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การใช้โครงการเป็นฐานในรายวิชาการแปลเชิงธุรกิจ :  
การสำรวจผลลัพธ์และการรับรู้ของผู้เรียน

**Implementing Project-based Learning in Business Translation Course:  
An Exploration of Outcomes and Learners' Perceptions**

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ได้รับทุนอุดหนุนการวิจัยและนวัตกรรมจากงบประมาณเงินรายได้  
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## บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยในครั้งนี้ ใช้ทฤษฎีวัฒนธรรมเชิงสังคมของ Vygotsky (1998) เป็นกรอบแนวคิดพื้นฐานในการศึกษาผลลัพธ์ของการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงงานเป็นฐาน (PjBL) ที่นำมาใช้ในรายวิชาการแปรรูปธุรกิจ และวิเคราะห์การรับรู้ของผู้เรียนเกี่ยวกับการนำไปใช้ดังกล่าว โดยใช้วิธีการสุ่มตัวอย่างแบบเจาะจง กลุ่มตัวอย่างในงานวิจัยประกอบด้วยนิสิตจำนวน 80 คน ซึ่งกำลังศึกษาอยู่ชั้นปีที่ 4 วิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยทักษิณ จังหวัดสงขลา เครื่องมือวิจัยที่ใช้มี 3 ประเภท ได้แก่ การสังเกต การเขียนสะท้อนคิด และการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง ซึ่งการสังเกตใช้เก็บข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับผลลัพธ์ของการใช้ PjBL ในชั้นเรียน ส่วนการเขียนสะท้อนคิดและการสัมภาษณ์ ใช้เพื่อรวบรวมข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับการรับรู้ของผู้เรียนที่มีต่อการใช้ PjBL ข้อมูลที่ได้จะนำมาวิเคราะห์ด้วยการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา เพื่อระบุแก่นสาระและตีความแก่นสาระเหล่านั้น

ผลการวิจัยเกี่ยวกับผลลัพธ์ของการใช้ PjBL แบ่งได้เป็น 4 ประเด็นหลัก ได้แก่ การจัดที่นั่งในชั้นเรียน การมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างผู้สอนและผู้เรียน การทำงานร่วมกันเป็นกลุ่ม และแรงจูงใจของผู้เรียนในการร่วมกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้ ส่วนผลการวิจัยเกี่ยวกับการรับรู้ของผู้เรียนที่มีต่อการทำกิจกรรม PjBL พบว่า ผู้เรียนมองเห็นทั้งในแง่ประโยชน์ และความท้าทายที่เกิดขึ้น ในด้านประโยชน์ ผู้เรียนแสดงความเห็นว่า PjBL ช่วยพัฒนาทักษะการคิดเชิงวิจารณ์ญาณ เพิ่มแรงจูงใจในการเรียนรู้ เสริมสร้างการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กับผู้สอน เพิ่มโอกาสให้ผู้เรียนได้ใช้เทคโนโลยีดิจิทัลใหม่ ๆ มองเห็นศักยภาพของเพื่อนร่วมกลุ่ม เข้าใจกลวิธีการแปรรูปและได้รับความรู้ด้านการแปรรูปเพิ่มขึ้น และได้พัฒนาทักษะการทำงานร่วมกับผู้อื่น ส่วนความท้าทายที่ผู้เรียนได้ระบุถึง ประกอบด้วย การหลีกเลี่ยงการถามคำถามเพื่อแสดงความเคารพที่มีต่อผู้สอน ความรู้สึกอายในการแสดงความคิดเห็นเมื่ออภิปรายในกลุ่ม การยึดติดกับวิธีการสอนแบบเดิมที่เน้นผู้สอนเป็นศูนย์กลาง การมองว่างานบางอย่างในกิจกรรม PjBL ไม่เกี่ยวข้องกับการแปรรูป ความยากลำบากในการจัดการเวลา ความขัดแย้งกันภายในกลุ่ม และความคาดหวังที่จะได้รับคำแนะนำและข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมจากผู้สอน

**คำสำคัญ:** การแปรรูปเชิงธุรกิจ, การเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงงานเป็นฐาน, ผู้เรียนชาวไทย

## ABSTRACT

This study, using Vygotsky's (1998) sociocultural theory as its foundational framework, examined the outcomes of implementing project-based learning (PjBL) into the business translation course and analysed the students' perceptions regarding such implementation. A purposeful sampling method was employed, involving the participants of 80 fourth-year English majors from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Thaksin University, Songkhla. The research utilised the following three data collection tools: observations, reflective writing, and semi-structured interviews. The observations were conducted to collect data on the outcomes of PjBL, while the reflective writing and the interviews were used to gather insights into the students' perceptions of this pedagogical approach. Concerning data analysis, thematic analysis was utilised to establish themes before their interpretation.

The results concerning the outcomes of PjBL implementation were organised into four main topics: seating arrangements, interactions between teachers and students, group collaboration, and student motivation to participate in learning activities.

In terms of the students' perceptions regarding the implementation of PjBL, they identified both advantages and challenges. Among the benefits, the students reported that PjBL facilitated the development of critical thinking skills, increased motivation for learning, enhanced interactions with the teacher, exposure to new digital technologies, recognition of peers' strengths, deeper understanding of translation strategies and knowledge, and improved collaborative skills. The challenges highlighted by the students included avoiding asking questions to show respect for the teacher, shyness in voicing their ideas during group discussions, a tendency to rely on traditional teacher-centred methods, perceptions of certain PjBL tasks as irrelevant to the translation course, difficulties with time management, conflicts within groups, and an expectation for more guidance and information from the teacher.

**Keywords:** Business translation, Project-based learning, Thai learners

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Pedagogical practices for teaching translation appear to have received increasing attention these days. Venuti (2016) contends that translation teachers are required not only to generate pertinent knowledge for their learners but also to observe, analyse, and research their own teaching strategies, methods, and approaches. These continued commitments, Venuti maintains, can help develop the learners and strengthen the teachers' professional development. Venuti's notion suggests that conducting classroom research benefits both teachers and learners.

Of all learning management, active learning, which is learner-centred, is claimed to be the most suitable for fostering learners' knowledge and skills essential for success in the 21st century (Braxton et al., 2008; Fayombo, 2012). In the sphere of translation instruction, despite active learning being endorsed, empirical evidence appears scant (Alkhatnai, 2017; Al-Sowaidi, 2021; Li et al, 2015; Retnaningsih, 2023). Given the gap, research investigating such implementation in translation courses is needed. Moreover, as translation teachers should adopt the teacher-as-researcher role (Venuti, 2016), the research is argued to be conducted by the teachers themselves.

One of the active learning approaches broadly discussed is project-based learning (hereafter referred to as PjBL). Educational research shows that using PjBL substantially enhances university students' learning experience (Freeman et al., 2014; Guo et al., 2020; Theobald et al., 2020). In university-level translation courses, its benefits are noted. PjBL is claimed to be a type of learning in actual situations that helps learners associate their prior knowledge with what they are learning (Alkhatnai, 2017) and work collaboratively in brainstorming ideas, researching, and investigating issues before discussing them and drawing conclusions (Indarti, 2016; Zainudin & Awal, 2012). In this learning process, their multiple skills are claimed to be nourished. Such skills are, for example, learning motivation (Galán-Mañas, 2011; Huang & Wang, 2012), social learning interactions (Ravitz et al., 2012), self-efficacy (Al-Sowaidi,

2021), problem-solving skills (Pierrakos et al., 2010), creativity (Galán-Mañas, 2011), and criticality (Chen & Yang, 2019). Kiraly (2005) similarly underlines these anticipatedly acquired assets, arguing that PjBL gives learners hands-on and meaningful translation learning and engages them in integrating different types of skills, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, all of which are deemed key of the 21st-century success. With such integration, Kiraly maintains, learners can construct knowledge by themselves, the knowledge that may be the same to or different from what they have previously learned in class.

In the Thai educational sphere, research on PjBL seems to abound, particularly in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. For example, Poonpon (2017) examined the development of English skills through PjBL, and Wongdaeng & Hajihama (2018) explored learners' perceptions of using PjBL in bolstering their 21st-century skills and their motivation for learning English. However, as evidenced in the literature, there remains a dearth of research on PjBL in translation classes. The current study therefore aims to address the gap by investigating the implementation of PjBL in a business translation course enrolled by fourth-year English majors at a university in South Thailand. Arguably, the research findings can benefit translation teachers by helping them plan and design learning content and activities. They can also be used as evidence for translation curriculum developers to ponder whether the approach is applicable in translation instruction, particularly in Thai educational contexts.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Questions**

The current study has the following two objectives. One is to investigate the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course, and the other is to explore learners' perceptions of implementing PjBL in the business translation course.

Drawn from the research objectives, two research questions were formed below.

- 1) What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?
- 2) What are the learners' perceptions of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?

### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

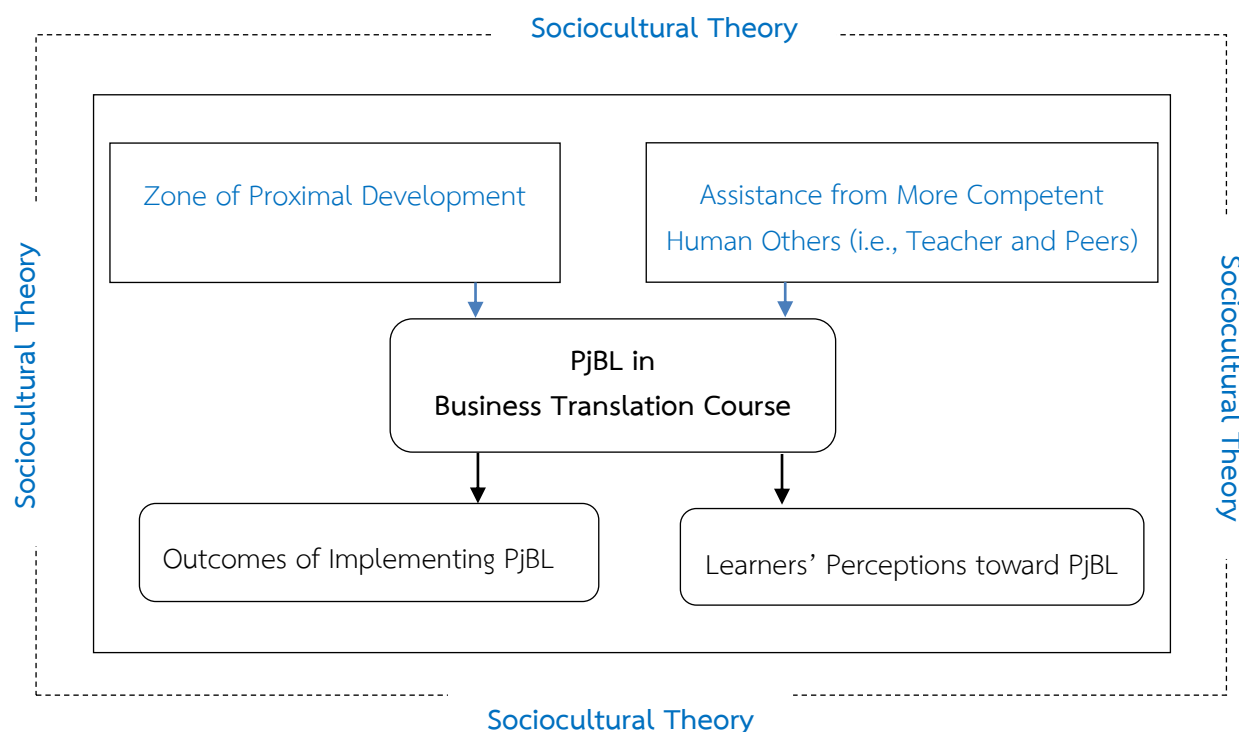
This study adopted Vygotsky's (1998) sociocultural theory as the theoretical framework. The theory holds that learning in social interactions mediated by materials, symbols, and human beings can render human cognitive development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). Given that the three agents are fashioned by sociocultural conditions, it appears that sociocultural factors, in addition to biological factors, influence human cognitive growth. Vygotsky (1998) highlights the importance of interacting with these three mediators, particularly with more competent human others (Wertsch, 1985). According to Vygotsky, learning precedes development: people learn, internalise what they learn, and add value to it before it becomes integral to their cognitive development. Based on the sociocultural theory, the learners in the current study are assumed to be shaped by shared and different sociocultural elements.

Another feature of this theory receiving explicit recognition in the realm of education is the role of the Zone of Proximal Development (Hereafter referred to as ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) defines ZPD as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Vygotsky's ZPD indicates that learning is a social phenomenon in that ones' potential learning abilities within their ZPD, as opposed to their actual learning abilities, can be achieved with help provided by more capable peers or teachers. The teachers, in particular, are viewed as the main mediators providing their learners scaffolding assistance, which will be gradually minimised when their learners' increased competence in taking charge of their learning is noticed (Chang et al., 2002).

Considering that Vygotsky's theory attaches importance to social interactions that provoke learning, PjBL which closely associates with such interactions can be claimed to be compatible with the theory (Polly et al., 2017). This can be ascribed to the notion that in PjBL, learners actively take part in the learning process with their teachers as their guides, monitors, coaches, and facilitators (Fleming, 2000). PjBL indeed can be done individually or in groups, and the latter appears to be more popular (Kokotsaki, et al., 2016). In such product-oriented learning, as Helle et al. (2006) argue, learners in groups of mixed abilities are expected to deploy their abilities to help each other. That is



to say, they can learn from others with more competencies in certain abilities and also from their teachers. This indicates the role of ZPD in PjBL. Based on this notion, the theoretical framework for this study was formulated as follows.



**Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Study**

#### 1.4 Scope of the Study

This qualitative research was conducted from May 1, 2024, to April 30, 2025. The data were collected and analysed following the research questions. Using the purposeful sampling technique, the participants in this study were 80 fourth-year English majors under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thaksin University, Songkhla, Thailand. These learners enrolled in Business Translation which is a mandatory course in the Bachelor of Arts Program in English in the first semester of the academic year 2024.

The research tools employed in this study comprise observations, reflective writing, and semi-structured interviews. The observations were used to collect the data on the participants' outcomes of learning through PjBL, which were recorded and reflected by me as their teacher and researcher. These perspectives were used to answer the first

research question “What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?”. For the latter two, the reflective writing and the semi-structured interviews, they were used to elicit the learners’ perceptions, the lived experiences that belong to the insiders doing project-based assignments. These were therefore intended to answer the second research question “What are the learners’ perceptions towards implementing PjBL in the business translation course?”. All the data potentially answering both research questions were then analysed by using thematic analysis steps proposed by Creswell (2013).

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Related literature suggests that research exploring the issues on the outcomes and learners’ perceptions of PjBL in translation courses in Thai educational contexts is under-researched. This study therefore seeks to address the paucity. It is argued that the research’s findings can potentially offer explanatory accounts on PjBL implementation in a business translation course and consequently yield benefits in various dimensions. Theoretically, the research findings may attest to other scholars’ theories and arguments, whereas opposing ones may encourage healthy debates for scholars and researchers to argue and discuss. Aside from the expansion of existing educational literature, it is expected that practical implications may arise. That is to say, the finding may indicate some pedagogical implications for those concerned, such as teachers and curriculum developers, which in turn help benefit learners. Additionally, in the research-related dimension, the study may reveal a research gap that needs fulfilling.

### **1.6 Conceptual Terms**

As this study focused on the implementation of PjBL in the business translation course in terms of its outcomes and learners’ perceptions, certain terms being used need to be conceptualised and clarified to facilitate readers’ understanding of the study’s contexts. These terms include PjBL, business translation course, outcomes, and perceptions.

**PjBL** is an acronym for project-based learning. It refers to a learner-centred model of learning in which a project is assigned for learners to work on, aiming at achieving deeper learning and constructing their knowledge and skills by actively exploring and

tackling real-world problems and challenges arising en route (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012). Through exploration, the learners are expected to cultivate different types of knowledge and skills (Thomas, 2000) and learn from their peers, particularly those with more competencies, as well as their teachers who are competent human others giving them scaffolding assistance (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). In this study, PjBL is in the form of a group work activity in which the learners were given one semester to complete it. This activity includes English-Thai translation of business advertising text, role play, and reflection.

**Business translation course** refers to a compulsory course for fourth-year English majors in the Bachelor of Arts Program in English under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thaksin University. The objectives of the course are to develop learners in terms of their knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to business translation. The contents involve, for example, characteristics of Thai and English business languages, strategies for translating business texts of different genres, and analysis and discussion of business translation errors.

**Outcomes** here can be understood as the outcomes of implementing PjBL perceived by me as the learners' teacher and also the researcher conducting the study. The analysed outcomes in this study were derived from my observations in class and in supervision with my learners outside the classroom. The observed data were recorded and reflected before being analysed to answer the first research question "What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?".

**Perceptions** are defined, according to Colman (2015), as an act of applying one's senses or one's mind to understand things or become aware of them. This study took this definition to explain how learners comprehend PjBL through their senses. The comprehension includes how they view, understand, feel, and are cognisant of PjBL. The data on these perceptions were analysed to answer the second research question "What are the learners' perceptions towards implementing PjBL in business translation course?".

## **1.7 Outline of the Study**

This study consists of the following five chapters.

**Chapter 1** is the introduction to this study. Firstly, it mentions the background of the study justifying why the research was conducted before displaying the research purposes and questions. Vygotsky's (1998) sociocultural theory was then highlighted under the theoretical framework section to show how it underpins the study. The scope and the significance of the research were subsequently described, followed by the conceptualised terms and the research structure outline.

**Chapter 2** discusses the issues in related literature that grounds the study. The first topic under review is PjBL for it is in focus before moving to PjBL in translation teaching. In the last section, related research is presented.

**Chapter 3** contains information on the research methodology applied in this study. It begins with detailing the data under study and the research tools being used, followed by a clarification of the researcher's role, an explanation of the procedures for data collection, and a description of the data analysis. Given that in qualitative research, meticulousness, consistency, and transparency are expected; criteria for ensuring research rigour are then explained. Lastly, ethical considerations were reported as this study involved contact with human subjects.

**Chapter 4** presents the analysed data to answer the first research question "What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?" and the second research question "What are the learners' perceptions towards implementing PjBL in the business translation course?". While the findings are presented, they will be discussed alongside.

**Chapter 5** concludes the research findings. Here, theoretical and practical contributions, research limitations, and recommendations for future research can be found, and thereby presented.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The current study investigated the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course and the learners' perspectives on using it. In this chapter, related topics in the literature are discussed to provide readers with the study's context as well as the research gap intended to be filled. These topics include project-based learning (PjBL), PjBL in translation teaching, and related studies.

#### **2.2 Project-based Learning (PjBL)**

Project-based learning or PjBL can be described as an instructional form that endorses learner-centred and experiential approaches; thereby emphasising learning by doing (Markham et al., 2003). expresses a similar sentiment, contending that PjBL's core concepts are derived from the constructivist principles that highlight context-specific learning, learner-centredness, and learning through social interactions. The social interactions, Fayombo (2012) claim, encourage learners to share knowledge and help each other to achieve certain goals. Since social interactions are considered to be the cornerstone of the sociocultural theory propounded by Vygotsky (1998), this then indicates the close association between PjBL and this theory.

#### **Benefits of PjBL**

PjBL has been in vogue in the educational sphere with many proponents arguing its benefits. For example, van Rooij (2008) claims that PjBL allows learners to exploit multiple resources in their learning. Alkhatnai (2017) argues that PjBL affords learners opportunities to link what they have learned with what they are learning, possibly entailing meaningful learning and reinforcing the tendency for application in other contexts, including their real-life situations. Pellegrino and Hilton (2012) note that through PjBL, learners are encouraged to actively explore real-world problems and challenges before endeavouring to come up with workable solutions, all of which can consolidate their deeper learning as well as the deeper learning process. Using real-

world knowledge is claimed to be one of the attractive reasons to include PjBL in classroom contexts. Instead of just receiving information, learners actively engage in their learning. Belwal et al. (2020) pointed out that learners who participated in an external consulting project in Oman were able to use their theoretical knowledge to solve real problems, which greatly enhanced their understanding. This link between what they learn in class and real-life experiences gives learners a sense of purpose and importance, encouraging them to be more involved in their education.

Strobel and van Barneveld (2009) compared this type of learning with traditional approaches and argued that PjBL yields long-term intention whereas the traditional approaches result in short-term retention. They also claim that with PjBL, learners can better develop their learning and life skills as well as maximise learners' and teachers' satisfaction. Given that learners' satisfaction enhances their motivation for learning (Shahriar et al., 2011), it can be claimed that learners' satisfaction towards PjBL helps strengthen their learning motivation (Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Galán-Mañas, 2011; Guven, 2014; Huang & Wang, 2012; Thomas, 2000). It can be argued that when learners are motivated, they invest more in their learning processes, leading to deeper commitment and perseverance.

Thomas (2000) asserts that PjBL intrinsically generates learners' choices, autonomy, and authority. Stefanou et al. (2013) describe how self-regulation in project-based settings helps learners take charge, make smart decisions, and stay motivated during their projects. Ravitz (2010) has a similar idea, mentioning PjBL as "student self-directed to some extent" (p. 293). With such autonomy, learners can create a project that satisfies their interests, abilities, learning styles, and learning styles. When their diversity in terms of these can be expressed, individual needs that reflect human diversity can be claimed to be acknowledged and respected. The implication here is that PjBL is a learning method that suits the nature of human beings.

Through such learning, learners can develop their cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking, learning agility, creative thinking, analytical thinking, and decision-making (Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Chen & Yang, 2019; Condliffe, 2017; Pierrakos et al., 2010; Hussain et al., 2009; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; Pierrakos et al.,

2010; Trilling & Fadel, 2012). It should be noted that not only are their cognitive learning domains developed, but their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills can also be fostered (Pellegrino & Hilton 2012). For Pellegrino and Hilton, the intrapersonal skills involve self-regulation, metacognition, grit, and flexibility whereas the interpersonal ones comprise communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, and leadership. Kokotsaki et al. (2016) likewise state the cultivation of interpersonal skills through this social learning. Particularly, collaboration appears to be the most emphasised in PjBL itself, collaborative learning aspects are considered key (Condliffe, 2017; Grant, 2002; Indarti, 2016; Krajcik & Shin, 2014; Zainudin & Awal, 2012). This is possibly because learners need to collaborate to complete a project. Because of this, only through such collaboration, their cognitive abilities, as well as their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, can arguably be developed. Guo et al. (2020) state that when group members work together on projects, it improves teamwork skills and builds a sense of shared responsibility. A project's success often relies on the team's combined efforts, encouraging learners to communicate openly, share tasks, and combine different skills to achieve a common goal. These abilities and skills are also claimed to help facilitate learners' lifelong learning (Condliffe, 2017; Fleming, 2000). In addition, Fleming (2000) argues that PjBL also promotes the skills of planning, organisation, research, and time management, all of which are essential for learners' academic or workforce pursuits.

### **Key Features of PjBL**

Several scholars (e.g., Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Fleming, 2000; Grant, 2012; Krajcik & Shin, 2014; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; Pierrakos et al., 2010) agree that cultivation of learners' engagement is fundamental in PjBL. This again indicates the concept of learner-centredness in which the process of learning is in focus with learners taking charge of their learning and knowledge construction and with teachers, peers, and learning materials serving as their scaffolds.

Larmer and Mergendoller (2010) interestingly point out crucial elements of PjBL, such as using compelling questions or challenges; creating a desire for knowledge acquisition or construction; undertaking an inquiry to acquire or construct knowledge; assigning a project that requires critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and technological

skills; encompassing feedback and revision; and rendering learners' voice and choice. These elements appear to be interweaved and interdependent. That is to say, in the knowledge acquisition and construction in the PjBL process, Blumenfeld et al. (1991) claim that learners are expected to seek solutions to problems by posing and refining questions, discussing ideas, making predictions, designing plans, gleaning and analysing data, drawing conclusions, exchanging their ideas to each other, posing new questions, and producing projects. Through these activities, collaboration is inevitably associated and therefore helps cultivate interpersonal and communication skills (Bell, 2010). Barron and Darling-Hammond (2008) suggest that learners' enquiries should be reflected. For Barron and Darling-Hammond, the reflection can be processed among themselves and also when receiving peer and teacher feedback, engendering their project improvement. From this perspective, PjBL appears to concern not only learner-learner collaboration but also learner-teacher collaboration.

The PjBL elements mentioned thus far seem to highlight learners' expected learning roles. It should be noted that to successfully implement PjBL, some crucial elements for teachers are argued. Fleming (2000) suggests taking into account these elements: selecting a focus for a project, identifying knowledge and skills to be learned, introducing the project and inviting learners to shape it, selecting a balance of teacher-led and learner-centred activities, setting project timelines and milestones, monitoring the learners' progress, evaluating learning results, and reflecting on collected data before planning further steps. Fleming's notion indicates that in PjBL, those expected to be actively engaged in the learning process are not only learners but also teachers. Đerić and Đević (2021) underline the active roles of teachers in PjBL as those who are "to facilitate, assist, advise, guide, monitor, and mentor students throughout the process (p. 57)".

### **PjBL Challenges**

It is claimed that the effectiveness of PjBL needs the incorporation of relevant supports (Thomas, 2000). Despite the positives of PjBL recognised in the educational sphere, some challenges are posed. Fleming (2000) states that in PjBL, learners' role is shifted from knowledge receivers to meaning makers or knowledge producers and that of teachers is from content experts to supportive coaches. As a consequence of this,



Fleming claims, some teachers and learners may be unfamiliar or even uncomfortable with it.

Thomas (2000) mentions learners' discomfort stemming from their unfamiliarity with PjBL which can accordingly cause challenges to their teachers who have to manage PjBL classes. Socha and Socha (1994) talk about some learners, particularly inexperienced ones, struggling to negotiate compromise in groups. The success of a project often relies on how well learners work together. However, teamwork can be complicated. Johnson and Delawsky (2013) discovered that differences in roles, ways of communicating, and personal conflicts can impact how well a team performs and how satisfied learners feel. The implication is that teachers should create a space that supports open communication and resolving conflicts, which can lead to better teamwork among learners. Additionally, as noted by Vasiliene-Vasiliauskine et al. (2020), using organised team-building activities can help reduce some of these personal challenges. This indicates that they still lack collaborative knowledge and skills and that providing them with these is requisite (Lewis et al., 2019). For Parker et al. (2013), some learners' discomfort and frustration are caused by their expectation of teachers adhering to traditional pedagogies. This is possible because they may think they are left to explore learning and tackle problems on their own with teachers' minimal guidance. The implication here can be that learners' understanding towards PjBL process and its benefits should be promoted. In addition, learners' motivation appears to be an issue. According to Edelson et al. (1999), inquiry-based learning in PjBL demands a higher level of motivation, compared with learning in other traditional learning activities. This suggests that the project as well as the questions raised for the project should be interesting enough to improve their motivation. In addition, Edelson et al. also point out that learners require knowledge on investigating project issues, tackling problems arising, and collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data before applying them to the project. Another challenge noted by Edelson et al. is learners' managerial skills. They view that in PjBL, learners are to manage complex and extended activities, those dealing not only with resources but also with people. Such challenge, Edelson et al. claim, is less in traditional learning activities as these activities are already organised by teachers.

Teachers themselves are also faced with challenges. Several teachers are endeavouring to be familiar with PjBL and its concepts as these are contrary to their deep-seated teacher cognitions (Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld, 2006). As Borg (2003) asserts, such cognitions influence teachers' pedagogic practices. Borg's notion indicates that teachers' cognitions in PjBL should receive attention as they may be forced to not only question but also change their educational beliefs. Another challenge for teachers is raised by Thomas (2000) who claims that teachers may find it difficult to facilitate the inquiry process and the dialogic interactions in PjBL due to time constraints (Thomas, 2000). Likewise, Lakkala et al. (2005) point out time restriction hindering in-depth inquiries which they considered to be the heart of PjBL. Habók and Nagy (2016) also raise this issue as a challenge for teachers. They say that with limited time in class and the time-consuming nature of PjBL, teachers are challenged with time management skills. Boss and Krauss (2007) mention teachers' challenges in time dedicated to replan, rethink, and redesign activities and assessment methods on both long-term and daily bases. Their perspective reflects that the teachers' roles in PjBL are not quite easy and that they may have to make extra mental efforts to prepare for the pedagogies they are not familiar with.

### **2.3 PjBL in Thai Educational Context**

According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1998), learning is argued to be influenced by sociocultural conditions (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). Because of this, it can be claimed that Thai cultural aspects can affect Thai education. Therefore, to study PjBL in the Thai educational context, Thai culture needs to be taken into account.

Komin (1990) examined Thai cultural values from a wide range of individuals, including both urban and rural residents of Thailand. Through this research, she identified nine distinct clusters of Thai cultural values, as detailed below.

The first value is ego orientation. For Komin, ego orientation was seen as the top priority. She observed that many Thais often lacked tolerance when their own egos were at risk. She argued that this focus on ego explained the importance Thais placed on saving face. For most Thais, preserving their own face and that of others was extremely significant while causing someone to lose face was viewed as disrespectful or insulting.

She noted that this led to many Thais communicating indirectly in their words and actions.

The second value is grateful relationship orientation. Komin argued that Thai people learn this value from a young age. According to Komin, for Thai people in general, when others help them, they should show gratitude and give back whenever they can. This giving back can take many forms, but it should not be measured in material ways.

The third value is smooth interpersonal relationship orientation. Komin noted that many Thais typically exhibit a polite, humble, and non-assertive manner. According to Komin, Thai individuals generally appear relaxed and friendly in social settings. Furthermore, she highlighted that this emphasis on maintaining positive relationships fosters eight key social values: being caring and considerate; kind and helpful; responsive to circumstances; self-controlled, tolerant, and restrained; polite and humble; calm and cautious; content; and valuing social connections. This perspective is closely linked to ego orientation, where individuals prioritise saving face and aim to ensure smooth interactions.

The fourth value is flexibility and adjustment orientation. Komin stated that many Thai people often handle situations with a light-hearted attitude because of their flexibility and adaptability. She indicated that this tendency might result in adverse behaviour, such as frequently changing their decisions or showing hesitance in following rules and regulations. Komin claimed that this value orientation was likely employed to foster harmonious interpersonal relationships among individuals.

The fifth value is religio-psychical orientation. Komin claimed that Thai Buddhism or Theravada Buddhism had a significant impact on the lives of Thai people. She noted that the concept of *kamma* is particularly influential, with many Thais using it to explain various aspects of their lives, leading to a fatalistic outlook.

The sixth value is education and competence orientation. Komin found that many Thai people recognised the value of education. However, she noted that they often pursued learning not just for its own sake. Instead, they saw education as a way to improve their

social status, gain more respect, and earn higher salaries. This suggests that they focused more on appearances than on the actual knowledge gained. She also connected this mindset to ego, explaining that achieving educational success could reflect their social standing and reputation.

The seventh value is interdependence orientation. Komin claimed that many Thai individuals understood the importance of co-existing and being interdependent. She argued that this understanding fostered a sense of brotherhood and encouraged community collaboration, particularly in rural areas of Thailand. She suggested that Thai people were generally very willing to assist others.

The eighth value is fun-pleasure orientation. According to Komin, Thai people typically participated in enjoyable and light-hearted interactions, which could be seen as superficial but were still fun and humorous. She noted that they viewed fun and enjoyment as important for maintaining good relationships with others. She also pointed out that they tended to approach everything with joy but could become bored quickly. This attitude indicates a tendency to avoid sticking with unpleasant tasks, regardless of their difficulty.

The ninth value is achievement-task orientation. Komin found that many Thai people did not often put in much effort for a task unless it brought them joy. Additionally, she claimed, they seemed to think that hard work alone was not sufficient; they viewed prestige and social recognition as key goals for success in life, using work and relationships as necessary tools. In Thai society, she maintained, the drive for social recognition made achievement more about social connections.

It is important to note that these value clusters should not be used to oversimplify Thai culture or to make broad assumptions about Thai individuals. Komin recognised this, arguing that the values could vary among different people and depend on specific situations. Additionally, since her research was published in 1990, some cultural elements may have shifted due to globalisation and socioeconomic changes.

In relation to PjBL, it seems that some PjBL elements and some Thai cultural values are not in alignment. For example, in PjBL, collaboration, raising questions, and working on a project critically appear to challenge the Thai cultural aspects of ego orientation and smooth interpersonal relationships. Moreover, in Thai educational contexts, many scholars contend that some Thai cultural aspects hinder the implementation of PjBL. For example, concerning the cultural value of hierarchy, learners perceive themselves as being in a lower status, compared with that of their teachers. Because of this, respect for the teachers is highly expected. In the study conducted by Prommak (2019), one of her participants claimed that Thai learners, in general, were socialised and taught to trust their teachers completely, and it could be inappropriate to ask questions or express ideas that challenge their teachers since it could mean they were challenging the teachers, as opposed to the teachers' ideas. Kettanun (2015) similarly stated that Thai learners usually do not ask questions in class to avoid disagreeing with their teachers and tend to stay quiet when teachers are around. This behaviour, Kettanun claims, is intended to show respect to their teachers and prevent any offence. As a consequence of these, Thai learners appear comfortable with their teachers taking control and tend to favour a traditional, teacher-led classroom environment (Thongprasert, 2009). Nevertheless, as Thai learners tend to be attentive to follow all the instructions provided by their teachers, they often do not take the initiative in class; instead, they prefer to wait for guidance on what to do, and even when prompted to make a choice, they may just turn to the teacher for a decision, as they have a strong trust in their teacher's expertise (Raktham, 2008). With some Thai cultural features seemingly inhibiting the PjBL implementation, the current study is expected to be rewarding in providing insights into the issue.

## **2.4 PjBL in Translation Teaching**

More attention has been directed to translation teaching these days. The increase in translation courses can be attributed to the following conviction:

The number of programs has risen not only with the expansion of the field but also with the steady increase of international organizations, the continual eruption of political and military conflicts, and the consequent displacement of mass populations, all of which create the urgent need for translators and

interpreters. In multi- and bilingual cultures, meanwhile, translator training has long been a necessity insofar as translation is a fact of daily life. (Venuti, 2016, p. 1)

Venuti's notion suggests that educational institutions need to multiply and develop translation courses in response to the changing world. Research on translator education appears to focus not merely on what to teach, but also on how to teach it. Lafeber (2010) argues that in the translation teaching process, in addition to language and translation, learners also require "analytical, research, technological, interpersonal and time-management skills" (p. 108). A likely implication of this is that translation teaching should incorporate pedagogical methods or approaches that facilitate these skills' development, and that learner-centred pedagogies should be adopted.

Kiraly (2000) proposes a social constructivist approach to translation teaching. For Kiraly, an ideal translation teaching can occur through social interactions that help stimulate knowledge construction and also through carrying out a project. Regarding the implementation of the project, he holds that:

Rather than attempting to build up students' translation-related skills and knowledge atomistically in simulated exercises prior to translation practice, it would be much more constructive to start each pedagogical event with a highly realistic, and if possible genuine, translation project. (Kiraly, 2000, p. 60)

Kiraly (2012) claims that his project-based approach to translator education is indeed derived from the Vygotskian social-constructivist view. Kiraly (2000) argues that PjBL allows learners to experience hands-on and thus meaningful translation learning, engaging them with a plethora of skills, particularly those contributing to 21st-century success, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Zheng (2017) also mentions PjBL benefits, stating that learners can undertake research management and be exposed to a large number of vocabulary items. Zheng asserts that after PjBL completion, there is a tendency for the learners to apply what they have acquired heuristically and seek pragmatic solutions to problems in other contexts. Zhang believes that "Working on real-world translation projects enables students to gain an insight into the translation profession and hone their required competencies as future qualified translators" (p. 180). Zhang's notion indicates that PjBL equips translation

learners not only with tools for solving problems in other areas of life but also with assets for being a qualified translator.

## **2.5 Related Studies**

With the PjBL benefits being argued in translation teaching, several researchers conducted related studies to explore PjBL implementation as well as learners' perceptions towards it. For example, Hilmi and Safitri (2022) conducted a study with 38 students to examine their perceptions towards using PjBL in the Basic Translation and Interpretation course. The data were collected by using an online questionnaire comprising both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The findings revealed that the students actively engaged in PjBL activities with their perceptions being found positive.

Astuti et al. (2021) studied how 25 university students in a translation class perceived the benefits of PjBL by using a questionnaire and the students' reflections. It was found that they viewed this type of learning positively, claiming that it helped develop their creative thinking, collaboration, and English skills.

In Li et al.'s (2015) study, the perceptions of business translation students in the Chinese context towards PjBL were investigated by using the students' reflective journals, a questionnaire survey, and two focus group interviews. The findings revealed that the students' perceived areas of growth included knowledge of the topic, teamwork and collaboration skills, presentation skills, communication skills, technological skills, research skills, critical thinking skills, and leadership skills.

Hastürkoğlu and Özer (2020) conducted a study exploring university students' perceptions towards PjBL in a technical translation course by using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The findings revealed that most of the students considered PjBL as a practical learning method assisting them to improve their metacognitive knowledge and skills which are essential for being qualified and competent translators.

Hussein's (2021) study examined how collaboration challenges in PjBL could be tackled. The data were gleaned from 67 reflection reports submitted by engineering

education students enrolling in PjBL assignments. The results revealed that the collaboration challenges were from their uncertainty in the assignments and priority conflicts among group members. This study suggested that these challenges could be solved by a structured project-management approach and by creating a supportive collaboration environment in which inclusion and openness were taken into consideration.

Al-Sowaidi (2021) did experimental research to investigate the effectiveness of deploying PjBL in business translation classes at two Yemeni universities; thereby having two groups of students with one as a control group and the other as an experimental group. These two groups of students took a pretest involving Arabic-English and English-Arabic translation. After the pretest, one group was taught using PjBL, whereas the other received traditional teaching. When the courses were completed, they were asked to take a post-test. The results showed that the experimental group using PjBL displayed more learning progress, compared with that of the control group. The students in the experimental group were also interviewed. They claimed that PjBL involved authentic learning activities and was relevant to their lives. They believed it provided them with more motivation and more confidence in learning. They viewed PjBL as a venue for them to cultivate their self-efficacy beliefs, their internet search skills, and their communication and negotiation skills.

## **2.6 Summary**

The chapter presents the pertinent issues in the literature. Thus far, PjBL appears widely recognised. Many of its benefits have been claimed while its challenges and the solutions to them discussed. The challenges being raised imply that more research investigating PjBL in class is needed. As can be seen, although related studies on the implementation of PjBL in translation courses prevail, very little research has been done on translation courses in the Thai educational context. Given that each country possesses different cultural contexts and that education itself is greatly fashioned by culture (Kapur-Fic, 1998), it could be interesting to examine the application of PjBL in the Thai education contexts and how Thai learners view it. The current study also intended to address this gap. The following chapter will describe the research methodology that the current study adopted.



## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The current research is a qualitative study examining the following two areas: the outcomes of using PjBL in the business translation course and the learners' perceptions towards using it. The research questions were accordingly formulated as follows.

- 1) What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?
- 2) What are the learners' perceptions towards implementing PjBL in the business translation course?

This chapter begins with Section 3.1 giving the introduction. Section 3.2 details the data under study and the research tools being applied. In Section 3.3, I delineated my role as a researcher who has been consciously reflexive in every step of the research process. Section 3.4 explains the procedures of data collection, and Section 3.5 describes the whole process of the data analysis. Section 3.6 describes how the research findings will be presented. Section 3.7 expounds on how research rigour was established to ensure the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the research findings. In Section 3.8, ethical considerations are demonstrated, showing that this research was ethically conducted. Section 3.9 summarises this chapter.

### **3.2 Data under Study and Research Tools**

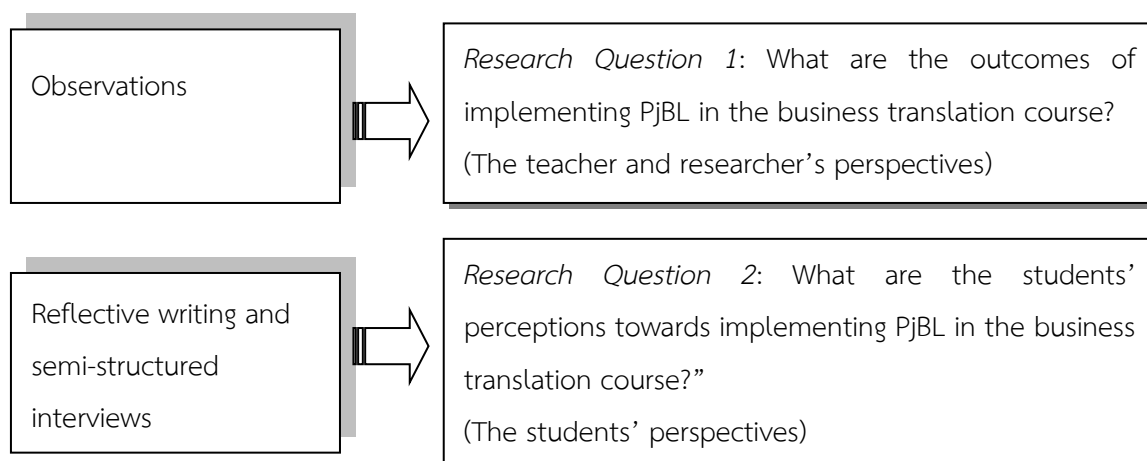
This research applied purposeful sampling to intentionally select the information-rich cases. They included 80 fourth-year students majoring in English in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thaksin University, Songkhla, Thailand. The students enrolled in Business Translation, which was a compulsory course in the Bachelor of Arts Program in English, in the first semester of the academic year 2024 (from June to September 2024).

This study applied the following three research tools: observations, reflective writing, and semi-structured interviews. These tools were deemed capable of eliciting the data to answer the two research questions, as described as follows.

The observations were used to collect the data on the outcomes of applying PjBL. I collected the observational data before analysing them to answer the first research question, “What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?”. Given this, it could be said that the outcomes were interpreted through the eyes of me, the teacher and researcher.

The reflective writing and the interviews were used to produce the data on the learners’ perceptions to answer the second research question, “What are the learners’ perceptions towards implementing PjBL in the business translation course?”. As both tools concern the data on how the learners understood and became aware of PjBL, they then represented the learners’ perspectives. It should be noted that the reflective writing and the interviews were intentionally used to accommodate the learners’ communication preferences. According to Prommak (2019), as individuals possess different ways of expressing themselves, using both writing and speaking in eliciting data can imply acknowledgement and respect given to the individuals’ communication preferences. Moreover, this study argues that applying the reflective writing and the interviews can help complement each other, possibly resulting in richer and deeper data.

Figure 2 will summarise the research tools deliberately applied to answer each research question.



**Figure 2: Research Tools Used for Collecting Data  
for Answering Each Research Question**

### **3.2.1 Observations**

The observations were done by me as their teacher. They were used to produce the data on the outcomes of using PjBL in the business translation course. I wrote down everything observable with a list of topics to be observed as an observation guideline, for example, their interactions with their peers, their interaction with me, their cooperation in groups, how they assigned certain roles among their group members, my roles when scaffolding, extroverted learners and introverted learners, high-achieving learners and low-achieving learners, learning atmospheres, and their motivation for learning. I took notes when the learners learned in class, particularly when they worked in groups on the assigned project and also when they consulted me for their projects outside the classroom. It should be noted that while recording the data, I used both English and Thai to ensure my note-taking flowed smoothly.

### **3.2.2 Reflective Writing**

The reflective writing was employed to elicit the learners' perceptions towards using PjBL in the business translation course. This research tool was selected as the reflection was expected to help them articulate their ideas clearly on the knowledge gained as well as the process of their learning (Barron & Darling Hammond, 2018). Fleming (2000) asserts that through such reflection in PjBL, learners can be better monitors of their own work. In this study, after the learners did their group work project, they were asked to reflect on how they have learned through undertaking the work, including PjBL benefits

and challenges. The learners were asked to reflect every time after doing the work. That is to say, although each group was assigned to complete only one project, they were to reflect every time they assembled to work on it inside and outside the classroom. At the end of the semester when the work was finished, each group had to gather these reflective writing pieces and submit them to me.

To facilitate their reflections, questions were provided to the learners as a guide. These questions were determined by the second research question intended to examine the learners' perceptions of using PjBL. They involved what they were learning, how they were learning, and why they were learning (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2015). Here, the learners were allowed to use Thai to avoid a language barrier. Regarding the process of the question formation, I first wrote the questions both in Thai and in English before asking my three colleagues in the Western Languages Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thaksin University, to verify them. We helped adjust ambiguous questions, discard irrelevant questions, and also add some more interesting questions. By using this peer-debriefing technique, the polished questions can be argued to be valid and able to be used in drawing useful data. Some examples of these questions are in Appendix B.

### **3.2.3 Semi-structured Interviews**

In qualitative research, interviews are regarded as an effective research tool to generate narrative data and examine individuals' views in depth (Kvale, 1996). This study used semi-structured interviews to capture the data on the learners' perceptions towards using PjBL in the business translation course. This type of interview was selected due to two justifications. First, as Prommak (2019) argues, semi-structured interviews provide a researcher with an interview guide to stay focused on the main topics under study while they still have some explorative aspects for participants to express a plethora of ideas. Second, despite having the pre-determined interview guide, they benefit an interviewer in that they have "room for negotiation, discussion and expansion of the interviewee's responses" (Mann 2016, p. 91).

Similar to the reflective writing questions, the interview questions were formed in alignment with the second research question: exploring the learners' perceptions of using PjBL in the business translation course. To ensure the questions' validity, they also underwent the peer-debriefing method. Some of the refined interview questions are in Appendix B.

Notably, as can be seen in Appendix C, the interview questions were similar to the reflective writing questions. To reiterate this, the reflective writing data and the interview data were expected to complement each other. Moreover, since these were semi-structured interviews, additional and probing questions were also posed when any emerging issues were noticed. When interviewing them, Prommak's (2019) interviewing strategies were extensively employed: attentive listening, provision of time for the interviewees to think and respond, respect given to their individual differences and sensitivities, using a friendly tone of voice when interviewing them, avoiding giving my own ideas or correcting their responses, and control of any unconscious sign of disagreement that may make them feel uncomfortable. Other strategies suggested by other scholars were also deployed, such as open-mindedness to different ideas (Hatch, 2002), encouraging them to tell stories (Creswell, 2013), using leading questions to bring the interviews back on track (Agar, 2008), asking yes-no questions to confirm the data the interviewees had given (Fetterman 2010), and asking the same questions in different ways when they appeared confused or did not understand the previous questions being raised (Guest et al., 2012).

This study applied one-on-one interviews with the Thai language being used as a medium of communication to avoid any language barriers. When I interviewed them, apart from using an audio recorder, I also took note of some seemingly interesting messages.

### **3.3 My Role as a Researcher**

Conducting this qualitative research, I acknowledge that my lived experience can affect the processes of data collection, selection, and interpretation. Finlay (2002) asserts that such influence is inevitable. To deal with this intervened subjectivity, several scholars advocate engaging in the research conduction reflexively. Reflexivity involves delving

into oneself as a researcher and examining one's research relationship (Mann, 2016). In so doing, it is claimed to maximise a researcher's self-awareness; thereby engendering trustworthiness (Finlay, 2002) and research rigour (Angen, 2000). In this study, I was reflexive on every aspect of the research by using a research diary to examine them. To express my reflexive engagement, I also uncovered my theoretical assumption as displayed in the theoretical framework of this study (see Section 1.3). Greenbank (2003) notes that a theoretical assumption in research is a way of dealing with research reflexively for it can justify how the data are collected, analysed, discussed, and presented.

As both a researcher and a classroom teacher, I quickly noticed that the dynamics between my students and me were not equal. This imbalance stemmed from a deep-rooted sense of hierarchy in Thai culture, where students often viewed their teachers as superior and infallible. As a result, they tended to be quite careful with their words and actions. While achieving complete equality in power dynamics is challenging (Creswell, 2013), I made an effort to implement various strategies to reduce this imbalance and alleviate their feelings of inferiority. For instance, during interviews, I demonstrated a genuine interest in their answers by listening attentively and smiling, while also being mindful to avoid any behaviors that might make them uncomfortable. When their responses were vague, I approached the situation with gentle and respectful probing questions to ensure they didn't feel their answers were wrong. To further promote a sense of balance, I encouraged them to share their thoughts openly in their reflective writing and interviews. Acknowledging the impact of power dynamics on the research process, I remained conscious of my actions and documented my reflections in my research diary.

### **3.4 Procedures of Data Collection**

Before the research was conducted, I submitted an ethical approval request to the Research Ethics Committee of Thaksin University. After receiving the ethical approval, the data collection process was undertaken, as shown in the following steps.

- 1) The process for applying PjBL in the business translation course was planned and designed. The course was in the first semester of the year 2004. This semester comprised 15 weeks.
- 2) In the first period of the course, I explained to the learners, verbally and in written documents, the information on my research, its process, and their rights as the research participants. Importantly, I made it clear that the research participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any time for any or no reason. In no way would their refusal or withdrawal affect their grades. Each learner would be treated equally without any bias. To show my impartiality and transparency, every grade and score was revealed, and the learners could verify them or seek justifications. All 80 learners agreed to take part in this study. They then signed a consent form acknowledging their approval.
- 3) The learners were assigned to learn more about PjBL before discussing it together in class. The students were needed to understand the teacher's role and their role in learning through PjBL in which the teacher and the students are mutually committed to being involved in the learning process. After their comprehension was verified, I illuminated how PjBL would be employed in the course and the details of their assigned group work project in which they were asked to find an English-written advertisement of their interest, translate the text into Thai, write a script for a situation concerning the advertisement and roleplay it using a video for recording it, and reflect on their work.
- 4) The learners were assigned to work in groups of four. Each group set up a Line Application group as a communication channel for working and discussing their work together. I was also invited to their groups, so they could reach me for any consultation.
- 5) During the course, the learners were asked to reflect on doing the project every time inside and outside the classroom in their reflective writing. They were asked to spend time reflecting on as much information as possible with the reflective questions given (see Appendix A). As Darling-Hammond et al. (2008) argue, time should be given to learners "to reflect deeply on the

work they are doing and how it relates to larger concepts specified in the learning goal” (p. 216). I had been observing the classes when they had worked on the project and also supervising them outside the classroom. The observed were taken note. As their teacher, I provided them with appropriate scaffolds when requested. My scaffolding assistance faded over time.

- 6) In the seventh week of the semester, the learners reported their progress to me who then gave them feedback and suggestions, if necessary.
- 7) In the thirteenth week of the semester, the learners were to present their work in front of the class with me and their peers providing them feedback.
- 8) In the last week of the semester, the discussions on PjBL and their groupwork project were held.
- 9) After the learners took the final examination, the interviewing process was arranged. Given that these 80 learners were assigned to work in groups of four, the total number of the group was 20. One representative from each group was asked to be an interviewee. I explained to them the interviewing process, their rights as the research interviewees, the use of the audio recorder while interviewing, offers of confidentiality and anonymity, and viable uses of the research results. These 20 learners agreed to be the interviewees and signed the consent forms. It took 15-30 minutes to interview each of them. The interview data recorded by the audio recorder were then transcribed.

All the collected data were subsequently organised for ease of analysis and reference. The observational data were grouped as one set to answer the first research question “What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?”. The reflective writing and the transcribed interview data were grouped as the other set to answer the second research question “What are the learners’ perceptions towards implementing PjBL in the business translation course?”. Both data sets were then analysed through the process elucidated in the next section.



### **3.5 Data Analysis**

In this study, each data set was analysed separately for it was aimed to answer each different research question. Despite this, they underwent the same data analysis process: the thematic analysis process. This study applied the thematic analysis steps suggested by Creswell (2013). I started reading the written data multiple times to gain familiarity with them. With the research questions in mind, tentative codeable ideas were jotted down. Common codes were grouped into potential themes. I went back and forth to the data, reading and identifying any feasibly emerging codes and themes. Then the themes were verified against the data and the coded extracts before being examined and interpreted. Finally, the themes were described with their extracts as examples to be displayed in the research findings.

As can be seen, the thematic analysis was not a linear process but a repetitive one (Creswell, 2013). That is to say, the data were many times revisited to articulate codes and themes and also to verify the themes against the data. This indicates that this type of analysis involved inductive and deductive steps.

### **3.6 Presentation of Research Findings**

The research findings were presented in a descriptive manner in Chapter 4 along with discussions related to the findings, based on the literature review and my own views. For the findings of the students' perspectives on PjBL, some of their extracts were also presented. Although the students responded in Thai, I translated their responses into English for presentation.

### **3.7 Criteria for Ensuring Research Rigour**

Research rigour is claimed to be essential in qualitative research that can be influenced by a researcher's inbuilt subjectivity (Morse et al., 2002). Adopting such rigour, Morse et al. maintain, research can be argued to have appropriate research design and methods. The current study applied the concept of trustworthiness proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to ensure its rigour. Their trustworthiness comprises the following four criteria:

credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability. This study employed several strategies to satisfy these criteria.

### **Credibility**

Credibility refers to the extent to which the data collected accurately reflects the participants' perspectives, as well as the consistency between their viewpoints and the researcher's interpretation and representation of those views (Tobin & Begley, 2004). In this study, credibility was achieved through the use of purposeful sampling to select participants likely to provide in-depth information, maintaining a research diary to document and reflect on each stage of the research process, engaging in peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to review reflective writing and interview questions, utilising the participants' first language during data collection, and incorporating direct quotes from participants in the presentation of research findings (Creswell, 2013).

### **Confirmability**

It is important to acknowledge that a researcher's subjectivity is an intrinsic aspect of qualitative research, and it cannot be completely eliminated. Nevertheless, to enhance the confirmability of this study, which is grounded in the principle that data should originate from the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), two specific strategies were employed. The first strategy involved maintaining a research diary that documented reflections on each phase of the research process. The second strategy consisted of implementing an audit trail, which entails a systematic compilation of all pertinent written and audio materials associated with the study. This audit trail serves to justify any modifications made during the research process and provides a means for those interested to trace the research journey.

### **Dependability**

Dependability, as articulated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), pertains to the stability of research findings over time, particularly when studies are replicated with comparable participants in analogous settings. Nonetheless, qualitative research is inherently designed to yield comprehensive and nuanced data rather than to promote replication. Shenton (2004) posits that ensuring dependability in qualitative research necessitates a thorough exposition of the research methodology, enabling other researchers to replicate

the study, although identical outcomes are not a requirement. In the present study, dependability was enhanced through peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to evaluate reflective writing and interview questions, the maintenance of a research diary, the establishment of an audit trail, and the provision of a detailed description of the research process (Shenton, 2004).

### **Transferability**

Transferability refers to the application of research outcomes in different settings and among diverse participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Nonetheless, qualitative research primarily aims to deliver rich, context-specific insights rather than to generalise findings across various contexts. Shenton (2004) contends that researchers should focus on offering a comprehensive account of both the research methodology and the specific contexts under investigation. This study adhered to Shenton's recommendations. Consequently, by providing a detailed description, individuals interested in utilising the findings in their own contexts can assess their relevance independently.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Before initiating this study, I submitted a request for ethical approval to the Research Ethics Committee at Thaksin University. Upon receiving the necessary approval, the research was conducted with a commitment to integrity. As the learners were the primary subjects of the study, obtaining their consent was of utmost importance. I provided them with comprehensive information regarding the research project, including its aims and methodology, their rights as participants, assurances of anonymity and confidentiality, potential risks, and the anticipated applications of the research findings. I emphasised that their participation was entirely voluntary, allowing them the option to decline or withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason, without any repercussions on their scores or grades in the course. I assured them that all scores and grades would be disclosed and justified to maintain transparency. Consequently, all learners consented to participate in the research and signed the consent forms. Following this, meticulous care was taken in the data collection process. The data were analysed with integrity and presented without bias. Acknowledging that ethical research is underpinned by rigorous methodology (DuBois & Antes, 2017), this

study adhered to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) principles of trustworthiness through various strategies (refer to Section 3.6). Therefore, it can be concluded that this study was conducted ethically.

### **3.9 Summary**

The current chapter delineates the methodological components applied in this study. All of the selected components were justified, showing how these guided the conduction of the study. The next chapter will then present the research findings derived from the analysed data to answer the research questions.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results that address the two research questions outlined.

- 1) What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?
- 2) What are the learners' perceptions towards implementing PjBL in the business translation course?

Here, it should be reiterated that the results of the first research question were obtained from my observations, while the insights related to the second research question were gathered from students' reflective writing and interviews. Following each of the results is its discussion.

#### **4.2 The Outcomes of Implementing PjBL**

It is important to emphasise that I monitored the students during their project work within the classroom as well as while supervising them outside of the classroom. These findings were categorised into the following four topics: seating arrangement, teacher-student interaction, collaboration in groups, and students' motivation for learning.

##### **4.2.1 Seating Arrangement**

As effective classroom management is claimed to be crucial for enhancing the teaching and learning experience (Scrivener, 2012), the first topic to be mentioned is the seating arrangement in class. The classrooms under observation were characterised by a high-density seating arrangement oriented towards the whiteboard. This layout may have been influenced by the substantial number of students in the class, particularly in situations where space is limited and must be utilised effectively to accommodate every student. Nevertheless, the seating layout in the classes observed had its limitations. I found it challenging to reach individual students, especially those seated in the back

rows. As a result, most interactions between the students and me tended to occur during whole-class discussions. During project-group work activities, the students often felt a bit uncomfortable sitting together in their designated groups. Additionally, it was also difficult for me as their teacher to move around the classroom to keep an eye on, monitor, and facilitate each group's progress. This seating layout appeared to promote reliance on the teacher, leading to a more teacher-focused method of instruction. Given that a learner-centred approach greatly enhances the success of projects, with teachers taking the active role as guides, monitors, coaches, and facilitators (Đerić & Đević, 2021; Fleming, 2000), it can be argued that the classroom layouts under observation appear to hinder the implementation of PjBL.

#### **4.2.2 Teacher-student Interaction**

In the observed classes, although PjBL, which was considered learner-centred, paid attention to the students taking charge of their own learning, my role as a teacher was not devalued. Such a role has just been changed from a knowledge feeder to a learning facilitator. I attempted to provide constructive facilitation and scaffolding assistance, particularly when the students were working on their projects. Despite the seating arrangement seemingly inhibiting the implementation of PjBL in class, I have tried to monitor the students by using questions to activate their learning. In the supervision outside the classroom, questions were also posed to stimulate the students to think by themselves and continue further learning. The students were also encouraged to ask me questions. It should be noted that when being in class, they rarely asked questions. Most of the questions asked were those seeking further clarification on topics they found confusing. This may be ascribed to Komin's Thai cultural values (1990) of ego orientation and smooth interpersonal relationships. That is to say, the students might feel that asking questions could make them look foolish in front of their peers, who might think they lacked intelligence or were trying to show off. Additionally, they might be concerned about my reputation; if I could not answer their questions, they could be seen as being disrespectful, causing me to lose face and potentially damaging the positive relationship we shared. However, when supervising each group outside the classroom, the students appeared more comfortable and confident in posing questions and sometimes challenging my ideas. It could be explained that when being with me and with their group members, they might feel more relaxed and less worried about

losing face in front of peers who were not part of their group. From the findings, it can be claimed that the concept of face savings plays a fundamental role in the dynamics of Thai classrooms, influencing how students learn and how they interact with their peers and their teachers.

#### **4.2.3 Collaboration in Groups**

From my observations, the students appeared active, motivated, and enthusiastic during their PjBL activities. Each group's members assigned roles to one another. The groups included a mix of outgoing and reserved learners and students with varying levels of achievement. I noticed that the students seemed more confident when working in groups. When faced with problems or confusion, they could ask their group members. In some cases, when the group members could not find the answers or the solutions to the problem, they then asked me for help. It should be noted that when they asked me as a group, they seemed more confident to ask. The peer support observed suggests that in the Thai educational context, some students seem more at ease and ready to learn when they are surrounded by their friends in the groups.

During the translation project work activities, the students communicated in English, Thai, and the southern Thai dialect. The use of English and Thai can be seen as normal as they were engaged in the English-Thai translation in the project. However, the incorporation of the southern Thai dialect highlights how the students' local identity is intertwined with their English-Thai translation learning experience. As this dialect was used as a tool in their learning, this also reinforces the sociocultural theory, which was adopted as the theoretical framework in the current study, in that students' sociocultural factors influence their learning process.

Some students who appeared quiet and reserved in the larger classroom environment truly excelled in smaller groups, often stepping up to lead discussions. Although they might have seemed introverted to me as their teacher, they became quite expressive with their peers, sharing ideas and steering the conversation. Conversely, some students who were more vocal in class tended to show less engagement during group activities. However, this was not a strict pattern, as many students remained quiet in both settings, while others continued to be talkative in their groups. However, the contribution level in

group work did not always reflect how successful the work was. Some talkative members might only bring up unrelated topics, while quieter members might have valuable ideas when prompted. This indicates that students' true potential should not be merely assessed solely based on their observed behaviour. Moreover, some students' silence might be a part of their cultural style of learning or a unique personal trait, and it should be understood and respected.

It is claimed that in PjBL, each group member's perspectives and experiences are valued and expected to be expressed, but the Thai cultural aspects of saving face and maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships appeared to hinder the PjBL implementation. Indeed, face savings appeared to be a double-edged sword in Thai educational contexts. On the one hand, it promoted a cohesive learning environment characterised by respect and harmony, where students were encouraged to maintain relationships. On the other hand, this same concept might inhibit open dialogue and critical commitment, creating an educational culture that prioritises social cohesion over intellectual rigour. From my observations, when some of the students worked in groups, it seemed that their face-saving attitudes discouraged them from taking the initiative, resulting in unequal participation. Very skilled students might hold back from fully participating because they were worried about overshadowing their classmates. Meanwhile, those who struggled might hesitate to engage for fear of being seen as out of place. Sometimes, even when they appeared to have differing opinions from their group members, they went along with the majority fearing that sharing their own thoughts might upset or anger their peers. This situation could prevent them from enjoying the advantages of working together, which ultimately restricted their educational experiences and outcomes. The findings observed align with the research of Komin (1990), which indicated that a majority of Thai individuals prefer to save face and foster positive relationships with others. This suggests that even though Komin's research took place between 1978 and 1981, certain elements of Thai culture that are believed to be influenced by globalisation and socioeconomic progress have remained unchanged today. However, it should be noted that while the cultural effects seemed relevant for some students, they could not be applied to all the students under study.



#### **4.2.4 Students' Motivation for Learning**

Motivation is considered to be a hidden quality, but this can be observed through their behaviour (Facione, 2000). From my observations, certain students seemed eager to learn as they collaborated in groups where they felt safe from the fear of making mistakes and losing face. They were able to showcase their strengths and contribute meaningfully to the team. For instance, those proficient in computer and digital technology took the lead in those areas, while others who were good at creating role-playing scripts related to the translated work focused on their strengths. This environment allowed them to feel more confident, as they could engage in the activities that they were good at and felt comfortable doing. Since the project turned out to assess not only their translation skills but also other skills, such as research and role-playing. This made group work fun for some students as they worked together and figured out their roles. It can then be said that PjBL could generate an intrinsic motivation for them. However, it should also be noted that some students appeared bored and frustrated, probably because there were too many tasks to finish. Moreover, it seemed evident that high-achieving students appeared to work attentively on their projects, realising that some of their scores were determined by this. The motivation behind their learning, which was largely influenced by their expectation of obtaining good grades, aligns with Komin's (1990) study which revealed that Thai individuals typically pursued education not purely for the joy of learning, but instead to enhance their social status. This can be said that in Thailand education is seen as an important way to move up in the social hierarchy and gain acknowledgement from others. This achievement motivation was considered to be an extrinsic motivation. Therefore, it can be concluded that it was observed that the PjBL implemented in this study created both types of motivation, the intrinsic motivation and the extrinsic motivation, for the students.

#### **4.3 The Learners' Perceptions of Implementing PjBL**

The students' perceptions of the use of PjBL came from their reflective writing and interviews. These findings were organised into two main topics: the benefits of PjBL and its challenges.

#### 4.3.1 Benefits of PjBL

The students who were the participants in the current study claimed that they gained benefits from learning through PjBL, as presented and discussed below.

Forty-seven students mentioned their improved skills, such as justification, analysis, and evaluation, which could be associated with critical thinking development skills. For example, they claimed that they sometimes had a detailed conversation about the different ways to assess the trustworthiness and importance of the information related to their project. This was especially important because there is so much data online, and the quality of sources can differ greatly. One student explained that:

*We apply what we have learned about critical thinking in the reading course to work on the project. We looked at the credibility of the sources of the information. We did it by considering many factors, such as the authors' qualifications, the reputation of the publication, and whether the information was supported by evidence or research. We tried to find out if there were any biases or propaganda behind it. We also avoided taking the information from Wikipedia because we were taught in the reading course that this website was not a reliable source. People can edit the information in it.*

The student's opinion indicates that through PjBL, his group members participated in discussions, questioned assumptions, and looked for clear reasoning, all of which are recognised by many scholars as crucial elements in the critical thinking process. Moreover, as the student claimed that he applied what he learned in other classes to PjBL, this shows that this learning approach can allow students to use different kinds of knowledge and skills to make the project successful. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the students not only mentioned critical thinking skills but also open-mindedness which was considered by many scholars (e.g., Bailin et al. 1999; Ennis 1987; Halpern 1998; Simister 2004; Willingham, 2007) to be an important critical thinking disposition. This clearly demonstrates that PjBL enhances critical thinking development among students (Anazifa & Djukri, 2017; Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Chen & Yang, 2019; Condliffe, 2017; Li et al., 2015; Pierrakos et al., 2010; Hussain et al., 2009; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; Pierrakos et al., 2010; Trilling & Fadel, 2012). It also echoes Kiraly's notion (2000) arguing that PjBL provides students with practical and significant experiences in translation, fostering their engagement with critical thinking abilities.

Fifty-three students said that they were motivated to learn through PjBL. Their notion supports those of the scholars who endorse using PjBL to promote students' learning motivation (e.g., Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Galán-Mañas, 2011; Guven, 2014; Huang & Wang, 2012; Thomas, 2000). These students claimed that their motivation came from feeling at ease while working with peers in groups. For example, one student said that:

*I liked knowing I wasn't alone and that if we made mistakes, everyone in the group would share the responsibility.*

Her notion appears to reflect a psychological factor: students may be comfortable learning when having their friends around. Moreover, her view on sharing responsibility when making mistakes can imply the Thai cultural aspect of saving face. Therefore, this can be argued that, to some extent, PjBL can reduce the negative effects of Thai cultural factors during learning.

Thirty-eight students claimed that they feel motivated to learn since the project work could also be carried on outside of the classroom. By this, they could take charge of their learning, arranging time when they should work on the project. For example, one student said:

*When working on a project, we can manage our own time because we don't only have time during class. We can also work outside of class. It is flexible. We can schedule meetings in the evening or late at night according to the convenience of the group members. We can meet anywhere that suits our time management. When time is not an issue, we don't feel stressed, we can work comfortably, our minds flow, and ideas come smoothly without any obstacles. We feel relaxed and not pressured.*

Their notion aligns with the notion of Thomas (2000) who argues that PjBL can nurture students' learning autonomy and that of Stefanou et al. (2013) who contend that self-regulation in contexts based on projects allows students to take the initiative, make informed choices, and maintain motivation throughout their projects. It also conforms to Fleming (2000) who argues that PjBL can help students develop their skills of planning, organisation, and time management, all of which are crucial for students in their studies or future jobs. Such intrapersonal skills gained through PjBL are also highlighted by Pellegrino and Hilton (2012).

Five students said they were motivated to work on the project as they felt they could use their own abilities to make the work successful. For example, one study said that:

*I feel proud. It's because I'm not very good at translation. If I were to help with translating a piece of work, I wouldn't be able to contribute much. But when working in my group, I can help them by using other skills that I can do. This way, they can see that I am valuable, that I can work, and that I can use my skills to contribute to the group work.*

The student's expression above indicates that PjBL can make students feel valued and part of their group. This sense of belonging can be argued to boost their motivation to learn and help them view learning more positively.

Twenty-five students mentioned PjBL as maximising teacher-student interactions. They claimed that with time constraints and a large class size, most of the interactions were in the form of whole-class interactions with overall feedback given to all the students. For example, one student said that:

*In the classroom, it's quite difficult for the teacher to provide individual or small group feedback because there are many students and time is limited. The feedback from her is mostly general and doesn't directly address the individual students' questions, problems, or needs. But when working on this group work project, we can consult with her outside of class hours, which allows for more interactions and closer contact with her, resulting in more precise feedback. Feedback gives us more encouragement to know whether we are on the right track or not. Even if we are not on the right track, we have the motivation to correct it because every time we receive feedback, the teacher always encourages us.*

The student's view indicates that PjBL should extend beyond the classroom, and teachers' guidance or supervision outside of class is helpful, particularly in situations of large class sizes and time constraints. This also reinforces that students exposed to detailed feedback are more likely to be able to achieve their learning goals (Guo et al., 2020). It can be argued that students can identify gaps in their understanding and make needed adjustments during the project by getting precise, timely, and constructive feedback. Moreover, the student's notion also suggests that feedback given to students

should be paired with support or reinforcement from their teachers for the teachers' support can enhance their students' motivation.

Four students said they could use new types of digital technology. This finding aligns with Li et al.'s notion (2015) that highlights technological skills as an area of growth students acquire through PjBL. It also implies that PjBL enables students to use various resources in their learning process (van Rooij, 2008; Kiraly, 2000). One of these four students in the current study raised an interesting issue on such matter, claiming that they could learn to use a new technological application from a peer in his group:

*One of the group members showed me how to use Story Planner to create role-plays based on translated works. I wasn't familiar with this app before; I only knew about Canva. I believe working in groups is beneficial because we can learn new skills that we might not have or be good at. I think the technological skills, including other skills that we developed during PjBL, can be used in other classes and everyday life, both now and later.*

The student's view indicates that PjBL not only allows the students to use their unique skills to reach a shared goal but also helps other students in their groups learn such skills at the same time. Moreover, his notion that the acquired skills can be applied in other contexts is consistent with that of Zheng (2017). In the current study, seventeen students pointed out this real-life application.

Eleven students mentioned their recognition of their group members' abilities. For example, one student said that:

*I was quite surprised. Working in the group, I got to see some potential in my friend. In the classroom, he is quiet and doesn't talk much, but when we worked together, I saw his great skills in creativity. He proposed interesting new ideas. It turned out that I saw my friend from a different perspective and got to know him better.*

This student's opinion indicates that when allowing students to take charge of their learning and use each individual's abilities to achieve a common goal, their diverse abilities can be expressed. The student's extract above shows that PjBL can showcase

human diversity and help group members recognise each person's strengths, fostering respect for individual differences.

Twenty-nine students claimed that they could learn translation strategies and knowledge by collaborating with their group members. For example, one student said that:

*When working in my group, I learned more about translation strategies. In class, although the teacher taught these to me, sometimes I couldn't keep up, and some parts I didn't understand but didn't dare to ask her. But in the group, I could ask my friends. I felt I got more knowledge.*

The student's notion implies a high-power distance between a teacher and his/her students in the Thai classroom context. It appears that in the Thai society, hierarchy is accepted and practised. Because of this, inequality tends to be seen as normal, and Thai people appear to have learned about this since their early socialisation. In Thai classrooms, students in general live up to this, realising such hierarchy and behaving accordingly.

One student claimed that by working on the assigned project, she learned to work with others:

*It helps me learn to collaborate and communicate with others. Actually, I don't like working with others in groups. I prefer working alone and thinking silently. I feel that sharing ideas and deciding which ones are good can waste time. However, with PjBL, I enjoy working a lot, especially when we tackle different tasks in the project.*

This student's idea mentioned her particular style of learning: working alone and thinking silently. However, through PjBL, she eventually realised that instead of merely adhering to her preferred learning style, she could enjoy another style of learning and benefit from it. This should thus be considered to be an attractive advantage of PjBL.

The findings indicate that collaboration in PjBL was instrumental in achieving the project's success (Astuti et al., 2021; Condliffe, 2017; Guo et al.; Grant, 2002; Indarti, 2016; Kiraly, 2000; Kokotsaki et al., 2016; Krajcik & Shin, 2014; Li et al., 2015;

Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; Zainudin & Awal, 2012). Such collaboration provided significant advantages for the students involved.

All in all, the findings on the students' perceptions of implementing PjBL in the classrooms were found positive. These findings conform to other studies conducted with students in translation courses in other educational contexts (i.e., Al-Sowaidi, 2021; Astuti et al., 2021; Hilmi & Safitri, 2022; Li et al., 2015). Nevertheless, it should be noted that although the findings in the current study have highlighted several advantages of using PjBL in the classroom under study, some findings indicated the challenges of this educational approach. The following section will present the findings on the challenges and discuss them.

#### **4.3.2 Challenges of PjBL**

The participants in this study expressed their ideas that indicated the challenges of using PjBL in the classroom. The findings will be presented and discussed as follows.

Seventeen students said that asking me questions could be regarded as a sign of disrespect. For example, one student claimed that:

*I did not want to ask the teacher questions as this might make me seem foolish in front of my friends. If I asked her questions, she could become irritated or believe I was being disrespectful, or that it might suggest she was not teaching effectively or raise doubts about her skills.*

The student's notion of "*I did not want to ask the teacher questions as this might make me seem foolish in front of my friends.*" and "*...it might suggest she was not teaching effectively or raise doubts about her skills.*" indicate the Thai cultural aspect of saving face which is related to the ego-orientation mentioned by Komin (1990). The latter additionally reflects the idea of showing respect to a teacher who holds a superior social position (Prommak, 2019). This also accords with the notion of Kettanun (2015) who notes that Thai students tend to refrain from asking questions during class to prevent any disagreement with their teachers and generally remain quiet in their presence.

Five students claimed that they felt too shy to share their thoughts or speak up while collaborating in their groups. For example, one student said that:

*In the group, there are already skilled friends, so I hesitate to share my thoughts. I'm afraid others might see me as silly or think my comments are foolish. If my friend thinks that way, I will feel embarrassed and stressed. It's best to stay silent and assist with tasks I can manage. For translation work that needs expertise, I let my talented friends take care of it.*

The student's view demonstrates the Thai cultural feature of losing face again. It seems that Komin's concept (1990) about ego orientation value can influence how students learn, especially in group settings.

Four students noted that they needed only correct answers from me who was their teacher. For example, one student explained that:

*At first, I was confused about why the teacher preferred to ask questions instead of giving direct answers. Later, she explained that if she simply provided the answer, I might not remember it for long. However, if she encouraged me to think deeper or discover the answer on my own, I would likely remember it better. She asked me which method I thought was better for learning. Still, there are times when I just want the right answer quickly because searching for it myself can take a lot of time.*

From the student's notion, three implications arise. First, in Thai classrooms, teachers are often seen as the main authority who is expected to know best and be responsible for providing only the correct answers (Prommak, 2019). Second, while PjBL is recognised as a learner-centred method where students take charge of their own learning, with teachers acting as coaches and providing support and scaffolded assistance, putting PjBL into practice in educational settings that are traditionally teacher-centred can present some difficulties. Third, the finding indicates that even if teachers explain to their students the benefits and the ways of learning through PjBL, the students who understand these may be demotivated to learn. As this student has put it, "*Still, there are times when I just want the right answer quickly because searching for it myself can take a lot of time.*". This implies that some students prefer instant results. It seems to suggest that 21st-century students, known as millennials, often lack patience and prefer quick



results (Carlson, 2015) although they become smarter, particularly when it comes to learning multiple tasks at the same time using media and technology (Prommak, 2019).

One student said that in the translation class, the assigned work should be only on translation:

*The group project, although it involves translation, has some parts that are not related to it, such as role-playing. If we used the time spent preparing and designing the role-playing to study translation, we would probably gain more.*

The student's sentiment shows that he enrolled in the translation course with the expectation of studying only translation and focusing fully on that, viewing other tasks unrelated to translation as distractions. However, it should be noted that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, helping students gain only knowledge in a subject course is argued to be insufficient. The students needed to be equipped with skills necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century alongside, and such skills can be developed through PjBL. This suggests that the benefits and necessity of using PjBL need to be elaborated to the students. Unless they realise this, they might see this method as ineffective and lose motivation to learn, which could prevent them from gaining any advantages from the learning experience.

Fifteen students mentioned their problems with time management. One of them explained that:

*There are too many subjects to study this semester, and all of them are difficult. We find it quite hard to manage time for work. Also, other subjects have several assignments and projects to complete. So, making each project turn out well is quite difficult. Sometimes, it can be more difficult because we have to deal with other members of the group.*

The student's view indicates that students having several assignments and projects in other courses can be a factor inhibiting the implementation of PjBL in a translation course. By this, it can be said that time management problems can result in students' motivation to learn and work on their projects and also in low productivity. The finding conforms to the notion of Edelson et al. (1999) who claim that one of the challenges in using PjBL in class is students' managerial skills, arguing that the students have to be responsible for handling complex and lengthy tasks that involve not just resources and

time but also collaboration with others. Edelson et al. claim that this level of challenge is lessened in traditional learning settings, where teachers have already structured the activities.

Twenty-seven students claimed that collaborating with their group mates might lead to issues. They noted that different types of intragroup conflicts occurred during PjBL. For example, they said that when they scheduled to work outside of class hours, some group members arrived late or did not show up. One student said that:

*The problem my group encountered was some group members not completing their assigned tasks or doing them poorly and carelessly.*

Another student saw the need to be in harmony as a problem when working on her group work project:

*Sometimes, we have to give the same answer. If some members give different answers from others, they can be marginalised. I once faced this problem. I didn't know how to handle negative reactions from others. It seems that if I want to work happily with others, I need to conform to the majority or someone who leads the group.*

These two students' notions display three implications. First, the project's success requires the collaboration and responsibility of all group members. Second, the student's view on the need to present the same ideas or agree with earlier ideas presented to avoid conflicts indicates conformity which appears to be one of the Thai cultural expectations. The cultural concept of conformity was reflected in Komin's (1990) smooth interpersonal relationship orientation where individuals strive to align with the thoughts of others to maintain harmony in their interpersonal connections. Such conformity in group work activities during PjBL can be argued to prevent group members from expressing their honest and straightforward communication of thoughts, which will cause missed opportunities for learning together, sharing ideas, and gaining insights from different viewpoints, which are the main advantages of this learning approach. Third, as the student expressed her frustration in trying to fit in with others and the stress that came from not doing so, this implies that during PjBL in Thai classrooms, it is possible that some students need to work hard to build their mental strength, energy, and determination. This is consistent with the view of Socha and Socha (1994) who

claim that certain learners, especially those who are less experienced, face challenges in reaching a compromise within group settings. The findings also reflect Johnson and Delawsky's (2013) contention which notes that the conflicts arising in a group work project can affect the level of satisfaction experienced by students.

Four students said they were unsure about how to approach and manage their projects. For example, one student claimed that:

*I understand the assignment from the teacher, but I would appreciate a clearer outline. For example, it would help if she specified which text we should translate. When we pick based on our own choices, it can lead to disagreements. Also, the role play needs to be clearly explained about the type and situation. When the teacher says we can create it freely, I feel lost on how to begin.*

The student's notion implies that she may be familiar with learning in traditional contexts that emphasise a teacher-centred approach. However, in PjBL which is considered to be a learner-centred approach, where students take on the role of creating meaning and producing knowledge, while teachers shift from being content experts to supportive coaches and facilitators. Because of this, some students might feel unsure or uncomfortable with it (Fleming, 2000; Parker et al., 2013; Thongprasert, 2009; Thomas, 2000). The findings also align with the statement of Raktham (2008), claiming that many Thai students frequently refrain from taking the initiative during class; rather, they tend to await direction on how to proceed. Even when encouraged to make a decision, they may simply await the teacher's guidance.

#### **4.4 Summary**

Thus far, this chapter presented and discussed the findings to answer the two research questions investigating the following two areas: the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course and the students' perceptions towards such implementation in the course. The findings on these two areas indicate that while PjBL was acknowledged for its benefits, both my students and I, as the teacher and researcher, also identified certain challenges.

The subsequent chapter will conclude the findings and present contributions and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This concluding chapter encapsulates the research by outlining its objectives and questions, methodology, and findings. Following this, it presents the contributions derived from the study. Finally, it offers suggestions for future research, taking into account the findings and limitations of the current study.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Research**

The present study aimed to achieve two primary objectives. The first objective was to examine the outcomes of incorporating PjBL into the business translation course, while the second objective was to analyse the students' perceptions regarding the implementation of PjBL within the same course. Based on these research objectives, two research questions have been developed as follows.

- 1) What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?
- 2) What are the learners' perceptions of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?

This research utilised Vygotsky's (1998) sociocultural theory as its foundational framework. This theory posits that learning occurs through social interactions facilitated by various materials, symbols, and individuals, which can significantly contribute to humans' cognitive development.

Regarding the research methodology, purposeful sampling was used to ensure rich and deep data. The sample comprised 80 fourth-year students majoring in English from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Thaksin University in Songkhla, Thailand. These students were enrolled in the Business Translation course, which was a

mandatory course of the Bachelor of Arts Program in English, during the first semester of the academic year 2024, spanning from June to September 2024. This research utilised three research tools: observations, reflective writing, and semi-structured interviews. The observations were employed to gather the data regarding the outcomes of implementing PjBL while the data on the learners' perceptions towards the implementation were generated through reflective writing and interviews. This study received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee at Thaksin University to guarantee that it adhered to ethical standards. The collected data were analysed by using the thematic analysis. The findings for the two research questions are below.

**Research Question 1: What are the outcomes of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?**

The findings regarding the outcomes of PjBL implementation could be categorised into the following four themes, namely seating arrangements, interactions between teachers and students, group collaboration, and the motivation of students to engage in learning.

**Research Question 2: What are the learners' perceptions of implementing PjBL in the business translation course?**

Regarding the findings on the students' perceptions of such implementation, it was found that they mentioned both the benefits and the challenges of PjBL.

For the benefits, they claimed that PjBL helped them cultivate critical thinking skills, enhance learning motivation, maximise teacher-student interaction, learn new types of digital technology, recognise group members' abilities, learn more about translation strategies and knowledge, and develop collaboration skills.

The challenges they claimed involved avoiding asking questions to show respect to me who was their teacher, being too shy to speak up and express their ideas in groups, familiarity with and adherence to the teacher-centredness approach, perceiving some tasks in PjBL as being irrelevant to the translation course, time management, intragroup conflicts, and expectation of being provided with more knowledge and instructions.

### **5.3 Contributions**

The results of this study indicate that students' apprehension about losing face, coupled with their desire to demonstrate respect towards their teachers, can lead to their avoidance of asking questions during class, which possibly results in unproductive PjBL. To address this issue, it is argued that teachers should provide positive reinforcement to those students who pose questions, thereby fostering an environment where inquiry is viewed as a valuable aspect of the learning process. Teachers need to cultivate this culture of inquiry among all students. Furthermore, it may be beneficial to convey to the students that asking questions is, in fact, a demonstration of respect towards their teachers, as it reflects their attentiveness and engagement in the learning experience. This approach is likely to enhance their motivation to learn.

Moreover, as evidenced in this study, during the external supervision with me who was their teacher, the participants were more inclined to ask questions and engage in meaningful interactions. As the participants noted, during such supervision, they felt calmer and less anxious about embarrassing themselves in front of peers who were not in their group, and more precise feedback was received, particularly when the classes were large and time was limited. Consequently, it can be claimed that it is advantageous for teachers to provide external supervision for their students while they are working on their projects.

In this study, some students claimed that they preferred traditional teaching methods, and one student suggested that in this Business Translation course, the project work being assigned should merely be on translation. It appears having students understand the nature of PjBL as well as its advantages is crucial. Teachers assume responsibility for this by guiding discussions on PjBL, allowing students to express their ideas and engage in dialogues before arriving at collective conclusions. This method is designed to assist them in constructing their own comprehension and recognising the PjBL significance. By grasping the advantages of PjBL, the students may become more open to embracing it.

Another important finding which indicates a systemic problem is the seating arrangement. It showed that the students experienced discomfort while seated in their

groups. This arrangement also posed challenges for me as their teacher in effectively monitoring their progress. The seating layout in fact fostered a teacher-centred approach, which impeded the execution of PjBL. It may be beneficial for the university authorities to consider redesigning classroom seating to better facilitate the implementation of PjBL.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

The study, ‘Implementing project-based learning in business translation course: an exploration of outcomes and learners’ perceptions’ employed a qualitative research design to collect the data using the observations, the reflective writing, and the semi-structured interviews. Researchers interested in expanding upon this research might consider undertaking a mixed-methods study, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. They may use such quantitative tools as structured surveys and experiments (including a control group and an experimental group). The data can then be analysed to uncover significant relationships, test hypotheses, and extend findings to a broader audience. According to the literature, the quantitative research design can enhance the credibility and rigour of the research, facilitating the discovery of patterns that might not be readily observable through qualitative methods alone. Therefore, utilising these two approaches is arguably anticipated to yield more profound and comprehensive data insights.

The participants in this research comprised fourth-year university students enrolled in the Business Translation course. Future investigations could extend to other translation courses to determine whether the results align or diverge from those observed in this study. Additionally, it is crucial for subsequent research to examine PjBL within translation courses across different international educational settings to assess the potential influence of cultural factors on its implementation, as evidenced in the present study. It is anticipated that by exploring such cultural influences, teachers will be able to tailor PjBL approaches to better suit the needs and expectations of their students, leading to the students’ improved learning outcomes.

Given that the research involved university students enrolled in the Business Translation Course as its participants, it would also be valuable to investigate the cognitions of



business translation teachers on the implementation of PjBL. According to Borg (2003), teachers' cognitions encompass “what teachers know, believe, and think” (p. 81). Borg argues that these cognitions significantly influence their teaching methodologies, warranting further examination.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A**

#### **Observation Guide for the Researcher**

1. A map of the classroom
2. Verbal behaviour and interactions
  - Who dominates the class?
  - Who initiates interactions?
  - What language is spoken?
3. Physical behaviour and gestures
  - Eye contact
  - Classroom behaviour
4. Teacher's roles
5. Students' roles
6. Extroverted students and introverted students
7. Good students and poor students
8. Learning Atmosphere
9. Student motivation for learning

#### **Observation Protocol for the Researcher**

<b>Descriptive Notes</b>	<b>Reflective Notes</b>

## **Appendix B**

### **Reflective Writing Questions**

#### **English Version**

- 1) What have you acquired (including both knowledge and skills) when doing your groupwork project?
- 2) Between PjBL and traditional learning, which one do you prefer to have in this course? Please justify your selection.
- 3) What are the advantages of using PjBL in this course?
- 4) What are the disadvantages of using PjBL in this course?
- 5) What is the best part of using PjBL in this course?
- 6) What are the challenges you have encountered when learning through PjBL and how did you overcome them?
- 7) How can you apply what you have learned through doing the group work project to real-life situations?
- 8) How can your PjBL experience be applied in other courses?
- 9) What are the suggestions for using PjBL in other translation courses?
- 10) Is there any additional issue you would like to raise? If so, please explain.

#### **Thai Version**

- 1) ผู้เรียนได้เรียนรู้อะไรบ้าง (ทั้งในแง่ความรู้และทักษะ) เมื่อทำโครงการกลุ่ม
- 2) ผู้เรียนชื่นชอบการเรียนรู้รูปแบบใดมากกว่ากัน ระหว่างการเรียนรู้ที่ใช้โครงการกลุ่มในรายวิชา และการเรียนรู้แบบเดิมที่ไม่มีการใช้โครงการกลุ่มในรายวิชา กรุณาให้ชี้แจงให้เหตุผล
- 3) ข้อดีของการใช้โครงการเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ในรายวิชานี้มีอะไรบ้าง
- 4) ข้อเสียในการใช้โครงการเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ในรายวิชานี้มีอะไรบ้าง
- 5) ผู้เรียนคิดว่า สิ่งที่ดีที่สุดในการใช้โครงการเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ในรายวิชานี้คืออะไร
- 6) มีปัญหาใดบ้างที่พบระหว่างการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงการเป็นฐาน และผู้เรียนแก้ปัญหาเหล่านั้นอย่างไร

- 7) ผู้เรียนคิดว่าจะประยุกต์สิ่งที่เรียนรู้จากงานกลุ่มโครงการในชั้นเรียนไปใช้กับสถานการณ์ในชีวิตจริงได้อย่างไร
- 8) ผู้เรียนคิดว่าจะนำประสบการณ์จากการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงการเป็นฐานไปปรับใช้กับรายวิชาอื่นได้อย่างไร
- 9) ผู้เรียนมีข้อเสนอแนะใดบ้างเกี่ยวกับการนำโครงการเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ไปใช้ในรายวิชาการเปลี่ยน ๆ
- 10) ผู้เรียนมีประเด็นเพิ่มเติมที่จะกล่าวถึงการจัดการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงการเป็นฐานในรายวิชาหรือไม่ หากมี กรุณาอธิบาย

## **Appendix C**

### **Examples of Interview Questions**

#### **English Version**

- 1) How do you feel about using PjBL in this course?
- 2) What are the advantages of using PjBL in this course?
- 3) What are the disadvantages of using PjBL in this course?
- 4) How do you feel about working in groups to accomplish the groupwork project?
- 5) What kind of knowledge and skills have you learned or bolstered while undergoing PjBL?
- 6) What are the problems or challenges encountered while doing the group work project?
- 7) How does PjBL develop you as a learner?
- 8) How does PjBL contribute to your lifelong learning?
- 9) What are the suggestions you would like to provide to me for using PjBL in other translation courses?

#### **Thai Version**

- 1) ผู้เรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรต่อการใช้โครงงานเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ในรายวิชา
- 2) ข้อดีของการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงงานเป็นฐานในรายวิชานี้มีอะไรบ้าง
- 3) ข้อเสียของการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงงานเป็นฐานในรายวิชานี้มีอะไรบ้าง
- 4) ผู้เรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรต่อการทำงานกลุ่มโครงงาน
- 5) ผู้เรียนได้เรียนรู้หรือพัฒนาความรู้หรือทักษะใดบ้างในการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงงานเป็นฐาน
- 6) ผู้เรียนประสบปัญหาหรือความท้าทายใดบ้างขณะทำงานกลุ่มโครงงาน
- 7) การใช้โครงงานเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ทำให้พัฒนาตนเองในฐานะผู้เรียนได้อย่างไร
- 8) การใช้โครงงานเป็นฐานในการเรียนรู้ก่อให้เกิดการเรียนรู้ตลอดชีวิตได้อย่างไร
- 9) ผู้เรียนมีข้อเสนอแนะใดให้ผู้สอน หากผู้สอนต้องการนำการเรียนรู้โดยใช้โครงงานเป็นฐานไปใช้ในการจัดการเรียนการสอนรายวิชาการแปลอื่น ๆ