision to employ a questionnaire as the research instrument in this study is rooted in two fundamental considerations. Firstly, the adoption of a questionnaire aligns with the student-based approach to the micro-evaluation of tasks, as proposed by Ellis (2018). This approach underscores the significance of utilizing a questionnaire to gather learners' perspectives and feedback, recognizing the value of direct insights from learners in comprehensively understanding their views on the task. Secondly, prior research, as highlighted by Fernández-Costales (2021), has established the efficacy of questionnaire surveys in assessing learners' perceptions of AVT tasks in language learning.

The questionnaire used in the present study was adapted from Barnes (2017), originally designed to explore UK learners' perceptions of translation tasks in their Spanish studies and beyond. The adaptation process involved tailoring the questionnaire to the Kazakhstan context and the specific AVT task at hand. Extraneous sections and items unrelated to the study's objectives were omitted,

while new items about topics like translation challenges, group work, and the dubbing task were incorporated.

The final version of the questionnaire included 18 closed-ended items, each using a 5-point Likert scale, and 1 open-ended question. The closed-ended items were divided into three sections: the first section assessed learners' attitudes towards the use of translation in their English classes, while the second and third sections explored their experiences and perspectives regarding the AVT task. The open-ended question invited respondents to share any additional insights or remarks they had about the TILT and the AVT task.

The questionnaire was translated into Kazakh, the learners' mother tongue, and subjected to back-translations by three English teachers from the same school to ensure accuracy. It was distributed immediately after the AVT task, ensuring a 100% response rate, and capturing feedback while the task was still fresh in their minds. On average, it took the learners 10 to 15 minutes to complete the survey using Google Forms.

4. Results and Discussion

The data collected from the 12 participants was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 25). To gauge the internal consistency of survey scales, a reliability analysis was conducted. The results demonstrated that all three scales exhibited acceptable reliability values, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient exceeding 0.7 ($\alpha > .7$), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The reliability values of the scales

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Attitudes	6	.85
Perceptions	6	.87
Outcomes	6	.95

The data analysis involved the use of mean comparison tests, specifically one-sample and paired samples t-tests, aimed at scrutinizing the participants' responses concerning various aspects of the AVT task and their overall perception of TILT. These means were compared to a constant value of 3, representing the neutral point on the Likert scale. This comparative approach allowed for an assessment of whether the learners' perceptions of the AVT task leaned toward a positive or a negative orientation. The interpretation of the findings was guided by relevant theories and prior research within the field of TILT.

In addition to the survey responses, 12 comments from the participants were also analyzed. Due to the small sample size and brief responses, extensive in-depth analysis used in larger studies was impractical. Nonetheless, qualitative insights were extracted to complement the research data, strengthening result validity, and providing supplementary insights into participants' experiences.

4.1 Learners' attitudes towards translation in the EFL classroom

The first section of the survey aimed to assess the learners' attitudes toward the use of translation in English language classes. Participants were presented with six statements, half of which represented positive viewpoints and the other half represented negative viewpoints regarding TILT. To evaluate the learners' self-reported attitudes, the mean values of the positive items such as "The inclusion of translation tasks adds variety to classroom activities", "Bilingual word lists help me memorize new words", and "Translation is useful for explaining difficult expressions", and the negative items such as "English should be the only language used in the classroom", "Relying solely on tools like Google Translate is sufficient for resolving my translation issues", and "Speaking and listening is more important than translating" were compared using a paired samples t-test.

Results from the paired samples t-test revealed a significant difference between participants' reported attitudes toward translation when attributed to negative statements compared to when attributed to positive statements ($t(11) = 2.45$, $p = .03$, two-tailed). Participants attributed more positive attitudes toward translation ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.15$) compared to negative attitudes ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.22$). This suggests that the learners in the survey expressed more favorable attitudes toward translation when presented with positive statements. The statistical analysis provides evidence of a significant difference in participants' attitudes, indicating a preference for the use of translation in English language classes (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Comparison of mean scores for positive and negative TILT statements
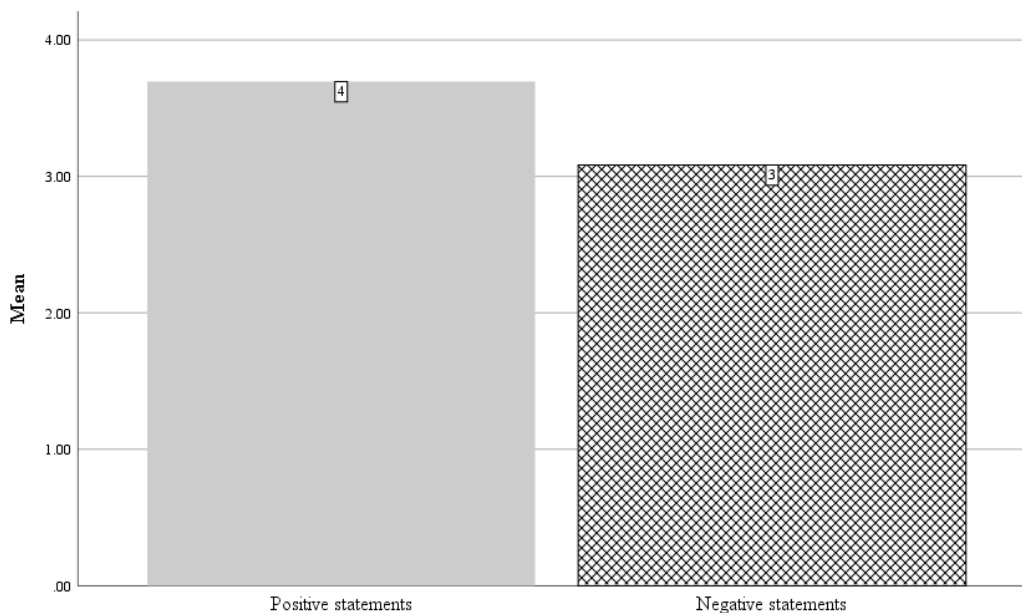
These findings align with prior research highlighting positive attitudes toward translation in language learning. Barnes (2017) conducted a study involving 41 secondary school learners, revealing an inclination toward the use of translation in the language classroom. A significant majority of participants (93%) expressed

a favorable stance toward translation, indicating its perceived value in language learning. Similarly, Fernandez-Guerra (2014) surveyed Spanish EFL learners to explore their views on translation tasks, and the results indicated positive opinions regarding the importance of translation in the learning process. These studies collectively demonstrate that translation is widely perceived as a valuable tool in language learning.

Furthermore, interpreting the obtained mean scores of each item within the scales provides intriguing insights into learners' attitudes toward specific aspects of TILT (see Figure 2). For instance, the notably high mean score (M=4.1) for the statement "Bilingual word lists help me memorize new words" suggests a positive disposition towards this method. This inclination could potentially be linked to the presence of word lists in their English textbooks, indicating that the learners might already be accustomed to and find value in such aids.

Figure 2. Means scores of positive and negative TILT statements
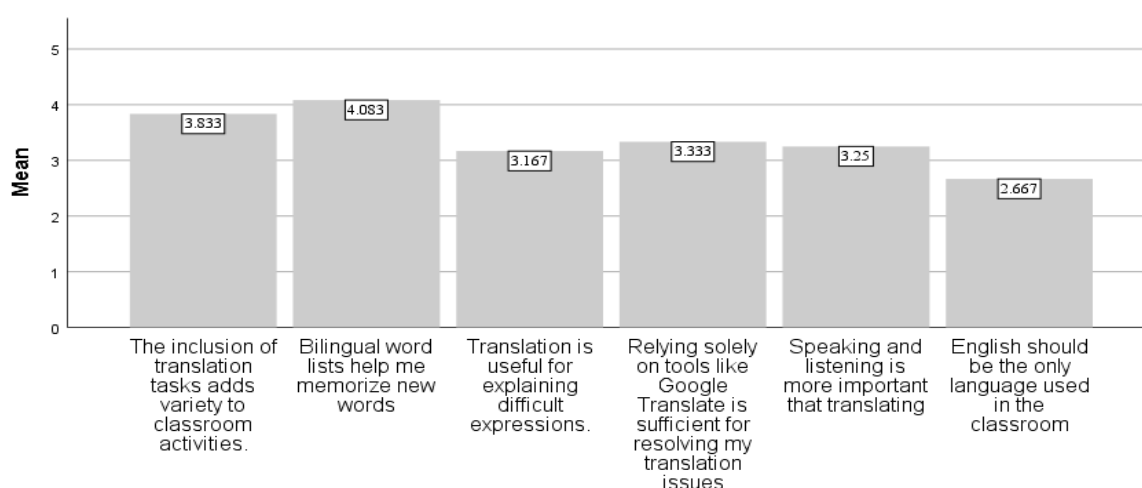
Conversely, the moderate mean score (M=3.1) for the statement "Translation is useful for explaining difficult expressions" offers some insights into classroom practices. The lower agreement could be attributed to the prevailing teaching method where explanations primarily rely on definitions rather than translation. Additionally, the response pattern to the statement "English should be the only language used in the classroom" (M=2.6) points to learners' reservations about their proficiency level. This reluctance could stem from a perception that their English might not be sufficient for an English-only classroom environment. These potential connections between the results and pedagogical practices underscore the importance of tailoring language teaching methods to learners' preferences and perceived abilities, in line with the principles of learner-centered education.

In summary, these findings and their interpretations provide a comprehensive understanding of learners' attitudes toward translation, offering valuable insights

for enhancing language teaching methodologies. The learners' positive inclination toward translation in the EFL classroom indicates a preference for its inclusion in language learning practices. Teachers can effectively integrate translation into their teaching methods by acknowledging and capitalizing on learners' attitudes, thereby enhancing language learning outcomes.

The presented learner-centered approach is in harmony with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasize learner-driven activities over teacher-directed ones (Saleh, 2022). Such an approach fosters learner engagement and active participation, resulting in a more meaningful and effective language learning experience. Teachers can enhance learners' language skills by integrating translation tasks which align with learners' preferences and attitudes, thereby creating a supportive and engaging learning environment.

4.2 Learners' overall perceptions of the AVT task

The objective of the second section of the questionnaire was to examine how the learners perceived the AVT task overall. To assess their perceptions, a one-sample t-test was conducted on the Perceptions scale, consisting of 6 items (see Figure 3). The t-test results revealed a significant positive evaluation of the AVT task by the participants ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.97$, $t(11) = 2.87$, $p < .05$). This indicates that, on average, participants held favorable attitudes toward the translation task, as the mean value of the scale exceeded the neutral point of 3 on the Likert scale.

Figure 3. Means scores of perceptions scale items
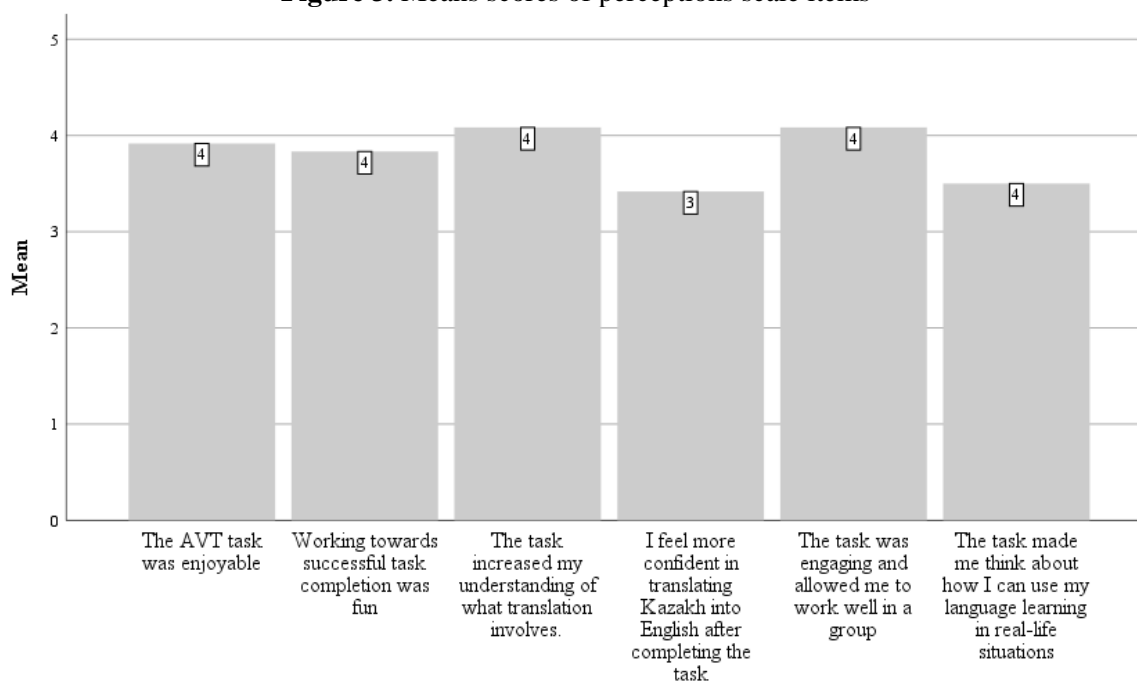
Moreover, the results demonstrate that the learners not only found the AVT task enjoyable, but also recognized its value in enhancing their understanding of translation, promoting effective group work, and facilitating future language learning. The significant positive evaluations obtained from the t-test validate the learners' favorable perceptions and assessments of the AVT task, underscoring its effectiveness and importance in fostering positive experiences and encouraging active participation.

These findings align with previous research on translation tasks, including the studies by Danan (2017) and Kerr (2014), which emphasize the role of AVT tasks in promoting dynamic classroom interactions and active engagement among language learners. Furthermore, Illés (2011) has also advocated for the use of translation tasks to enhance learner engagement and motivation. Collectively, these studies provide a solid foundation for understanding the positive impacts of translation tasks and AVT in promoting learner engagement, motivation, and enjoyment in language learning contexts.

However, the mean for item 4, "I feel more confident in translating Kazakh into English after completing the task", was relatively low. This observation can be attributed to the participants' limited exposure to the translation task. Given that they engaged in only one instance of the AVT task, it is understandable that their confidence level might not have significantly changed.

Finally, the open-ended responses of the participants align with the findings and provide additional support. Several learners expressed their enjoyment and positive feedback regarding the task, emphasizing its unique nature, interesting aspects, practicality, and the opportunity to engage in different modes of working. Their comments include: "The task was a new and exciting experience for me as I had never done dubbing before. I thoroughly enjoyed it and appreciate the opportunity"; "The inclusion of translation and dubbing made the English lesson more captivating"; "The task was highly beneficial, especially the discussions"; "I particularly liked the task because it allowed us to work individually, in pairs, and as a team"; "I never realized that translation could be so enjoyable".

4.3 Outcomes of the AVT task

After evaluating the participants' perceptions of the AVT task, it is essential to explore the impact it had on them. The last section of the survey aimed to assess the outcomes as perceived by the learners following their involvement in the task. To analyze these outcomes, a one-sample t-test was conducted on the Outcomes scale. The results of the t-test revealed highly positive evaluations of the effects derived from the AVT task among the participants ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.11$, $t(11) = 3.35$, p < .05). The mean scores for all six items consistently hovered around 4 on the 5-point Likert scale, indicating a strong agreement with the perceived effects (refer to Figure 4). These significant positive evaluations suggest that participants recognized and valued the positive results and advantages associated with their engagement in the AVT task.

Among the reported outcomes, the learners emphasized the expansion of their English vocabulary, in line with Laufer and Girsai's (2008) research. A learner's comment further highlighted the usefulness of the translation task in learning new collocations and animal names. Additionally, the participants acknowledged the task's effectiveness in broadening their cultural knowledge, consistent with the studies conducted by Olk (2009) and Seidlhofer (2011), which indicate that translation tasks contribute to cultural knowledge development. The high mean value of the cultural knowledge item can be attributed to learners' actively engaging in discussions about cultural differences naturally occuring during the translation of the cartoon, particularly when encountering words with national connotations. Consequently, the learners recognized the development of enhanced problem-solving skills as a benefit of the translation task. Moreover, the learners reported the acquisition of communication skills, translation skills, and improved competence in using resources as outcomes of their engagement in the AVT task.

Figure 4. Means scores of outcomes scale items
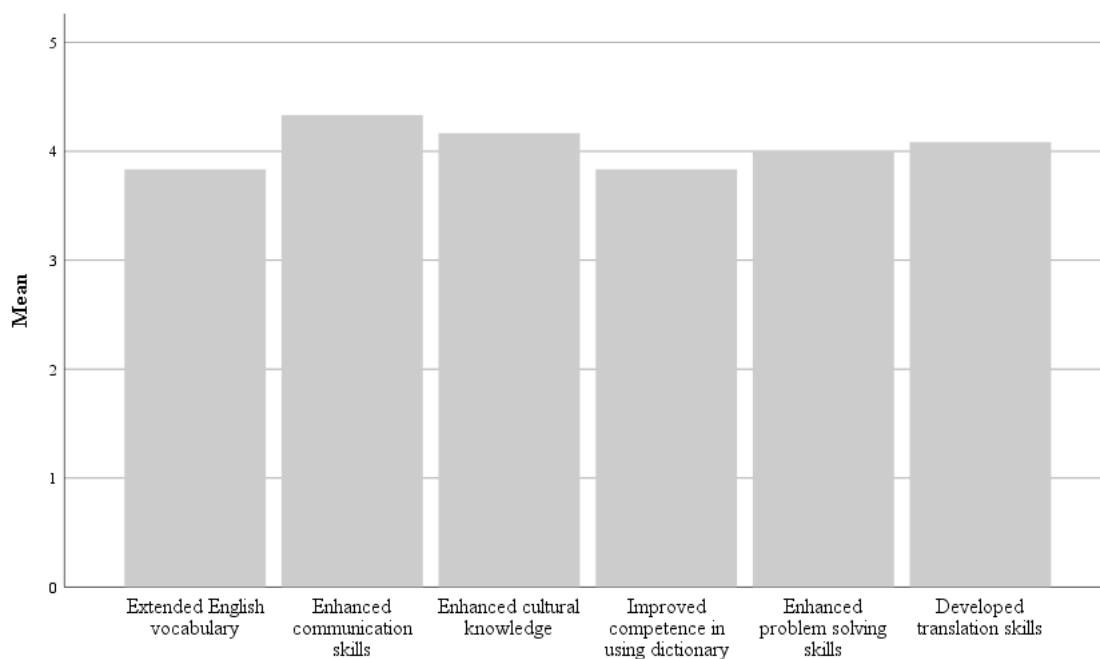
In addition, studies by Illés (2011), Seidlhofer (2011), and Widdowson (2003) further corroborate the positive impact of translation tasks on language learning. These works emphasize that integrating translation tasks into language classes can boost learner engagement and motivation, ultimately leading to successful task completion. They underscore the advantages of translation tasks in fostering language skill development, stimulating critical thinking, and deepening comprehension of linguistic and cultural facets. Through active participation in translation tasks, learners can enhance their language proficiency and gain a more profound insight into the target language and culture.

Collectively, the findings from previous research, coupled with those from the present small-scale study, provide a holistic understanding of the advantages associated with integrating translation tasks into language learning contexts and affirm the effectiveness of AVT tasks in facilitating diverse language learning outcomes. These outcomes span from the expansion of vocabulary and the development of cultural awareness to the acquisition of communication and translation competences.

5. Conclusion

The limited existing research on the use of translation as a task in TBLT prompted this study, which aimed to address this research gap by introducing an AVT task into the EFL classroom and assessing its effectiveness with Kazakhstani secondary school EFL learners. The research followed Ellis's (2018) micro-evaluation of tasks methodology. Through a student-based survey, this study explored learners' attitudes toward translation in language teaching, their overall perceptions of the given AVT task, and the perceived outcomes associated with its implementation.

The findings of this small-scale study contribute to the existing arguments for TILT, specifically regarding the use of translation activities as tasks. The learners expressed positive attitudes toward translation, reinforcing the potential of integrating translation tasks into the EFL classroom. Furthermore, their overall perceptions of the AVT task were generally favorable, highlighting its efficacy as an engaging and effective approach.

The outcomes reported by the learners following their engagement in the AVT task encompassed various facets, notably including the expansion of their English vocabulary, an enriched understanding of cultural aspects, and the development of problem-solving, communication, and translation skills. These findings resonate with prior research and highlight the significant role translation tasks can play in advancing language learning and fostering a deeper understanding of linguistic and cultural aspects.

The significance of this study extends to its practical implications for secondary school teachers aiming to introduce innovative approaches to enhance language learning experiences. By integrating translation tasks, such as the AVT task, into their curriculum and employing the micro-evaluation of tasks methodology to assess learners' attitudes and the task's effectiveness, teachers can make informed decisions about its suitability for future use. This approach encourages a more diverse range of classroom practices, fostering an environment where educators are open to experimenting with new teaching methods. The micro-evaluation of tasks is also straightforward, making it accessible for teachers to implement and refine their instructional strategies.

While these findings offer valuable insights, it is crucial to recognize the study's limitations. The present research was conducted in a specific context, with a limited number of participants and with a particular language pair, restricting the

generalizability of the results to other settings. Furthermore, the data from student-based evaluations might be influenced by a desire to please the teacher and researcher, suggesting the need for caution when interpreting the results.

To mitigate these limitations and strengthen the validity of the findings, future research should contemplate expanding the sample size and investigating the effectiveness of translation tasks in diverse languages and educational settings. This would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the potential benefits and challenges associated with the integration of translation tasks in language education.

In conclusion, this study pointed out the potential advantages of incorporating translation tasks, particularly AVT tasks, into the EFL classroom. The positive attitudes, perceptions, and reported gains affirm the effectiveness of this approach. These findings contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding TILT and the integration of translation tasks as valuable pedagogical tools in CLT and TBLT. By leveraging the strengths of translation tasks, teachers can create engaging and meaningful language learning experiences for their learners.

The findings of this study, situated at the intersection of language pedagogy and translation studies, lay a solid foundation for future research endeavors. They invite further investigations into the optimal design and implementation of translation tasks within the framework of task-based language learning and teaching. By acknowledging the limitations of this study and exploring new avenues of inquiry, researchers can continually advance our understanding of the role of translation tasks in fostering effective language education.

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