Creating significant learning experiences in literary translation: a course redesign plan

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Abstract
Literature on translation education over the past two decades covers studies that report on the successful application of teaching and learning practices informed by social-constructivism. These studies, however, do not give a clear report on the way the tenets of social-constructivism have been applied in the design of the teaching and learning activities used. This study attempts to demonstrate the applicability and effectiveness of Fink's (2013) integrated course design, which has been built upon his taxonomy of significant learning experiences (2013), in filling the gap. Within this framework, therefore, we have presented the structure of the units and materials designed for an undergraduate literary translation course, in an Iranian educational context, and outlined through sample materials the steps we took in developing activities aimed at achieving Fink's significant learning.
Key words: significant learning, course redesign, literary translation, material, undergraduate trainee translators

1. Introduction

With the learner-centered paradigm achieving prominence as a theoretical foundation for teaching and learning practices, instructional designs aligned with the principles of this paradigm have been proposed for use in the development of curriculum plans, course designs, and course redesigns. When implementing a new paradigm, theoretically, it is logical,to begin with the larger curricular frameworks and course syllabi from which units and materials later derive (Wiggins, McTighe, 2011). However, when the time is not ripe for such an enterprise, instructors whose beliefs, actions, and concerns are driven by the learner-centered paradigm can themselves step on the road to attaining their goals, provided that they have access to necessary tools and resources. It is then that the focus of the instructional design procedures for novice instructor-designers, as Wiggins and McTighe (2011) assert, first turns to more concrete levels such as unit design and material development, rather than the more abstract and difficult task of syllabus design or curriculum planning.

Consistent with the paradigm shift, mentioned above, different courses included in the translation curriculum programs worldwide have undergone major modifications and improvements through the attempts made by the instructor-designers adhering to social-constructivism. The study conducted by Shih (2011) in teaching translation theories, the one by Li in teaching journalistic translation (2006) and those in commercial/business translation (2005; 2013), those by Cho and Roger (2010), Chmiel (2010), and Baxter (2012) in teaching consecutive interpreting, and the one by Galán-Mañas (2013) in teaching legal translation are among such attempts. In many of these studies, the focus is, above all, on preparing the trainees for the professional workplace. Consequently, teaching topics and activities mainly center on the application of the non-linguistic approaches to translating texts and involve such issues as the skopos or purpose of the translation, translation brief, the initiator, the commissioner, and the target audience.

Among the translation courses, however, the course literary translation, which is usually referred to as an unteachable course, has received little attention from

recent pedagogical advances. One reason might be the complexity of the linguistic and extra-linguistic properties of literary texts and thus the challenge that such properties pose in teaching. What is more, since the linguistic approach is characteristically aligned with the requirements of translating literary texts, discussions on the non-linguistic approaches to translation, central to the recent course redesign attempts in TE, are not of primary concern in translating literary texts and, consequently, in teaching the course literary translation. Even so, making continuous instructional quality improvements should be part and parcel of any course, especially when the problem, as in translation education (TE) in Iran, is not just a matter of keeping pace with innovations, but of, as Kelly (2005) puts it, sticking to failed, apedogogical approaches (see Ebrahmi (2013) and Kafi, Khoshsaligheh, and Hashemi (2017) to get a better picture of TE in Iran).

What is certain is that TE in Iran, in line with the recent trends and advances in TE worldwide, should bring changes to the traditional practices common in almost all translation courses, through a slow yet evolutionary process. Literature suggests that the application of teaching and learning practices informed by the social-constructive epistemology in Iranian translation courses could help enhance classroom learning environments (Ebrahimi, 2013). This does not exclude the course literary translation since as Washbourne (2013) puts it, "we cannot simultaneously teach literary translation and deny its teachability" (49).

The practical application of the tenets of social-constructivism in the design of teaching and learning activities is an important aspect of pedagogy (Kiraly, 2000). However, past literature on the attempts made by the constructivist-minded instructor-designers and researchers in TE does not give a clear report on the way the tenets of social-constructivism have been applied to the teaching and learning activities used in the newly-designed translation courses. In this study, therefore, attempts have been made to demonstrate the applicability and effectiveness of Fink's (2013) *integrated course design* (ICD), which has been built upon his *taxonomy of significant learning experiences* (2013),[1] in filling such a gap and, particularly, in assisting novice instructor-designers with their design and redesign endeavors. We have thus presented the general structure of the units and materials designed on the basis of Fink's model for the course literary translation and outlined through sample materials the steps we took in developing activities aimed at achieving Fink's significant learning.

2. Methodology

2.1 Theoretical frameworks

The theoretical frameworks used in this study include one that underlies the learning theory adopted and one that supports the design and development of the materials.

2.1.1 Underlying learning theory

This study adopts social-constructivism to underpin its learning theory. In TE, Kiraly (2000) was first to propose a translation pedagogy the philosophical basis of which rests on the social-constructivist epistemology. His key principles of the social-constructivist translation education, which have formed the foundation of course redesign in the present study, are as follows:

Multiple realities and multiple perspective are one of his principles entailing that learning must be an essentially interactive process. Learning how to communicate and think requires learners to share and contrast perspectives with one another, which leads to debate, negotiation, and change and growth in their perspectives. A classroom

discourse that encourages the exchange of perspectives between students, colleagues and working professionals can better facilitate the process through which learners join the profession. The second principle is *collaborative/cooperative learning*, which helps individual learners to refine their knowledge and create meanings and is of great use in promoting the notion of learning how to learn. *Appropriation* is another principle that refers to the process by which interpersonal knowledge becomes intra-personal knowledge. Learners are, of course, not the only group within the classroom setting who appropriate knowledge; teachers appropriating the learners' viewpoints can reinsert them into the classroom discourse, and thus promote the teaching-learning dialogue. *The zone of proximal development* (ZPD) is Kiraly's another principle of the social-constructivist translation education that refers to what learners can achieve when provided with guidance. According to this principle, learning happens only when activities and assignments are placed within learners' ZPD. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teacher to hold learners in their ZPD by structuring interactions and developing instruction that provides learners with enough support and guidance. The concept of ZPD, in turn, emphasizes the role of the constructivist teacher as a guide and facilitator rather than a distributor of knowledge. A further principle is s*ituating learning* that engages learners in learning tasks that are embedded in the larger, natural complex of human activity. It is, of course, relative with respect to the learners' current level of knowledge and skill development. Kiraly's *viability*, moreover, suggests that learning does not happen when learners plug in specific skills on command; rather, it involves a process through which learners personally discover the gap in their knowledge and the need to add to their current knowledge and application skills. His *scaffolding*, in addition, pertains to the support offered by the teacher to assist learners working in their ZPD, which eventually brings them closer to a state of competence. Scaffolds are supposed to be gradually withdrawn so that learners can complete tasks unaided either individually or collaboratively. The last principle is *socio-cognitive apprenticeship* that involves learners entering the culture of practice, reflecting on their own work against the performance of professionals, and making necessary changes without guidance.

2.1.2 Material design and development

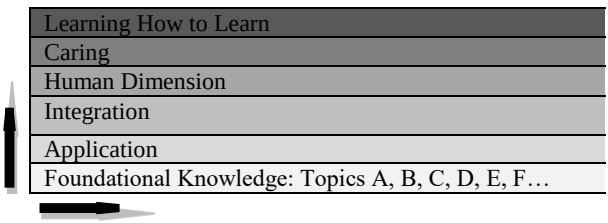
The model used to practically apply the tenets of social-constructivism in teaching the course literary translation is Fink's (2013) ICD. Fink's instructional model, representing a shift from a content-centered paradigm to a learning-centered one, is based on his *taxonomy of significant learning experiences* (2013).

Fink's taxonomy of significant learning

Fink's taxonomy extends beyond Bloom et al.'s (1956) taxonomy as it addresses such types of learning important in higher education as "learning how to learn, leadership and interpersonal skills, ethics, communication skills, character, tolerance, and the ability to adapt to change" (Fink, 2013: 34). Defining learning in terms of change in the learner, Fink has created his taxonomy around six major categories of *foundational knowledge*, *application*, *integration*, *human dimension*, *caring*, and *learning how to learn*. Each kind of learning, unlike Bloom's hierarchical taxonomy, is related to other kinds and achieving each increases the possibility of simultaneous achievement of others, which shows the relational and interactive nature of the taxonomy.

The taxonomy of significant learning experiences, according to Fink (2013), implies that the learning goals for a course should not be limited to content mastery and that using a combination of significant learning goals will create a kind of

synergistic effect necessary to the achievement of significant learning by learners. In other words, unlike the content-centered paradigm that directs teaching and learning only along foundational knowledge, his taxonomy, which is based on the constructivist, learning-centered paradigm, directs teaching and learning into multiple dimensions of learning (see the following figure).



The learning-centered paradigm (vertical axis) versus the content-centered paradigm (horizontal axis), adapted from Fink (2013)

Selection of appropriate activities

Gaining an accurate and deep insight into Fink's taxonomy is the primary step to take before starting the course design or redesign based on his 12 step ICD model (see Appendix). After identifying important situational factors in the first step of ICD, course designers have to identify important learning goals and formulate appropriate feedback and assessment procedures in the second and third steps, respectively. This approach to course design where assessment procedures for each learning goal are first decided upon and then appropriate materials are designed is known as backward design, which has also been employed by Wiggins and McTighe (2011) in their *Understanding by Design* (UbD) model.

In step 4, which is the focus of the present paper, ICD in line with the literature on college teaching that moves beyond the lecture-discussion tradition and advocates active learning (Barkley, 2010; Bean, 1996; Bonwell & Eison, 1991) defines effective learning as those having three components of information and ideas, experiences (doing or observing), and reflection.

Fink's (2013) taxonomy as the foundation underlying his ICD model has very close affinity with the key principles of Kiraly's (2000) social-constructivist approach. Moreover, the concepts and ideas within his model follow a clear and purposeful progression, making it a helpful tool particularly for novice instructor-designers. Therefore, using this framework as a structuring device for the design and development of our materials is in line with the philosophy of learning underlying our study, which is also the foundation of such translation pedagogical models as competency-based training (PACTE, 2003; Hurtado Albir, 2007; 2010; 2015; 2017) and its precedent, the objective-based learning (Delisle, 1980).

2.2 Teaching and learning instruments

Each of the three components of active learning can be incorporated in teaching and learning practices through the use of certain activities. The whole range of activities discussed by Fink (2013) and those selected for the course literary translation are presented in what follows.

Information and ideas

An important part of learning is receiving information and ideas usually through an intermediary (i.e., the textbook writer or the lecturer). A more direct mode of receiving information and ideas is attainable if students are asked to read original sources and examine original data. To give trainees in the course literary translation sufficient factual information, we provided them with materials developed on the basis of Fink's (2013) taxonomy and Wiggins and McTighe's (2011) UbD model. Part of the information was directly presented to them in the lesson description beginning each unit, through instructor's lecture, and whole-class discussions and part of it was embedded in the body of the *task* appearing toward the end of each unit.

Experiences

Doing experiences refers to any learning activity in which students actually do something. While indirect *doing* experiences include such activities as case studies, gaming, simulations, and role-playing, more direct modes engage students in real activities performed in authentic settings. Watching or listening to others doing activities related to what students are learning, moreover, gives them an opportunity to experience the reality of the phenomenon they are studying. While providing students with this opportunity might be challenging, indirect observations such as stories that can be accessed via film, literature and oral history allow students to acquire valuable experiences. In our course, we had the opportunity to provide the trainees only with *doing* experiences including analyzing and evaluating (critical thinking), creating new forms and styles (creative thinking), solving problems and making decisions (practical thinking), reading, writing, and researching.

Reflection

A search for the meaning of experiences, information, and ideas, either individually or collaboratively, can greatly enhance the quality of a learning experience. Activities that encourage students to reflect include leading whole-class discussions, debriefing simulations or problem-solving activities, writing one-minute papers, and keeping a learning journal or developing a learning portfolio. In our course, due to the idiosyncrasies of the context, we could only work on the first two types of activities included mainly within the body of the *task*.

3. Analysis and discussion of sample designed materials

The designed units for thecourse literary translation have four major components: *lesson description*, *exercise*, *task*, and *project*.[2] In what follows, attempt has been made to show how Fink's taxonomy of significant learning experiences and Kiraly's key principles of social-constructivism have worked hand in hand to guide the design and development of the materials.

Each unit starts with a preparatory activity such as an internet search query, a brief translation activity, or a translation critique activity that is aimed to work as a tool to indirectly present to the trainees the need to learn a new skill or acquire new knowledge. This purpose is then pursued within the body of lesson description by regularly inviting the trainees to practice judgment in using different skills rather than plugging in one specific skill on command. This way, therefore, the bottom level of the taxonomy, i.e., information and ideas, is also taken into account not just through the lecture-based tradition, which provides the ground for the trainees not only to personally discover the gap in their knowledge and the need to add to their current

knowledge and application skills, but also to realize that prior learning might be utilized in multiple occasions so as to accomplish a new learning experience.

Exercises serve as the primary tool to help the trainees move up to the second and third levels of the taxonomy, i.e., applying and integrating knowledge. Unit tasks and projects, which are the focus of the present study, further facilitate the accomplishment of this purpose. The preparatory activities, lesson descriptions, and exercises, also, are aimed at developing a pattern where sharing and contrasting perspectives are encouraged both between the instructor and the trainees and among trainees themselves, which mark a step up to a higher level of the taxonomy, i.e., human dimension. Therefore, trainees confronted with alternative perspectives are hoped to increase their understanding of their own perceptions and evaluate the evidence for their and others' viewpoints. A learning environment as such, in turn, provides the ground for the trainees not to merely receive knowledge but to appropriate it, directing the trainees to gain an increased appreciation for the topic, i.e., caring.

Although the above-mentioned key social-constructivist principles constituted an inseparable aspect of the whole teaching and learning practices, the design of the task and the project of each unit better manifests scaffolding, ZPD, collaborative/co-operative learning, and socio-cognitive apprenticeship. The sample task and project related to the unit *Doing Stylistics in Literary Translation* have been provided, in what follows, to better illustrate the role that they play in realizing such key principles of social-constructivism and Fink's taxonomy of significant learning experiences.

3.1 Task

Consisting of four stages (i.e., pre-translation activities, translation, post-translation activities, and reflections), the tasks designed for the course literary translation encompass all the three components of active learning. In the sample task provided, the features of each stage have been separately discussed, reflecting, in turn, the major objectives of the unit.

As indicated in the general instruction to the task, trainees have been asked to read a Persian contemporary short story. The story has been selected from Persian Literature because Persian trainee translators would certainly experience fewer language difficulties in reading a story in their own language. Therefore, they can put more effort into its stylistic analysis. Although the purpose is to engage the trainees in the process of translating a short story, they have not been required to translate the whole story into English. In truth, the task aims at making the trainees aware of the importance of doing stylistics before starting to translate short stories. It is, therefore, hoped that the task, avoiding the "read and translate directive" (González Davies, 2004: 71), would provide the trainees with the opportunity to both apply the theoretical knowledge gained on the topic in focus, which has been previously covered in the lesson description, instructor's lecture, and whole-class discussions, and transfer what they have learned in practice to other translation situations regardless of language directionality.

> In this translation task, you will read a Persian contemporary short story by Abu-torāb Khosravi named "Miniator-ha." This story is from the collection *Divān-e-soomanāt* published by Nashr-e Markaz, Tehran, in 1998. The following activities are step-by-step guides that help you understand how to deal with a translation task of this type. Please note that although the task intends to get you involved in the process of translating a short story, it does not require you to translate the entire story into English. In fact, it is at the top of the task's

objectives to make you realize that a major step to take in translating a short story is doing stylistics. The experience that you gain in this task can be extended to other translation tasks regardless of language directionality.

Stage one: Pre-translation activities

The purpose underlying the pre-translation activities is to help the trainees fully comprehend the story, as it is the very first step in any translation activity irrespective of the text type. Therefore, multiple readings of the story, pair and whole-class discussions and consultation with the instructor have been included in the first two steps of this part of the task so as to encourage the exchange of multiple perspectives. In so doing, trainees will be involved in *doing* experiences, though simulated and get information and ideas at the same time.

Step ONE- Read the story in its entirety. Remember that you may need to read more than once or at times you may feel the need to return to some parts to get a richer picture of the story.

Step TWO- Now share your understanding of the story with your classmates, and, in return, listen to their accounts. If there are any discrepancies between your accounts, try to identify possible sources of misunderstanding. You can ask your instructor to help.

In the upcoming steps of the pre-translation activities (steps 3-10), trainees' attention is drawn to the story's thematic and stylistic issues. Questions are divided into three categories of diction (steps 3-7), grammar (step 8), and narration (step 9). Each step comprises a question that highlights a point about the story's style and/or themes. To answer these questions, trainees are required to find evidence by referring to the story, relate various pieces of evidence to each other, and analyze and evaluate them. Therefore, trainees are engaged in all three types of active learning experiences, i.e., getting information and ideas, *doing* experiences (mainly through making connections and critical and practical thinking), and meaning-making (mainly through pair or whole-class discussions).

Take, for instance, steps 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 where the story's thematic and stylistic issues from the standpoint of diction have been taken into account. Since "Miniator-ha" depicts the image of a German woman in a traditional Eastern mansion during World War II, readers see the encounter between the East and the West. On the one hand, an Eastern mansion with all related objects is seen, and on the other, elements and objects representing the West are referred to. As the trainees go through these five steps, they are guided to find out possible reasons underling such juxtaposition, and eventually the major theme of the story, i.e., *time*.

Step THREE-Upon initial reading of "Miniator-ha," one is perhaps attracted by the kind of atmosphere that the writer has created; it induces a particular feeling as if one is visiting a traditional Eastern mansion. Go through the story again to make a list of objects pertaining to this Eastern atmosphere.
What translation challenges do these culture-specific elements pose? Literature on translation strategies to render culture-specific words reveals a varying range of procedures including Newmark's (1988)

accepted standard (or recognized) translation or his *transference* strategy, Hervey and Higgins' (2002) *cultural borrowing*, Baker's(1992) *translation using a loan word*, Chesterman's (1997) *exoticization (estrangement or foreignization)*, and Schäffner and Wiesemann's (2001) *naturalization*.
From among the mentioned procedures, mainly divided in two major ones, that is, foreignization and domestication, which one will you opt for? In order to avoid possible misunderstanding, many scholars also recommend employing two or more procedures at the same time (for instance, Newmark's (1988) *couplet*, *triplet*, and *quadruplet* strategies, Schäffner and Wiesemann's (2001) *combinations*, and Chesterman's *(*1997) *double presentation*). Other proposed procedures, though not so common, include naturalization, calque, notes, glosses, additions, omissions and explanation provided in footnote. How about these translation procedures? Do you consider them workable in rendering culture-specific terms in "Miniator-ha"?
Step FOUR- Besides these culture-specific terms that refer to certain objects relating to Eastern art and architecture, when characters exchange dialogues, there are similar cultural overtones which give more emphasis to the Eastern feel of the story. In such cases, interestingly, the language tends to become more poetic. Can you find some instances?

StepFIVE- "Miniator-ha" begins with the narrator—a miniature painter living in an Eastern mansion in Tehran, Iran—recounting the story of Madame Schneider's stay in his mansion during World War II. Therefore, we see the encounter between the East and the West. Make a list of such words and discuss possible reasons why they have been juxtaposed.
Do these terms also pose the same challenge as the terms discussed in *Step THREE* do?

Step SIX- At lexical level, consider the objects pertaining to Persian art and architecture such as نقوش اسلیمی، عشقه، ارسی و شمسه once more. Do a Google Image search to see how they look like. What similarity in form do you notice between these architectural patterns?

Step SEVEN- At lexical level, again, certain words such as باران، باد، تولد، ردیف، چلچراغ، آبشار are used repeatedly all through the story. In your opinion, what connotative meaning do these words have in common?

Some of the questions in this stage of the task are followed by another translation-related question, mainly for the purpose of reviewing theories and principles of translation that trainees have already been exposed to or conducting online or traditional search queries on new theoretical issues. The translation-related questions that follow each of the questions in steps 3, 4, and 5, for instance, provide the trainees with information about the principles of translating culture-specific terms. Therefore, while receiving information and ideas, trainees are involved in *doing* experiences that promote their searching skills. Pair and whole-class discussions are also included in these questions to get the trainees involved in meaning-making processes. Mention should be made that since the steps have been organized in a way

that each upcoming step sheds more light on the earlier one(s), trainees can reflect more on an issue and reconsider each step before giving a definite answer.

In line with the previous steps, step 8 looks at the story's thematic and stylistic issues from the standpoint of grammar. This step aims at adding one more piece of evidence to confirm the presence of *time* as an important thematic and stylistic issue. Since the purpose is to enable the trainees to pay more attention to such thematic and stylistic intricacies later in the translation stage, attempts have been made to give them as many clues as possible. In the second part of this step, several points about the usage of habitual past in English and Persian have been raised to highlight the difference between the two languages and the diversity of usage in each.

> *Step EIGHT*- At syntactic level, the tense that is used almost throughout the whole text is that of habitual past tense, indicating ongoing action. Do you think this might be suggestive of any specific thematic and/or stylistic disposition? Note that habituality implies progressiveness and is considered as a type of imperfectivity or incompletion.
>
> In translation, identifying the right tense to convey the same reference in time (that is, Persian past progressive) is an important issue to consider. English provides us with three alternatives: used+to+infinitive, simple past, and would+infinitive. Of course, all instances of Persian past progressive are not used to serve habituality; some are there simply to denote an action in progression. Between the three variants mentioned above, there are certain similarities and differences of usage. For instance, pay attention to these three grammatical points: (1) *used to* implies termination of the past habit, while *would* does not; (2) both the *simple past* and *would* can be used in place of *used to*, but they always require a time reference; and (3) *would* is often used to talk about regular activities, particularly in narrative, or when we are reminiscing. However, it is never used at the beginning of a story; the scene must first be set with the simple past or used to. Refer to an advanced English grammar book or search online to find out more differences and similarities in application between these three choices. Then, reconsider the tense in the story and decide on the applicability of each of these three English alternatives to the habitual past tense used in the Persian story.

In step 9, the story's narrative style is in focus. Trainees have been provided with information on the story's non-linear narrative style and are asked to think about the underlying reasons for this choice. Other details included in this step are meant to direct the trainees to this understanding that besides the story's thematic and stylistic features at lexical and grammatical levels, its narrative style also emphasizes the theme of *time*. Trainees are expected to come to realize that the author's intention was refusing to give the events a definite beginning, middle point, and an ending. To encourage further reading and research, moreover, the instructor can call the trainees' attention to the importance of the concept of *time* in the postmodernist literature. In the second part of this step, trainees are asked to reflect on possible challenges that this type of narration might pose in translation.

> *Step NINE*- You have certainly noticed that the story includes flashbacks and sidetracks that weave together to tell the story of a German couple in Iran before and during World War II. Therefore, it

does not follow a sequential line of narration; rather, a non-linear narrative has been the writer's choice in narrating the events. In postmodernist literature, non-linear time and temporal displacement are not only used as stylistic devices but are often integral to the thematic structure and content of a given literary piece. To what effect, do you think, the writer has employed this technique? Does this technique pose any translation challenges?

As the trainees reach step 10, they have to review all the previous steps and find out their common ground. Therefore, it not only gives them the opportunity to reconsider and reflect on the previous steps but also provides them with a more holistic view on the issues raised thus far by engaging them in critical thinking.

Step TEN- Go through the questions raised above once again. We considered a number of thematic and stylistic issues at lexical, syntactic and narrative levels. Can you identify a common point that the questions raised above hint at?

Overall, the steps included in the pre-translation activities, representing all three components of active learning experiences, aim at leading the trainees in the direction of covering multiple dimensions of learning. In other words, after acquiring the foundational knowledge about the topic, the trainees learn how to apply the knowledge, integrate various ideas, and interact with their peers.

Stage two: Translation

Resorting to what they have learned about the story's thematic and stylistic intricacies in the pre-translation activities, trainees can now start trying their hand at translating some short excerpts from the story into English. In this stage, trainees are involved in *doing* experiences that engage them mainly in practical and creative thinking.

Choose three excerpts of at least 100 words from the story. Considering the analysis you did in the pre-translation phase, translate the selected excerpts into English. Bring your translation to the class, justify your translation choices and consider your classmates' and instructor's comments for improving your work.

Stage three: Post-translation activities

After practically evaluating and employing the result of the stylistic analysis done in translating the selected excerpts, trainees have been asked to discuss their choices with their peers with the purpose of revising and improving their translations. Therefore, the main objective underlying this stage is to make trainees aware of the importance of revising and editing practices after completing the first draft of the translation. These activities require trainees to do further research and reflections—the two inseparable activities that should always accompany the translation practice.

In step 1, trainees are directed to reconsider the way they have dealt with the translation of culture-specific terms. Hints are given so that they would be encouraged to creatively think about possible ways to bring to their translation the desired degree of local coloring. In step 2, trainees' attention is drawn to the difficulty of translating the word "مادام/Madam" as it contains an extra reflection of meaning in the story.

Besides juxtaposing the choices available in Persian and English to express the past habitual tense, step 3 introduces annotated translation to trainees, by means of an example, illuminating to them the fact that an ability to explain the choices we make reflects the care and attention that we had given to them in the process of translation.

Step ONE- In translating the culture-specific terms, you have perhaps realized that once they are simply neutralized in translation, the writer's intention to create certain motifs is minimized. However, for the first mentioning of each culture-specific word, it is common to accompany it by a descriptive equivalent. Also, all culture-specific words can be italicized throughout the translation. Think about these and other possible techniques that can help you bring to your translation the desired degree of local coloring and at the same time facilitate reading for your intended audience.

Step TWO- The German woman is referred to as «مادام» all through the story. Besides being a title, this word in Persian suggests an element of continuity. Realizing that such reflection of meaning exists, we become more aware of the harmony of the elements within the story. However, the question is if this extra reflection of meaning can also be reproduced in English or it is a case where translation is bound to suffer from an inevitable loss. Discuss this in the class.

Step THREE- While past habitual behavior is indicated in English by three variants, Persian makes use of the *past progressive tense* and the infinitive phrase *ādat be anjām kāri dāshtan /to have the habit of doing something/*. For instance, here is how the story begins:

مادام اشنایدر که عبوس پشت پیانو می‌نشست و آن ملودی باواریایی را می‌زد به سروان اشنایدر فکر می‌کرد. مادام می‌گفت: «سروان عادت داشت قبل از آفتاب بیدار شود، روزهای اول عروسیمان که به ساحل ماین رفته‌بودیم، سروان همین ملودی را می‌زد تا مرا بیدار کند.»
مادام می‌گفت: «نسیمی می‌آمد و رنگ‌های کرانه ماین سبز و آبی بود.»
مادام انجیلش را باز می‌کرد و دعا می‌خواند.

Do your selected excerpts also include the past progressive tense as in the excerpt above? How did you render such cases into English? Look at how tense has been translated in a student's translation of the same excerpt and compare it with your own translation choices:
Whenever Madame Schneider sat sullen behind the piano and played that Bavarian melody, she thought of Captain Schneider. Madame would often say: «Captain used to get up before sunrise; in the early days of our marriage when we had gone to the Maine coast, Captain always played the same melody to wake me up. Madame would say: «a breeze was blowing and the seashore was green and blue. » Madame would open her gospel and read prayers.

Here are some notes the student has written on her translation choices:

As for the first three instances of habitual past tense in the original, I opted for simple past tense in English as they all refer to situations of long duration. However, in order not to be misunderstood as referring to a single state in the past, I inserted 'whenever' to the beginning of the sentence. Thereby, I could render habituality unambiguously.

'Would' was also an alternative, but it is especially common non-initially in a sequence of habitual events. Of course, because the structure of the story's narrative is nonlinear, these beginning lines do not mark the real starting point of the narration and are indeed part of the internal sequence of the story. However, to be on the safe side, I decided on the simple past tense and not 'would' even though the latter is commonly used in narrative fiction. The habituality associated with a past memory described in the same scene was also not rendered with 'would,' although the character is reminiscing; imperfective as it is, I went for 'used to' (as in 'used to get up') and simple past with time adverbial (as in 'always played') without wavering.

Now, consider the following questions:
1. How convincing do you find the student's notes on her own translation choices?
2. Have you ever commented on your own translation? Do you think it could be of any use?

Accompany part of your translation of the story with your own notes on some important issues involved and your particular way to tackle them in translation. Then, see if the added notes have brought any new point to your mind or improved your earlier version of translation in any way. After that, exchange your commented translation with a partner to see if the accompanied notes can better convince you about the translated choices your partner has opted for.

Stage four: Reflections

In the reflections stage, trainees are given the opportunity to think deeply about what they have done in the previous stages, review the experiences gained, and consider their generalizability to other similar translation situations. It is hoped that by this stage, trainees would have gained an increased appreciation for the topic, learned how to inquire about it, and become self-directing learners. These correspond to the last two categories in Fink's taxonomy, i.e., caring and learning how to learn and, again, are reflective of the major key principles of social-constructivism as the major ideas inherent in this stage, in keeping with the previous ones, remind the trainees that acquiring knowledge and skills is not once-and-for-all and attaining learning autonomy depends on their ability to reflect on their own works.

The task you have just completed shed light on the fact that doing stylistics is what distinguishes a mediocre translation from a professional one. Also, we came to realize that even though some of the stylistic features of a literary work might not be conveyed in translation, as translation always suffers from some degree of loss, this type of analysis can at least help us cut the losses to minimum. How is it possible to extend what you learned in this task to other similar situations where, regardless of the directionality of the language, you are supposed to translate another story? What techniques did you practice in this task that could be extended to other occasions?

3.2 Project

The step-by-step structure of the task and the instructional clues provided along the way, as opposed to the traditional read and translate directive, gives the trainees the opportunity to have the instructor's guidance and support while working in their ZPD. Autonomous performance of unit projects is considered a test of validating appropriate scaffolding (Calvo, 2015). In other words, trainees who have been guided all through the way in completing the task should now be able to transfer their learning experience to other situations. The ability to transfer is, according to Wiggins and McTighe (2011), the ultimate goal of learning. The project has been, therefore, designed to give trainees an opportunity to experience a new challenge, one that creates the zone of proximal development, this time, with minimum support and scaffolding. At the same time, attention has been paid to the improvement of such skills as reading and writing in the trainees' native language, doing collaborative work, and presenting class lectures.

Moreover, the designed tasks and projects require the trainees to work collaboratively so that the group would accomplish the learning goal of meaning-making and each individual would appropriate knowledge. Throughout the entire teaching and learning practices, the instructor moving from group to group and providing support and guidance can present to the trainees a model of thinking and acting, which represent an attempt toward the accomplishment of another key principle of social-constructivism and an ascend to the top level of the taxonomy, i.e., learning how to learn.

Related to the topic discussed in the unit, a project has been designed to give you more opportunity for detailed observation, research, group work, and coming up with ideas. Consider the following points before starting the project:

(1) Form groups made up of two or three members.
(2) Select one member who is ready to dedicate more time, energy and even expertise to the work to become the project manager.
(3) Divide responsibilities among members depending on their interest and abilities.
(4) Submit the reports of scheduling and activities to the instructor and check your progress with him/her.
(5) Hold discussion sessions with your group members at intervals where you can raise your problems, find solutions, bring up your suggestions, inform each other of the useful searches you did and the resources you used, do consistency checks for terminology and way of presentation, etc.
(6) Submit your typed, polished work to the project manager, so that s/he put them all together, read them once more to remove any possible cases of inaccuracy or inconsistency.
(7) The project manager should submit the work together with a report of what the group did in completing the project to the instructor.

From the collection *Divān-e-soomanāt*, choose another short story and analyze it stylistically. From the perspective of a translator, also, take heed of possible translation challenges and see what solutions your stylistic analysis of the story has to offer. The task that you just completed is a good model to follow. Then, in a written report of at

least 1000 words, elaborate on the role that a literary-linguistic analysis of the story can play in enhancing the quality of translation. In so doing, give details and bring some translated excerpts from the story to support your views. Finally, present your analysis in the class during a 15-minute lecture.

4. Conclusion

It is widely believed that the best answer to the many problems of TE worldwide is running courses based on social-constructivism. Many have reported on how well the approach have fulfilled the numerous needs of their students and their own aspirations as teachers; however, the way they have applied the tenets of social-constructivism in the design of their teaching and learning activities is an issue which has not been specifically illustrated. It is true that, as Kiraly (2000) states, the procedures and the design adopted in one translation classroom inspired by social-constructivism cannot be generalized to others; however, an instructional model, working as a structuring device, can better direct the efforts made by many novice instructors interested in shifting away from the traditional teacher-centered courses.

The study reported herein represents the first attempt made in employing Fink's (2013) taxonomy in redesigning translation courses and emphasizing its affinity to the tenets of social-constructivism. In the sample activities provided, we attempted to show how materials, by design, can enhance the trainees' mastery of course content and their ability to apply and integrate that knowledge. Additionally, they can provide the trainees with lots of opportunities to interact with their peers and reflect on the value of the course content as well as their own learning. These materials were part of our effort in redesigning the course literary translation, and were implemented through action research in an undergraduate literary translation classroom. As such, they are not claimed to reflect social-constructivism in its entirety; instead, they reflect the level and needs of the trainees in our context whose views were incorporated in the design once the activities were used in the first cycle of the implementation. With no claim on the generalizability of the materials, this study took one step in demonstrating the usefulness of Fink's (2013) taxonomy, particularly for novice translation instructor-designers, as a tool for providing the structure necessary for changes in translation pedagogy away from merely lecture-based, teacher-centered courses.

Notes

1. Fallahi (2008) and Tabor (2005) have examined the effectiveness of Fink's course design model in the redesign and development of a Life Span Development course and E-commerce education, respectively. Their studies, however, give a general report on the usefulness of the model.

2. Where task and project design is concerned, our approach resembles the task-based approaches applied in translator training by González Davies (2004), Hurtado Albir (2015), and Colina's (2003). However, in classifying unit and task components, we were inspired by the framework presented by Gharaei, Parvaresh, and Ketabi (in press).

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Appendix

Steps in Integrated Course Design

Initial Phase: Build Strong Primary Components

1. Identify important situational factors.
2. Identify important learning goals.
3. Formulate appropriate feedback and assessment procedures.
4. Select effective teaching and learning activities.
5. Make sure the primary components are integrated.

Intermediate Phase: Assemble the Components into a Coherent Whole

6. Create a thematic structure for the course.
7. Select or create a teaching strategy.
8. Integrate the course structure and the instructional strategy to create an overall scheme of learning activities.

Final Phase: Finish Important Remaining Tasks

9. Develop the grading system.
10. Debug the possible problems.
11. Write the course syllabus.
12. Plan an evaluation of the course and of your teaching.

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