

A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF THE COLLABORATIVE TEACHING MODEL OF THE “TRANSLATION PRACTICE” COURSE AT GUANGXI UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES ON TRANSLATION*

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Abstract

The objectives of this study are: 1) to explore the impact of the collaborative teaching model on students' translation abilities in the Translation Practice course; 2) to analyze the effects of the model on the sub-dimensions of language proficiency, translation competence, and translation literacy; 3) to examine the relationships among cooperative learning atmosphere, task design, teacher guidance and feedback, and translation ability; and 4) to propose effective strategies for improving translation instruction through collaborative learning. This research adopts a quasi-experimental design with a comparative control method. The population consists of English majors from Guangxi University for Foreign Languages, and the sample comprises 140 students from the 2022 cohort, divided equally into an experimental group (collaborative teaching model) and a control group

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(traditional teaching model). Data were collected using standardized translation tests and a self-designed questionnaire, and analyzed through SPSS 26.0 using descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, correlation, and regression analysis.

The research results show that: 1) the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in translation ability ($M = 83.90$ vs. 74.47 , $t = 22.06$, $p < .001$); 2) the collaborative teaching model positively influenced all sub-dimensions of translation ability, with the greatest improvement in translation literacy ($M = 3.55$); 3) strong positive correlations were found among the cooperative learning atmosphere, task design, teacher feedback, and translation ability ($r > .80$, $p < .01$); and 4) regression analysis confirmed that the collaborative teaching model significantly predicted translation performance ($\beta = .961$, $R^2 = .922$, $p < .001$). The study concludes that the collaborative teaching model substantially enhances students' translation performance by fostering peer interaction, effective task engagement, and reflective teacher feedback. Recommended strategies include strengthening task authenticity, refining feedback mechanisms, and cultivating supportive cooperative learning environments to improve translation pedagogy in higher education.

Keywords: Collaborative Teaching Model, Translation Ability, Translation Competence, Translation Literacy, Translation Practice Course

Introduction

Translation plays a pivotal role in facilitating intercultural communication, serving as a vital bridge for the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and values across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In today's era of globalization and artificial intelligence, the demand for translators with high linguistic proficiency, professional competence, and translation literacy has increased significantly. Translation is no longer perceived as a mere process of

linguistic transfer but as a dynamic cognitive and social activity involving collaboration, problem-solving, and reflective learning (Kiraly, 2000; Pym, 2010). Consequently, translation pedagogy has evolved from product-oriented approaches to process-oriented and learner-centered models that emphasize students' active participation, interaction, and autonomy.

However, many translation courses in Chinese universities remain dominated by traditional, teacher-centered instruction. In such classrooms, teachers often monopolize the discourse, while students passively absorb theoretical knowledge and memorize linguistic equivalents without developing authentic translation strategies. This model leads to low motivation, limited communicative competence, and a disconnect between academic learning and professional practice (Cai, 2023; Miao, 2007). Addressing this gap is particularly important for application-oriented institutions such as Guangxi University for Foreign Languages, where practical training and cooperative learning are essential to achieving educational outcomes aligned with the translation industry's needs.

In response to these pedagogical challenges, the collaborative teaching model has emerged as an effective instructional innovation. Grounded in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and the principles of cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2009), the model emphasizes mutual support, peer interaction, and shared responsibility in the learning process. Within this framework, students co-construct meaning through authentic translation tasks, peer discussions, and reflective feedback, while teachers act as facilitators who scaffold learning and guide collaborative inquiry. Such interaction enables learners to operate within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and progressively develop higher-order cognitive and translation skills.

Previous research has shown that cooperative learning enhances cognitive engagement, problem-solving ability, and learner autonomy (Barros,

2011; Dooly & Sadler, 2016). However, empirical studies specifically examining collaborative teaching in translation education—especially quantitative investigations—remain limited. Most existing studies in China focus on general cooperative or task-based learning approaches without clearly defining the mechanisms or core dimensions of the collaborative model (Guo & He, 2022; Xiao, 2024). This research therefore addresses a significant gap by providing empirical evidence on how the collaborative teaching model affects students' translation ability, including the sub-dimensions of language proficiency, translation competence, and translation literacy.

The present study investigates the implementation of the collaborative teaching model in the Translation Practice course at Guangxi University for Foreign Languages. A 16-week quasi-experimental design was employed to compare the collaborative and traditional teaching models. Students in the experimental group participated in structured peer collaboration, group translation projects, and teacher-guided feedback sessions. The model was designed around three key components—learning atmosphere, task design, and teacher guidance and feedback—each assumed to contribute differently to translation performance.

The study is theoretically grounded in social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), collaborative learning theory (Johnson & Johnson, 2009), and the translation competence frameworks proposed by the PACTE Group (2017) and Transcom Project (Göpferich, 2011). These frameworks collectively suggest that translation ability develops through social interaction, reflective practice, and scaffolded engagement within authentic learning contexts.

Accordingly, this research aims to examine the overall impact of the collaborative teaching model on students' translation abilities. To analyze how its three structural components—learning atmosphere, task design, and teacher feedback—affect translation performance. To investigate the relationships among these components and the dimensions of translation competence. To propose



evidence-based pedagogical strategies for improving translation education through collaborative learning.

By combining theoretical and empirical perspectives, this study seeks to contribute to the modernization of translation pedagogy in China. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for teachers, curriculum designers, and institutions aiming to cultivate autonomous, reflective, and professionally competent translators equipped for the globalized communication era.

Objectives

- 1) to explore the impact of the collaborative teaching model on students' translation abilities in the Translation Practice course.
- 2) to analyze the effects of the model on the sub-dimensions of language proficiency, translation competence, and translation literacy.
- 3) to examine the relationships among cooperative learning atmosphere, task design, teacher guidance and feedback, and translation ability.
- 4) to propose effective strategies for improving translation instruction through collaborative learning.

Literature Review

The development of translation competence has long been a central topic in translation studies and translator education. Early models of translation training were primarily product-oriented, emphasizing the accuracy of translated texts rather than the process through which translators acquire and apply skills (Nord, 1997; House, 2015). However, with the rise of cognitive and sociocultural theories, translation has increasingly been viewed as a complex, process-oriented activity involving decision-making, problem-solving, and reflection (Göpferich, 2011; Kiraly, 2000). This paradigm shift has led to new approaches to

translation pedagogy that emphasize learner autonomy, collaboration, and professionalization.

One of the most influential frameworks in translation education is the PACTE model (2003, 2017), which defines translation competence as a system of interrelated sub-competences-bilingual, extra-linguistic, instrumental, strategic, and psycho-physiological. PACTE's research emphasizes that translation competence is not innate but gradually developed through guided practice and reflection. Similarly, the TransComp project (Göpferich, 2011) identifies the dynamic evolution of translation competence across time, highlighting the interplay between linguistic, instrumental, and strategic competences. These frameworks underscore that translation ability cannot be fully achieved through individual learning alone but requires social interaction and experiential engagement.

Chinese scholars have also contributed to this theoretical development. Cai Jigang (2023) argued that translation competence should be understood as a synthesis of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, extending beyond linguistic transfer to encompass intercultural understanding and professional literacy. Similarly, Wang Ke (2020) emphasized that translator education must integrate reflective learning and social collaboration to align with the demands of China's "Going Global" strategy. These studies converge on the idea that translation education must cultivate not only technical skill but also cognitive flexibility and professional identity-goals that naturally align with the collaborative teaching model.

The concept of collaborative learning originates from Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which posits that learning occurs through social interaction within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Knowledge is not transmitted from teacher to student but co-constructed among participants. Applying this theory to translation education, Kiraly (2012) introduced a social constructivist model of translator training, in which students learn translation through

authentic projects, teamwork, and reflection rather than passive reception of theoretical content. Kiraly's model fundamentally redefines the teacher's role as a facilitator and co-participant in learning, guiding students toward independent problem-solving and critical thinking.

Empirical studies have shown that collaborative translation tasks—such as peer revision, group translation projects, and collective terminology management—significantly improve both translation quality and learner engagement (Barros, 2011; Dooly & Sadler, 2016). Li (2018) found that group-based translation projects enhanced Chinese students' self-efficacy and critical awareness of translation strategies. Similarly, Deng Yuhua et al. (2023) demonstrated that cooperative classroom environments fostered students' motivation and reflection, particularly when teachers provided timely feedback and scaffolding. These findings align with Johnson and Johnson's (2009) theory of cooperative learning, which identifies five essential elements: positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing. Within this framework, collaboration transforms competition into mutual support, encouraging students to learn with and from each other.

The collaborative teaching model applied in translation classrooms integrates these theoretical principles by structuring cooperative activities around authentic translation tasks. It typically includes group translation projects, peer reviews, reflective journals, and teacher-guided feedback sessions (Kiraly, 2012; Wang & Fan, 2024). Through these structured interactions, students develop not only linguistic accuracy but also essential professional competences—such as teamwork, digital tool usage, and ethical decision-making—reflecting the multi-dimensional nature of modern translation practice.

Recent research in translation pedagogy identifies three core dimensions of collaborative teaching models: learning atmosphere, task design, and teacher guidance and feedback (Deng, 2023; Guo & He, 2022).

Learning atmosphere refers to the degree of mutual trust, respect, and support among students during cooperative activities. A positive environment promotes risk-taking and the free exchange of ideas (Barros, 2011).

Task design concerns the structure and challenge of translation tasks. Effective tasks should simulate real-world translation scenarios, balance complexity and attainability, and encourage critical reflection (Kiraly, 2012).

Teacher guidance and feedback ensure the quality of collaboration by providing scaffolding, formative assessment, and reflective prompts that help students internalize professional standards (Wang & Fan, 2024).

The interaction among these dimensions determines the overall effectiveness of the model. When designed appropriately, the collaborative model not only improves translation performance but also enhances meta-cognitive awareness, learning motivation, and professional literacy (Xu & Wang, 2024).

The concept of translation literacy has recently gained prominence as translation becomes increasingly integrated with digital and intercultural contexts. Translation literacy encompasses not only linguistic accuracy and strategy use but also professional ethics, teamwork, and awareness of translation quality assessment (Li, 2021; Pym, 2010). Within a collaborative framework, translation literacy is cultivated through peer evaluation, reflection, and authentic practice, which help students understand professional standards and develop critical judgment. For instance, Dooly (2017) found that project-based collaborative translation enhanced learners' awareness of translation responsibility, cross-cultural negotiation, and the ethical implications of textual mediation.

In the Chinese educational context, Cai (2023) emphasized the urgent need to embed translation literacy within curriculum design, aligning academic instruction with the demands of industry and global communication. The collaborative model provides an ideal pedagogical environment for this integration by linking theoretical knowledge to authentic teamwork and decision-making processes.

Synthesizing the above theories, this study conceptualizes the collaborative teaching model as an instructional system comprising three interdependent components-learning atmosphere, task design, and teacher feedback-each influencing different aspects of translation ability: language proficiency, translation competence, and translation literacy. Drawing upon the PACTE and TransComp frameworks, the model assumes that translation ability develops dynamically through cycles of interaction, reflection, and feedback.

This integrated approach aligns with social constructivist principles, positioning learners as co-constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients. It also resonates with the cooperative learning paradigm, which emphasizes shared goals, peer accountability, and collaborative problem-solving. Within this conceptual structure, translation education becomes not only a linguistic and cognitive process but also a social and ethical practice that prepares students for the demands of professional translation in the 21st century.

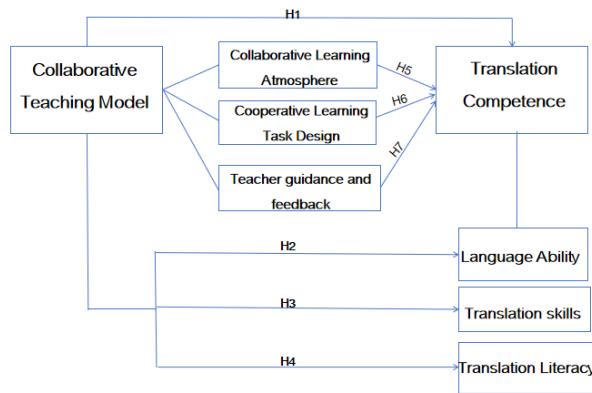


Figure 1: Research Content Framework

Methodology

This study adopted a quasi-experimental design to examine the effect of the collaborative teaching model on students' translation ability in the Translation Practice course at Guangxi University for Foreign Languages. A total of 140 English-major students were divided equally into an experimental group (collaborative model) and a control group (traditional method) over a 16-week semester. Data were collected through translation pre- and post-tests and a questionnaire assessing learning atmosphere, task design, and teacher feedback. The instruments were validated and showed high reliability. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, t-tests, correlation, and regression using SPSS, were employed to evaluate group differences and relationships among variables. Ethical standards were observed, with informed consent obtained from all participants.

Result

This section presents the quantitative results of the study examining the impact of the collaborative teaching model on students' translation abilities in

the Translation Practice course. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, correlation analysis, and regression modeling.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Academic Performance

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Experimental	70	83.90	2.73		
Control	70	74.47	2.31	22.04	0.011

Table 1 shows that the experimental group, which adopted the collaborative teaching model, achieved a significantly higher mean score ($M = 83.90$, $SD = 2.73$) than the control group ($M = 74.47$, $SD = 2.31$). This indicates that the collaborative teaching model effectively enhanced students' translation performance. The higher average reflects stronger engagement and peer interaction, supporting the view that cooperative learning promotes deeper understanding and practical competence in translation tasks (Vygotsky, 1978; Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Students' Evaluation on Collaborative

Dimension	Mean	SD
Collaborative Learning Atmosphere	3.36	1.11
Task Design	3.13	1.17
Teacher Guidance & Feedback	3.29	1.19
Translation Ability	3.35	1.04

Table 2 illustrates that students generally held positive perceptions toward the collaborative teaching model, with all mean scores exceeding 3.0

on a five-point scale. Among the dimensions, the cooperative learning atmosphere ($M = 3.36$) and teacher guidance and feedback ($M = 3.29$) received the highest ratings, indicating that an interactive and supportive environment, along with timely feedback, effectively enhanced students' engagement and confidence in translation learning (Slavin, 2015; Oxford, 2017).

Table 3 Correlation between Collaborative Teaching Model and Translation Ability

Variable	Correlation (r)	Sig. (p)
Collaborative Model → Translation Ability	.961**	< .001
Teacher Feedback → Translation Ability	.940**	< .001
Task Design → Translation Ability	.895**	< .001

Table 3 reveals a strong positive correlation between the collaborative teaching model and students' translation ability ($r = .961$, $p < .001$). Among the sub-dimensions, teacher feedback ($r = .940$) and task design ($r = .895$) showed particularly high correlations, indicating that effective guidance and well-structured tasks play crucial roles in improving translation performance. These results confirm that interaction, cooperation, and teacher support are key factors enhancing translation competence and literacy (Kiraly, 2014; Li, 2020).

In summary, the experimental group outperformed the control group in translation ability, demonstrating the effectiveness of the collaborative teaching model. Students expressed positive attitudes toward the cooperative learning environment, particularly regarding teacher guidance and teamwork. The strong correlations between the collaborative model and translation outcomes support the notion that interaction, feedback, and shared problem-solving are essential drivers of translation competence and literacy.

Conclusions

This study concludes that the collaborative teaching model has a significant and positive effect on enhancing students' translation ability in the Translation Practice course at Guangxi University for Foreign Languages. The experimental results confirmed that learners who engaged in cooperative translation activities, peer discussions, and guided feedback achieved higher academic performance than those in traditional teacher-centered settings.

The findings validate the theoretical principles of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and Kiraly's (2012) constructivist translation pedagogy, emphasizing that knowledge and competence are developed through social interaction, scaffolding, and reflective participation. The integration of collaborative learning elements—particularly task design, learning atmosphere, and teacher feedback—proved to be essential in promoting translation competence, literacy, and motivation.

Pedagogically, the study underscores that effective translation education should move beyond individual learning and adopt a collaborative framework that combines authentic translation projects, peer evaluation, and teacher facilitation. These approaches foster not only linguistic proficiency but also critical thinking, teamwork, and professional literacy—key qualities for translators in the digital and globalized era.

While the study was limited to one institution and a 16-week experimental period, the results provide valuable insights for future research and curriculum design. It is recommended that future studies extend this work through longitudinal and multi-institutional investigations to examine the long-term effects of collaborative pedagogy on translator identity, intercultural competence, and professional development.

In conclusion, the collaborative teaching model represents an effective and sustainable approach to translation education—one that bridges theory and

practice, cultivates learner autonomy, and aligns academic instruction with the professional standards of the contemporary translation industry.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the collaborative teaching model significantly enhanced students' translation ability in the Translation Practice course at Guangxi University for Foreign Languages. The experimental group achieved higher performance and showed more positive learning attitudes than the control group, confirming that cooperative learning principles effectively promote academic achievement, engagement, and reflective learning.

These results are consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which posits that learning occurs through social interaction and scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In this study, students co-constructed meaning, solved translation problems collaboratively, and improved their metacognitive awareness through peer discussion and teacher feedback. This reflects Kiraly's (2012) constructivist translation pedagogy, emphasizing that translation competence develops through authentic, socially situated learning rather than passive knowledge reception.

The analysis further revealed that teacher feedback and task design were the most influential components of the collaborative teaching model. Structured feedback helped students evaluate their translation strategies and reflect on problem-solving processes, while authentic task design increased engagement and realism. These results support Li (2020) and González Davies (2017), who highlight that realistic, project-based translation activities enhance learners' confidence and professional competence.

Moreover, a positive learning atmosphere played a crucial supporting role by fostering openness, trust, and mutual encouragement among students.



As noted by Barros (2011) and Deng (2023), such environments reduce anxiety and promote willingness to participate in collaborative decision-making-key to developing translation literacy and teamwork.

In summary, the discussion confirms that the success of the collaborative teaching model arises from the synergy among its three dimensions:

Learning atmosphere - creates psychological safety and motivation. Task design - ensures authenticity and cognitive challenge.

Teacher feedback - provides reflection and professional guidance.

Together, these elements transform the translation classroom into an interactive learning community that integrates theory with practice. The model not only enhances students' linguistic and strategic competences but also cultivates their autonomy, critical thinking, and professional literacy, aligning with modern translation education goals in the globalized era.

Recommendations

The study revealed that the collaborative teaching model significantly improved students' translation performance in the Translation Practice course at Guangxi University for Foreign Languages. Students in the experimental group achieved higher scores and expressed more positive attitudes toward learning, confirming that peer cooperation, reflective interaction, and teacher guidance play crucial roles in developing translation competence. These findings align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Kiraly's constructivist pedagogy, which emphasize that learning occurs most effectively through social collaboration and guided participation.

Teacher feedback and task design were found to be key components influencing learning outcomes. Timely, constructive feedback encouraged students to reflect on their translation strategies, while authentic translation

tasks enhanced engagement and professional awareness. A positive classroom atmosphere further supported teamwork, confidence, and creativity. Together, these factors created a dynamic and interactive learning environment that bridges theory and practice in translation education.

The study demonstrates that integrating collaborative learning principles into translation teaching can foster not only linguistic and strategic abilities but also critical thinking, teamwork, and professional literacy. Teachers are encouraged to adopt group translation projects, peer assessment, and reflective discussions to strengthen students' autonomy and engagement. Task design should also connect classroom learning with real-world translation practice.

Although the study was limited to one university and a 16-week period, the findings provide valuable evidence for reforming translation pedagogy. Future research should explore the long-term and cross-institutional effects of the collaborative teaching model to better understand its influence on translator identity, intercultural competence, and sustainable learning outcomes. Overall, the collaborative teaching model offers an effective and practical framework for improving translation education, promoting active learning, and preparing students for the professional demands of the modern translation industry.

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