

Collaborative Translation for Writers

Work with learners of English - No other languages required

TransCollaborate Incorporated is a not-for-profit organisation run by a small team of language professionals based in Melbourne. Since July 2016 we have been working with teachers, students and researchers across the world to encourage the practice of collaborative translation. We do this because we believe collaborative translation offers an inclusive and interactive model for cooperative world-sharing, demonstrating the myriad ways in which translation allows us to learn, share and create with others.

TransCollaborate began as a research project jointly funded by Monash University (Australia) and the University of Warwick (UK). Founded by a team of four doctoral students conducting research in the fields of translation, literature and language teaching, we facilitated a series of international events to explore how collaborative translation might work in academic research, in the language classroom, and as part of the migrant experience.

Over time, we found that the keenest response to our workshops came from migrant communities in Melbourne – those visiting or living in the city on work, study, refugee or travel visas. While many were already enrolled in formal English courses, collaborative translation offered them the opportunity to hone their language skills and build social confidence in what was often still a very new environment.

As one South Korean participant attested: "It's definitely good for practising writing, speaking, listening, even thinking in English... Making new friends from a different country, and sharing, studying with them, is a unique and rare experience."

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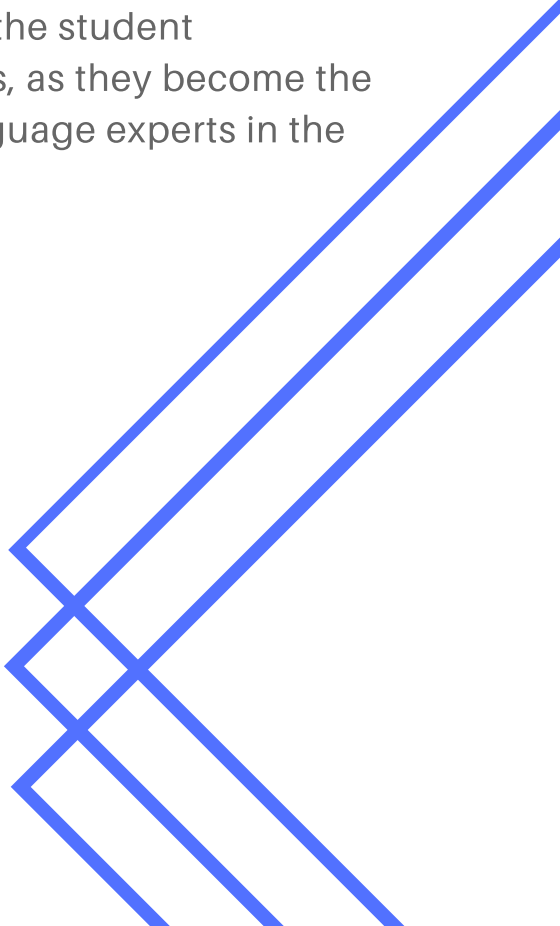


“The TransCollaborate process empowers its collaborators through heightened linguistic and sociocultural understanding and awareness.”

In January of this year we received a Community Grant from the City of Melbourne to support our work in 2019. We aim to use this opportunity to formalise our collaborative translation workshops, and in turn offer the experience to more English-learners. We also want to encourage professional English language writers to join us in a paid capacity, as we believe their expertise will offer language-learners valuable insight into the nuances and creative possibilities of the English language.

To this end, we have developed a model that ensures the native English-speaking writer is paid \$40/hour to work for three hours with a group of two to four students from a single non-English speaking background. While the students must all share a native language that is not English, they may be from a diverse range of countries (for example, a group of Spanish-speaking students from countries across Latin America, or a group of Arabic-speaking students from across Northern Africa and the Middle East).

Over the space of the three-hour workshop, the group will collaborate to produce an English translation of a literary text written in the students' native language. It is critical that the English-speaking writer does not have any formal knowledge of the students' native language; this ensures that the students receive valuable language practice explaining the nuances of the text in English, while the writer has the rare opportunity to engage with a text in an unfamiliar language. Limiting the writer's knowledge of the text also empowers the student participants, as they become the source-language experts in the room.



The Details

Dates: Ongoing throughout 2019
 Location: On site at an English school or Multicultural Hub in Melbourne CBD
 Pay: \$40/hour for a 3-hour session
 Contact: Jessica at transcollaborate@gmail.com

