



COMMON CHALLENGES IN VIETNAMESE-ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH-MAJORED JUNIORS AT TAY DO UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

It is undoubted that translation plays an indispensable role in exchanging information, news, culture, literature and sciences among people globally. In other words, translation facilitates communication and understanding between people who come from various cultures and speak different languages. Owing to the significance of translation, it is employed as a fundamental subject to English majored students. Nevertheless, it is not an easy subject for students to master. Thus, this study aimed at investigating the obstacles that students often encountered when translating texts from Vietnamese to English. This was a quantitative and qualitative research. The questionnaire and test paper were used as two major instruments to gain the most reliable findings. To achieve the goal, 74 English majored juniors from both English 10A and 10B at Tay Do University were selected as the sample for this research. The results showed that English majored juniors faced many challenges in Vietnamese-English translation, consisting of vocabulary, grammatical structures and cultural aspects.

Keywords: common challenges, Vietnamese English translation, English majored juniors

1. Introduction

This chapter describes in detail the rationale of the research. Next, the research's aims and significance of the research are presented. The final part is the organization of the study.

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1.1 Rationale

It is universally accepted that language plays an indispensable role in the process of information exchange and communication with one another. Currently, when living in an international community, human beings need to have a common language so as to bridge the gap among different nations. English, therefore, is considered as a universal language in today's world. As a matter of fact, English is commonly used in life aspects and in cooperating relations as Sozdinler (2008:1) stated "*English has an important role in in the fields of medicine, education and engineering*". Consequently, having a great command of English brings us more advantages, especially for those who want to get high-paying jobs and succeed in their life.

Owing to the popularity of English, many countries worldwide have a tendency of transferring their materials into English such as brochures, contracts, treaties, applications forms, manuals, articles, etc. The context of Vietnam is no exception as Duff (1994:12) mentioned that "*translation happens everywhere and all the time*". It can be said that the role of translation becomes more and more significant, leading to the increasing demand of translators with expert skills. As a result, translation has been employed as a fundamental subject for English majored students.

However, translation is not easy for students to master because it requires their expertise in both source language and the target or receptor language. Specifically, they need a thorough understanding of vocabulary, grammatical structures, cultural aspects and other elements. In reality, many students often face challenges when translating Vietnamese into English because the former language and latter one does not share similar linguistic features and the concepts of culture.

For example, "*Chính phủ có kế hoạch xây hàng ngàn ngôi nhà cho người vô gia cư*". Many students tend to translate the word "*nhà*" into "*home*". (The government plans to build thousands of *homes* for homeless people). Although "*home*" and "*house*" are the place where one lives, meaning "*nhà*" in Vietnamese, in terms of the conlocational meaning they are different. "*House*" refers to the building or structure whereas "*home*" refers to the atmosphere or feeling found in the house.

Another example is "*Con bé dường như buồn ngủ*" (this sentence was extracted from the first semester final test papers for BA English 2007 class).

The key is "*The little girl seems sleepy*". But many students translated into "*The little girl is seemed sleepy*", they were confused with the verb "*to be*" and the verb "*seem*" (cited in Huynh, 2014). Thus, translation is a complicated process and even for those who are fluent in several languages. It is understandable that English learners meet many challenges in translation and there is no exception for students majoring in English at Tay Do University.

For those above reasons, I have an intention to conduct a study entitled "*Common Challenges in Vietnamese-English Translation of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University*". I hope this research will be a useful reference for English-majored juniors at Tay Do University to improve their translation skill.

1.2 Aims and significance of the research

1.2.1 Aims of the research

The current study was conducted with the aim of investigating some common challenges that English-majored Juniors at Tay Do University often faced in the process of Vietnamese-English translation. Basing on the findings of the results, students could realize their own problems and therefore figure out feasible ways so as to enhance their translation skills.

1.2.2 Significance of the research

The study will be a useful reference for all people who are interested in translation. Firstly, it is beneficial for English majored junior students who have problems in translation can improve their translation skill. Secondly, teachers have a thorough understanding regarding difficulties in Vietnamese – English translation learning of students and then they have more effective teaching methods to help their students study better in translation subject. Finally, this study may also be a reference for further discussion by other researchers because this is an insufficient field of study in Vietnam.

1.3 The organization of the thesis

This study consists of five chapters: (I) introduction, (II) Literature review, (III) research methodology, (IV) findings and discussion, (V) conclusion and references.

Chapter I presents the rationale of the study, the aims of the thesis as well as the organization of the thesis

Chapter II reviews the literature on definitions of translation, distinguish interpretation vs translation, kinds of translation, and challenging factors when translating Vietnamese to English.

Chapter III provides the research methodology, research design, a description of participants as well as research instruments used for collecting and analyzing the research data. In addition, the data collection procedure is also presented.

Chapter IV analyses and discusses the results of the questionnaire and test from the learner's responses.

Chapter V concludes the summary of the thesis, shows implications, indicates some limitations, and proposes some suggestions for further studies.

2. Literature review

Chapter 2 includes four parts. The first part addresses the definitions of translation, the second part provides distinction between interpretation and translation, the third part indicates types of translation and the final part shows some common challenges in Vietnamese- English translation.

2.1 Definitions of translation

Translation is the vehicle of ideas, thoughts and perspective of the world. It is used as a tool to transmit information in many different countries. Thus, translation has been variously defined. According to Catford (1965), "*Translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language)*". Nida & Taber (1969) gave the same way when saying that "consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in term of meaning and second in term of style". To give more details, (Bell.R., 1991) stated that *translation is the expression in another language (target language) of what has been expressed in one language (source language), preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences*. That is to say, translation is substitution of a new text for the original in which the meaning and style of the text remained unchanged.

With the above definitions, it can be seen in the following example, the Vietnamese sentence "*Người bắt đầu học ngoại ngữ luôn luôn gặp khó khăn ngay từ bước đầu.*" can be translated into the English sentence "*Beginners of foreign language always meet difficulties from the outset.*" (Tran Van Diem, *Dong A Language School*, 1998). Furthermore, Bùi Bảo Tiến and Đặng Xuân Thu in their "*Interpreting and Translation Coursebook*" (1997) pointed out another interesting way "*translation is rendering a written text into another language in a way that the author intended the text*". In other words, translation is also understood as the process of changing form from source language into target language in which the meaning of the text or author's intention is preserved. Besides, (Hatim and Mason - 1997) made a difference of the concept of translation when stating that "*Translation is an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication.*" (Hatim and Mason - 1997:1). From this definition, translation is also the process of conveying message across linguistic and cultural barriers by communicative activities.

In short, it can be said that "*Translation is the process of changing something that is written or spoken into another language.*" (Advanced Oxford Dictionary). All above definitions of translation share the same idea that translation is the process of replacement or substitution a written text or an utterance from the source language into the target language, which remains equivalence in content, the purpose of communication.

2.2 Translation versus interpretation

Interpretation and translation are two disciplines which are closely related to field of linguistics. What they share is to render or translate a message from one language to another language. However, there are some distinguished differences in which language is used.

Firstly, to interpreters, they must have a fundamental proficiency in spoken communication. Interpreters listen to speaker's message in the source language and renders it orally, consecutively or simultaneously, in the target language. In contrast, translators need excellent written skills. Translators study written material in one

language (source language) and reproduce it in written form in another language (target language).

Secondly, translators will spend more time searching for the best technical terms because translators rely mainly on thorough research with background materials and dictionaries in order to produce the most accurate and readable written translation possible. Conversely, interpreters must immediately come up with a satisfactory paraphrase as they are a part of a communication process directed at a live audience.

In short, both the translator and the interpreter have their own complicated characteristics. Nevertheless, both of them need have a thorough mastery of the target language, as well as a very good passive understanding of the source language or languages with the nature of their work.

2.3 Kinds of translation

In reality, there is no standard or only one guaranteed method for translation because everyone has their own translation method. However, some kinds of translation are found because of the differences and similarities of the source structures, different kinds of text that are going to be translated and different purposes of translation. According to Newmark (1988), there are 8 kinds of translation.

2.3.1 Word-for-word translation

This is often demonstrated as interlinear translation, with the target language immediately below the source language words. The SL word-order is preserved, and the word translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context. Culture words are translated literally. The main use of word-for-word translation is either to understand the meaning of the SL or to construct a difficult text as a pre-translation process.

For example:

- Source language: *"When my younger sister was a child, she played the piano very well."*
- Target language: *"Khi em gái tôi còn nhỏ, nó chơi đàn rất giỏi."*

Another example:

- Source language: *"There is a book on the table."*
- Target language: *"Có một quyển sách ở trên bàn."*

2.3.2 Literal translation

The source language grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents, but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context.

For example:

- Source language: *"He looked up at the Milky Way."*
- Target language: *"Anh ấy nhìn lên con đường màu sữa."*

2.3.3 Faithful translation

A faithful Translation attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the target language grammatical structures. It 'transfers'

cultural words and preserves the degree of grammatical and lexical ‘abnormality’ (deviation from source language norms) in the translation. It attempts to be completely faithful to the intentions and the text-realization of the source language writer.

For example:

- Source language: *“He is as fast as a kangaroo.”*

- Target language: *“Anh ta nhanh như một con kangaroo.”*

2.3.4 Adaptation

This is the ‘freest’ form of translation. It is used mainly for plays (comedies and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture converted to the target language culture and the text rewritten. The deplorable practice of having a play or poem literally translated and then rewritten by an established dramatist or poet has produced many poor adaptations, but other adaptations have ‘rescued’ period plays.

Source text:

*“Thà một phút huy hoàng rồi chợt tắt
Còn hơn buồn le lói suốt trăm năm.”* (Xuân Diệu)

Target text:

*“It would rather the victorious brightness
In an only moment the centenary twinkle.”*

2.3.5 Free translation

Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually, it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called ‘intralingua translation’, often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all.

For example:

Source language: *“Business is business.”*

Target language: *“Công việc là công việc, tình cảm là tình cảm, không thể lẫn lộn được.”*

2.3.6 Semantic translation

Semantic translation differs from ‘faithful translation’ only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (that is, the beautiful and natural sounds of the SL text, compromising on ‘meaning’ where appropriate so that no assonance, word-play or repetition jars in the finished version.

For example:

The source language: *“We hope you will enjoy your staying with us.”*

Target text: *“Chúng tôi hy vọng ngài sẽ có một kỳ nghỉ tuyệt vời tại khách sạn này.”*

2.3.7 Idiomatic translation

Idiomatic translation reproduces the ‘message’ of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

For example:

- Source language: *“Out of sight, out of mind.”*
- Target language: *“Xa mặt cách lòng.”*
- Source language: *“Wait and see.”*
- Target language: *“Thời gian sẽ trả lời.”*
- Source language: *“No guide, no realization.”*
- Target language: *“Không thầy đố mày làm nên.”*

2.3.8 Communicative translation

Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership.

For example:

- Source text: *Good morning!*
- Target text: *“Bác đi đâu đấy ạ!”*

2.4 Some common challenges in translation

It goes without saying that translation is a skill not easy to master. This skill, therefore, students usually study in third year and the fourth year because it is believed that this is the time students can grasp vocabulary, grammar and other elements effectively as Ross mentioned *“Translation holds a special importance at an intermediate and advanced level: in the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers”*. However, in reality, there are few students mastering in these elements namely vocabulary, grammatical structures and culture. Thus, it leads to challenges in the process of their Vietnamese- English translation.

2.4.1 Vocabulary

Nation and Meara (2010:89) mentioned that *“vocabulary ability is considered a convenient mean sure for assessing language skill”*. It is widely acknowledged that vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a language and text comprehension depends on the command of vocabulary knowledge. For example, the source language has the word *“book”* in the sentence *“I read a book”*, *“a book”* in a noun form means *“quyển sách”*, but in the other sentence *“I want to book a room”*, the different meaning of *“book”* in verb form means *“đặt vé, đặt phòng”*. Hence, vocabulary is one the most important factors affecting to translation.

2.4.1.1 Collocation

In the process of learning vocabulary, many students face with collocation. Word combination, or collocation, means words co-occurring repeatedly in a language, which sounds “right” to native speakers. According to the Oxford, collocation is a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance.

For example, native people use “*it is raining cats and dogs*” to say something when it is raining very heavily. Another example is that “*a big house, a large house and a great house*” have the same meaning, but “*great man*” is different from “*big man or large man*”. It is clear that a word has many synonyms, but each word only fits one context or situation (Ying, 2009; Yan, 2010).

However, in Vietnamese the word “*uống*” (drink) can go with many different kinds of liquid water, beer, alcohol, medicine, and even poison. However, in English these are clear distinctions as follows:

“Drink beer/water/wine/coffee.”

“Take medicine/poison.”

That is the reason why students majoring in English make collocations mistakes. Students usually write “*do good to*” or “*do bad to*” because of knowing the phrase “*do harm to*”, and write “*gain harvest*” because of the meaning of “*obtain*” or “*gain*” in “*gain recognition*” or “*gain experience*”. However, the right collocation should be “*reap harvest*”. Moreover, according to Yan (2010), *ESL learners tend to generalize the language knowledge acquired to formulate new rules without considering the exception and limitation of the special language situation*”.

For example, basing on the correct collocations “*take measures*” and “*commit a crime*”, students make “*take some activities*” and “*commit a mistake*”. Because they have generalized from the correct collocations of commit, such as “*commit a murder*”, “*commit theft*” and so on.

As a result, *the major problem for non-native translators is to achieve appropriate collocations in the target text* (Hatim and Mason, 1990). Therefore, it is suggested that students should read as many English materials as possible and take notes some important collocations under the English standard, and then learn by heart to avoid mistakes.

2.4.1.2 Idioms

Idioms are applied frequently in literature and in reality. It serves as a tool to make the language more graphic. In some senses, idioms are the reflection of the environment, life, historical culture of the native speakers and are closely associated with their inner most spirit and feelings. According to Oxford, a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words. However, it has been argued that idioms seem to be too complex for foreign language users (Liu, 2003, McLellan, 2010) and there

is no exception for English majored juniors due to the fact that every nation has their own characteristics.

For example, due to the differences Vietnamese and English culture, idiom “to sell like a hot cake” is usually translated as “*bán đắt như tôm tươi*” instead of “*bán đắt như bánh nóng*”.

“*There is no time like present.*”

is usually translated as:

“*Việc hôm nay chớ để ngày mai.*”

instead of:

“*Không có thời gian như bây giờ.*”

“*Wet blanket*”

should be translated:

“*người rầu rĩ*”

instead of:

“*cái chăn ướt*” (Nguyen, 2001).

In addition to this, Vietnam has the cultural tradition of the wet rice production. Therefore, animals have a strong attachment to Vietnamese daily life. That’s why Vietnamese idioms of comparison consist of images related to buffaloes which work very hard every day to help farmers in rice production agriculture. As a result, when Vietnamese people mention about the strength, people usually used idiom “*khỏe như trâu*”.

In contrast, in English, when people want to indicate the strength, people usually use “as strong as a horse” due to the fact that horses can not only pull ploughs but also transport and entertain. In fact, it does not mean English people do not consider buffaloes as strong animals or Vietnamese people do not regard horses as strong animals. That results just from the difference in culture.

Although the culture of two nations is different, to some extent, ways of thinking and looking at the world of English and Vietnamese is quite similar.

E.g.

Vietnamese idioms	English idioms
Cha nào con nấy	Like father, like son
Nhập gia tùy tục	When in Rome, do as the Romans do
Chở củi về rừng	Carry coals to Newcastle
Thương cho roi cho vọt	Spare the rod, spoil the child
Lửa thử vàng, gian nan thử sức.	Fire proves gold, adversity proves men
Mưu sự tại nhân, thành sự tại thiên	Man proposes, God disposes

In short, idioms are present in all languages, so studying them is in need. A person who does not know how to use an idiom and just use individual word will not become confused when translating and even make the meaning become strange, unnatural, and funny. That is one of the reasons why that make non-native learners cannot get on well with the native ones.

2.4.1.3 Prepositions

A preposition refers to the word or phrase which shows the relationship between one thing and another, linking nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence. Besides, Lawal (2004) stated that *prepositions indicate various relationships between words or phrases in sentence*. The relationship includes those of time, points, position, direction and various degrees of mental or emotional attitude. Preposition exist in both English and Vietnamese vocabulary systems. However, in Vietnamese and English, prepositions have different attributes and usage in each vocabulary.

In Vietnamese, each preposition has a fixed meaning which does not change regardless of the noun, adjective or verb preceding it. In contrast, the meaning of a preposition in English depends on its preceding word. Hence, preposition is one of obstacles in gaining the target language of learners as Richards and Ravina mentioned "*preposition is one of the most problematic categories that students encounter in learning English*" (Richards, 1974; Ravina, 1982).

For example, in Vietnamese, with the preposition "về" can be expressed by different prepositions in English:

- "a talk on history : một cuộc nói chuyện về lịch sử";
- "be disappointed in : thất vọng về";
- "be interested in : quan tâm về";
- "lay emphasis/stress on : nhấn mạnh về";
- "be worried about : lo lắng về";
- "be proud of/ take pride in : tự hào về";
- "be famous for : nổi tiếng về";

instead of

- "disappointed about",

- “proud of”,
- “famous about” as the translator may use (Nguyen, 2001).

To make clear this point, look at the examples (Nguyen, 2001).

E.g.1:

“Tòa án nhân dân quyết định kết án họ 15 năm tù về tội buôn lậu ma túy.”

which is translated into English as:

*“The People’s Court decided to condemn them to 15 years imprisonment **about** the drug smuggling.”*

is incorrect because of the interference of Vietnamese mother tongue (về → about). This Vietnamese sentence should be translated into correct English as follow:

*“The People’s Court decided to condemn them to 15 years imprisonment **for** the drug smuggling.”*

E.g. 2:

“Là một giáo viên ưu tú trong nhiều năm, ông Nam có nhiều kinh nghiệm về giảng dạy và giáo dục học sinh.”

→

*“As a qualified teacher for many years, Mr. Nam is experienced **about** educating and teaching the students.” (incorrect)*

It must be translated:

*“As a qualified teacher for many years, Mr. Nam is experienced **in** educating and teaching the students.”*

From the mentioned example, learner tended to choose the English preposition basing on Vietnamese meaning without paying attention to their variations.

Besides, let’s take a look at the table below:

Notion	English prepositions	Vietnamese prepositions
trong	in, inside	trong
ngoài	Out, outside, out of	ngoài
trên	on, upon, above, on top of, over, atop	trên
dưới	under, underneath, beneath, below	dưới
trước	before, in front of, ahead of, preceding	trước
sau	behind, following, at the back of (Br), in the back of (Am)	sau
bên	by, near, next to, close to, beside, alongside, to the right/left	bên, cạnh, sát, gần, kê, bên phải, bên trái
giữa	within, among, between, in the middle of, in the midst of	giữa

(Tran, 2010)

From the table, when Vietnamese people want to describe the meaning “*trước*”, the word “*trước*” does not change the form in any situations as we can see :

“*Bạn con đang ở trước nhà.*”

→ Your friend is **in front of** the house.

“*Có xe đằng trước kia.*”

→ There is a car **ahead**.

However, when being translated into English, there are various prepositions to indicate “**trước**” according to the positions of the subjects and objects. “*Trước*” – “*in front of*”, “*ahead*”. This difference occurs because Vietnamese people don’t pay attention to trajector (đối tượng định vị) and landmark (đối tượng qui chiếu) when describing the higher position (Tran,2010). Meanwhile, English people take these into consideration. That is why Vietnamese people find it difficult to use correct English prepositions.

In short, due to the mother tongue interference, students found themselves confused in using preposition. To avoid this type of errors, students should learn words attached to preposition by heart. Besides, students should learn many structures with preposition systematically as possible to have a habit of using accuracy and natural sentences as native speakers in translation.

2.4.2 Grammar

Vocabulary is really significant, but it is not enough for translating. Grammar or grammatical structure appeared as another special element to make translation become meaningful. In 1999, Haegeman and Gueron denied the grammar of the language as “*a system of rules and principles which is at the basis of all sentences of a language enabling speaker to produce well-formed sentences, to evaluate sentences and to reduce unacceptable sentences by an acceptable variant*” (p.16). However, English majored students have grammatical error in Vietnamese-English translation due to the differences between Vietnamese and English. Tenses, passive voice and countable and uncountable noun are the best examples

for those challenges. Specifically, there is no change in verb form in Vietnamese when people talk about the period of time whereas English uses inflectional suffixes on the verb to signify time when an action happens. In addition, Vietnamese people tend to use active constructions to express their ideas whereas English people prefer to use passive constructions. Besides, noun forms do not change when people mention uncountable and countable nouns in Vietnamese.

Apparently, differences in such grammatical structures cause some challenges for students in Vietnamese- English translation.

2.4.2.1 Tenses

One of the problems students usually have in translation that is about tenses. By tense we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time. However, English goes very strict structures while Vietnamese language is much more flexible. Thus, the majority of students have much trouble in translating tenses from Vietnamese to English.

In English, the tense indicates the time in which an action occurs, present, past, or future. For example, the present tense of the verb *to bring* is *bring*, the past tense is *brought*, and the future tense is *will bring*. In contrast, verbs in Vietnamese are not marked for tense.

For instance:

“Anh ấy đang học tiếng Anh.”

It can be translated as:

“He is studying English now.”

Obviously, this is the present progressive tense in English. It shows an action happening at the moment of speaking. To describe this tense, we must change the form of verb by adding -ing to “*study*” while there is no rules of using the different verb forms to express the time when an action happens in Vietnamese. Evidently, there is no inflection to Vietnamese verb “*học*”.

Another example is:

“Tôi đã học tiếng Trung Quốc 5 năm nay.”

English suggested version would be:

“I have learned Chinese for 5 years.”

The tense of the verb is the present perfect tense, it expresses an action which happened in the past, and up to now or in the future. With the above present perfect tense,

the verb “*học*” has also no inflection and the meaning of the sentence remains unchanged. Through the mentioned-above examples, it can be noticed that English has a very clear distinction between tenses whereas tense is not usually required in Vietnamese. Thus, students should practice more if they want to limit grammatical errors in using English in general and specifically in Vietnamese-English translation skill.

2.4.2.2 Passive voice

Among many grammatical points in English, passive voice stands out as one of the most popular, also the most confusing to language learners. Not only do they find it hard to use passive sentences in suitable contexts in place of using active voice, but they get really big difficulties in passive voice transference from Vietnamese to English.

*“The **passive voice** is a **grammatical construction** (a **voice**) in which the **subject** of a sentence or clause denotes the recipient of the action rather than the performer.”* (English Passive Voice, 2009)

The passive voice is commonly formed by combining a form of the “*to be verb*” with the past participle (P.P) of the main verb **BE + P.P**.

Take “*He is bitten by a dog*” as an example: “*He*” is the recipient of the action “*bite*” and the performer is “*the dog*”.

Another example, “*Vegetables should be kept in the refrigerator*”. Evidently, the action of keeping vegetables in the fridge is more important than the fact that who should keep it the fridge. It can be considered as a passive voice. However, in Vietnamese, people prefer to use active voice which the subject is the agent responsible for performing the action.

For example, in Vietnamese, people say “*he sold the car*” instead of “*the car was sold*” (by him) like in English. Thus, having a habit of using active voice leading to wrong translation in English. The following sentence is considered to have grammar error because the translator misused the voice.

Vietnamese: “*Giáo dục qua mạng, hay giáo dục trực tuyến là một loại hình giáo dục phát triển nhờ vào tiến bộ của ngành công nghệ thông tin.*”

English: “*Internet or on-line education is a form of education which develops thanks to information technology.*” (Incorrect) (Nguyễn Thành Đức, 2009)

The error of this example is the verb “*develops*”, which is in active form. It must be in passive form “*is developed*” because “*Internet or on-line Education*” cannot develop by itself. Therefore, the Vietnamese sentence should be translated “*Internet or on-line Education is a form of education which is developed thanks to information technology*” (cited in Huynh, 2014).

One more case that would be needed for further discussion is about some non-subject sentences. For example, “*Cần đẩy mạnh công nghiệp hóa, hiện đại hóa*”, in this case, if students do not know to use unreal subject, they will not be able to translate this sentence into English following passive voice. This sentence should be translated as “*It is necessary to promote industrialization and modernization*”. Thus, the distinction between English and Vietnamese makes students have troubles in using passive voice to render the message.

In summary, passive voice is not a simple task to translators. Vietnamese people prefer using active voice to using passive voice. Therefore, that is a big drawback for language learners as English majored juniors. To avoid this problem, students practice more this structure to help their translation become smoothly and naturally.

2.4.2.3 Countable nouns and uncountable nouns

When studying English nouns, students tend to focus on the meaning and ignore their potential grammatical meaning, leading to the fact that they face many problems in translating nouns, especially in count nouns and un-countable nouns. Some nouns in Vietnamese such as “*thông tin*”, “*tin tức*”, “*lời khuyên*” are considered as countable nouns like “*một lời khuyên*”, “*những lời khuyên*”, “*một tin tức*”, “*những tin tức*”. Nevertheless, we are not allowed to use “*advices*” instead of “*advice*”, “*a new*” in place of “*news*” because they are regarded as uncountable nouns in English. Thus, this difference makes students have misunderstandings in translation. For example, students tend to write “*I have a lot of information for our research paper. instead of “I have a lot of information for our research paper”.*

A non-countable noun always takes a singular verb in a sentence. Non-countable nouns are similar to collective nouns. A collective noun is a type of noun that identifies groups of people and things as a single unit. In English, collective nouns can exist in countable and uncountable noun forms. Hence, it is confused for students to use collective nouns effectively. Taking two sentences below as an example:

“My family **is** here.”(1)

“My *family* **are** here.”(2)

There is no change in the noun’s form. Therefore, students do not know exactly whether *family* indicates a unit or individuals. In this situation, in Vietnamese, family is used for a lot of people in a house, so family is regarded as plural and combined with plural of the verb. However, there are two situations in English, “*family*” can exist in countable and uncountable noun. The word “*family*” is understood as a countable noun when it indicates many members in family (individuals), while it is understood as an uncountable noun when it indicates a unit.

In short, special attention should be paid to countable and uncountable nouns because such nouns in English are more complicated than those in Vietnamese. Once

students keep sticking to their mother tongue in transferring nouns into English, they will fail to create a proper Vietnamese-English translation.

2.4.3 Culture and background knowledge

To become good translators, in addition to having a good knowledge of vocabulary as well as grammar, acquiring background knowledge is also extremely important. Background knowledge is defined as information that is essential to understanding a situation or problem. Anderson (1999) took the view that “background knowledge includes all of the experiences that a reader brings to a text: life experiences, educational experiences, knowledge of how texts can be organized rhetorically, knowledge of how one’s first language works, knowledge works, knowledge of how the second language works, cultural background and knowledge”. That is to say, the shortage of background knowledge hinders translators from rendering the source-language texts into the target-language ones with the same meaning. Of all such background knowledge, culture is considered as the most difficult topic in translating due to the fact that every nation has its own customs, beliefs, lifestyles, and thoughts. Brown (2007) emphasized that “A language is a part of culture, and a culture is a part of language... so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”. Consequently, it could be said that students could not reproduce an accurate, comprehensible even perfect translation if they have inadequate cultural background.

In the world, there are two main cultures which create a big difference: Oriental culture (Vietnam) and Western culture (England). For example, Vietnamese people use rice or clothes symbol to imply one’s income. However, English people use “bread and butter” because bread is a main food in Britain and people usually eat bread with butter. Thus, the dissimilarity between two distinct cultures leads to obstacles in the process of translation.

It is commonly known that “ao dai is a traditional costume of the Vietnamese women” and we never find an equivalent word in English to translate “ao dai”. However, some translators translated mechanically “ao dai” into “a dress”. It would be preferred to writing down “ao dai” to express the cultural feature and avoid misunderstanding “ao dai” as “a dress”.

For example, “Trang phục truyền thống của người phụ nữ Việt Nam là chiếc áo dài, tượng trưng cho sự duyên dáng” should be translated into English as “The traditional costume of the Vietnamese women is “ao dai” which symbolizes the grace (Nguyen, 2001). Furthermore, Vietnam is located in the tropical monsoon with complex terrain, and it is famous for the ancient agriculture. Therefore, things, events, phenomena and concepts related to that characteristics that reflect markedly in the name, production tools, rice processing like “cày sâu cuốc bẫm, gieo mạ, làm cỏ, tằm, cám, trấu; bánh đa, bánh đúc”. Besides, there are words about the customs of marriage such as “dạm ngõ, ăn hỏi, thách cưới, nộp cheo” and religion, creed (e.g. đình, chùa, miếu, am, phủ, điện thờ, bàn thờ, bài vị). For Vietnamese people, these words and phrases are very popular, but they are extremely

strange to Westerners. As a result, it is very difficult for translators to translate these words into other languages.

All in all, differences in geography, history, physical life, spiritual, customary practices lead to challenges in translation as Classe (2000) assumed that *differences between source language culture and target language culture may cause translation loss because there are some contextual aspects that have features related exclusively to source language culture and they are not found in the target language culture*. These features are unusual lifestyle or habits of particular people that do not appear in the target language.

3. Research methodology

The purpose of this chapter includes research questions, hypotheses. The next part shows research design, participants and instruments clearly. The procedure of the research is also stated in the final part of this chapter.

3.1 Research questions and hypotheses

3.1.1 Research questions

The research was undertaken to address the following questions:

- 1) Do English majored juniors have any challenges in Vietnamese- English translation?
- 2) What are the challenges that they face in their Vietnamese- English translation?

3.1.2 Hypothesis

According to the literature review and the research questions, it was hypothesized that English Majored juniors at TDU might face challenges in Vietnamese- English translation.

3.2 Research design

This research was a survey carried out to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses shown in the previous section. In fact, it followed a descriptive design. In this research, a questionnaire and a test were employed to investigate some challenges of English majored juniors in Vietnamese-English translation. To conduct the research, 74 students from class English 10A and 10B were selected as the participants of the study. The research was performed within 16 weeks.

3.3 Participants

The participants in this study were 74 English majored juniors at Tay Do University. Their ages ranged from 20 to 22. They all speak Vietnamese as their mother tongue and English is considered as their second language. All of them received the same studying environment. Most of them have studied English for more than 10 years.

3.4 Research instrument

A questionnaire and a translation test were two instruments used in this research. The questionnaire was utilized to get the data from students' challenges in Vietnamese-English translation. Moreover, the test consisting of 20 sentences was made with the requirement to render these sentences from Vietnamese into English. Actually, the researcher collected them from *Translation 1&2* by Nguyen Van Tuan and *Cam nang luyen dich Viet-Anh* by The Windy. This test was used to examine to further describe their problems in Vietnamese-English translation.

The following section would discuss the instruments in detail.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

- **Reasons for choosing the questionnaire**

According to Oxford (1990), one of the most popularly used techniques to collect data is questionnaire because it can be objectively scored and analyzed. Questionnaire would help to collect a large amount of data from a large number of participants in a short time. In this research, the questionnaire aimed to seek the information about the students' view on Vietnamese- English translation, their challenges as well as errors in translating Vietnamese to English.

- **Description of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire consisted of 2 parts.

Part one aimed to investigate the students' background including 10 questions (numbered from 1 to 10). In this section, students were required to choose their most appropriate answer.

Part two embraced 18 statements (numbered from 11 to 28) in total featured five-degree Likert-type scale (i.e. strongly agree, agree, no ideas, disagree and strongly disagree).

In this part, statement 11 was to point out students' attitude towards the significance of translation. Statements 12 and 13 were to point out student attitudes towards the advantages of translation. Next, difficulties in translation of students in Vietnamese-English translation were classified into 3 main categories, namely vocabulary (statements 14 to 20), grammar (statements 21 to 26) and culture (statements 27 to 28).

The content's summary of 3 challenges mentioned above was presented in the following table:

Statements	The content's summary of statements
14, 15, and 16	- Students' problems in word collocations.
17 and 18	- Students' challenges in prepositions.
19 and 20	- Students' obstacles in idioms.
21 and 22	- Students' challenges in tenses.
23 and 24	- Students' problems in passive voice.
25 and 26	- Students' obstacles in countable and uncountable nouns.
27 and 28	- Students' challenges in culture-specific words.

3.4.2 Test paper

- **Reasons for choosing the test paper**

The test was employed in this research for some reasons. Firstly, test is one of the most accurate tools to check the students' ability in translating from Vietnamese to English. Secondly, through doing the test, students could realize what challenges they met in Vietnamese- English translation.

- **Description the test paper**

This test was divided into 2 sections:

Section 1: Students' background was required to collect about name, gender, age and a number of years studying English.

Section 2: Students were required to translate 20 sentences from Vietnamese to English following the instructions of each part.

There were 3 main problems, including vocabulary, grammar and culture aspects. In particular, the first 9 sentences dealt with vocabulary. From sentence 1 to 3, they were related to collocations, sentence 4 to 6 concerning with prepositions and sentence 7 to 9 regarding idioms.

The next 9 sentences were about grammar. From sentence 10 to 12, they were relevant to tenses, sentence 13 to 15 with regard to passive voice and sentence 16 to 18 with count nouns and un-count nouns

The last 2 sentences, from sentence 19 to 20, they were concerned with cultural knowledge.

The translation tests collected after 40 minutes were analyzed in detail.

3.5 Procedure

The researcher conducted in 16 weeks. The specific information was shown in the following table:

Duration	Activities
Week 1 -Week 5	- Setting an outline for research. - Searching documents related to topic. - Writing introduction and literature review.
Week 6 - Week 8	- Designing and editing questionnaire and test. - Delivering the questionnaire to students. - Administering the test to participants.
Week 9 - Week 10	- Analyzing the data from the questionnaires and tests.
Week 11 - Week 16	- Reporting the results and make discussions. - Writing the conclusions, limitations, and direction for further research. - Completing the thesis.

4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaires as well as translation papers. The discussion about results is also stated in this chapter.

4.1 Results

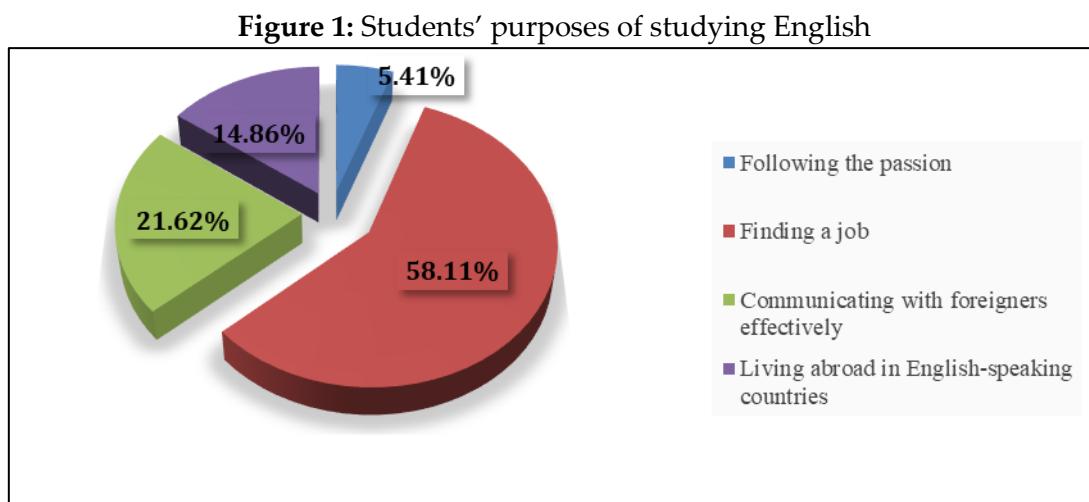
Through questionnaires and test papers, the researcher got many valuable and reliable information from the participants. This section comprised the findings from questionnaires and translation tests collected from 74 English majored juniors.

4.1.1 Results from the questionnaire

Thanks to the students' help, the researcher gained helpful information serving for researching and analyzing the data. The results of questionnaire included 2 parts, namely, students' background and their common challenges in Vietnamese-English translation.

4.1.1.1 Students' background

The first question asked the students the reasons why they chose English as their major and these reasons were categorized in the following pie chart.



The graph illustrated that most of students from English major classes course X (including 10A & 10B) at Tay Do University would like to have high-paying jobs after graduation (58.11%), because they believed that English is one of the prerequisites to be fully qualified to apply for their dream jobs. Besides, there were 21.62% of students who wished to communicate with foreigners efficiently so as to enhance their English speaking and listening competences and there were 5.41% of the participants studying English to follow their passion. Moreover, there were 14.86% of them asserting that they wanted to move abroad to English-speaking countries such as Australia, England, United States, Canada, etc. as their second country.

4.1.1.1.1 The students' interests in translation

Table 1: The students' interests in translation

2. What do you think about learning translation?	Percentage (%)
A. Interesting	68.92
B. Not interesting	10.8
C. Normal	16.22
D. Boring	4.05

Thanks to the data presented in Table 1, the researcher got more insights into students' thoughts about learning translation. The responses revealed that most of participants showed their interests in translation. To be more specific, over two-thirds of students (68.92%) acknowledged that translation is interesting to study so they would practice a lot so as to master this subject. In addition, there were 16.22% of students considering translation normal. Perhaps, they did not spend time enough on practicing translation and they did not have motivation for translation much. In contrast, the rest of them with 10.81% and 4.05% of students, successively considered translation to be not interesting and even boring. It could be said that they met a lot of problems in the process of learning translation. All in all, the statistics showed most of the students had positive attitude towards translation.

4.1.1.1.2 Students' perspectives towards the significance of translation

Table 2: Students' attitude towards the significance of translation

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
11. Translation is an essential subject in acquiring second language.	14.86	75.68	9.46	0%	0%

Taking a quick look at Table 2, it was undoubted that the proportion of respondents strongly disagreeing and disagreeing with the statement was zero. By contrast, 14.86% of the students strongly agreed and three quarters of the ones (75.68%) agreed with the fact that translation is an essential component in the process of acquiring the second language whereas 9.46% of them had no idea about this statement. In brief, learners were aware that translation plays a vital role in language acquisition.

4.1.1.1.3 Student attitudes towards the benefits of translation

Table 3: Student attitudes towards the advantages of translation

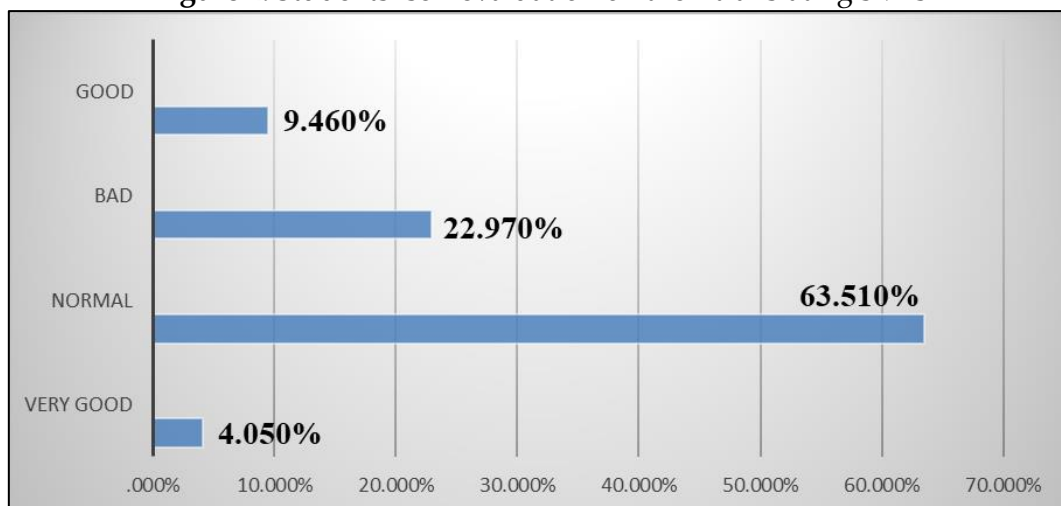
Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
12. Practicing Vietnamese- English translation on a daily basic will widen my lexical resources.	18.92	70.27	10.81	0	0
13. Practicing Vietnamese- English translation frequently helps enhance my grammar use.	16.21	60.81	17.57	5.41	0

From Table 3, the students' perspectives towards the benefits of translation were presented. In terms of vocabulary (statement 22), 18.92% of students strongly concurred and 70.27% of consented to the ideas that practicing Vietnamese-English translation on a regular basis helped expand their vocabulary. In contrast to this, the minority of students (10.81%) gave no comment on this statement. Concerning grammatical aspects (statement 23), most of students came to an agreement that grammar also contributed in improving their translation competence, namely 16.21% of participants strongly agreed and 60.81% of the ones agreed. Still, a minority of students did not recognize the benefits of translation. Specifically, the number of students remained neutral and disagreed with this statement was 17.57% and 5.41%, respectively. Through the findings, generally, most of the students expressed their positive attitude towards translation.

4.1.1.1.4 The students' self-evaluation on their translating skills.

It is essential to find out students' translation skills in order to investigate the suitable ways to help enhance their level in translating and correct the errors as well. Let's observe the figure below:

Figure 2: Students' self-evaluation on their translating skills



As can be shown in Figure 2, it was obvious that more than 60%, exactly 63.51% of participants acknowledging that their translation skills were normal. It meant that they were able to translate basic sentences or paragraph given by their teachers in class. In addition, there were 22.97% of students assumed that their translation skills were bad. Meanwhile, the percentage of students having good and very good translation ability was not high. Specifically, the small number of students (4.05%) was confident with their very good translation skills and 9.46% of respondents believed their translation competence was good. Thus, it was visibly noticeable that the students' translation ability was not truly good, so they need to try and practice as much as possible to improve their translation skills.

Table 4 & 5: Student's attitudes towards self-studying in Vietnamese- English translation

3. How much time do you usually spend practicing Vietnamese-English translation at home per day?	Percentage (%)
A. Less than one hour	54.05
B. More than one hour	35.14
C. Within two hours	0
D. Others:	10.81

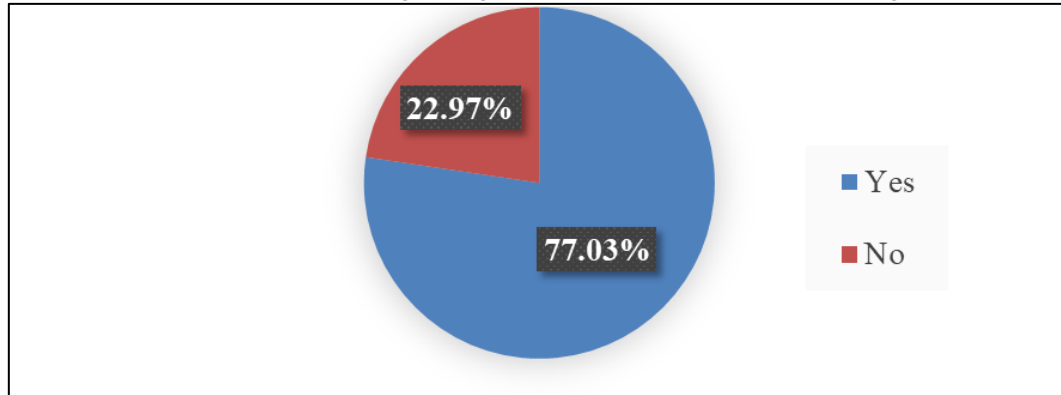
4. Personally, how much time is enough for you to practice Vietnamese-English translation?	Percentage (%)
A. About 30 minutes	8.11
B. Around one hour	68.92
C. More than one hour	22.97
D. Others:	0

From the two tables, self-study had a big influence on studying translation of students, especially in Vietnamese- English translation. In the former, there were about half of the students (54.04%) sparing less than one hour every day on practicing translation from Vietnamese into English. In addition to this, 35.14% of the participants spent more than one hour for the practice of this translation section and none of them spent up to two hours per day. The remainders with 10.81% responded the answer "others" in which they confirmed that they spent less than 30 minutes and nobody said "never". In short, most of the students show their positive attitude towards self-studying Vietnamese- English translation.

As for the latter, nearly 70% of respondents (68,92%) thought that around one hour was the sufficient time for practicing Vietnamese-into-English translation. Next, 22.97% of them asserted that it should be better if the practice lasted more than one hour. The rest of participants (8.11%) assumed that they just needed around 30 minutes daily. All in all, the amount of time students spending on translating Vietnamese texts into English ones was fairly different from one another. The reasons elaborating on this situation was that they spent time doing part-time jobs and developing other skills.

4.1.1.1.5 Students' style of translation

Figure 3: Students' habit of using Google Translate in Vietnamese- English translation



Taking a glance at the figure above, it was amazing that the vast majority of students often used Google Translate as an efficient tool to help them translate Vietnamese texts into English ones. Nevertheless, this was not a rather optimistic signal because such a tool seemingly made their rendering become inaccurate, clumsy and even funny due to mechanical translation. Moreover, this tool has not been considerably improved and there still existed many errors.

Table 6: Students' style of translation

6. Word-for-word is your style in Vietnamese-English translation	Percentage (%)
A. Yes	59.46
B. No	40.54

As can be seen from the Table 6, a number of students admitted that they employed word-for-word translation technique to cope with their process of studying translation whereas the percentage of students who said "no" were 40,54%. From these proportion, it can be concluded that students' translated tasks were incorrect, unnatural and boring due to the fact that they applied word-for-word method. It indicated that they were greatly affected by their mother tongue and they always kept their own style.

Table 7: Students' ways of coping with challenges in Vietnamese-English translation

7. What do you do when you encounter new Vietnamese words or phrases in Vietnamese- English translation?	Percentage (%)
A. Looking up in Vietnamese- English dictionary	63.51
B. Asking friends or teacher	16.22
C. Guessing from the context	20.27
D. Other:	0

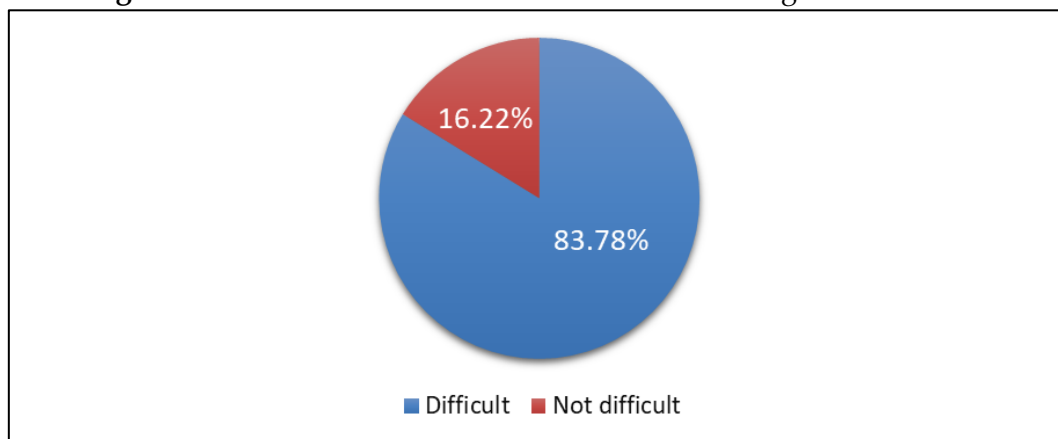
The ways students tackled with new Vietnamese words or phrases in Vietnamese-English translation were shown in the table 6. The responses revealed that 60.81% of the

students entirely relied on Vietnamese-English dictionaries when translating whereas 20.27% of the students could guess the word meaning from the context. The remaining of (16.22%) respondents asked their teachers and friends.

Through the data, it was obvious that more than a half of students were dependent on the dictionaries to get the meanings of new words or phrases because they believed that it was one of the fastest ways to find the meaning of words. However, it sometimes took much time to pick up the most suitable words since a word could contain many layers of meanings. Thus, the others stated that they attempted to guess the meaning from context for the reason that this way was less time-consuming than the previous ones and it was also an accurate and effective methods for their translating. In other cases, students would ask classmates or lecturers if they were unable to find out the answer for their translation.

4.1.1.1.6 Students' attitudes towards Vietnamese- English translation

Figure 4: Students' attitudes towards Vietnamese- English translation



Looking at Figure 4, it was evident that merely 16.22% of participants did not consider this kind of translation a complicated task for them. On the other hand, there were a massive 83.78% of students had difficulties in studying translation from Vietnamese to English. This was apparently the result of the fact that our mother tongue and English do not share similar linguistic features as well as cultural aspects. Also, they did not spend an adequate time for practicing such a type of translation and thus challenges in the process of rendering Vietnamese into English were unavoidable for students.

Table 8: Students' frequency of encountering obstacles in Vietnamese- English translation

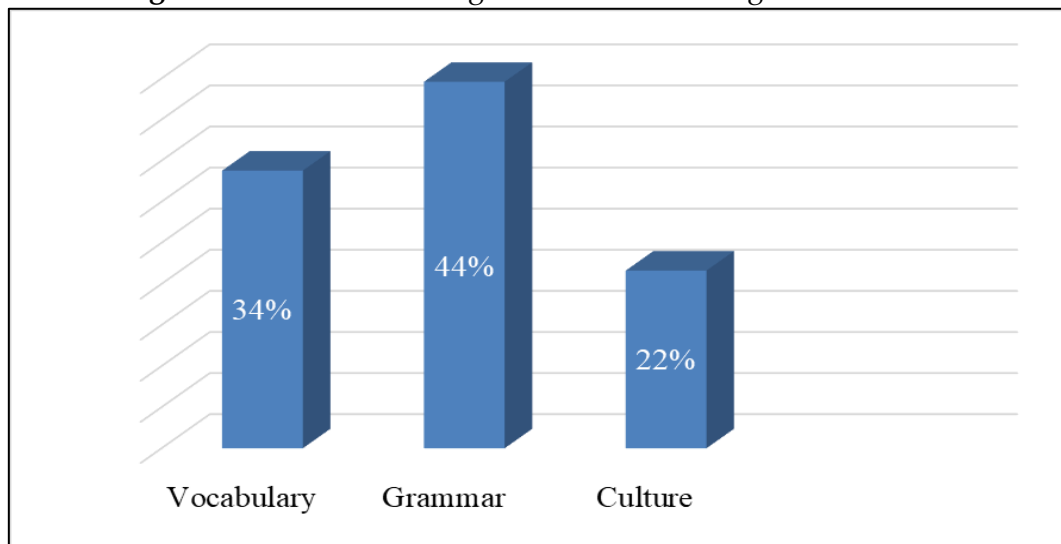
9. How often do you experience the difficulties in Vietnamese- English translation?	Percentage (%)
A. Never	0
B. Seldom	9.46
C. Usually	56.76
D. Always	33.78

Basing on the results in the Table 8, it was not hard to see the participants did have troubles rendering Vietnamese into English. Among 74 respondents, there were 42 of them (56.76%) responded that they ran into the challenges very usual. Besides, 25 participants, accounting for 33.78%, affirming that they always faced challenges and there were just 9.46% of students asserting that they seldom got into difficulties in this section of translation. Drawing from the students' responses, it was apparent that Vietnamese-English translation was not an effortless task for students.

4.1.1.1.7 Students' challenges in Vietnamese- English translation

From the Figure 5, it could be clearly seen that Vietnamese-English translation was a difficult subject to students. Their common challenges were shown in the figure below:

Figure 5: Students' challenges in Vietnamese-English translation



The bar chart described the data about English majored juniors' obstacles in Vietnamese-English translation. As can be seen from the responses, grammar accounted for the highest percentage when there were 44% of the students admitted that they had a lot of problems in grammatical structures. The second position belonged to vocabulary with 34% of students encountering difficulties. Finally, students faced the least challenges in rendering cultural elements with 22%.

4.1.1.1.8 Difficulties in vocabulary

- Collocation

Table 9: Students' problems in word collocations

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
14. It is hard for me to recognize collocation in Vietnamese- English translation texts.	24.32	56.76	18.9	0	0
15. I cannot remember all collocations because they are of various sorts.	21.62	54.06	13.51	10.81	0
16. I have a habit of translating word-for-word to form a new collocation.	12.16	45.95	27.03	14.86	0

The above table including three statements in total investigated students' common problems in word collocation. In statement 14, there were 24.32% of the participants strongly agreeing and 56.76% of students agreeing with this statement. Conversely, the remaining with 18.92% of the respondents gave no comments. When delivering the questionnaire, some students asked the researcher "could you tell me what collocation is". That question was the best evidence for confusion about collocation of the students. Next, statement 15 in the table indicated that there were just 10.81% of the respondents disagreeing that they could not remember all the collocations. It meant that they practiced translation a lot and of course, they could easily remember word collocations. Besides, there were 13.51% of the participants having no idea with the statement, which showed they were hesitant whether or not they could apprehend collocation. On the contrary, about three-fourths of students (54.06% agreed and 21.62% strongly agreed) stated that memorizing collocations was a tough challenge for them because they are of various sorts. Lastly, the result from statement 16 showed that most of the participants had a tendency of forming new collocations by translating word-for-word, with 12.16% strongly agreed and 45.95% agreed. There still remained 27.03% of the respondents expressing the neutral attitude to this statement. Nonetheless, nearly 15% of the students (14.86%) dissented from the statement owing to the fact perhaps they checked collocation carefully before translation.

- **Preposition**

Table 10: Students' challenges in prepositions

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
17. I am in confusion whenever connecting words with their appropriate prepositions.	20.28	52.70	12.16	14.86	0
18. I am usually influenced by Vietnamese when translating prepositions into English.	21.62	50	21.62	6.76	0

In the first statement, when being asked about whether students had troubles in preposition or not, 20.28% of participants completely approved and 52.70% of them concurred with this opinion. In contrast, 12.16% of the students were on the fence while 14.86% of them disagreed with the statement. For the second statement, successively 27.62% and 50% of students strongly agreed and agreed with the idea that they were largely affected by Vietnamese when rendering prepositions into English. On the contrary, there were 21.62% of the participants giving no ideas. The rest of juniors (10.81%) disagreed with this statement. As a result of students' responses, it revealed that they confronted problems relevant to prepositions in Vietnamese-English translation.

- **Idioms**

Table 11: Students' obstacles in idioms

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
19. It is hard to find out equivalent idioms in Vietnamese-English translation texts.	24.32	44.59	18.92	12.17	0
20. Idioms containing culture-specific items pose great challenges for me to translate from Vietnamese to English.	27.03	55.41	17.56	0	0

Table 11 consisting of 2 statements provided information about students' challenges in rendering idioms from Vietnamese into English. In the former, nearly 70% of students in which 24.32% of the students strongly agreed and 44.59% agreed with the fact that they had troubles finding equivalents for English idioms to translate from Vietnamese. Unlike other students, there were 18.92% of the participants showing uncertainty and just 12.17% of the ones disagreed with this statement. Regarding the latter, it was noticeable that a vast majority of students admitted that they coped with translating cultural idioms, namely, 27.03% "strongly agree" and 55.41% "agree". There were only 17.56% of the

participants expressing their hesitation with the statement whilst no one showed disagreement.

In brief, finding out the equivalence of idioms in general and idioms containing culture-specific items in particular was in fact, a big challenge for juniors majoring in English.

Table 12: Students' challenges in tenses

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
21. Tenses in English often make me feel puzzled in translating them.	27.02	64.86	0	8.11	0
22. I am confused about the inflectional verbs in Vietnamese- English translation.	17.5	58.19	9.46	14.86	0

As can be seen from the first statement in the above table, 27.02% of the students entirely consented and 64.86% of the respondents came to an agreement that they met challenges in transferring tenses from Vietnamese to English. In addition, only 8.11% of the participants disagreed with the statement. Concerning the second statement which aimed at figuring out if students had problems with inflectional verbs. Obviously, the majority of students encountered those problems (17.57% of them strongly agreed and 58.19% agreed). Meanwhile, a minority of students had no ideas and showed disagreement with 9.46% and 14.86%, respectively.

Through the two statements, it could be said that tenses caused confusion for participants in converting them into English.

- **Passive voice**

Table 13: Students' problems in passive voice

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
23. I tend to use active voice rather than passive voice in Vietnamese- English translation.	18.92	68.92	0	12.16	0
24. It is hard to transform active sentences into passive ones in Vietnamese- English translation.	20.27	66.22	13.5	0	0

As presented in the table, 18.92% of students strongly agreed and 66.22% of the students agreed, whereas only 12.16% of the participants dissented with the fact that "I tend to use active voice rather than passive voice in Vietnamese- English translation". Besides, the findings from statement 24 illustrated that nearly 90% of students (20.27% "strongly agree" and 66.22% "agree") asserted that it was truly difficult for them to translate active voice

into passive one. However, only 13.5% of the students gave the disagreement with this statement. In general, students met difficulties in translating passive voice from Vietnamese to English.

- **Countable and uncountable nouns**

Table 14: Students' obstacles in countable and uncountable nouns

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
25. I have trouble translating countable and uncountable nouns from Vietnamese to English.	12.16	50	13.52	24.32	0
26. I do not realize that some nouns in Vietnamese cannot be counted in English.	14.86	41.89	25.68	17.57	0

Continuing with problems in countable and uncountable nouns, table 14 comprised two statements. With statement 25, it was noticeable that 12.16% of the respondents strongly agreed and half of the students agreed that countable and uncountable nouns challenged participants in reproducing such nouns from the source language (Vietnamese) to the target language (English). Nevertheless, there were 13.52% of students having hesitation and about a quarter (24.32%) of the students did not agreed with this statement. As for statement 26, when being asked about the recognition that some nouns in Vietnamese cannot be counted in English, 17.57% and 25.68% of students gave no comments and disagreement, successively. More than 50% of participants, consisting of 14.86% and 41.89% of them who in turn strongly concurred and consented to the statement. In short, due to the fact that students could not escape from their mother tongue, challenges in terms of countable and uncountable nouns were accordingly inevitable.

4.1.1.1.9 Obstacle in translating cultural aspects

Table 15: Students' challenges in culture-specific words

Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	No idea (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
27. It is a rather complicated task for me to translate topics regarding culture	10.81	45.95	27.02	16.22	0
28. I sometimes cannot choose words to render due to cultural differences.	13.51	51.35	22.98	12.16	0

From the table, statement 26 manifested that 16.22% of the students disagreed when they assumed that it was not hard for them to convey cultural texts from Vietnamese to

English while 27.02% of students admitted they were on the fence with this statement. Nonetheless, a number of students had contrary viewpoints. In particular, sometimes they coped with untranslated words due to cultural aspects. It was discernible that more than half of the students (13.51% “strongly agree” and “51.35% agree”) agreed with statement 27. Once again, 22.98% of the students were up in the air whilst 12.16% showed that they did not agree with this statement. Generally, cultural barriers brought about inaccurate, funny and incomprehensible translated versions.

4.1.2 Results from the test

Table 16: The number and percentage of students’ mistranslation

Vietnamese- English translation	Mistranslated sentences		Tested sentences	
	N ^o	%	N ^o	%
Vocabulary	429	28.98	666	45
Grammar	446	30.08	666	45
Culture	131	8.85	148	10
Total	1006	67.91	1480	100

Table 16 showed that 67.91% of sentences translated by the participants were in correct. In fact, the proportion of grammatical mistranslation was the highest (30.08% or 446 terms) while that of mistranslation in cultural sentences was the lowest (8.85% or 131 sentences). Meanwhile, the percentage of mistranslated sentences in terms of vocabulary was 30.08% or 446 sentences. It can be concluded that the students had the most difficulties in translating grammatical structures while they faced the least challenges in rendering cultural terms. Besides, they had obstacles in translating vocabulary whose percentage was slightly lower than grammar’s.

Students’ mistranslation in each challenge was presented in the chart below:

Table 17: The number and percentage of mistranslation concerning vocabulary

Vocabulary mistranslation	The number of errors	Percentage
Collocation	165/222	11.15%
Preposition	138/222	9.32%
Idiom	126/222	8.51%
Total	429/666	28.98%

It was easily observed that word collocation was deemed the hardest for students to translate with 11.15%. Besides, they also had obstacles in transforming prepositions and idioms from Vietnamese to English with 9.32% and 8.51%, respectively.

- **Word collocations**

Example 1:

“Chính phủ đã thực hiện nhiều biện pháp ngăn chặn việc buôn lậu ma túy.”

The English suggested version would be:

*"The government has **taken many measures** to stop the drug smuggling."*

However, the majority of students did translate the sentence as follows.

"The government has done a lot of measures to prevent the smuggling or drugs."

or

"The government has performed several measures to prevent smuggling drug."

Example 2:

"Sau khi nghiên cứu thị trường, chúng tôi đã quyết định đưa ra thị trường một sản phẩm gây ấn tượng có thể cạnh tranh với hàng ngoại nhập."

The English suggested version was

*"After **doing a market research**, we decided to launch an impressive product which can compete against the imported ones."*

Nevertheless, a large number of participants rendered the sentence as:

"After researching the market, we decided to introduce an impressive product that can compete with imported goods."

or

"After investigating the market, we decided to launch an impressive product that could compete with foreign goods."

Example 3:

"Cô ấy sẽ đi công tác vào cuối tháng Sáu."

The English suggested version would read:

"She is going to go on business at the end of June."

Nonetheless, students translated the sentence as:

"She will go to work in late June."

or

"She will go on a mission at the end of June."

- Prepositions

Example 1:

"Ông ta thất vọng về các học trò của mình."

Many students rendered the sentence into English as:

"He was disappointed about his students."

Conversely, the sentence would have been translated as

*"He was **disappointed in/with** his students."*

Example 2:

"Chúng tôi thành thật chia buồn về việc ra đi của bố bạn."

Many students converted this sentence into English as:

"We are really condolatory about your father's death."

or

"We are sorry to hear of your father's death."

However, the sentence should have been rendered as

"We really condole with you for the loss of your father."

Example 3:

"Họ sống độc lập với bố mẹ"

was translated by students as follows:

"They live independently with parents."

or

"They live independently from their parents."

On the other hand, it was highly recommended that the sentence would be:

*"They live **independently of** their parents."*

- **Idioms**

Example 1:

"Bóng đá không phải là sở thích của tôi."

Many students reproduced this sentence as:

"Football is not my hobby."

or

"Football is not my preference."

On the contrary, the English suggested version was:

*"Football is not my **cup of tea**."*

Example 2:

"Cô ấy bán hàng đắt như tôm tươi."

was translated by students as:

"She sells like fresh shrimp."

Or

"She sells as expensive as fresh shrimp."

But the key was:

*"she **sells like hot cakes**."*

Example 3:

“Mặc dù họ lái dịch vụ taxi, nhưng doanh số bán xe hơi là thu nhập chính của họ.”

Several students rendered the sentence as:

“Although they drive taxi service, car sales are their main income.”

The English suggested version was:

*“Although they run a taxi service, car sales are their **bread and butter**.”*

Table 18: The number and percentage of grammatical mistranslation

Grammatical errors	The number of errors	Percentage (%)
Tenses	142/222	9.55
Passive voice	170/222	11.48
Countable and uncountable nouns	134/222	9.05
Total	446/666	30.08

Table 18 showed the data about the proportion of students' grammatical mistranslation. In fact, passive voice was the term which had the highest mistranslated percentage (11.48%). It followed by tenses and countable and uncountable nouns with 9.55% and 9.05%, respectively.

- **Tenses**

Example 1:

“Chuyến tàu kế tiếp khởi hành lúc 11 giờ sáng.”

A lot of students translated the sentences into English as:

“The next train will start at 11 am.”

or

“The next train is going to depart at 11 am.”

The English suggested version was:

*“The next train **leaves** 11 am.”*

Example 2:

“Anh ấy đã chờ trong suốt 2 giờ. Bây giờ anh có muốn gặp anh ấy không?”

A large number of students converted this sentence into English as:

"He waited for 2 hours. Do you want to meet him, now?"

or

"He was waiting for 2 hours. Do you want to meet him, now?"

Though those were their answers, the key was:

*"He **has been waiting** for 2 hours. Will you meet him now?"*

Example 3:

"Đến năm 2020 thì cha tôi đã nghỉ hưu rồi".

Students reproduced it into English as:

"My father will retire in 2020."

or

"My father has retired since 2020."

Nevertheless, the key was:

*"My father **will have retired** by the year 2020."*

- **Passive voice**

Example 1:

"Đây là chốn thờ cúng tôn nghiêm yêu cầu giữ im lặng."

Most of students translated the sentence into English as:

"This is a worship place that requires silence."

or

"We are requested to keep silent because this is a solemn place of worship."

However, the English suggested version was that:

“Silence is required at this worship place.”

Example 2:

“Chúng tôi không tính gộp thuế sân bay vào giá vé và quý khách phải trả khi đến hoặc đi tùy theo địa phương.”

The following sentences were incorrectly translated by students as:

“We are not included airport tax on fares and you have to pay when you come or leave depending on the local.”

or

“Airport tax is not included in ticket fare and you must pay when arriving or leaving depending on the local.”

Nonetheless, the English suggested version was:

*“Airport taxes **are not included** in the ticket price and **must be paid upon** arrival or departure locally”.*

Example 3:

“Chúng tôi không nhận đơn trễ hạn.”

This sentence was rendered by participants as:

“We do not accept late applications.”

In order to be more idiomatic, they should have translated this sentence as:

*“Applications after the closing date **are not accepted**”.*

- **Countable and uncountable nouns**

Example 1:

“Tôi có nhiều kinh nghiệm trong lĩnh vực công nghệ phần mềm.”

There were several students translating the sentence into English as:

"I had many experiences in the field of software engineering."

Nevertheless, the English suggested version was:

*"I gained much **experience** in software engineering."*

Example 2:

"Anh ta đã cho tôi rất nhiều lời khuyên trước cuộc phỏng vấn."

Many students reproduced this sentence into English as:

"He gave me many advices before the interview."

or

*"He gave me **some advices** before interviewing."*

The key was *"He gave me **a great deal of advice** before my interview"*, though.

Example 3:

"Tất cả thiết bị y tế phải được khử trùng trước khi sử dụng."

This sentence rendered into English by students as:

"All medical equipment must be sterilized before using."

In contrast, the English suggested version was:

*"All **medical equipment** must be sterilized before use".*

- **Cultural elements**

Table 19: The number and percentage of cultural mistranslation

Cultural errors	The number of errors	Percentage (%)
Culture	131/148	8.9

Example 1:

“Ruộng có hai vụ: vụ tháng năm và vụ tháng mười. Người làm ruộng hầu hết cả năm dầm mưa dãi nắng ở ngoài đồng áng. Hết cày bừa, gieo mạ, cấy lúa, lại làm cỏ, tát nước.”

The English suggested version was:

*“Rice-paddy fields have two crops: the fifth-month and the tenth-month ones. Almost all year round, the peasants **expose themselves to the rain and sun** in the rice fields. They do the **ploughing, harrowing, transplanting, weeding and irrigating** one after another.”*

However, many participants converted the sentence into English as:

“Rice field has two crops: in May and in October. Most of farmers expose to the sun and rain out the fields most of the year. They not only plough, seed, cultivate but also weed and bail out water.”

or

“Rice field has two crops: May and October. Most of farmers are sun-rays in the fields. Plowing, sowing plowing, transplanting rice, weeding and slapping water.”

Example 2:

“Đa số dân làng đều có tay nghề về chặt tre, chẻ tre đến đan chiếu và tằm phen khi còn rất nhỏ.”

The sentence was made by students as:

“Most of the villagers are skilled in cutting and splitting bamboo to weaving mats and wattles at very young age.”

“Most of the villagers specialized in cutting bamboos, splitting bamboos to knit mats and wattles when they were very young.”

The English suggested version was:

*“Most of the villagers specialized in **chopping, splitting** bamboos to **weaving the mats and wattles** at a very young age.”*

4.2 Discussion

As stated in Chapter I, it was truly important to find out some common challenges of English majored juniors in Vietnamese-English translation. After going through the analysis of questionnaires and test papers, it was discernible that students' challenges in translating texts from Vietnamese to English were vocabulary, grammatical structures and culture. To clarify such problems, the researcher would like to review them so that the picture of students' problem could be drawn vividly.

First of all, vocabulary was one of the difficulties that students met in their translation. In other words, their challenges about vocabulary were related to word collocations, idioms and prepositions. Students asserted that they were unable to produce an idiomatic sentence due to the fact that it was hard to recognize collocations in Vietnamese and English. In addition to this, since English collocations were more and more increased, students could not bear in mind such collocated words. Moreover, students also met a lot of challenges in rendering idioms. In reality, due to the fact that Vietnamese and English were two distinct cultures, so students found idioms complicated to find out equivalent idioms in their translating. It was more sophisticated when they dealt with idioms containing culture-specific items. Simultaneously, word-for-word technique appeared as a rescued way for them to tackle collocations and idioms. However, it was the main causes that desired meaning of a translated text could not be fully conveyed. Finally, prepositions also posed challenges for students in translation. Under the influence of their mother tongue, students tended to combine words with prepositions depending on the meaning of Vietnamese. Thus, students usually made errors in using prepositions in English.

Secondly, the vast majority of students admitted that grammatical structures were the top obstacles in translating. Specifically, they had troubles with tenses, passive voice and countable and uncountable nouns. In English, people used many tenses to indicate time concretely and accurately while in Vietnamese merely used "đã", "đang", "sẽ" to show the time at the present, in the past and future. That is, Vietnamese verb forms did not change through time. As a result, students often did not conjugate in Vietnamese-English translation. Equally important, students also encountered problems with passive voice. In Vietnamese, active voice was a preferred construction rather than passive voice. However, students were not aware of this habit, which obstructed them in producing a well-worded and natural translated text. Furthermore, they faced many problems in translating countable and uncountable nouns into English. Students had a tendency of focusing on the meaning and ignoring their potential grammatical meaning. Obviously, they did not realize that some nouns in Vietnamese cannot be counted in English.

Last but not least, students had obstacles in translating cultural aspects. Nevertheless, this was the problem that students had the least challenges among 3 above-mentioned elements. Students had difficulty translating cultural topics owing to the fact that they were short of cultural knowledge. Moreover, cultural differences also led to many problems for students to translate. Apparently, every nation has its own culture

and it reflects the way people in each country use. As a result, it was a complicated task for students to translate cultural words.

In conclusion, the researcher's outcome figured out that juniors could not break language barriers for the purpose of creating a pure target language. Besides, this indicated that students could not produce well-worded translation on the grounds of three big challenges discussed thus far.

5. Conclusions, Implications, Limitations, Recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions, implications, limitations and recommendations for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

No one can deny the importance of translation in the "global village". Since its very beginning, translation has not ceased to play an indispensable role of transferring messages across the two languages. However, it was a sophisticated task for students when the source language and the receptor one does not share the same linguistic features. For those reasons, challenges relevant to Vietnamese-English translation were the main objective of the thesis.

After conducting the research by analyzing important information collected from questionnaires and translation tests, the research would like to draw some conclusions for the whole research. Students had problems with translation because of the following reasons. In term of vocabulary, they encountered troubles in word collocations, idioms, and prepositions. The students could not remember all of the pairs of collocations as well as idioms, so they guessed and used word-for-word translation to deal with these difficulties. To avoid these errors, students should read books extensively to collect collocated words and idioms under the English standards and keep them in mind for their latter use. With prepositions, students should rescue themselves from the habit of using prepositions relying on the meaning of their mother tongue to make their translation more idiomatic.

In the matter of grammar, this was the problem that students had the most difficulties. In particular, they coped with tenses, passive voice and countable and uncountable nouns. In such cases, students are advised to do grammatical exercises on a routine basis. It is a good idea to help familiarize with grammatical structures of the target language. Another feasible solution was that students should read a variety of English material because through reading different genres and styles of writing, they can learn how other authors use language, how sentences are structured to make their translation flexible and natural.

Finally, the shortage of cultural knowledge in both source language and target language was obstacles in students' translation. To surmount the problems, they could apply many different ways to understand other cultures. Firstly, they could read Vietnamese and English cultural books to enlarge their culture knowledge. Secondly,

they could follow local websites with data on entertainment, outings, trends to have a bright outlook on other customs and cultures. Last but not least, travelling to English-speaking countries could be the best way because they would experience and learn many interesting things from those different cultures.

All in all, it could be implied that students met difficulties in rendering texts from Vietnamese into English though they had studied the theory of translation as well as practiced many translation tasks provided by teachers in class. The possible explanation for this problem was that they had habit of using word-for-word technique. Moreover, they were strongly influenced by their mother tongue in their translation. Therefore, facing many challenges in Vietnamese-English translation was something unavoidable.

5.2 Implications

Basing on the findings, there were three implications that the researcher would like to refer. First of all, students could be aware of their challenges in Vietnamese-English translation as above-mentioned findings. Secondly, students should practice translation in both Vietnamese and English extensively to obtain accuracy in their translation. Thirdly, teachers would have a thorough understanding concerning students' obstacles in translating texts from Vietnamese to English and then they have more effective teaching methods to help their students study better in translation subject.

5.3 Limitations

This was the first time the researcher carried out a study like this; thereby, it was hard to avoid some restrictions. As a result of the time limitation, the researcher could not cover all the challenges that students faced in their Vietnamese-English translation. Besides, it took much time to collecting the data due to the fact that students expressed non-cooperation in the first few minutes. Nevertheless, the researcher hoped that, in its scope, the current paper would offer students the usefulness for English majored juniors in their Vietnamese-English translation studying process as well as for those having interests in translating Vietnamese to English.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

The main focus of this research was to investigate some challenges of English majored juniors. Accordingly, another study about how to overcome these difficulties or how to improve the translation skill should be conducted to help students have a better translation skill. Furthermore, the researcher just carried out the survey on juniors, so the further study should be implemented on seniors or even sophomores who are about to approach the process of translation to gain more reliable and convincing results.

Conflicts of Interest Statement

The authors whose names are listed immediately below certify that they have no conflicts of interest, authorship, and disclosures in publication. They confirm that this

work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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