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GRADUATION MINOR THESIS
EXPLORING DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN INTERPRETING VIETNAMESE INTO ENGLISH FACED BY FINAL-YEAR ENGLISH-MAJOR STUDENTS AT HA TINH UNIVERSITY

Ha Tinh, May, 2017
EXPLORING DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN INTERPRETING VIETNAMESE INTO ENGLISH FACED BY FINAL-YEAR ENGLISH-MAJOR STUDENTS AT HA TINH UNIVERSITY

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Ha Tinh, May 2017

Student

Tran Thi Huyen
ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on difficulties caused by cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English faced by English majored final year students at Ha Tinh University. The difficulties are analyzed with data taken from questionnaire for 40 participants.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter firstly presents the rationale of the study in which the background of the research and the reasons for the research are given by the researcher. Moreover, aim of the research, research questions, research scope, significance of the study, and the organization of the research paper are also presented.

1.1. Rationale of the study

Nobody can deny the importance of English. Together with the economic globalization trend, English has been more and more popular. It is considered the international language or the lingua franca all over the world. English, therefore, is used widely in all aspects of the daily life such as science, business, entertainment, Internet, and so on. Being a member of WTO -World Trade Organization nowadays, Vietnam opens the door to other countries in the world. Vietnamese people have more chances to join the dance of exchange with those from many foreign countries. Moreover, due to the rapid development of science, technology, internet, many people have to work on various documents, e-mails, contracts, news, etc., most of which are in English. For the crowd-pleasing demand, the number of people who want to learn and use English increases evidently.

Since I was small, English is my favorite subject, I always dreamed about being able to communicate with Western people frequently. Then, I was very excited that I could be an English major student in Ha Tinh University. During 4 years studying English language there, I have been taught to study English in a professional way.

Among subjects for English majors at my university, interpreting is one of the most difficult language practicing skills. I found that converting English
(Vietnamese) to Vietnamese (English) as frequently as possible is not as simple as I thought. So I have been interested in observing and guessing what difficulties influencing on my as well my classmates’ interpreting.

Except for the different criteria of expression, there are similar difficulties between translation and interpreting. Benfoughal (2010) carried out 5 difficulties in translation including: grammatical, lexical, stylistic, phonological and cultural problems. According to him “the cultural specific expressions are some how difficult to translate, even professional translators find it difficult to deal with them.”

Moreover, he suggests that “The interpretations may completely different as they may just slightly different, subtle overlaps. The differences between cultures and life perceptions from a society into another may cause a lot of problems to translators; it creates a lot of gaps which lead to plenty of overlaps between language pairs. Hence, the translation task is going to be too complicated.”

Agree with Benfoughal (2010), I realize that compared to the other four difficulties, cultural difficulties are hard to face with and find solutions. In my opinion, cultural difference is always confused me to convert source language into target language. Moreover, being lack of knowledge about culture background is one of reasons that students deal with wrong explanation. The inadequate cultural background can cause the problems or even disaster in interpreting. Therefore, I decided to do the research in difficulty caused by cultural differences for major English senior students.

1.2. Aims of study
This study is targeted at identifying the cultural differences difficulties in interpreting faced by English-majored seniors at Ha Tinh University. Besides, the writer wants to clarify how English-majored seniors overcome cultural
differences difficulties in interpreting. As a result, some useful strategies to deal with these kinds of problems will be presented.

1.3. Research questions

In order to fulfill the aim above, the study focuses on answering these following questions:

1. How do English major senior students at Ha Tinh University think about the influence of cultural differences on interpreting?
2. What difficulties caused by cultural differences do they have when interpreting?
3. What do they often do to solve the problem?

1.4. Scope of the study

A cross culture is a very large scale. However, due to limitation of my knowledge as well as experience and time, only interpreting difficulty caused by cultural differences is taken into consideration. But hopefully, these will partly help people have general knowledge and understanding about cultural differences to get easier in interpreting.

1.5. Significance of the study

The fact shows that interpreting Vietnamese into English is a difficult process. As a language learner, I have found that a great number of final year English major students at Ha Tinh University encounter a number of difficulties in interpreting Vietnamese into English caused by cultural differences. I hope that the strategies suggested in the research paper will make some necessary changes in the current learning and teaching of interpreting. Thus, the teaching and learning process can be fruitfully carried out in classes.

1.6. Organization of the study

Chapter one: Introduction.
This chapter presents the rationale, the aims, the research questions, the scope, and the organization of the study. This part provides a general look at the study.

Chapter two: Development

The chapter consists of 4 main parts:

2.1. Literature review
2.2. Methodology
2.3. Findings
2.4. Discussion of findings

Chapter three: Conclusion.

This chapter includes

3.1. Summary of the study
3.2. Implications and Suggestions
3.3. Further research
CHAPTER TWO: DEVELOPMENT

This chapter focuses on the theoretical background of the study. It includes a number of important theoretical terms and then previous studies related to the research were mentioned. The part also presents in details the findings and discussion on the result of the study.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Definition of culture

Culture is the knowledge and characteristics of a particular group of people, including definition of language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. The word “culture” comes from a French term, which derived from the Latin “colure” means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation and nurture.

The Cambridge English Dictionary firmly states that culture is the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.

Besides, there are hundreds of researchers analyzed about culture definition.

We can also see definition of culture from “Primitive Culture” (1871) written by Tyler, she defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.

According to Kroeber (1952), culture is “the historically differentiated and variable mass of customary ways of functioning of human societies”

In his research, Tannin (1984) suggested that “culture is everything you have ever learned about how to communicate and how to think about things – which comes down to the same thing”
A definition summarized from Wikipedia, culture is a general term for social behaviors and norms found in human societies. Culture is a central concept in anthropology, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human societies.

Shock (1970: 1) suggested: “Culture, in its broadest sense, is what make you stranger when you are away from home. It includes all belief and expectation about how people should and act which have become a kind of second nature to you as a social learning. When you are with members of a group who share your culture, we or you do not have to think about it, for you are all viewing the world in pretty much in same way and you all know, in general terms, what to expect of one another.”

Hoopes (1973: 3) consider culture as “the sum of ways of living, including valuableness, beliefs, esthetic standards, linguistic expression, patterns of thinking, behave norms, and styles of communication which a group of people develop to assume its survival in a particular physical and human environment. Culture and the people who are part of its interact. So culture is not static. Culture is the response of a group of human beings to valid and particular needs of its member. It, therefore, has an inherent logic and an essential balance between positive and negative dimensions.”

Levine and Alelman (1993) defines that: “Culture is a shared background (for example national, ethnic, religious) resulting from a common language and communication style, customs, beliefs, art, music and all the other products of human thought made by a particular group of people at a particular time. It also refers to the informal and often hidden patterns of human interactions, expressions and viewpoints that people in one culture share”.
Culture is the product of discourse communities in term of society and history, created by language and action. Culture is always changing to be fitted to people belief and behavior in particular time. Obviously, language and culture cannot occur alone and are never separated.

2.2.2. Definition of cultural differences communication

Culture and communication depend on each other. Culture can be viewed as a part of communication, the way people communicating is affected by culture. That means people from different cultural background should communicate in different way. Cultural difference is not only affected between national difference, but also different social status, education, institutional memberships into professions.

As mentioned in his report, Dr. Prasanta (2016) asserted that “communication barriers generally arise due to the absence of understanding between parties to the dialogue. Culture tends to create different attitudes and approaches to problem solving”

According to Richards (1985: 92), “cultural differences communication is an exchange of ideas, information, etc. between persons from different backgrounds. There are more problems in cultural differences communication than in communication between people of the same cultural background. Each participant may interpret the other’s speech according to his or her own cultural conventions and expectations. If the cultural conventions and expectations, if the cultural conventions and misunderstandings can easily arise, even resulting in a total breakdown of communication. This has been shown by research into real life situation, such as job interview, doctor – patient encounters and legal communication”.

Kramsch (1998: 81) states cultural differences as “the meeting of two cultures or languages across political boundaries of nation – states”.

2.2.3. Cultural differences between Vietnam and British

There are many anthropologists researched about differences of culture between Eastern and Western society. Vietnam can be considered as a representative of Republican agricultural society, in contrast, British is a Capitalism country. Besides living in different environment, people in Eastern and Western are educated in distinctively different ways.

The culture of Vietnam is one of the oldest in Southeast Asia, with the ancient Bronze age, Dong Son culture being widely considered one of its most important progenitors. Due to a millennium of Chinese rule, Vietnam was heavily influenced by Chinese culture in terms of politics, government, Confucian social and moral ethics and art. Vietnam is considered to be a part of the East Asian cultural sphere. (Wikipedia – Culture of Vietnam)

Whereas, the culture of the United Kingdom is influenced by the UK’s history as a developed island country, a liberal democracy and a major power; its predominantly Christian religious life; and its composition of four countries – England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland – each of which has distinct customs, cultures and symbolism. The wider culture of Europe has also influenced British culture, and Humanism, Protestantism and representative democracy developed from broader Western culture. (Wikipedia – Culture of the United Kingdom)

2.2.4. Culture shock

Culture shock is defined on Wikipedia as a term used to describe the anxiety and feelings (of surprise, disorientation, confuse, etc.) felt when people have to operate within an entirely different cultural or social environment, such as a foreign country. It grows out of the difficulties in assimilating the new culture, causing difficulty in knowing what is
appropriated and what is not. This is often combined with strong disgust about certain aspects of the near or different culture.

Harries and Moran (14: 226) suggest that “culture shock is neither good or bad, and necessary or unnecessary”.

Valdes (1995) defines culture shock as a common experience for a person learning a second language in a second culture, referring to phenomena recognizing from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis. It associated with feeling in the learners of estrangement, anger, hostility, homesickness and even physical illness.

Foster (1962: 87) announces that “culture-shock is mental illness, and is true of much mental illness, the victim usually does not know he is affected. He finds that he is irritable, depressed, and probably annoyed by the lack of attention shown him”.

Culture shock is the consequence of adapting to the new environment caused by the movement of different cultural backgrounds.

2.2.5. The influence of cultural differences on language

Sapir (1996) indicates that “the close relationship between language and culture, concluding that it was not possible to understand or appreciate one without knowledge of the other”.

However, Wardhaugh (2002:220) reports three claims to the relationship between language and culture.

The structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world or, as a weaker view, the structure does not determine the world-view but is still extremely influential in predisposing speakers of a language toward adopting their world-view
The culture of a people finds reflection in the language they employ: because they value certain things and do them in a certain way, they come to use their language in ways that reflect what they value and what they do.

The ‘neutral claim’ which states that there is little or no relationship between the two.

Brown (1994:165) describes language as a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language, they are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.

It is known that Vietnamese and English are two distinctive languages. This is shown in the way of using different word-classes for one idea.

Vietnamese is considered as Austro-Asiatic original, derived from the agricultural civilization. The official language in Vietnam is Vietnamese, but in Vietnam more than 10 dialects that are very different from each other coexist, this particular feature makes Vietnamese extremely different from English.

Moreover, due to differences in perspective Vietnamese is distinguished from English in terms of time, habits. For example, Vietnam has special customs such as "thách cướĩ" that England does not include. Vietnamese believe in the Buddhism and spirit world, ancestor worship is what any Vietnamese do.

The differences mentioned above affect language, it is difficult to look at the traditional words of the two countries for comparison.

2.1.6. Interpreting

Interpreters are seen by their customers. They make face-to-face communication possible. Interpreters speak in the first person and become the voice of the speaker. They express the speaker’s ideas and convictions with
the same intensity and same shades of meaning, and without ever adding their own views or comments.

Definition on Wikipedia suggests **Interpretation** or **interpreting** is oral translation of speech or sign from a language into another. An interpreter is a person who converts a thought or expression in a source language into an expression with a comparable meaning in a target language either simultaneously in "real time" or consecutively when the speaker pauses after completing one or two sentences.

**2.3. Methodology**

**2.3.1. Research approach**

Within social science, there are two major research approaches. They are quantitative and qualitative research.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993, p.191) “quantitative research relies heavily on numbers in reporting results, sampling and providing estimates of instruments reliability and validity.” Because quantitative research was statistical analysis to determine the results, it effectively provides an objective view of the data without the interference of the researchers’ subjectivity. However, a part from these strong points, quantitative also have some weak points such as failure to provide the researcher with the information on the context of the situation, limited outcomes to only those outlined in the original proposal because of close type questions. Meanwhile, “qualitative research describes and analyzes people’s individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions” (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993, p.372). By using it, researchers can gain more insights on their behaviors and put them in the relationship with natural settings. (Punch, 1998).
In order to make the study more reliable and objective as well as to make it more convincing, both of quantitative and qualitative approaches are used in this study.

To collect data, different methods of study are used. Firstly, the author conducted a survey on investing knowledge of students about cultural differences. Moreover, researcher searched data from books and reference materials collected from books, internet, television, dictation, exchanged with teachers and friends. In order to have the insight of the reality and confirm the data collected, interview is conducted.

2.3.2. Participants

These participants are 40 English major senior students come from Hatinh University who studied about interpreting skill for 2 semesters and three teachers who taught interpreting.

2.3.3. Instruments for data collection and analysis of this study

2.3.3.1. Questionnaires

The database is collected from the survey questionnaire. In order to collect sufficient data for analysis, the author designed two types of survey questionnaire: four multiple-choice questionnaires, three comment questionnaires. All of these them are design on website Monkey Survey.

These questionnaires is designed for 40 participants to investigate how they know about cultural differences and its influence on interpreting then investigate their solutions to deal with difficulty caused by cultural difference in interpreting.

The questionnaire has 4 parts:

Part 1: Investigate perception of participants about culture and its influence on interpreting Vietnamese into English.
Part 2: Suggest some easily obvious difficulties caused by cultural difference to investigate participants solving ability.

Part 3: Survey how participants deal with these difficulties.

2.3.3.2. Samples

There are five samples designed to survey interpreting ability of HTU final English major students relating to cultural differences.

2.3.4. Interviews

After the questionnaire was collected, 10 participants were randomly chosen to interview in order to get the insight into difficulties and strategies students used to deal with their translation of conditional sentences. All the interviews were recorded with the participants’ permissions. The results were presented in the form of themes verbalized and quoted to illustrate the findings of this study.

2.3.5. Procedures of data collection

All of questionnaires are designed on SurveyMonkey. After completing questionnaires standard, survey link was sent to all participant through their email. For who do not provide their email, survey link would be sent on Facebook. The samples were given directly to the participants. All interviews were carried out directly and recorded with the informants’ permissions. The data collected were analyzed statistically and the results were presented in form of percentage and mean score, illustrated by table and chart.

2.4. Findings

2.4.1. Students’ perceptions of the cultural differences

2.3.1.1. The influence of cultural differences on language
Chart 2.3.1.1. Influence of cultural differences on language

It is obvious to see that most of participants believe in the impact of language on culture. More than 70% of students completely agreed that there was a relationship between culture and language. The table also showed that there are 7.5% of students insignificantly understand and 5% of them did not ensure. The figure of the number of students who totally stated that there was no relationship between language and culture was 12.5%.

Base on the database showed in this chart, I would like to claim again that most of participants affirmed that language is influenced by culture. Indeed, language and culture have a straight connection and relation with each other. Because language is an instrument for transmitting culture to that end, this implies no language can exist in the lack of culture. The human ability of learning language is strongly based on their realizing level and their domination on culture. If someone has rich information in the field of language learning but neglect from cultural matter, this negligence causes awkward mistakes in learning language. The language cannot exist without culture (Hayati, 2011).
According to Emmitt & Pollock (1997), language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next.

Language and culture support each other, the way people use language is closely relating to language, culture is expressed through the way people use language. Understanding the relationship and influence between language and culture helps participants aware why there are difficulties caused by cultural differences when interpreting.

2.3.1.2. The importance of cultural differences awareness in interpreting Vietnamese into English

As mentioned above, differences from distinct culture cause languages thought. However, many people do not recognize this, that is the reason why many amateur interpreters often misunderstanding their customers of cultural factors. An investigation was created among participants to survey how they aware about cultural differences in interpreting.

![Chart 2.3.1.2. Importance of cultural differences on interpreting awareness](chart)
The chart 2.4 indicates that 97% of participants find cultural differences very important in interpreting Vietnamese into English. This data shows that participants might encounter problems related to cultural factors in interpreting.

2.3.3.3. Frequency of dealing with cultural difference in interpreting

As shown in chart 2.5, the number of students who always deal with cultural difference in interpreting reaches at 30%. There are 35% of the students suggested that they sometimes saw cultural differences difficulties in their interpreting and 10% of them claimed that they never find it hard to deal with difficulties caused by cultural differences.

The data shown in the chart reflects that the average frequency of participants facing the difficulty caused by cultural differences is quite high. The reason is predicted that they are not fully equipped to deal with the difficulties.
2.3.3.4. Evaluation on the difficulty caused by cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English

This section reflects the participant's assessment of the influence of cultural factors affecting on interpreting Vietnamese into English.

Chart 2.3.1.4. Difficulty in interpreting Vietnamese into English evaluation

2.3.4. Common language difficulties caused by cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English of HTU senior English-majored students

Difficulties caused by cultural differences are difficult to face not only for students even for professionals. This section focuses on the common language difficulties participants encountered when dealing with interpreting Vietnamese into English.

2.3.2.1. Traditional words
Vietnamese is definitely distinct from English because of word structure and also culture background. Some examples were suggested to analysis ability of participants in interpreting Vietnamese feature words into English.

**Example 1**  Trong kỹ thuật chăm canh cây lúa, **cây mạ non** là tiền đề giúp cây lúa khỏe đẹp, dễ tập trung, bông to, năng suất cao.

In example 1, there is a Vietnamese feature word belonging to agricultural culture **cây mạ non**. In contrast with British and Western countries, Vietnamese agriculture bases on wet rice, because of weather and topography, **cây mạ non** is one of example that actually is not concluded in English dictionary. **Cây mạ non** is a period of growing rice, when rice seed are planted and grow as saplings Vietnamese call them **cây mạ**. The work that replants these saplings in a field is **cây mạ non**.

When participants were asked to interpret **cây mạ non** into English, they got trouble and confused in finding the corresponding phrase in English. After the survey, the result is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Try to find synonym</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Google translate for help</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the action in their own language</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally confused and skip</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.1. Methods used in interpreting Example 1*

As shown in Table 1, there are 50% participants who tried to find the corresponding phrase in English, but after that their results almost failed. 35% was the figure of participants depending on Google Translate, their answers were not positive as well. Using their own language to explain what **cây mạ non** is, 15% participants, brought about effective result for English listeners. The rest of participants chose to skip their answer.
**Example 2**  Theo truyền thống, trong **lễ nap tài**, nhà trai mang lễ vật và tiền mặt sang nhà gái

In example 2, the phrase *lễ nap tài* does not appear in British culture. Vietnam is a Western country where includes many traditional activities, *lễ nap tài* is a necessary procedure before wedding. In *lễ nap tài*, groom’s family brings offerings and money to bride’s family to express their honor, one of the ways to thank for bride’s parents growing her.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Try to find synonym</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use Google translate for help</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the action in their own language</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally confused and skip</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.2. Methods used in interpreting Example 2*

The table indicates that there are 30% of participants who belief in finding a synonym. 30% of participants decided to translate the phrase in Google. No one could use their own language to give out an explanation. The most noticeable figure was 40% of participants not completed their answer.

**Example 3**  Can you interpreting words **thúng, mưng, nong, nia, sọt** into English? Do you use any help?

Vietnamese words are various. While pronouns *I* is used as a subject of a verb to refer to the person speaking or writing, it can be interpreted in many ways in Vietnamese. Example 3 is one of examples showing the richness of Vietnamese. *Thúng, mưng, nong, nia* are words to describe types of basket used in Vietnam, the only difference among them is size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use <em>basket</em> instead</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give out comparison and detail of these words</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confused and skip</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.3. Methods used in interpreting Example 3

The table 3 shows a significant number of participants skipped or were confused by the questionnaire in Example 3, 65% of them. In contrast, only 5% of participants could use their own words to describe the differences among given words. There are 12 participants who used English corresponding words for all of those words. As mentioned in section 1.2.2 chapter two, the culture of Vietnam and the UK is markedly different due to the influence of geographical location, climate, terrain, historical background. This causes a profound effect on habit, belief and language. Vietnam was a country dominated by both Eastern and Western countries, so the Vietnamese language is a rich system of both vocabulary and grammar. However, the Vietnamese still maintain their own national and language habit, therefore there are also special features that other countries do not have. As in example 1, cây mạ non is a difficult phrase to find the same meaning in English.

The challenge for the participants in this study is to find the best possible interpretation of traditional words. In this case, according to the analysis of data in Section 3.1.6 chapter two, all students would try to find ways to interpret these difficult phrases into English. However, the English phrases close to the meaning cây mạ non interpreted by students, such as transplants young rice, grow young rice make English listener confused about its definition.

The most satisfactory result found in 15% of students is the detailed description of the cây mạ non. They provided an explanation of the process specifically including planting seeds, growing them to be saplings then replanting them in field. This term belongs to the wet-rice civilization, as opposed to the industrial culture in the UK, thus searching for a phrase that has meaning close to it is difficult for participants.
In addition, Vietnam was a feudalism country in more than 4,000 years, the old customs are still maintained by people today, lê nap tài mentioned in 3.2.6 is one of them. To England, a Catholic country, not worshiping ancestor, lê nap tài is a completely strange definition. Thus, among the 30% of students looking for similar words in English, this is totally impossible mission. Moreover, lê nap tài is translated as “charge ceremony” on Google Translate, it does not conclude all of meaning, that is why results of 30% of students did not success.

In general, English majored students at Ha Tinh University are too dependent on translation tools, so the development of the target language interpretation is limited. Interpreting requires less time to think than translation, which affects the speed of thinking of students resulting in poorer translation quality. Do not know how to interpret ancient words, traditional words often makes students confused, leading to the development of ambiguous translations.

Lê nap tài a difficult phrase, the number of students skipped this question is quite high, accounting for up to 40%. This shows that students do not equip themselves with knowledge of cultural boundary, as well as knowledge of cultural differences. This problem should be improved in the near future.

Handicrafts are used in daily life in Vietnam commonly. Thúng, mùng, nong, nia, sọ mentioned in example 3 in section 3.2.6 chapter two are popular items in the suburbs. Thúng is made of bamboo, the small one is called ciosan used to contain things; the bigger one is called coracles, used as a small boat. Mùng is thúng as well, but smaller, used commonly in Southern Vietnamese. Nong and nia are the same in shape, nong is bigger; people contain wet things and spread them under sunshine to dry. England is the place where industry is important, taking advantage of the sunlight to dry is
less common, the British visitors are often interested in these ways of Vietnamese.

Some participants participated in this study suggested that basket can be interpreted from all of given words. This is not true of the exact definition of nong and nia. They are much flatter than basket, different in usage as well. 2 students gave comparison and explanation of shape and use of these things in detail. Their explanations are considered as easy to understand, detailed and easy to imagine. A student shared

Thúng is a big basket, used to contain things or people, sometimes it can be used as a boat, múng is another way to express thúng. Nong and nia shape as a disk, but much bigger, made of bamboo. They are handicrafts used by farmers mostly. Sọt is a round basket.

Surprisingly, 26 of 40 students were confused and decided not to contribute the answer. Because the participants are majored English students, the embarrassment is that they are lacking in their thinking. These words are not as hard as lể nap tài they are not too abstract.

To sum up, the ability to interpret the traditional words of the last-year majored English at Hatinh University is not so good. They tend to rely on assistive devices and do not show contextual thinking, this is the consequence of lack of vocabulary, understanding of context and culture.

2.3.2.2. Idioms

Example 5  Can you interpret these Vietnamese idioms into English: gay ỏng đáp lưng ỏng, lấy ỏng tôi ở bụi này? Do you use any help?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skip the answer</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Google for help</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask other people for help</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.4. Methods used in interpreting Example 5
Table 2.5 shows 40% of students who skipped the question given out. Likewise, that number as same as the figure of students who used Google search top support their answer. The rest 20% ordered other people to suggest them method to interpret.

Vietnamese is influenced by Chinese, so Vietnamese idioms are deeper and more expressive than the idiom in English. In example 5, when students were asked about idiomatic translation of *gây ông đáp lung ông*, many results were given:

- make a rod for one’s own back
- to be hoist with one’s own petard
- to fall into one’s own trap

All of results, according to students, were suggested on Google and other people on learning English forums. Likewise, *lạy ông tôi ở bụi này* was translated as with assistant of Google and forum:

- Cry stinking fish.
- Who makes excuses, himself excuses

However, there are more than 15 students skipped answer. That means that students still lack confidence in facing difficult idioms.

Because of different beliefs, the way people express idioms in Vietnam and England are also distinct. Vietnam has a culture of wet rice, while England is an industrial country, perception of things is not similar, students should pay attention to this in order to improve idiomatic interpreting.

2.3.5. Strategies HTU senior English-majored students use to deal with difficulties caused by cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English
Interpreting traditional words affected by culture is not an easy work for participants in this study, also professional. Moreover, the methods they used to deal with this difficult are limited.

### 2.3.3.1. Using tools

In order to be easier in interpreting, there are many tools created, this part presents some tools introduced by 40 participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google Translate</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online translation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No tool</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.5. Interpreting tools introduced by participants*

The first suggestion was Google Translate, a common tool, chosen by 50% of informant. Looking up dictionary was the second choice, offered by 30% of informant. The number of students who did not decide any tools took over 10% and the rest said that they used online translation tools to deal with this problem.

Dictionaries are the most optimal of the available tools. Dictionaries are useful and diverse, students can access most of the common vocabularies in popular dictionaries. However, because of such usability, sometimes the dictionary does not include words of special meaning.

With the strong development of technology, Google translate is one of the tools that students prefer. Google translate is contributed by a free community, anybody can be the author of the translation, the results on Google translate are varied. However, Google translate still prefers word-by-word translations or literal translations. In my opinion, students should be careful when they use Google translate to support their interpreting relating to cultural factors, especially when it requires context and culture knowledge.
Besides, online translation is a kind of useful and convenient tool. The disadvantage of this tool is that there are so many sources, therefore students should know how to choose reliable sources to support their interpretation in the best way.

2.3.3.2. Consultant

Even good interpreters also need support tools like translators handbooks, below are the tools that students think would help them in becoming a good interpreter.

In addition to using support tools, HTU English-majored students also turn to other more useful solutions such as cooperating interpreting, team building and expert inquiry.

The interviews of participants once again confirmed the using of consultant such as their teachers, classmates, partners, or the people who have knowledge as well as experience not very strange or rare way.
CHAPTER THREE: CONCLUSION

The last chapter of the research firstly gives the summary of the main points of the study. Essentially, implications for both teachers and students are suggested by researchers. In addition, limitations of the study and suggestion for further research are also mentioned.

3.1. Summary

With the current trend of globalization, interpreting is a necessary skill in serving the development of cooperation with foreign countries. For the development of foreign economics, the understanding of cultures around the world is also very helpful for interpreting. Addressing the cultural barriers to interpreting is an urgent matter for English majored students.

Majored English students at Ha Tinh University have been studying interpreting strategies for two years. Thus this paper focuses on investigating their ability to cope with the difficulties caused by cultural differences in interpreting.

In order to accomplish the study, the survey questionnaires were distributed to 40 senior majored English students at Ha Tinh University. The results show their inexperience and embarrassment with these difficulties. In addition, they also suggested some strategies that are helpful according to them.

As a result, they are developing and improving their interpreting skill more and more effectively.

Hopefully, this study can contribute to the improvement of interpreting Vietnamese into English for majored English students at Ha Tinh University.

3.2. Implications

3.2.1. For the students
This section indicates some implications suggested to students to deal with difficulties caused by cultural differences.

Firstly, the students may read materials in monolingual books and documents to learn about interpreting strategies. They also should make requests or create situations to practice with their friends to find the best ways to solve the problem.

Secondly, the students should research cultural knowledge of both Vietnamese and England. Culture is the foundation of a people, to convey the true meaning of the original to the translation successfully, the understanding of culture helps students grasp the original meaning as well as the deeper meaning.

The limitation of cultural knowledge confuses students during interpreting, which makes the translation unclear.

3.2.2. For the teachers

I recommend the teachers should create environments and build their lesson plan for their classes to take part in the activities in cultural interpreting. In addition, the teachers should suggest Vietnamese and English cultural documents for their students to get knowledge of culture background.

Through these activities, the learners can be trained in good environments where they have chances to interpreting situations including cultural features. Moreover, the learners will probably express successfully their information as well as to convey their interpreting to English customers.

3.3. Limitation of the study

The study is just conducted in a small scale and in a limited time. The results might be more persuasive, convincing, and exciting if the researcher had more time and updated material on the issues under study.

3.4. Suggestions for further research
Future research considering cultural feature in interpreting as well as translation or cultural differences problems in linguistics should highlight what type of data and tasks are being analyzed and compare them to others. At the very least, more research studies should at least note the limitations to generalizability based on the context and task type of the data.

It should be born in mind that: “our culture influences our way of thinking and acting. To learn another language, we need to learn to appreciate the culture of which the language is a part. We can’t really learn a second language or more precisely, learn the use of that language unless we learn about culture because many of the meanings constructed in the language are culture specific.” (Pollock, 1990:39)

Cultural differences is one of challenges in interpreting, it is also considered as the most difficult objection.
References

Abdelwahed Benfoughal (2010) Students’ difficulties and strategies in translation – The case of Third year students, Mentoury University Constantine


Prasanta Kumar Padhi (2016), The Rising Importance of Cross Cultural Communication in Global Business Scenario


QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is to explore difficulties caused by cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English faced by fourth-year English-majored students at Hatinh University. Your responds are very important in the success of the survey. The data will be used for a study project and not for other purpose. Therefore, your cooperation is very important. We appreciate your cooperation.

1. Do you think language is influenced by culture?
   A. Absolutely
   B. A little
   C. Not sure
   D. I don’t know

2. Do you think cultural differences are important in interpreting Vietnamese into English?
   A. Absolutely important
   B. Important
   C. A little important
   D. Not at all

3. Do you often have to overcome with cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English?
   A. Always
   B. Often
   C. Sometimes
   D. Never

4. Do you think it is hard to deal with difficulties caused by cultural differences in interpreting Vietnamese into English?
A. Very difficult  
B. Difficult  
C. A little difficult  
D. Easy  

5. Can you interpret Vietnamese words into English frequently?  
   a. Trong kỹ thuật chăm cánh cây lúa, cây mạ non là tiền đề giúp cây lúa khỏe đẹp, dễ tập trung, bông to, năng suất cao. How did you interpret?  
   
   b. Theo truyền thống, trong lễ nạp tài, nhà trai mang lễ vật và tiền mặt sang nhà gái. How did you interpret?  
   
   c. Can you interpreting words thugs, mưng, nong, nia, sọt into English? Do you use any help?  
   
   d. Can you interpret these Vietnamese idioms into English: gây ông đáp lưng ông, lấy ông tôi ở bụi này? Do you use any help?  

6. Do you think of any methods to deal with these words?  

7. Do you know any tools to help you interpret these words?