More Heads Are Better than One: Peer Editing in a Translation Classroom of EFL Learners

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Abstract

During the process of translation, students need to learn how to detect and correct errors in their translation drafts, and collaboration among themselves is one possible way to do this. As Pym (2003) has explained, translation is a process of problem-solving; translators must be able to decide which choices are more or less appropriate for the specified purpose of translation. Therefore, it is necessary for the teacher to create a learning environment that facilitates the students, not only to learn how to solve the problems, but also to be exposed to other possible solutions of those problems. This paper aims to give a comprehensive account of peer editing in collaborative translation classrooms for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. The participants of this study were 21 EFL undergraduate students who took a

business translation course. Qualitative data were collected from the students' translation drafts, diaries, and interviews, in order to explore the effects of peer editing on the students' abilities to deal with translation difficulties. The results revealed that peer editing enhanced the quality of the students' translations and enabled the students to detect errors and revise their translations. More importantly, peer editing was a social interaction that effectively engaged the students to work collaboratively with each other.

Keywords: peer editing, collaborative translation projects, collaborative learning, translation classrooms, EFL learners

Introduction

Peer editing has been extensively used in both writing classrooms and translation classrooms. Previous research has documented the advantages of peer editing in different learning contexts of L1 writing classes (Graner, 1987; Karegianes, Pascarella, & Pflaum, 1980; Sager, 1973), and in L2 writing classes, peer editing has been shown to enhance the quality of students' writing tasks (Austria, 2017; Berg, 1999; Hoogeven & Gelderen, 2015; Huh & Lee, 2014; Min, 2006), engage them in the writing process (Caw, Léger, & Perry, 2017; Diab, 2010, 2011; Hojeij & Hurley, 2017; Lee, 2017; Rollinson, 2005), and also improve their writing proficiency (Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; J. Wang et al., 2014). In the context of translation training, peer editing is a skill that students should master as it is what they are likely to use in the world of professional translation (Colina, 2003). Additionally, editing their peers' work is a way to practice decision-making and problem-solving strategies. These strategies need to be developed in translation classrooms (Bell, 1991; González Davies, 2005; Scott-Tennent, González-Davies, & Torras, 2000).

Previous research on class dynamics in translation training has investigated different aspects of learning activities, such as self-assessment and peer assessment (Carroll, 2015; Robinson, López Rodríguez, & Tercedor Sánchez, 2006) or computer-assisted learning

(Baraniello et al., 2016; Prieto-Velasco & Fuentes-Luque, 2016), but it seems that there are few studies focusing on peer editing.

The literature on collaborative translation, especially collaborative project-based learning, shows its effectiveness to empower the students to meet their potential challenges, create meaningful learning experiences, and enhance their translation competence (Galán-Mañas, 2011; Kiraly, 2000, 2012; Mitchell-Schuitevoerder, 2011). With the success of the collaborative project-based learning approach, it is interesting to explore how students collaborate with each other in the process of peer editing, and also how peer editing contributes to the development of their translation abilities. This paper, therefore, aims to shed light on the use of peer editing and its effects on the students' abilities to deal with translation difficulties in a collaborative translation project designed for EFL undergraduate students.

Literature Review

Peer editing is one of the learning activities that aims to promote collaboration among students and at the same time enhances their performances in the contexts of writing classrooms and translation classrooms. In peer editing, students work in pairs or groups or as a class to critically review others' pieces of writing and provide editorial feedback. Peer editing in this study was implemented as a key element in a collaborative translation project for Thai EFL undergraduate students.

Peer editing

For several decades, great efforts have been devoted to an attempt to decentralize the teacher's roles in traditional classrooms. Dating back to the 1950s and the 1960s, the idea of changing classroom learning environments was first discussed among British teachers in secondary schools and medical education, and in the early 1970s, a group of American college teachers proposed alternative learning approaches, such as peer tutoring, peer criticism, and group work (Bruffee, 1984). In language learning contexts, renowned scholars such as Bruffee (1973), Sager (1973), and Karegianes et al. (1980), stated firmly that the teacher should create learning environments that facilitate and empower the students to learn from each other. Within

the social contexts created by the teacher, the students can practice discussing, sharing ideas, and helping each other (Bruffee, 1984). As Vygotsky (1978) explained about students' interactions and development, knowledge can be socially constructed by the collaboration of knowledgeable peers. Peer editing, as a form of collaborative learning, has been implemented and explored in L1 and L2 writing classrooms, and it is now widely acknowledged that peer editing can be effectively incorporated in the process of writing.

- ### *Peer editing in L1 and L2 writing classrooms*

Pioneer work of L1 writing research includes the work of Graner (1987), who proved that students who both gave and received feedback from peers improved their L1 proficiency. Karegianes et al. (1980) also verified that low-proficiency students who participated in peer-editing activities had a significant improvement on their L1 writing, compared to the other group who received feedback from the teacher. As Sager (1973) explained, when students are taught to assess writing tasks, the skills they learn can help them focus more when they produce and revise their own writing.

The aforementioned results are in line with those in L2 writing research later on, confirming the benefits of peer editing. When peer editing is included in the L2 writing syllabus, EFL students become more actively engaged in the process of writing, and their writing proficiency can also improve because what the students learned from peer editing can be applied in the evaluation and revision of their own writing tasks (Brammer & Rees, 2007; Byrd, 2003; Chong, 2010; Diab, 2010, 2011; Jesnek, 2011; Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; Rollinson, 2005; J. Wang et al., 2014).

The benefits of peer editing in L2 writing have been extensively researched in various aspects. In terms of improving the quality of texts, feedback from peers showed positive impacts on the quality of the students' revision (Berg, 1999; Hoogeven & Gelderen, 2015; Huh & Lee, 2014; Min, 2006). Peer feedback helped the students develop their argumentative strategies (Huh & Lee, 2014), systematically focus on the writing process (Hoogeven & Gelderen, 2015), and notice their errors (Hojeij & Hurley, 2017). Diab (2010) investigated types of language errors that could be revised through the process of peer editing and

indicated that feedback from peers could successfully reduce *rule-based errors*, such as subject-verb agreement errors or pronoun reference errors, but not *non-rule based errors*, such as word choices or sentence structures.

When peer editing and self-editing are compared, it has been found out that peer editing is more effective than self-editing (Diab, 2010, 2011). Evidence has shown that student editors benefit more than writers or those who receive the actual feedback because as editors they can subsequently implement their editing skills in their own writing (Lundstorm & Baker, 2009). Through the process of collaboration and negotiation in the peer-editing stage, the students become more critical and aware of language errors when revising and editing their own work (Diab, 2010; Rollinson, 2005).

Among notable advantages of peer editing on developing writing performance, another contribution commonly accepted is to engage the students to collaborate with each other. L2 scholars explain that the actual purpose of peer editing is to provide opportunities for the students to negotiate ideas (Jesnek, 2011) and interact with each other (Rollinson, 2005). The social interactions occurred are meaningful learning experiences because the students are actively engaged in the writing process while trying to discuss alternatives to revise their writing tasks (Caw et al., 2017; Diab, 2010, 2011; Hojeij & Hurley, 2017).

However, some issues regarding the students' proficiency level have been observed as it could possibly affect the success of peer feedback in L2 writing. For example, it was found out that student editors at lower proficiency levels benefited from improvement on *global writing aspects* (organization, development, and cohesion) more than those who had higher proficiency (Lundstorm & Baker, 2009). Also, high-proficiency students not only benefited more from the peer editing but also they outperformed students with lower proficiency when giving suggestions to their peers' writing (J. Wang et al., 2014). Jesnek (2011) pointed out advantages of peer editing on upper- level classes over lower-level classes because students with higher proficiency are competent enough to share their ideas with others. She further explained that low-level classes might face problems of time constraints, off-task talk, and more importantly, when there is a wide

range of students' abilities in class, social power can influence the effectiveness of peer editing when high-proficiency and low-proficiency students were paired up to do peer editing.

- *Peer editing in translation classrooms*

In translation classrooms, editing is one of the essential skills to be enhanced because it is what the students tend to utilize in a professional setting, and during the editing process the students learn to spot unnoticed translation errors and make appropriate decisions to revise them (Colina, 2003). As pointed out by Pym (2003), the act of translation is a process of problem-solving, selecting one target text from the series and proposing it as a replacement of the source text for the specified purpose and readers. Also, Pym (1992) explains the notion of non-binarism in translation evaluation methods, stating that choices we made in translation are not just right or wrong, but as more or less appropriate for the purpose of that translation. Therefore, in order to produce a quality translation, especially the one which is difficult in content and form, translators must be able to perform effective decision-making and choosing a problem-solving method suitable for a particular situation (Wilss, 1990). Thus, many scholars in translation studies and translation training agree that one of the main goals in translation training is to develop students' strategies in decision-making and problem-solving (Bell, 1991; Fernández & Zabalbeascoa, 2012; González Davies, 2005; Lörscher, 2005; Orozco & Hurtado Albir, 2002; Scott-Tennent et al., 2000; Wilss, 1996).

Although peer editing is normally incorporated into the process of translation training,   little is known about benefits of peer editing as part of collaborative translation projects. A study exploring translation students' perceptions of online peer feedback reported that the students valued the feedback from their peers since it facilitated them to deal with linguistic issues in their translation drafts, but they did not appreciate spending their time to give feedback to their peers (K. Wang & Chong, 2013). The present study, hence, incorporated peer editing in collaborative project work in order to create a learning environment that can facilitate the students to work together and also engage them during the process.

- *How to implement peer editing*

When peer editing is first introduced to the classroom, students may not be comfortable critiquing each other's writing and may be reluctant to judge others, so to promote substantive and constructive feedback, the teacher has to make sure the students clearly understand the purposes and the process of peer editing. The lists of responsibilities as writers and editors should be elaborated and discussed in class. After peer editing, it is also a good idea to have the students reflect on the process in order to consider how well they worked together and what actions they will take in the next peer-editing situation (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005; Byrd, 2003).

In translation classrooms, Mossop (2007) suggests that the degree of revision can vary, depending on types of texts and particular working contexts, such as how the text is going to be used, who is going to be the readers, and the factor of time limitation. He also proposes practical parameters to be used in peer editing. The parameters include accuracy, completeness, logic, facts, smoothness, tailoring, sub-language, mechanics, layout, typography, and organization.

Characteristics of collaborative translation classrooms

Kiraly (2000), a key figure who integrates the social constructivist approach into translation training, notes that an individual student "creates or constructs meanings and knowledge" (p.4) through participation in social interaction, and that collaboration among students will empower them to be active learners who are willing to collaborate with others in their own learning. A model authentic collaborative translation project was proposed by Kiraly (2000) and implemented with an attempt to maximize authenticity in translation assignments (Kiraly, 2005, 2012). Rather than assigning different tasks to develop students' translation skills and knowledge, an authentic whole-group collaborative translation project can be used. The teacher's responsibilities are to help organize, moderate, and encourage the group's efforts. For different groups of learners, the collaborative project-based learning approach has been adopted, and a syllabus was designed to accommodate the students' profiles, as well as the social and institutional contexts (Birkan-Baydan & Karadağ, 2014; Galán-Mañas, 2011; Mitchell-Schuitevoerder, 2011; Prieto-Velasco & Fuentes-Luque, 2016). As Galán-Mañas (2011)

suggests, for students with less experience in translation, a collaborative project can be assigned, but additional support, such as clear guidance, detailed working steps, and specific timeframe, should be provided as necessary.

The implementation of collaborative translation projects has been acknowledged to develop students' translation competence. Such projects provided opportunities for the students to be familiarized with the process and the management of authentic translation projects, such as using a subtitling software or finding human and documentary resources (Kiraly, 2001, 2005), and they were also trained to deal with situations that could occur in the professional world of translation (Galán-Mañas, 2011). During the translation process, the students, as members of a team, were also challenged to meet their own potential to solve translation problems and to carry out the sub-tasks independently; therefore, learner autonomy was promoted (Mitchell-Schuitevoerder, 2011; Prieto-Velasco & Fuentes-Luque, 2016). When the students experienced an authentic work environment, they were highly motivated to take responsibility for their own learning, and their active participation could be observed (Kiraly, 2001, 2005). According to Galán-Mañas (2011), it was the motivation factor that drove them to perform better. Also, self-confidence was developed since they learned how to work and resolve problems in a realistic situation (Prieto-Velasco & Fuentes-Luque, 2016).

Galán-Mañas (2011) also mentioned that collaborative projects can bring about different challenges. The students not only need to have experience in working as a team but also need to realize that the success of the team depends on each member's full contribution. The teacher needs to set up appropriate criteria for assessing group work and individual efforts. Also, timely and continual feedback is required so that the students learn what to be improved in the next step. Compared to traditional class activities, collaborative projects can become excessive workload for the students and the teacher. Therefore, well-thought-out planning for each step is necessary before the implementation of the projects.

In sum, peer editing in writing classes can benefit individual students as student writers and student editors. As the writers of the papers, the editing process provides them constructive criticism that

can be used to improve their paper. In turn, when the students   read their peers' papers, they are practicing important writing skills, and all the skills used to edit others' papers can be applied for their own writing. More importantly, peer editing as a form of collaborative learning has a valuable quality to engage the students and thus enhance practical experiences. Hence, it is worth investigating what contribution peer editing makes in the context of collaborative translation classrooms.

Research Design

Settings

Participants in this study were an intact group of 21 Thai EFL undergraduate students in different language degree programs in a Thai private university, majoring or minoring in English. They enrolled in the *Translation in Business* course as an elective course. The students had a variety of background knowledge and experiences in translation: sixteen students were English major students who had passed two basic translation courses, one was a student from an international program in Business English who had passed four translation courses, and four students were Thai majors who took a translation course for their first time.

The peer-editing activity was a step in the Collaborative Translation Project, a project designed to facilitate the students to collaborate with each other in carrying out the course project. The students worked in groups of 3 or 4, so there were altogether 6 groups. The task was an English-Thai translation of a business management article, and the situational context stated that the translation was for a publication in a business magazine. The project consisted of three stages. In the first stage, the students made a working plan and did text analysis for translation. In the second stage, they did their translation parts individually and afterward worked together in their own groups to make the group's first draft. The peer editing is a step in the last stage when they did reciprocal editing and then revised their translation draft to produce the final draft translation. It is notable that before the project implementation, the students attended a 9-week training session. The session prepared them to have knowledge and skills necessary for this project, such as analyzing and solving problems,

using translation resources, applying criteria for translation editing, practicing self-and peer-editing skills, as well as discussing what to do and not to do when collaborating with each other.

Instruments

Three instruments were used to collect data in this study.
1. Translation drafts
   The students produced three translation drafts: the individual translation draft, the group's first draft, and the group's final draft.
2. Learner's Diaries
   The students were assigned to write three diaries, right after they finished each translation draft. Each diary contains analysis of translation difficulties and reflections on each working step.
3. Semi-structured interview protocol
   Interviews were conducted at the end of the project. Six students who were the leaders of each group were individually interviewed in Thai, based on guiding questions and the data obtained from their diaries and translation drafts.

Data collection and data analysis

Data were collected from the students' analysis of *translation difficulties* in the Learner's Diaries, and they were compared with data from their translation drafts so as to see how the inappropriate solutions of the difficulties, or the *translation errors*, were detected and corrected after the process of peer editing. According to Nord (2005), 'translation difficulties' refer to subjective transfer tasks each translator has to solve due to their own level of knowledge and competence, so translation difficulties can be in a form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, or even fragments, depending on each translator's identification. The difficulties that have not been appropriately solved are considered 'translation errors'.

Additionally, reflections on the translation process from the Learner's Diaries were used to elicit more in-depth data to augment

those from the interviews in order to confirm how the peer editing benefited their translation.

Content analysis was utilized to analyze the data from the interview. The process included data transcribing, coding, and analyzing (Chamaz, 2006). To ensure inter-rater reliability, the data were analyzed by the researcher and another rater who had experience in analyzing qualitative data. The interview transcript was translated into English by the researcher, and back translation was also conducted. During the presentation of the interview data in this paper, the students are referred to as S1 to S6 according to their group numbers.

Findings

The peer editing in this project contributed to the students' performance in two dimensions: their abilities to deal with translation difficulties and their willingness to work collaboratively with each other.

Students' abilities to deal with translation difficulties

Translation is a process of solving problems, a process in which translators make effective decisions to select the most appropriate choices suitable for a particular situation to convey the meanings of the source texts (Pym, 2003; Wilss, 1990). Therefore, in translation classrooms, students should learn how to deal with problems and make appropriate decisions to solve them (Colina, 2003). Peer editing is a learning activity that facilitates them to do so, with the use of collaboration among other students. In the present study, the students reported that the peer-editing activity as a step in the collaborative translation project supported them to detect various types of translation errors. As a result, the student translator groups could correct those errors in their drafts through the collaboration with their peers. To understand how the translation errors were corrected, the parameters for translation editing by Mossop (2007) was adapted to explain the errors that the students could detect. The parameters include (1) accuracy, (2) completeness, (3) smoothness, (4) tailoring, and (5) mechanics and presentation. The following is how the students' translation drafts were improved due to their collaboration in the peer-editing process.

Accuracy

Errors related to accuracy occur when there are mistranslations of the message, such as mistranslations of ideas, details, or sequences of events. Students in Group 2 who majored in Thai reported that they had faced a lot of problems in interpreting the meanings of some words in contexts, phrases, and expressions, as well as unfamiliar sentence structures, because none of the students had much experience in English use and translation. Group 1 who were English major students did reciprocal editing with Group 2 and helped them understand more about those problematic elements. S2 explained the way they could correct the errors as follows.

> *We had misunderstood a lot. ... Friends in the other group [Group 1] gave us comments so that we understood more about sentence structures, words with multiple meanings, phrases, and expressions.* (Interview, S2)

Completeness

Errors related to completeness occur when elements in the source text are rendered incompletely since there is accidental addition or omission. S3 mentioned that her group members failed to notice that some messages were accidentally omitted, and Group 4 could detect those errors and gave comments to her group. Here is what S3 reported.

> *Group 4 gave comments on some elements that we missed out.* (Interview, S3)

Smoothness

Errors related to smoothness occur when the text does not flow because there are awkward sentences or the connections between sentences are not clear. Group 1 revealed that Group 2 who majored in Thai could help them since some of the elements in their translated draft did not sound natural, and Group 1 used those comments to revise their text.

> *We had some elements that were not very smooth, so they [Group 2] revised them for us.* (Interview, S1)

Group 6 also stated that peer editing helped them make better decisions, such as the translation of the word 'sustain' in their first draft, and also the revision of some other parts as well.

> *If we hadn't worked with this group [Group 5] in editing, we would have gone too far, such as the word 'sustain'. We had had a problem with this word, but after the discussion, we got the idea to help our group. And in some other parts, we thought we did okay, but the ideas from the other group helped improve our translation a lot.* (Interview, S6)

Tailoring

Errors related to tailoring occur when the language used in the target text does not suit its use and users, such as inappropriate degree of formality and technicality. In some cases, the vocabulary used may not suit the subject matter and the target readers. Examples that were found in the present study were from the students' decisions to transcribe or translate business terms. Group 5 explained that they had made a decision to translate the word 'brand', but one of the group 6 members explained that this word should be transliterated, not translated, because it is more commonly used in Thai nowadays and the target readers will be able to understand it better.

> *[For some elements,] we were pretty sure that we were correct, but 6a mentioned them, like transliterated words.* (Interview, S5)

Additionally, during the editing session, the issue of transcribing proper names arose while Group 3 and Group 4 were editing each other's draft. They were discussing how to transcribe non-English people's names. Group 3 who had found a way to solve this problem in their text earlier gave a suggestion to Group 4 about the website that could be used.

> *We asked them [Group 3] why they did like that. For example, we transcribed [non-English] people's names as we thought they should be, but they explained that we should search from this website.* (Interview, S4)

In turn, Group 4 also found out that the formats of subtopics translated by Group 3 were not parallel, so Group 4 made comments and explained why their peer's translation of subtopics should be revised.

> *I told them [Group 3] that subtopics must be translated in a parallel format as the teacher had taught us in class.* (Interview, S4)

Mechanics and presentation

Errors related to mechanics occur when there are errors in spelling and punctuation. Problems related to presentation occur when the text layout (such as margin, paragraph indent, and sub-headings) or the text formatting (such as bolding, font type, and font size) does not make senses, or some of their elements are not consistently used. In this study, Group 3 reported that they found typographical errors and some paragraphs that were misplaced in Group 4's translation draft, so they pointed that out during the peer-editing session.

> *They [Group 4] had problems of typos and misplaced paragraphs, so we told them what we found.* (Interview, S3)

Based on the results, it is evident that when the students collaborated with each other during editing process, various types of errors could be detected and those errors were appropriately corrected. Successfully solving those problematic elements meant that the quality of their translations improved. Previous studies have confirmed that feedback from peers can enhance the quality of the students' L1 writing (Graner, 1987; Karegianes et al., 1980) and L2 writing (Austria, 2017; Berg, 1999; Hoogeven & Gelderen, 2015; Huh & Lee, 2014; Min, 2006). However, a closer look at the data indicated that types of language errors that could be significantly reduced in EFL writing classes were only *rule-based errors*, or errors with specific language forms and systematic solutions, such as subject-verb agreements or pronoun references (Diab, 2010). Likewise, Lundstorm and Baker (2009) explained that for a group of low-level proficiency students, only *global writing aspects*, such as organizations and cohesion, could be significantly improved. In this study, within the context of translation training for EFL learners, the results provide confirmatory evidence that

unnoticed errors could be better detected and corrected due to the collaboration among the students in the peer-editing session. Some errors could be detected by their forms, such as parallel structure, misspelt words, or misplaced paragraphs, but a number of errors that were detected by the student editors required a relatively higher level of decision-making and thinking skills, such as interpreting word meanings in contexts or understanding unfamiliar sentence structures.

The success of the implementation of peer editing in this study can be explained by the fact that two reciprocal editing groups compared their translation drafts from the same source text, and when their choices were different, they reread the source text again and started to discuss their ideas until they finally found out that one or both choices were acceptable or needed to be revised. On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that this type of social interaction was very beneficial for the student editors and the student translators because both groups needed to reconsider their own choice and make decisions about another choice selected by their peer's group. This peer-editing activity also exemplified the notion of non-binary errors for translation evaluation to the students, emphasizing that translation choices should not be viewed as just right or wrong, but it is the communicative purposes that make the choices more or less appropriate (Pym, 1992).

As it is widely accepted that to develop students' decision-making and problem-solving skills is significant in translation training (Bell, 1991; Fernández & Zabalbeascoa, 2012; González Davies, 2005; Lörscher, 2005; Orozco & Hurtado Albir, 2002; Scott-Tennent et al., 2000; Wilss, 1996), it can be concluded that this form of peer editing is an effective learning activity that could enhance students' translation abilities for the students not only practiced solving difficult problems and making decisions at least twice, if not more, but also experienced alternative ways to solve a single problem.

Willingness to work collaboratively with others
Apart from enhancing the students' abilities to detect and correct translation errors, another benefit of peer editing in this study was to engage the students to work collaboratively with each other. Notable scholars in EFL, such as Bruffee (1984), Jesnek (2011), and Rollinson

(2005), firmly state that the essence of peer editing is to create a social context for the students to discuss and negotiate their ideas with each other. The social interactions occurred can be meaningful learning experiences because the students are actively engaged in the writing process while trying to discuss alternatives to revise their writing tasks (Diab, 2010, 2011; Hojeij & Hurley, 2017). The data yielded by the present study provide strong evidence that the students were willing to work collaboratively to give feedback on each other's work and also appreciated the feedback from their peers. The students clearly mentioned that they realized the value of peer editing.

> *A very important thing we got from this project is that we learned about exchanging ideas within groups and with other groups.* (Interview, S2)

> *What really helped me was discussing with another group. We then got new ideas and understood the text better.* (Interview, S5)

> *In some parts, I didn't translate them as it should be, but after revising it several times and having others help read it, I did it another way, which was much better.* (Interview, S6)

More importantly, when providing comments or suggestions, the students committed to their responsibility. They did not just tell what they thought was correct but also gave detailed explanations of elements in questions. As S3 reported, a student in Group 4 who was very good at English explained to their group about the error due to the sentence structure that they had overlooked.

> *Group 4 explained that this word was an adjective and it modified another word, so it had to be translated like this.* (Interview, S3)

In another example, Group 5 who could not finish giving comments in class sent the rest of the comments online to their peer-editing group after class, and also the collaboration between the two groups continued even after the peer-editing session.

Group 5 sent me the file right after the editing day, so we could get the rest of the comments [for the part that we hadn't finished in class]. (Interview, S6)

There were several points that we discussed after the peer-editing session. We also asked questions via our Line group, but that wasn't very often. I didn't want to bother them too much. (Interview, S6)

Limitations of the peer-editing process in L2 writing were also discussed (Jesnek, 2011; J. Wang et al., 2014). High proficiency students were reported performing better in terms of feedback giving and had a chance to benefit more from peer editing tasks (J. Wang et al., 2014). The process of peer editing can be problematic when the student editor and the student writer had different levels of language competence. Those who were younger or had lower level of competence could be threatened by social power (Jesnek, 2011). In this study, the students' profiles were varied as this course was offered as an elective course, and the students were from different majors, English, Thai, and an international program in Business English, and also from different class years. The results obtained indicate that some work-related issues arose, but the students finally managed to work together to do reciprocal editing and learned from each other in their own ways.

In the case of Group 1 and Group 2, Group 1 members were English major students who passed two translation courses, but Group 2 members were Thai major students who had far less experience in translation and English use. However, it was reported that Group 1 gave suggestions about word meanings and sentence structures to Group 2, and in turn Group 2 could help with the issue of smoothness in Group 1's Thai translation.

We had misunderstood a lot. … Friends in the other group [Group 1] gave us comments so that we understood more about sentence structures, words with multiple meanings, phrases, and expressions. (Interview, S2)

They [Group 2] paid attention to details and helped us revise some parts that were not very smooth. (Interview, S1)

In the case of Group 3 and Group 4, they were all English majors, but Group 3 members were in their third year and Group 4 in their fourth year. This course was also the first course they studied together. In terms of social power due to their ages (a factor in Thai culture), S3 reported that it was quite difficult to give comments to their seniors at the beginning, but they finally managed to do it. Also, Group 4 asked Group 3 questions about the resource that they had not known before.

> *At the beginning, we felt uncomfortable as I hadn't known them [the senior classmates in Group 4] before. And after that session, we have known each other better.* (Interview, S3)

> *We asked them [Group 3] why they did like that. … And we thanked them.* (Interview, S4)

In the case of Group 5 and Group 6, the students were all English majors, except 6a who led the peer-editing discussion. S6 was the only student from an international program in business English and his minor was translation. It is obvious that this counterpart had a gap in terms of both language competence and translation ability.

> *At first, they [Group 5] felt unease, but then it was okay since they managed to give comments to my group.* (Interview, S6)

> *S6 was very nice. He didn't say it directly that our translation was wrong, but instead he showed us their translation and gave easy explanations so that we could understand him.* (Interview, S5)

Group 5 and 6 were also the only pair that couldn't finish editing in class, but Group 5 sent Group 6 their comments on the following day via their own Line group (a social networking application). Despite a clear gap between these two groups, they continued helping each other by asking and answering questions from time to time after the editing session.

It is also interesting to learn that although two groups paired up for the peer editing were assigned to do a translation of the same source

text, as student translators who received comments, they did not use every word, expression, or comment from their counterpart. Even Group 5 and Group 2 who were working with the groups that had more experience in translation brought their peers' suggestions into consideration and discussed in groups again on how to use them.

> *We didn't copy their [Group 6's] words, but we tried to understand them first and considered which words we should use.* (Interview, S5)

> *We didn't use them [the words suggested by Group 1] all. We thought how to adjust those words to use in our translation.* (Interview, S2)

In the present study, the students' willingness to work collaboratively in peer editing is broadly consistent with the major trends in L2 writing classrooms that peer editing can become social interactions that engage students in the writing process and can promote collaboration among them (Austria, 2017; Caw et al., 2017; Diab, 2010, 2011; Hojeij & Hurley, 2017; Jesnek, 2011; Rollinson, 2005). However, in contrast to the major trends in the literature in peer editing, K. Wang and Chong (2013) reported that their undergraduate translation students in Australia valued the online peer feedback as student translators, but did not appreciate spending their time as student editors to give feedback to their peers. The comparison of K. Wang and Chong's (2013) study and the present study could yield a clearer picture of peer editing as part of collaborative learning. For instance, the social interactions of the two studies were totally different. The online peer feedback was provided anonymously by individual students whereas peer feedback in the present study was conducted as part of a collaborative project in which collaboration was being emphasized along the way from the beginning of the project, not to mention discussions of each member's roles in the collaborative project team and practices of peer editing in the training session before the project had started. Additionally, the online peer editing was done privately in their own time, but the peer-editing session in this study was scheduled during class time and was clearly stated in the project manual with clear explanations of steps and responsibilities of each

team. Hence, it is vital that the teacher provide a learning environment that facilitates the students to collaborate with each other.

In conclusion, this research has demonstrated that the peer editing as part of collaborative translation projects is beneficial for improving EFL students' abilities to deal with their translation difficulties. Errors or inappropriate solutions of translation difficulties in their translation drafts that could be detected and corrected were varied, and the quality of the students' translation drafts was improved in all aspects: accuracy, completeness, smoothness, tailoring, and mechanics and presentation. The students also got to practice problem-solving and decision-making skills and learn alternative ways to solve problems from their peers. More importantly, the students expressed their willingness to collaborate with each other to edit their peers' work and appreciated the way they helped each other. As student translators, they valued what they learned from their peers, and as student editors, they tried to discuss the elements in questions and also explain to their peers why those elements should be revised. Although this class had students with mixed abilities, they could make use of their abilities to review their peers' paper. It seems fair to conclude that the students were engaged in the process of editing and benefited a great deal from it as they performed the roles of editors and translators.

Implication and recommendations

Implication from the findings

The findings suggested that peer editing can be effectively used as part of any collaborative translation projects because it has demonstrated that students with a variety of translation competence and language proficiency can benefit from collaboration with each other, in terms of enhancing their abilities to correct translation errors and being engaged to learn from each other during the process of translation. However, it is important that the requirements and task types be designed to accommodate the students' levels of knowledge and experience. In courses offered to students with mixed abilities or low-level courses, editing practices with simpler and shorter texts should be introduced so that the students can clearly understand the criteria and be familiar with the process before the peer-editing stage is

introduced. During the process of peer editing, it is necessary to closely monitor the students' interactions and provide extra help when necessary. On the other hand, for a group of students with a more solid background and a higher level of experience in translation, such as those in their advanced courses in undergraduate programs or those in graduate programs in translation, they can be more challenged by incorporating peer assessment as part of project evaluation. With any forms of peer editing, communication with the students on the objectives and procedures of the peer-editing activity is a crucial factor for an effective implementation of peer editing.

It is challenging but essential to provide timely and continual feedback on the students' work progress so that they may more clearly understand what should be improved for the next step. However, that does create an enormous workload for the teacher. Therefore, the teacher should have a well-planned feedback system.

It is also beneficial to make use of communication technology to support collaboration among the students. There are numerous online discussion forums that can facilitate them to share useful translation resources and support each other throughout the process of learning. It is recommended that the teacher select the most appropriate system for the particular learning context, design learning activities that can fully engage them, and monitor its use during the implementation. When the channel or the task that is currently used seems impractical, the teacher must be sensitive enough to know and decide how to adjust the activities or how to replace the channel. Additionally, online giving and receiving feedback, of course, require extra time and efforts from the students, but if the benefits are clearly communicated and that online communication channel is affordable and convenient enough, the students can be facilitated and convinced to invest their time and efforts for their learning.

Recommendations for further research

The study extends our knowledge of the benefits students gain from peer editing; however, the findings are not without limitations. Due to the nature of the collaborative group work, the analysis does not enable us to determine individual students' abilities and their progress. More experiments will be needed to verify whether individual students'

abilities on revising translation errors significantly improve and how the students with different levels of competence could benefit from peer editing. Quantitative data regarding the enhancement of student engagement and self-confidence as a result of collaborative peer editing are desirable.

Moreover, class dynamics during the editing process can also provide rich data for the researcher. One question still unanswered is how individual students with different levels of translation competence interact during the peer-editing process. It is recommended that patterns of interactions, involving equality and mutuality levels of each member (Storch, 2002) and motivation factors should be taken into consideration. For qualitative data collection, students' learning diaries, class observation, and interviews can collect only some dimensions of collaboration. Future work can investigate the effectiveness of peer editing on quality of translation work by analyzing translation drafts with the notes taken by the students during the peer-editing process.

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