PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF TRANSLATION STUDIES BEFORE AND AFTER A TRANSLATION COURSE

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Abstract

Although studies on student experiences of translation are widespread in the field of translation studies, they still remain limited in the field of English language teaching. To fill a gap in this field of research, the present study focuses on the pre-service English language teachers' experiences of translation as a practice and translation studies as a discipline at a state university. To this aim, an open-ended pre-test and an open-ended post-test questionnaire were designed to explore 40 senior ELT students' individual views on translation studies before and after a compulsory translation course and thus offer theoretical solutions to their common translation problems. Firstly, all students were taught basic translation theories, test types, strategies, and approaches throughout the course. Later, their responses to both questionnaires which involved elements related to these theoretical and practical aspects were analyzed through thematic coding in a qualitative manner. These responses produced several thematic categories for each question in each questionnaire. According to the results of the analysis, pre-service English language teachers developed a positive experience of translation and translation studies after being introduced to the above-mentioned theoretical and practical points throughout the course. This can be associated with the fact that they largely benefited from these theories for translation tasks given in the course, which improved their overall translation competence. The present study also provided useful ideas for decision-makers in bachelor's degree ELT programs and indicated the need for multidisciplinary cooperation between ELT and translation studies to increase the students' academic level in both departments.

Keywords: Pre-service EFL teachers, Compulsory translation course, Translation theory, Translation practice.

İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Çeviri Dersi Öncesi ve Sonrasında Çeviribilimle İlgili Deneyimleri

Öz

Öğrencilerin çeviri deneyimleri üzerine çalışmalar, çeviribilim alanında yaygın olsa da İngilizce öğretmenliği alanında henüz sınırlı sayıda kalmıştır. Bu alandaki boşluğu doldurmayı hedefleyen mevcut çalışma, bir devlet üniversitesindeki İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının bir uygulama alanı olarak çeviri ve bir disiplin olarak çeviribilimle ilgili deneyimlerine odaklanmaktadır. Bu amaca yönelik olarak, bir İngilizce öğretmenliği programının dördüncü sınıfında okuyan 40 öğrencinin çeviriye dair bireysel görüşlerini anlamak ve böylece onların ortak çeviri sorunlarına çözüm sunmak için zorunlu çeviri dersinin öncesinde ve sonrasında iki farklı açık uçlu anket tasarlanmıştır. Öncelikle tüm öğrencilere temel çeviri kuramları, metin türleri, çeviri stratejileri ve çeviri yaklaşımları ders boyunca öğretilmiştir. Sonrasında ise öğrencilerin bu kuramsal ve uygulamalı konulara dair öğeler içeren iki ankete verdiği yanıtlar, tematik kodlama kullanılarak nitel bir bakış açısıyla çözümlenmiştir. Verilen cevaplar, iki anketteki her bir soru için birden fazla tematik kategori ortaya çıkarmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının ders boyunca yukarıda adı geçen kuramsal ve uygulamalı noktaları öğrendikten sonra çeviri ve çeviribilim konusunda olumlu deneyimler yaşadığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu durum, öğretmen adaylarının ders içerisinde verilen çeviri ödevleri için bu kuramlardan büyük oranda yararlanmış ve bu şekilde genel çeviri yetkinliklerini artırmış olmalarıyla bağdaştırılabilir. Aynı zamanda mevcut çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenliği lisans programlarında yer alan karar vericiler için de faydalı fikirler sunmuş ve İngilizce öğretmenliği ile çeviribilim öğrencilerinin akademik seviyesini artırmak adına iki bölüm arasında çok disiplinli bir işbirliği ihtiyacı olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce öğretmeni adayları, Zorunlu çeviri dersi, Çeviri kuramı, Çeviri uygulaması.

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1. Introduction

Since the end of the nineteenth century, English as a Foreign Language (EFL)/English Language Teaching (ELT) scholars who deferred students from using their "*own language*" and translation in foreign language classes have long defended monolingual teaching (Hall & Cook, 2012, p. 271). The underlying reason for this was often their opposition to the domination of Grammar Translation Method throughout this period (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). However, towards the end of the twentieth century, it has been slowly acknowledged that translation, among other "*crosslingual activities*", could prove to be an effective strategy for language teaching and learning (Stern, 1992, p. 295). Malmkjær (1998) even argued that translation actually involved four main language skills, i.e. reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and, in a way, helped students practice language-related abilities. Similarly, according to Campbell (2002), translation could contribute to different areas of EFL teaching such as vocabulary, grammar and semantics. Cook (2001), too, advocated "*bringing the L1 back from exile*" in EFL to improve and innovate existing teaching methods (p. 419). There was also empirical evidence that learners themselves relied on the supporting role of translation in exploring linguistic complexities in their learning process (Liao, 2006). In this respect, Hall and Cook (2012) concluded that the division between the foreign language and translation seemingly ended in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, as the advantages of using multiple languages in a foreign language class were now being recognized.

Under these circumstances, integrating translation into EFL courses is now far from an unusual case. As Fois (2020) also points out, cultural, textual and communicative competence is of utmost importance for EFL students' linguistic knowledge, and translation practices can enhance these, since the above-mentioned three dimensions are also what skilled translators will surely need in a professional setting. Considering that EFL students are bound to become bilingual and "*will function in some way as a translator*", translation will eventually become "*the fifth macroskill*" for them in their career path (Campbell, 2002, p. 71). In other words, EFL students are likely to be expected to perform translation at some point of their lives due to the belief that a person with a sufficient knowledge of English will easily translate from their native language into English and vice versa. However, translation also requires training beyond sufficiency in two different languages and, as a result, a specialized translation training will definitely provide a different practical perspective for EFL students in terms of their approach towards learning a language.

The need for a specialized translation course which will endow EFL students with a satisfactory academic proficiency in translation has also been underlined as far as the undergraduate context in Türkiye is concerned (Genç & Özcan Dost, 2023). To this aim, in 2018, Turkish Council of Higher Education (YÖK) incorporated a compulsory translation course into bachelor's degree ELT programs at all universities in Türkiye. According to this, ELT students attend a weekly three-hour translation course in which they translate from and to both languages, i.e. English and Turkish (Council of Higher Education, 2018). The present study also focuses on this course at a state university in Türkiye and analyzes pre-service EFL teachers' experiences of translation studies before and after a compulsory translation course in a bachelor's degree ELT program. The main research questions to be answered can be listed as follows:

1. How do students' knowledge of translation theories affect their experiences of translation studies?

2. How do students' knowledge of text types affect their experiences of translation studies?

3. How do students' knowledge of translation strategies affect their experiences of translation studies?

4. How do students' knowledge of target audience affect their experiences of translation studies?

2. Literature Review

The number of academic studies on EFL/ELT students' translation skills is relatively limited compared to those focusing on professional training at the departments of translation and interpreting. In the existing literature, the research on the relationship between translation and EFL/ELT can be roughly divided into two visible tendencies. The first striking research topic is the position of translation in language learning and teaching. The topic can be divided into two groups, since researchers usually dealt with either EFL/preparatory class students or ELT students. For instance, Shoeib (2016) investigated EFL students' and teachers' perspectives towards the influence of translation on language learning at different grade levels and found that despite significant differences between students' and teachers' perspectives, the students displayed a positive attitude towards the practice, giving teachers a valid reason to benefit from translation as a teaching strategy. Similarly, Genç et al. (2022) investigated two different groups of preparatory class students' (upper intermediate and advanced vs. pre-intermediate and intermediate levels) attitudes towards the use of translation as a language learning strategy and indicated that the students' proficiency levels did not characterize their perceptions of the contribution of translation to language learning. Khoshnood and Kafiopour (2023), too, explored the impact of translation into L1 on intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary skills and demonstrated that it became a significant learning strategy for the students. Turning to teachers' perspectives about the use of translation as a teaching strategy in EFL, Badda and Vázquez (2024) interviewed ten different teachers to understand the contribution of translation exercises to beginner level EFL learners' reading comprehension and reported that teachers regarded translation into the students' native language as useful, particularly for culture-based reading passages. In a similar vein, El Boubekri (2024) examined secondary school teachers' perceptions of the translation use in EFL classes and revealed that despite discrepancies among teachers' personal methods, L1 was unavoidable option for language teaching in EFL settings. Likewise, Smagul (2024) analyzed 100 different secondary school teachers' attitudes towards integrating students' first language into EFL classes and reported that while these teachers acknowledged some benefits of translation into L1, their preferences were also decided by other factors such as curricula, textbooks, and colleagues. As for the second group of researchers in this topic, Aktekin and Uysal Gliniecki (2015) delved into the role of translation as a learning strategy for ELT students and demonstrated that these students regarded translation as a useful and facilitative strategy that assisted their overall language learning experience. Similarly, Bekereci Şahin (2022) analyzed the contributory aspects of translation courses to pre-service EFL teachers' professional skills in bachelors' degree ELT programs and reported that these courses were remarkably fruitful when it comes to increasing pre-service EFL teachers' linguistic skills, manifesting the need to increase hours allocated to these courses to help EFL teachers pursue their prospective careers as translators. In another study, Genç and Özcan Dost (2023) again discussed the controversial position of translation courses in bachelor's degree ELT programs in Türkiye. They suggested that these courses should offer a multi-dimensional and flexible training structure to underline better the role of translation in language learning and teaching and to familiarize students with different text types, linguistic structures, and theoretical approaches in the field of translation studies. Finally, Siregar et al. (2024) created the Case Study Learning Model to improve students' level of English through translation in an ELT course and reported that the model was an effective tool in overcoming students' linguistic problems.

The second tendency in the existing literature is to problematize of EFL/ELT students' mistakes in the translation process. For example, Akkoyunlu (2017) employed a data-driven learning (DDL) approach to create a research design that would increase prospective ELT teachers' awareness and performance on translating lexical collections in a translation course. The findings suggested that DDL

approach could decrease prospective ELT teachers' translation errors and improve their lexical repertoire and thus could be effectively used as a supportive tool in translation courses of ELT programs. In a similar study, Arslan and Kavaklı (2019) performed a document analysis on the assignments of 30 prospective EFL teachers at a state university to list their translation errors and prove the helpfulness of error analysis in measuring their translation performance. It was demonstrated that they mostly made structural, lexical and interpretive mistakes in their translation tasks, thus requiring their lecturers to fix them and improve their language use. Similarly, Kitjaroonchai and Kitjaroonchai (2023) compared individual and collaborative translation performances of 20 English majors at a private university to list their translation errors. They found out that the most frequent errors were related to word choice, articles, and prepositions and that collaborative translation activities remarkably reduced the number of errors.

The most notable point in the studies mentioned above is their persisting lack of engagement with fundamental translation theories when EFL teachers attempt to rely on translation as a learning strategy. Emphasizing the significance of theoretical knowledge in enhancing students' translation skills, Snell-Hornby (1985) rightly contends that a preliminary textual analysis on linguistic transfer methods between two languages and a discussion of translation problems based on these theoretical strategies will immensely help students overcome practical obstacles in a translation process. In line with Snell-Hornby's (1985) suggestion, the following theoretical issues in translation studies were introduced to pre-service EFL teachers in the present study to familiarize them with fundamental translation theories and contribute to their translation decisions.

The first theoretical point introduced to pre-service EFL teachers was Jakobson's pioneering definition of types of translation, which later paved the way for the emergence of translation studies and its sub-categories. Jakobson (2000) divided translation into three different types: (1) interlingual translation, (2) intralingual translation, and (3) intersemiotic translation. According to this tripartite categorization, intralingual translation is the act of translation within the same language where the same text is transferred from a certain verbal sign, i.e. an alphabet, into another one. Interlingual translation constitutes the most well-known act of translation today, i.e. *translation proper*, where a text in a given language is transferred into another language. Finally, intersemiotic translation is transferring a text in a sign system into another one, such as adapting a literary work to the cinema (Jakobson, 2000).

The second theoretical point introduced was Reiss' categorization of text types. According to Reiss (2000), the notion of text type cannot be restricted to "*a single linguistic or cultural context*" because these text genres, particularly written examples, are often encountered in almost all societies (p. 163). In this sense, three main text types can be listed based on the communication of content, artistic/aesthetic form and persuasive character, respectively: (1) informative texts, (2) expressive texts, and (3) operative texts (Reiss, 2000). For instance, a newspaper report can be considered as an informative text, while a lyrical poem is an expressive text and a sales promotion is often an operative text (Reiss, 2000). The fourth text type is multimodal, in which a written text is combined with a visual or audio text, such as a song or a movie (Reiss, 2000).

The third theoretical point introduced was direct and oblique translation strategies proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) who divided the former into three categories: (1) borrowing, (2) calque, and (3) literal translation. As for oblique translation strategies, there are four different methods: (1) transposition, (2) modulation, (3) equivalence, and (4) adaptation (Vinay & Darbelnet, 2000). It must be noted that while more than one strategy can be used in a single sentence, each method, particularly oblique translation strategies, can be employed by a translator obligatorily or optionally depending on the translation problem at hand (Vinay & Darbelnet, 2000).

The fourth theoretical point introduced was a group of equivalence approaches which started to appear in the early 1960s. Discarding obsolete adjectives used throughout the history to label translations such as "*free*", "*faithful*" or "*literal*", modern translation studies scholars renamed "*basic orientations*" in a translation process in a binary fashion: (1) source-oriented and (2) target-oriented translation (Munday, 2001, p. 41). In this respect, various scholars offered binary classifications such as formal and dynamic equivalence (Nida, 1964), semantic and communicative translation (Newmark, 1981), overt and covert translation (House, 1997), and adequate and acceptable translation (Toury, 2012). In this way, students were informed about possible directions they could decide in a translation process depending on their target audience's expectations.

It can be inferred from various studies in the existing literature that EFL/ELT scholars have not so far touched upon the necessity of teaching students translation theories as a preliminary basis for translation tasks in an EFL/ELT or a translation course. Therefore, to fill this gap in the literature, the present study draws attention to the benefits of fundamental translation theories for ELT students' success in translation practice. To this end, unlike the above-mentioned studies which employ translation as a language learning method or as a tool to pinpoint students' linguistic and/or grammatical errors, it attempts to familiarize pre-service EFL teachers with four different theoretical aspects of translation explained above to remedy their common translation problems and boost their translation proficiency. Thus, it aims to increase their awareness on the concrete relationship between theory and practice and, with the lens of translation studies, to strengthen their capacity as prospective teachers and translators.

3. Methodology

The present study was designed as a qualitative case study. It is an effective analytical method which enables researchers to observe and generalize relevant behaviors in a certain group of people or in a phenomenon (Yin, 2003). In this sense, the present study dealt with a compulsory translation course as a case study in which a certain group of student's, i.e. pre-service EFL teachers, individual opinions were observed within the framework of a predetermined course content to reach generalizations about their experiences of the course in question. Furthermore, the use of two open-ended questionnaires instead of a Likert scale and the participants' individual responses to them makes it a qualitative one.

3.1. Study Design and Group

The purposive sampling method was used to encourage 40 pre-service EFL teachers who study at a state university's bachelor's degree ELT program to participate in the present study voluntarily. After being informed about the objectives and content of the study, the participants were asked to answer two open-ended questionnaires, i.e., a pre-test prior to a compulsory translation course and a post-test following the same course, to express their opinions on and experiences of the course and translation studies in general. They were given 30 minutes for each questionnaire.

Table 1

The Participants' Descriptive Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Translation course/training experience	Frequency
Male	25% (n=10)	Yes	5% (n=2)
Female	75% (n=30)	No	95% (n=38)
Total	40	**Total**	40

The present study's participants were 40 senior students enrolled in a compulsory translation course at a state university during the fall semester of 2023-2024 academic year. Three-fourths of the

participants were females, while only a quarter were males. Additionally, 95% of the participants (n=38) had not taken any translation training prior to their compulsory translation course.

3.2. Data Collection

There were four different questions in each questionnaire. While the pre-test involved four questions on the participants' previous translation experiences, current knowledge of translation theories and text types, and approach towards target audience in translation, the post-test delved into potential changes in the participants' views on translation theories, text types, translation strategies taught in the course, and approaches towards the target audience. The participants were also asked follow-up questions to obtain more details about their responses. Despite the participants' adequate knowledge of English, the questionnaires were given out in Turkish so that they could better express their views on open-ended questions.

The validity of both questionnaires was based on the definition of construct- and content-related validity by Fraenkel et al. (2011). According to this, validity in qualitative research takes into account the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of a research instrument, and while construct-related validity points to the consistency of an instrument with theoretical expectations, content-related validity refers to its logical content and structure (Fraenkel et al., 2011). To ensure construct-related validity, both questionnaires in the present study were prepared in accordance with four research questions derived from translation theories in the course content. Later, to check content-related validity, two different researchers, i.e. one in the field of ELT and one in translation studies, were requested to examine both questionnaires, and their feedbacks were used to shape the questions into their final form. As for reliability, Fraenkel et al. (2011) again suggest that writing down the questions and comparing different participants' descriptions of the same occasion are among solutions that can help qualitative researchers strenghten the reliability of a research instrument. As such, to ensure reliability in both questionnaires, the participants were asked to answer questions in written form, and their individual responses to the same question were quoted in the data analysis to highlight similarities in them.

3.3. Data Analysis

After the participants completed both questionnaires, we performed thematic coding to classify the participants' responses to each question in the pre-test and post-test. According to Saldaña (2009), based on the researchers' intuitive senses, thematic coding allows researchers to categorize responses with similar characteristics systematically. Considering this, we treated responses with similar words, sentences or views as a set of similar data for our qualitative analysis. Besides, all responses were coded by both researchers to reach consensus on the thematic categories of each question. In addition, Saldaña (2009) suggested that we quoted some of the individual answers to demonstrate overlapping points in the participants' responses in a thematic category.

3.4 Ethical Approval

For the objectives of the present study, an ethical committee approval with the decision number 2023-42 was obtained from Social Sciences and Humanities Ethical Committee at a state university on 01.12.2023. In addition, as stated before, all participants were informed about the objectives of the present study in detail beforehand, and they were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time during the survey.

4. Findings

4.1. Pre-test

A pre-test questionnaire was utilized to investigate the participants' experiences of translation and knowledge of translation theories before the compulsory translation course. Based on the existing literature, essential aspects of translation studies such as translation practice, text types, translation strategies, and target audience approach were prioritized in this questionnaire. The reason why it included only yes/no questions lies in the fact that its main objective was to evaluate pre-service EFL teachers' existing knowledge of translation studies briefly and without any further details regarding their past translation activities. In other words, it was designed to prove their lack of knowledge and experience in this field, which, in return, laid the groundwork for the post-test questionnaire.

Table 2

The Participants' Experiences of Translation Studies Before the Course

Questions	Responses	Frequency
1. Did you have any knowledge translation experience before the translation course?	Yes	52.5% (n=21)
	No	47.5% (n=19)
	Total	100% (n=40)
2. Did you have any knowledge about translation theories before the translation course?	Yes	5% (n=2)
	No	95% (n=38)
	Total	100% (n=40)
3. Did you have any knowledge about text types before the translation course?	Yes	55% (n=22)
	No	45% (n=18)
	Total	100% (n=40)
4. Were there any factors that determined your approach towards target audience before the translation course?	Yes	20% (n=8)
	No	80% (n=32)
	Total	100% (n=40)

The first question aimed to document the participants' previous translation experience. Although more than half of the participants, i.e. 52.5% (n=21), performed some translation, 47.5% of them (n=19) did not deal with any translation before taking the compulsory translation course. As such, their responses indicate that translation has become an inevitable task for pre-service EFL teachers, possibly due to the assumption that individuals with a certain level of English can translate naturally and are somehow asked to do so once they reach a certain level of English. The second question explored the participants' preliminary knowledge of translation theories. It was evident that an overwhelming majority of the participants, i.e. 95% (n=38), were not familiar with basic translation theories, while only 5% (n=2) of them stated that they had a limited knowledge of these theories. The third question discovered the participants' knowledge of text types at the beginning of the translation course. It was observed that more than half of the participants, i.e. 55% (n=22), were familiar with text types, since it is likely that they were commissioned to translate various texts in the past. However, 45% (n=18) of them stated that they were not familiar with any text types because they did not have any tangible translation experience. Finally, the fourth question sought the participants' approach towards their target audience. Most of the participants, i.e. 80% (n=32), reported that there were no links between their specific target audience and translation, since, again, they were not probably familiar with the crucial role of target audience in a translation process. Nevertheless, 20% (n=8) of them demonstrated that they considered the target audience while they translated.

4.2. Post-test

A post-test questionnaire was applied to investigate the participants' views on the compulsory translation course and gain insight into any potential changes in their experiences of theoretical and practical issues in translation studies. As seen in Table 3, their responses on translation theories, text types, translation strategies, and target audience yielded several thematic categories for each question.

Table 3

The Participants' Experiences of Translation Studies Following the Course

Questions	Response category	Frequency
1. How have translation theories affected your experience of translation studies?	Depth and complexity	27.5% (n=11)
	Theoretical familiarity	22.5% (n=9)
	Self-sufficiency	20% (n=8)
	Context	15% (n=6)
	Objective	12.5% (n=5)
	Neutral	2.5% (n=1)
	Total	100% (n=40)
2. How have text types affected your experience of translation studies?	Textual awareness	67.5% (n=27)
	Contribution	17.5% (n=7)
	Textual knowledge	10% (n=4)
	Neutral	5% (n=2)
	Total	100% (n=40)
3. How have translation strategies affected your experience of translation studies?	Easiness	50% (n=20)
	Cultural details	20% (n=8)
	Accuracy	17.5% (n=7)
	Neutral	12.5% (n=5)
	Total	100% (n=40)
4. How has target audience affected your experience of translation studies?	Importance of target audience	32.5% (n=13)
	Appropriate language	30% (n=12)
	Demographic features	15% (n=6)
	Facilitating approach	12.5% (n=5)
	Neutral	10% (n=4)
	Total	100% (n=40)

The first question aimed to explore the participants' opinions on translation theories. Their responses to this question can be categorized into six different groups based on their perceptions about the contributions of translation theories to their translation skills. The first group, which corresponded to 27.5% (n=11) of all participants, stated that translation theories raised their awareness on the depth of translation which "*was profound*" (Respondent 3) and "*never superficial*" (Respondent 6, 9, 16, 26, 28) as a practice and thus "*should not be done haphazardly*" (Respondent 5). Some participants also drew attention to its complexity because they realized that translation "*was not fairly simple*" (Respondent 19, 20) or "*was not as easy as it seemed*" (Respondent 24). The second group of participants corresponded to 22.5% (n=9) of all participants and underlined that the compulsory translation course informed them about the existence of "*something called translation theory*" (Respondent 13). As such, it helped them "*choose a suitable theoretical approach for translation*" (Respondent 1), "*increase*

technical knowledge about translation" (Respondent 8), "*understand why translation without theory could turn out to be a vain effort*" (Respondent 10), "*manage translation activities according to theories*" (Respondent (25), and "*perform translation in a more effective way*" (Respondent 22). The third group comprised 20% (n=8) of all participants and stressed the impact of translation theories on their self-sufficiency as novice translators. Their responses indicated their "*belief in their translation ability*" (Respondent 18, 32), "*positivity towards translation*" (Respondent 17, 21), and "*level of knowledge about translation*" (Respondent 29) were affected in a positive manner after translation theories had been introduced to them. The fourth group, which consisted 15% (n=6) of all participants, mentioned how they "*started to pay more attention to contextual aspects*" in translation thanks to their growing knowledge of translation theories throughout the course (Respondent 4, 11, 23, 27, 31). The fifth group was equal to 12.5% (n=5) of all participants and therefore a relatively small group compared to previous ones. After studying translation theories, the participants in this group inferred that the "*objective of a translation task*" was the most important subject matter in the translation process (Respondent 2, 12, 14). The last group was only 2.5% (n=1) of all participants and remained neutral, as they argued that translation theories did not contribute to and change their experiences of translation studies.

The second question revealed the connection between the participants' familiarization with text types and any potential changes in their approaches to translation studies. Their responses can be divided into four different groups. The first group corresponded to 67.5% (n=27) of all participants and emphasized text types' contribution to their general textual awareness. According to them, an increasing knowledge of text types greatly shaped their "*translation approach*" (Respondent 5, 7, 12, 16, 24, 31, 32, 33, 38, 41), "*language use*" (Respondent 13, 14), "*vocabulary choice*" (Respondent 8), and "*awareness on translation in general*" (Respondent 25, 26, 27, 30, 34, 36, 42). The participants in the second group, which constituted 17.5% (n=7) of all participants, stated that a preliminary analysis on the type of a text prior to the translation process "*contributed to translation performance*" (Respondent 4), "*helped translate literary texts easily*" (Respondent 10), "*helped differentiate between easy and difficult parts of a text*" (Respondent 11), "*strengthened translation skills*" (Respondent 22), and "*affected translation approach positively*" (Respondent 35). The third group, which comprised 10% (n=4) of all participants, viewed text types as a significant acquisition of the course, since they learned "*the features of different text types*" (Respondent 6, 18, 39) and "*how to identify the type of a given text*" (Respondent 21). Finally, the fourth group, which consisted of 5% (n=2) of all participants, believed that they were not positively affected by the text types taught in the course. Thus, they can be said to have maintained a neutral experience of the theoretical point in question.

The third question analyzed the extent to which the participants benefited from theoretical translation strategies in the course syllabus. According to the thematic analysis, their responses fall into four different groups. The first group, which consisted 50% (n=20) of all participants, resorted to these strategies to alleviate translation problems in a translation task. In other words, translation strategies enabled them to "*translate more easily*" (Respondent 7, 10, 12, 15, 25, 27, 32, 37), "*understand which part of the sentence should be translated firstly*" (Respondent 1, 2, 5, 37) and "*focus better on the problematic parts of a text*" (Respondent 11, 13, 14). The second group, which comprised 20% (n=8) of all participants, claimed that translation strategies highlighted the central role of culture in translation for them, as they "*found out why and how each text should be translated in its own cultural setting*" (Respondent 19, 20, 28, 29), "*selected vocabulary in line with the cultural background of a text*" (Respondent 33, 34), and "*adjusted their strategies based on the cultural elements in a text*" (Respondent 36). The third group, which was equal to 17.5% (n=7) of all participants, drew on translation strategies to ensure the accuracy of their translations. Translation strategies usually helped them "*translate more accurately*" (Respondent 4, 18, 24) and "*avoid translating randomly*" (Respondent 6, 21) or "*word-for-*

word" (Respondent 8). Similar to the previous question, the fourth group, which corresponded to 12.5% (n=5) of all participants, included those who adopted a neutral approach towards theoretical translation strategies, as they did not deliberately use a translation strategy against a specific translation problem.

The fourth question examined whether the target audience affected the participants' experiences of the text during translation. Their individual responses to this question can be divided into five different groups based on the way in which they adjusted their translation approach for a specific target audience. The first group comprised 32.5% (n=13) of all participants and gained consciousness about the decisive position of target audience in the reception of a translated text. As a result, they learned how to "*always remember the existence of a target audience*" (Respondent 3, 5, 35, 36), "*differentiate between differences in an intended target audience*" (Respondent 14, 25, 27) and "*make textual choices according to the target audience's expectations*" (10, 13, 15, 16, 31). The second group corresponded to 30% (n=12) of all participants and prioritized the use of an appropriate language which would address the target audience appropriately, as the target audience may expect "*specific vocabulary*" (Respondent 4, 17, 26, 33), "*a plain and understandable language*" (Respondent 12, 22, 34, 38) or "*certain cultural elements*" (Respondent 18, 23, 30). The third group, which consisted 15% (n=6) of all participants, seemed to take demographic features of the target audience into account because their "*age groups*" (Respondent 20, 24) or "*ethnicity and religion*" (28, 29) could determine their translation decisions when building the target text. The fourth group, which corresponded to 12.5% (n=5) of all participants, relied on their knowledge of target audience expectations to facilitate their translation process. The reason underlying it was the fact that being familiar with the target audience "*made it easier to translate*" (Respondent 8, 32), "*boosted confidence in the suitability of translation decisions*" (Respondent 11), and "*shape the target text in the right context*" (Respondent 37). The fifth and last group was equal to 10% (n=4) of all participants and stated that they did not specifically outline their target text according to the social traits and expectations of a specific target audience.

5. Discussion

One of the visible findings of the pre-test questionnaire was nearly half of the participants' inexperience when it comes to practical dimension of translation. In this respect, it is possible to state that the compulsory translation course introduced the fundamental steps of a translation process to pre-service EFL teachers and provided them with a face-to-face and first-hand translation experience, which can be considered as a theoretical and practical gain, respectively, and a positive impact on their experiences of translation studies. In addition, the course also prepared them mentally against the assumption that EFL teachers will eventually face the need to perform translation in their career because of societal perceptions about their bilingual abilities. Similar to the findings in the present study, Bekereci Şahin (2022) also stresses the significance of improving pre-service EFL teachers' translation performance as the "*fifth skill*", offering them an initial step towards a "*second career option*" (p. 41), and Siregar et al. (2024) view translation "*as an essential skill*" for students who study at English-related departments (p. 144).

Another striking finding of the pre-test questionnaire was that most participants had not familiarized themselves even with the most fundamental translation theories, while the remaining group possessed a limited sense of these theories. However, the post-test questionnaire made it clear that this negative outlook changed considerably, as the participants' increasing knowledge of translation theories throughout the course raised their awareness on critical issues such as the depth and complexity of translation, crucial position of context and objective in translation or achieving self-sufficiency in translation. Given the quite low number of the participants familiar with basic translation theories in the pre-test and high frequency of responses about positive contributions of these theories to the participants' translation skills in the post-test, it can be argued that the introduction of translation theories

affected pre-service EFL teachers' experiences of translation studies positively. In another study on pre-service EFL teachers' translation errors, Arslan and Kavaklı (2019) reported that the participants made structural, lexical and translational errors in their translation tasks. However, their given solutions did not involve the integration of translation theories to pre-service EFL teachers' translation courses; instead, they suggested writing assignments and/or using a dictionary to improve the participants' translation skills (Arslan & Kavaklı, 2019). Kitjaroonchai and Kitjaroonchai (2023) also observed that university EFL students often produced syntactically, semantically and culturally inaccurate translations and argued that collaborative translation could offer a solid solution to such common mistakes, ignoring the crucial position of theoretical knowledge in translation again. When compared to these studies, the present study yields a significant finding and a more viable solution to the same groups', i.e. pre-service EFL teachers and university EFL students, translation problems through translation theories, which was also acknowledged by the participants themselves in the post-test questionnaire.

Translation strategies categorized into different methods can also be classified as a type of translation theory, as they offer a theoretical perspective towards a given translation problem. In line with this conception, another theory-related observation of the present study was the relative impact of categorical translation strategies on the participants' perceptions of their individual translation performance. According to the findings of the post-test, it was found that translation strategies by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) introduced throughout the course created a positive atmosphere in the course for the participants since they facilitated their translation tasks through increasing their understanding of culture in translation and improving their level of accuracy. Considering most of the participants' emphasis on the positive outcomes such as "*easiness*" and "*accuracy*" as well as their previous lack of knowledge about translation theories, it can be stated that translation strategies made further positive contribution to pre-service EFL teachers' experiences of translation studies. Similarly, Akkoyunlu (2017) mentions how designing a theoretical training model aimed at teaching students translation strategies can significantly improve their translation performance. As a result, the findings of this study broadly overlap with those of the present study.

Another indication of the pre-test questionnaire was that one out of two participants in the present study was familiar with text types classified by Reiss (2000), which can be regarded as a surprising finding when compared to the low frequency of the participants familiar with translation theories and strategies before the course. The main reason the participants initially saw themselves knowledgeable about text types may result from the fact that they mistook the notion of "text type" with "genre" in their past translations, given that nearly half of the participants performed translation before the course. As for the post-test questionnaire, it was observed that the introduction of text types by Reiss (2000) to pre-service EFL teachers contributed to their translation skills from varying perspectives such as raising their textual awareness and giving them useful knowledge about the text to be translated. Another intriguing finding related to text types is that even though more than half of the participants were familiar with text types beforehand, the number of participants who found text types facilitative was much higher, demonstrating the potential contribution of text types to their translation performance. In other words, it can be contended that a basic knowledge of text types positively contributed to pre-service EFL teachers' experiences of translation studies. It must be also noted that none of the above-mentioned studies in the existing literature point to the potential benefit of text types for a pre-service EFL teacher's translation skills, which can be listed as another contributory finding of the present study.

The last finding of the pre-test questionnaire was that only one out of five participants was aware of the relationship between a translated text and its intended target audience during translation. It can be deduced from this finding that the participants used to focus on their individual textual choices more without allocating sufficient time to shaping their target text in parallel with the potential target

audience's expectations. However, the findings of the post-test indicated that the introduction of various binary translation approaches to pre-service EFL teachers throughout the course mostly helped them realize the central role of target audience in translation and manage their linguistic choices accordingly. As a result, it can be suggested that binary translation approaches turned pre-service EFL teachers' experiences of translation studies into a positive one. In a similar study on university EFL students' translation performance, Kitjaroonchai and Kitjaroonchai (2023) accentuated that a lack of knowledge about binary translation approaches may cause novice translators to create meaningless sentences in the target language. Drawing attention to this potential threat, Genç and Özcan Dost (2023) pointed out that translation course syllabuses in bachelor's degree ELT programs in Türkiye covered translation approaches to familiarize students with theoretical and practical aspects of translation. Hence, when the participants' responses in the present study are considered, the advantages of introducing these approaches have been proven empirically, justifying the decision to integrate them into ELT curricula.

6. Conclusions and Suggestions

The present study explored pre-service EFL teachers'experiences of translation studies before and after a translation course at a state university in Türkiye. In spite of the stereotypical assumption in the society that ELT students and/or pre-service EFL teachers can naturally translate any text, the study revealed that they did not always find their practical skills sufficient for translation tasks. In relation to this, the participants' responses to four open-ended questions in the pre-test and post-test questionnaire verified that pre-service EFL teachers' fundamental theoretical knowledge about translation notably boosted their confidence in their translation capacity and performance. In the wider sense, the present study emphasized that it was essential and beneficial to acquire a basic knowledge of translation theories for pre-service EFL teachers if they wish to perform as a professional translator in their future career. In addition to the participants' responses that showed the usefulness of course content to a large extent, another indicator of success for theoretical translation training in this course was the fact that 36 out of 40 students who took part in the present study managed to pass the course with a final grade of AA or BA. Overall, translation theories presented a concrete remedy to their current translation problems before the compulsory translation course.

The most visible limitations of the present study are its relatively low number of participants and its sole focus on a compulsory translation course at a single state university in Türkiye. However, its limited findings may also provide a basis for further interdisciplinary research and collaboration with other universities to develop better translation course content, since the survey findings and discussion above highlight an evident need to continue integrating translation courses into bachelor's degree ELT curricula. Even basic translation training within the framework of translation theories can remarkably contribute to pre-service EFL teachers' professional qualities and development in the long run. Other studies on the same topic, too, touch upon the need for the multidimensional and flexible revision of translation courses to maximize the contribution of translation to ELT students' special language learning and teaching needs (Bekereci Şahin, 2022; Genç & Özcan Dost, 2023). All of these overarching suggestions call for a multidisciplinary collaboration among language-related university departments in Türkiye. Ideally, future cooperation between ELT and translation and interpreting departments will be particularly useful in designing a fruitful undergraduate curriculum for both departments.

7. References

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