



ENGLISH-MAJORED STUDENTS' COMMON TRANSLATION MISTAKES AND THEIR SOLUTIONS: VOICES FROM STUDENTSⁱ

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Abstract:

Along with the translation industry's increasing global growth, Can Tho University (CTU) hopes to train highly skilled translators in order to satisfy the needs of society. At Can Tho University, Translation courses are considered a useful subject not only for translation majors but also for all English- majored students. In the fourth academic year, students participate in some translation courses. For English-majored students in general, the Translation courses are aimed not only at providing intensive training on translation skills but also at reinforcing knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. In addition, they provide translation skills by practicing the translation of documents. Through the course, the researchers have noticed that, in addition to progress in their translation skills, language students also encounter some issues in conveying messages from English to Vietnamese and vice versa. This study aims to fill the knowledge gap when it comes to translation mistakes analysis in Vietnamese-English translation and vice versa. The research investigates typical mistakes made by English-majored students and suggests solutions to improve their translation capabilities. In line with the tendency of using a student-centred model, this study was conducted to identify the translation equivalence problems encountered by 63 students from the two classes of fourth-year English major students at School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at CTU when they studied the subject Technical Translation and to propose solutions. The study explores the perspectives of students to gain insights into the experiences of students when translating, and the strategies recommended by students to help them better understand the language. The research will identify common mistakes to recommend solutions that can be implemented

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in the classroom. By gathering data from students, this study provides a more holistic understanding of the challenges faced by student translators and how they perceive language, which can help them succeed in real-world translations. In conclusion, the study sheds light on the common mistakes of English-majored students and proposes solutions to improve their translation skills. A baseline survey, questionnaire, and semi-structured interview were the research instruments utilized in the study in order to get the most accurate results. The three basic categories of mistakes in translation covered by this thesis are linguistic mistakes, comprehension mistakes, and translation mistakes. The methodology used to analyse the study's translation mistakes was influenced by Phạm Thu Quỳnh Na (2005). Because it is suitable and practical for Vietnamese learners and includes clear instructions, this type of model was selected as the study's main theoretical framework. The current study makes use of this framework to analyse and evaluate translation errors in a thorough manner. There have been several pedagogical suggestions made for instructors of translation to use in their classrooms to minimize students' errors during translation practices.

Keywords: translation, common mistakes, solutions, English-majored students, Can Tho University

1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

In the context of globalization, English is regarded as a lingua franca. Business conversations, television, street corners, classrooms, and other settings frequently employ English. Thus, it can be argued that English is popular throughout society, from households to workplaces. This gives rise to the question: "Is Vietnamese-English and English-Vietnamese translation required in this case?" (Tung, 2019). Some scholars show that translation is still crucial. Similar to other English skills, translation plays an important role. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the four pillars of the English language that are taught to everyone. However, translation is the fifth pillar that nobody talks about. A translator must be fluent in both their mother tongue and their target language as well as possess specialized and cultural knowledge in order to read a source text and translate it into another language while keeping the original text's style and intent. In the past, the concept of language translation was straightforward and influenced by structuralism and comparative linguistics. Nowadays due to the rapid advancement of linguistics and related disciplines, the issue of translation equivalence has become a difficult one in translation theory since viewpoints on the nature of translation differ, and opinions on this issue are quite contradicting. Although there has been numerous research on contrastive and mistake analysis in the learning and teaching of second languages, few of them have focused on English translation mistakes committed by Vietnamese university students.

Besides that, nowadays people use a variety of technologies and tools in order to translate from one language to another. ChatGPT and Google Translate are two of the most popular services for achieving translation. ChatGPT is a natural language. Processing

technology that can understand complex sentences and provide accurate translations. Google Translate is a translation engine powered by Neural Machine Translation that can provide translations of larger bodies of text. Both tools are useful for quick and accurate translations, but they each have their own unique advantages and disadvantages. Many users choose to use both tools in order to get the best results. When translating with ChatGPT or Google Translate, there are multiple benefits such as improving accuracy in translation, faster response time, personalized context-aware responses and providing answers specific to the user's needs. However, ChatGPT and Google Translate are not able to completely replace human translation yet as there are still certain nuances that cannot be accurately translated, such as cultural references, slang and idioms. This study shows that human translators are still necessary for complex and nuanced translations, particularly in cases where local knowledge or an understanding of context is required.

1.2 Research aims

The study attempted to (1) study English-majored students' common mistakes in translation practices and (2) investigate English-majored students' suggested solutions to overcoming their common mistakes in translation practices through their voices and teacher's voices.

1.3 Research questions

The study tried to answer the following questions: (1) What are English-majored students' common mistakes in translation practices? And (2) What are English-majored students' suggested solutions for their common mistakes?

1.4 Significance of the study

The present study was conducted with a view to filling the gap in the knowledge of translation mistakes analysis in Vietnamese-English translation and vice versa. The goal of the current study is to shed light on the typical mistakes made by English-majored students when translating. Additionally, students can overcome challenges in the process of translating from the source language to the target language by discovering the challenges they are encountering. The present study suggests some main macro-skills for any translator who begins his/her work in the field of translation to understand the common translation mistakes made by English-majored students, and to propose solutions to improve their translation capabilities. The research will focus on the perspectives of both students and teachers to gain insight into the experiences of students when translating and the strategies recommended by teachers to help students better understand the language. The goal of the research will be to identify common problems and mistakes in order to recommend solutions that can be implemented in the classroom. By gathering data from both students and teachers, this research will provide a more holistic understanding of the challenges faced by student translators. Additionally, the research will provide a better understanding of how English-majored students perceive language, thus preparing them for better success when engaging with real-world translations.

1.5 Scope of the study

The present study is a small-scale study including 100 English-majored students and four teachers in School of Foreign Languages at Can Tho University. The study is to examine the common mistakes made by English-majored students when it comes to translation and to identify potential solutions from both the perspective of the students and teachers. The research will focus on both direct translation from English to a foreign language and vice versa, with a special emphasis on the implications of the students' mistakes in the particular language and culture they are trying to translate to. Additionally, the study will explore other areas of translation studies such as cultural and semiotic implications, theories of translation, and implications for language teaching and learning. The study will also seek to provide recommendations to both students and teachers to best improve the translation process.

2. Literature review

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 The nature and importance of translation

Research over the past 50 years has demonstrated that translation studies have emerged and developed alongside the advancement of many different sciences, particularly linguistics, under the influence of numerous other linguistic trends and schools, ranging from Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar theory (1957) to the works of Nida and Taber. Hartmann (1980) and Gutt (1991) have directed readers more toward theory text translation. The translation must go beyond the textual level, towards discovery and achieving communicative interaction and translate what the reader of the translation is interested in. Moreover, according to Al Wassey (2001), the phenomenon of translation is a genuine offshoot of the phenomenon of language since, at the time when humans first colonized the planet, their tongues varied and they need a way to communicate with others who spoke other tongues.

Since the early 20th century, as the profession of translation has grown in Vietnam, many translators and linguists have become interested in the field of translation study. Lê Quang Thiêm (1989), in particular, was the first to address some translation theory concerns in the project "Contrastive Linguistics". There have been several additional translation research projects recently. Overall, the authors' contributions to the home country translation theory are noteworthy and valuable. Some studies on English-Vietnamese translation have been published in Vietnam in both theory and practice, including those by Nguyễn Quốc Hùng (2005) and Lê Hùng Tiến (2007).

Referring to this research, translation studies as well as translation theory is the framework in order to detect translation mistakes. It takes expertise, art, and science to translate. It is a science in that it requires in-depth familiarity with the two languages. It is also a talent since it requires the capacity to work around any translational difficulties and the capacity to translate concepts that are unique to the target language. The nature of translation is rooted in the phenomenon of language; it is a means by which humans express themselves and communicate with each other. Translation is a process that involves converting written

or spoken language from one language into another. Furthermore, translation is essential for promoting communication and understanding among people who speak different languages, as well as for spreading knowledge and ideas across cultures. Translation has become a crucial field of study and practice in the contemporary globalized world, where people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds often interact with each other. It has also been beneficial for many sectors, including business, politics, education, science, and technology. Working as a translator requires not only proficiency in two or more languages but also the ability to understand the cultural contexts of both languages and convey meaning accurately and sensitively in the target language. In short, translation plays a vital role in promoting intercultural communication, fostering understanding, and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas. It is an essential tool for people to communicate and interact with each other, despite their linguistic and cultural differences.

2.1.2 Translation studies with criteria for a good translation

A successful translation conveys all the concepts from the source text as well as its structural and cultural elements. Massoud (1988) outlines the following standards for a quality translation: simple to comprehend, fluent, seamless, and accurate. A competent translation can capture some of the original's literary nuances. A competent translation makes a distinction between literal and metaphorical language and recreates the original's cultural and historical context. A decent translation will attempt to accurately capture the original text's meaning (pp. 19-24). By following these standards, a skilled translator can produce a high-quality translation that accurately conveys the intended meaning of the source text to the target audience.

El Shafey (1985) provides additional standards for a quality translation that complement the guidelines outlined by Massoud (1988). El Shafey's three guiding principles for a successful translation are as follows. (1) A translator must have a strong command of the target language as well as a deep understanding of the vocabulary and syntax of the source language. This involves not only being fluent in both languages but also having a thorough knowledge of their linguistic and cultural nuances. (2) A high-quality translation should accurately reflect the tone, mood, and style of the original text. This means that the translator should be able to capture the intended emotional impact of the source text and convey it appropriately in the target language. (3) A translation should flow naturally in the target language so that it reads like it was originally written in that language. This requires more than just a literal translation of the source text; instead, the translator must be able to adapt the text to the linguistic norms and conventions of the target language while still preserving the original meaning. By following these principles, a skilled translator can produce a high-quality translation that accurately captures the intended meaning of the source text while also conveying its tone, mood, and style in a natural and fluent manner in the target language.

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El Touny (2001) approached the topic from a different angle and concentrated on defining several translation kinds. Word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptive translation, free translation, idiomatic translation, and communicative translation are the eight categories of translation he listed. He suggests that the ideal form of translation combines elements of all of these approaches, aiming to maintain the shape and structure of the original text while also adapting it to the needs and preferences of the target audience. The final type of translation should convey meaning from the context, be faithful to the original text, and be simple enough for readers of the target language to understand.

El Zeini (1994) did not appear content with these standards for judging translation quality. She proposed a pragmatic and stylistic framework for assessing translation quality. She clarifies how the paradigm "*places equal emphasis on both the artistic and pragmatic components of translation*". It is anticipated that by adhering to these criteria, "*translators will be able to minimize the chance of producing errors or losses, as well as eliminate problems of unacceptability.*" *This model covers a set of criteria that are divided into two main categories: content-related criteria and form-related criteria*" (p.27). The translation's correctness in capturing the original text's intended meaning is the main emphasis of the content-related criterion. These standards include validity, correctness, and faithfulness to the original text. The form-related criteria, on the other hand, evaluate the translation's fluency, readability, and coherence, among other stylistic and pragmatic elements. Naturalness, clarity, elegance, and coherence are some of these standards. By adhering to these criteria, translators can minimize the chance of producing errors or losses in translation and eliminate problems of unacceptability. El Zeini's model offers a pragmatic and stylistic approach to evaluating translation quality that takes into account both the content and form of the translation. This can help to ensure that the translation accurately conveys the intended meaning of the source text while also being stylistically and pragmatically appropriate for its target audience.

In conclusion, the works of Massoud (1988), El Shafey (1985), and El Zeini (1994) all provide different perspectives on translation quality and offer practical solutions to improve translation skills. These works can be useful for English-majored students looking to improve their translation skills, as well as for language trainers who are seeking to enhance the quality of translation training. By considering the various criteria for a good translation put forward

by these scholars, students and trainers can develop a better understanding of how to produce high-quality translations that accurately convey the intended meaning of the source text while also being stylistically and pragmatically appropriate for the target audience. In conclusion, these research works provide valuable insights into the complex process of translation and offer practical guidance for improving translation skills and training. By incorporating these insights and guidance into their practice, English-majored students and trainers can work towards producing more accurate and effective translations.

2.1.3 Definition of “translation mistakes”

The Skopos theory was developed by Hans J. Vermeer in the 1970s and 1980s, and later expanded upon by Katharina Reiss and other scholars, which emphasizes the importance of translating with a specific purpose or "skopos" in mind. This theory suggests that translation quality can only be evaluated within the context of the intended purpose of the translation and the needs and expectations of the target audience. According to this theory, a translation mistake can be defined as a failure to follow the instructions implicit in the translation brief or an unsatisfactory solution to a translation difficulty. Translations that do not adequately fulfil their intended purpose or meet the expectations of the target audience would also be considered mistakes within this framework. For example, if a translated document was intended to be used for a business presentation but contained errors that undermined its credibility or made it difficult to understand, it would be considered a mistake according to the Skopos theory. Similarly, if a translated website did not accurately reflect the brand image or voice of the company, it would also be considered a mistake. By emphasizing the importance of purpose and context in translation, the Skopos theory offers a useful framework for evaluating translation quality in a way that is sensitive to the needs and expectations of the target audience.

Mossop (1989, p.57) describes translation mistakes as *“a given rendering will be deemed to be non-translation if it fails to conform to the concept of translation predominant in the target culture.”* He recognizes translation mistakes in terms of formal equivalence and cultural norms. It implies that the attainment of formal equivalence is included in Mossop's definition of translation mistake, but other crucial elements like smoothness, readability, and consistency in the translated result are not. Additionally, formal equivalence, as described by Nida and Taber, is a technique for translating literally while safeguarding rhythm, unique stylistic forms, expression in syntax and lexis, metaphor, word play, and other elements. As a result, formal equivalence is primarily used in translating poems and songs, not all types of texts. In conclusion, while Mossop's definition of translation mistakes highlights the importance of considering both formal equivalence and cultural norms in evaluating translation quality, it is important to also consider other elements such as readability, consistency, and appropriateness of the translation approach for the specific type and purposes of the target text.

In comparison to Mossop's definition (1989), Pym (1992) has several translation mistakes. Pym (1992) offers a more comprehensive concept of translation mistakes than Mossop's definition (1989). While he does not categorize these mistakes systematically, Pym

identifies a range of factors that can contribute to translation mistakes, including poor understanding, time constraints, inappropriate translation for the target audience, issues with language, pragmatics, and culture, over- or under-translation, and discursive or semantic inadequacies. Pym's more comprehensive definition of translation mistakes takes into account a much wider range of factors that can impact translation quality. For example, it recognizes the importance of the intended audience and how translations need to be appropriate and engaging for that audience. It also acknowledges the role of pragmatics, culture, and discursive or semantic nuances in determining the effectiveness of a translation. By taking into account such a wide range of factors, Pym's definition of translation mistakes provides a more nuanced and comprehensive framework for evaluating translation quality. It emphasizes the importance of considering a range of contextual factors when evaluating the effectiveness of a translation and recognizes that mistakes can occur in many different ways and for many different reasons.

Aveling's (2002) definition of translation mistakes are more thorough and organized than previous definitions, as it identifies three key criteria that must be met for a translation to be considered successful: equivalence, sufficiency, and correctness. Aveling's emphasis on the importance of equivalence is particularly significant, as it recognizes that this concept encompasses a wide range of different types of equivalence, including formal, semantic, pragmatic, and textual equivalence. This more nuanced understanding of equivalence highlights the fact that there are many different factors that must be taken into account in order to create an effective translation. Sufficiency and correctness are also important criteria identified by Aveling. Sufficiency refers to the ability of the translation to meet the needs of the target audience and serve its intended purpose, while correctness relates to the accuracy and precision of the translation in the context of the source text. By emphasizing these three key criteria, Aveling (2002) provides a more comprehensive framework for evaluating translation quality. She recognizes that successful translation is not just about achieving a literal or formal equivalence, but also about creating a translation that is appropriate, effective, and accurate in the context of its intended use.

Since Schiaffino (2005) contends that it is simpler to agree on what constitutes an error than on what constitutes quality in the abstract and that the absence of errors is a key component of quality, it is essential to identify translation mistakes and categorize them before conducting an empirical evaluation of the quality of translation. By doing so, it becomes possible to measure the degree to which these errors impact the quality of the final product. By categorizing translation mistakes, it becomes possible to identify patterns or trends in the errors that occur during the translation process. This information can be used to improve the translation process, by addressing common errors and developing strategies to avoid them in the future. Overall, understanding the types of translation mistakes that can occur is an important step in evaluating translation quality, as it enables systematic analysis and improvement of the translation process.

Although there have been various interpretations of translation mistakes, I am using it to mean a failure to convey the meaning in the target language. Translation mistakes can occur when words or phrases are not accurately translated from one language to another. Inaccurate

translations can lead to misunderstandings, incorrect or inappropriate phrases, or incorrect information being conveyed. To minimize translation mistakes, it is important to use a reliable and accurate translation tool, such as Google Translate, or find a qualified translator who is proficient in both languages.

2.1.4 Classification of translation mistakes

Depending on translation (TL) theories and standards, translation mistakes are characterized differently (Hansen, 2010). When viewed from the perspective of equivalence, for example, translation mistakes can be seen as inadequacies in the target text or a lack of equivalence between the source and target texts, as noted by Koller (1979: 216, quoted in Dewi, 2015). Similarly, Hatim and Mason (1997: 203) classify translation errors into two broad categories based on their impact on meaning: significant (or unmotivated) denotational discrepancies and violations of the target-language system. Examples of significant discrepancies include omissions, additions, and substitutions, which are deviations from the intended meaning of the source text. Target-language violations, on the other hand, refer to errors in grammar, orthography, or other aspects of the target-language system. By categorizing translation errors in this way, Hatim and Mason provide a systematic framework for evaluating errors and assessing their impact on translation quality. This approach emphasizes the importance of maintaining consistency with both the source and target-language systems, as well as ensuring that the intended meaning of the source text is accurately conveyed in the target language. Overall, understanding the various ways in which translation mistakes can be characterized is important for developing effective strategies for identifying, categorizing, and addressing errors in the translation process.

Krzysztof (1996) proposes a categorization of translation mistakes into four main categories: errors of misinterpretation, realization errors, meta-translation errors, and errors of syntagmatic surface translation. While this approach provides a useful framework for categorizing different types of translation mistakes, it can also be quite complex and difficult to apply in practice. For example, the first category of errors of misinterpretation includes a broad range of mistakes related to equivalence, including equivalents, calques, and borrowings. While these concepts are well-defined in translation theory, identifying examples of each in the context of a specific translation can be challenging. Similarly, the second category of realization errors includes a range of mistakes related to misreading syntagms, misunderstanding verb frames or text modalities, and misinterpreting scenes or scripts. While these errors can have a significant impact on translation quality, identifying them in practice can be challenging. The third category of meta-translation errors includes mistakes related to the translation process itself, such as TL mistakes, incorrect recipient knowledge assessments, and inadequate subject-matter understanding. These errors can be particularly challenging to identify, as they often require a deep understanding of the context and goals of the translation process. Finally, the fourth category of errors of syntagmatic surface translation includes mistakes related to the actual translation output, such as translation methods, additions or omissions of text, and alterations to the intertextuality of the text. While these errors can be easier to identify than other types of mistakes, they can still be quite complex and require

careful analysis. Overall, while Krzysztof's framework provides a useful way to think about different types of translation mistakes, it can also be somewhat complicated to apply in practice. As a result, researchers and practitioners may need to take a more flexible approach to identifying and evaluating translation mistakes.

Newmark (1989) classified translation mistakes in a more rational way, dividing them into two basic categories: linguistic mistakes and referential mistakes. Reference mistakes concern facts, the actual world, and propositions rather than words, according to [8: 189]. Language mistakes include flaws in the use of articles, prepositions, punctuation, tense, voice, subject-verb agreement, word choice, spelling collocations, idioms, and other areas where the translator's proficiency is lacking. The second classification makes sense and is acceptable for judging the caliber of translations in general, particularly those produced by undergraduate students who are still in their formative stages of training. Thus, it is very apparent why there is a lack of proficiency. This classification offers a logical method for assessing the caliber of translations, especially those created by undergraduate students who are still learning the language. It makes it possible to identify and analyze translation faults more systematically, taking into account both language and factual mistakes. Overall, Newmark's classification system highlights the importance of having a solid grasp of both the target language and the subject matter in producing accurate and high-quality translations.

Although Nord (1997) concurs with Newmark's approach, he adds that there should be four basic categories for translation problems. The first category is a lack of receiver orientation, which refers to pragmatic translation problems resulting from a translator's failure to take the target audience into account. This lack of focus on the receiver can lead to translations that are not appropriate for the intended audience. The second category is mistakes in cultural translation, which occur when culturally equivalent practices are used. According to Nida (1982), there can be no connection between languages since no two languages are similar in the meaning given to equivalent symbols or in the way such symbols are ordered in phrases and sentences. As a result, it is inevitable that cultural equivalents will not be accurately translated. The third category Nord proposes is linguistic inadequacy, which refers to problems in the translator's proficiency in the source or target language. This type of problem can occur from a variety of linguistic issues, such as incorrect grammar, spelling, word choice, and style. Finally, the fourth category is a lack of textual coherence, which refers to problems in the organization and structure of the text. This can result in translations that are difficult to read and understand, making it hard for the target audience to engage with the translated material. By introducing these four categories, Nord expands upon Newmark's classification system to include additional areas of concern that can impact the quality of translations. Ultimately, this highlights the importance of considering a range of factors in the translation process to ensure that the final product meets the intended purpose and audience.

Schiaffino (2005), on the other hand, divides translation mistakes into three broad types. First, if the translation's meaning diverges from the meaning of the original language, there will be a semantic mistake. Second, mistakes in forms include grammatical, spelling, and other formal mistakes that do not alter the Source language's understanding of the translation. Schiaffino (2005) and Newmark (1989) both had the same perspective in this regard. Errors in

compliance are included in the third classification. Even while the meaning and form are correct, the translator neglects to incorporate the style manual, chosen terminology, and other client requirements, which can result in an unnatural, unintelligible, and inconsistent translation. Overall, Schiaffino's categorization system captures the range of potential mistakes in a translation and highlights the importance of considering a range of factors beyond just language proficiency. By attending to the specific requirements of the client and the style of the intended translation, translators can enhance the effectiveness and impact of their work.

In addition to the previous categorization systems, Aveling (2002) proposes a somewhat different categorization of translation errors. Aveling classifies translation errors as either "stupid blunders", which are mistakes resulting from the translator's incompetence or lack of understanding, or as "planned mistakes", which are deliberate choices intended to replicate the source text more closely. The concept of "stupid blunders" reflects errors that may result from a lack of knowledge of the source or target language or poor translation skills. On the other hand, "planned mistakes" represent a more strategic approach to translation, in which the translator may elect to reproduce certain stylistic or structural features of the source text in the translation, even if it creates some degree of inaccuracy. By drawing attention to these distinct types of translation errors, Aveling (2002) underscores the importance of considering both the intention and competence of the translator. While "stupid blunders" may reflect a lack of skill or focus, "planned mistakes" are often a conscious choice made by a skilled translator in the service of a particular translation strategy. Overall, Aveling's categorization provides an additional perspective on translation errors and highlights the importance of understanding the underlying reasons behind mistakes in translation.

Nguyễn Thị Minh Tâm et al (2017, pp. 90-104) provide four model-based translation evaluation criteria in their study on translation mistakes in signs. The four criteria are: functional equivalence, grammatical accuracy, terminological accuracy, and appropriateness of language use. These criteria provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating the quality and accuracy of translations, particularly in the context of sign translation. In addition, the topics covered by the translation analyses of Munoz (2012) and Keshavarz (1993) include spelling and grammar, vocabulary, content, and language usage and style. These topics are closely related to the criteria proposed by Nguyễn Thị Minh Tâm et al., reflecting the importance of evaluating accuracy and appropriateness across multiple dimensions of translation.

Within the scope of the present thesis, translation mistakes are divided into three main types: linguistic mistakes, comprehension mistakes and translation mistakes. The study's translation mistakes analyses approach was inspired by Phạm Thu Quỳnh Na (2005). Phạm Thu Quỳnh Na's Guide Sheet for Translation Error Analysis originally concentrated on three dimensions: linguistic mistakes, comprehension mistakes, and translation (transfer) errors. This type of model was chosen as the primary theoretical framework for the study primarily because it is appropriate and user-friendly for Vietnamese learners and includes clear instructions. Linguistic mistakes refer to using wrong words, using inappropriate synonyms, using inappropriate prepositions, omitting plural forms and structural errors. Comprehension

errors occur when the translation is completely standardized in terms of vocabulary and structure, but when compared with the source text, the target text shows the fact that students have misunderstood the meaning of a word and sentence of the source text. According to Phạm Thu Quỳnh Na (2005, p. 51), it means that the translation is not close due to the carelessness or inability to comprehend or interpret the meaning of a word or a sentence in the source text. Meaning mistakes consist of errors of not translating part of the source text, misinterpretations of phrases and idioms and punctuation marks. By using this framework, the present study provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing and evaluating translation mistakes, which can help to identify specific areas for improvement in the translation process.

2.2. Related studies

Lê Thị Bích Thủy's study (2015) aimed to investigate the translation errors made by Vietnamese EFL students and to propose ways to reduce these errors. The study focused on the sources and types of errors made by students in their translation tasks. The study analysed the translation errors made by 40 Vietnamese EFL students at a northern Vietnamese university. The errors were categorized into three types: linguistic errors, cultural errors, and individual errors. The sources of errors were also identified, including lack of vocabulary knowledge, lack of cultural knowledge, and lack of translation strategies. To reduce these mistakes, the study proposed several strategies, including the use of collaborative learning, raising awareness of cultural differences, increasing vocabulary knowledge, and providing more translation training. Overall, the study highlights the importance of identifying and addressing the sources and types of errors made by Vietnamese EFL students in translation tasks. By implementing strategies to reduce these errors, students can improve their translation skills and communicate more effectively across cultures.

Đỗ Na Chi (2018) conducted a study to examine the effectiveness of translated texts compared to the original Vietnamese texts and how Vietnamese EFL college students approach translation tasks. The study analysed 10 translated texts from 10 participants and found a significant percentage of inaccuracies in the translations resulting from the word-by-word translation method and the influence of the Vietnamese language. According to the study, unreliable translations were sometimes the result of a lack of understanding of the original language's meaning. To assist educators and students in making changes to the curriculum and teaching strategies, the study provides advice on how to improve translation skills. The study highlights the need for a better understanding of the translation process and the importance of considering both the source language and the target language when translating. It also emphasizes the role of educators in providing students with the necessary tools and strategies to improve their translation skills. Overall, the results of this study have important implications for the field of translation and can help to inform the development of more effective training programs for translators and students of translation.

Nguyễn Thanh Tùng (2019) identifies three common groups of translation mistakes made by third-year students in the Faculty of English Language Studies: the language group, the personal experience group, and the background knowledge group. The study analyses the errors produced by HUBT students during translation teaching and marking, and categorizes

them accordingly. After analysing the factors contributing to these mistake categories, Tung recommends the following strategies to reduce translation errors: (1) Increase students' language proficiency, (2) Introduce Standard English information sources, and (4) encourage group and pair collaboration. The study concludes that the background knowledge group is related to the language group and the personal experience group, and that these errors are common among third-year students in various classrooms during translation practice and written tests. Overall, this study provides insight into common translation errors made by students and offers recommendations for improving their translation skills. By addressing language proficiency, providing reliable information sources, and encouraging collaboration, instructors and students can work together to reduce errors and improve overall translation accuracy.

Nguyễn Thi Thu Thủy's study (2019) focused on investigating the effectiveness of collaborative learning in improving translation ability among Vietnamese EFL students. The study aimed to determine if collaborative learning could reduce translation errors and improve overall translation ability. The study involved 30 Vietnamese EFL students at a university in Vietnam who were divided into two groups - a collaborative learning group and a non-collaborative learning group. The collaborative learning group was instructed to work in pairs to complete translation tasks, while the non-collaborative group worked alone. The study found that the collaborative learning group performed significantly better in translation tasks and made fewer translation errors compared to the non-collaborative group. Additionally, the collaborative learning group reported a higher level of satisfaction with their learning experience. The study concludes that collaborative learning is an effective method for improving translation ability among Vietnamese EFL students. By working together in pairs, students can discuss and clarify translation choices, increasing the accuracy and quality of their translations while also developing their collaboration and communication skills. Overall, this study provides evidence that collaborative learning can improve translation ability among Vietnamese EFL students and can reduce the number of errors made in translation tasks.

Overall, the study provides insights into the challenges of translating English into Vietnamese and offers suggestions for improving the quality of translation by increasing cultural awareness. These studies demonstrate the importance of addressing translation errors among English-majored students in Vietnam and suggest strategies for improving their translation abilities. Translation plays a crucial role in facilitating communication across cultures and languages, and it is essential that EFL students develop the necessary skills and strategies to produce accurate and culturally appropriate translations. By identifying the sources and types of errors made by students, promoting collaborative learning, and increasing cultural awareness, these studies provide valuable insights into how the quality of translation in Vietnam can be improved. These strategies can help EFL students develop their translation skills and produce translations that effectively convey the intended meaning and cultural nuances of the source text.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research objectives

The study was carried out with two main objectives.

- 1) To study English-majored students' common mistakes in translation practices
- 2) To investigate English-majored students' suggested solutions to overcoming their common mistakes in translation practices.

Through this research, the aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by English-majored students in their translation practices and to identify potential solutions to improve their translation skills.

3.2 Research design

The research objectives of the study were to identify the common mistakes made by English-majored students and propose solutions to address these issues. To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods research design was employed, which involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The use of a mixed-methods research design allows for multiple sources of data to be collected and analyzed, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. This research design aims to provide a holistic approach to identifying and addressing common mistakes made by English-majored students, with the ultimate goal of improving their proficiency and success in the subject matter.

3.3 Participants

Sixty-three seniors from Department of Foreign Languages, SFL, at Can Tho University participated in the study during the 2022-2023 academic year. The participants in the study were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The sample was chosen based on the willingness of participants to take part in the study and their availability during the research period. Students hone their intermediate translation skills by translating texts with a variety of themes, including tourism, culture, and education, to name a few. Among these, 100% are in the fourth year. They responded to the questionnaire via Qualtrics and handouts. Qualtrics offers advanced analytical capabilities that help users to analyze survey responses and gain insights. Handout questionnaires can be tailored to a specific audience or event, making it easier to gather specific feedback or opinions.

3.4 Research instruments

3.4.1 Baseline survey

A baseline survey focused on common translation errors made by students. The baseline survey listed a number of common translation mistakes such as *grammatical mistakes, mistakes in spelling, punctuations, word choice, and syntax*. Respondents were asked to indicate which mistakes they frequently encounter while translating, as well as any additional mistakes not included in the list. The questionnaire included checkboxes for respondents to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each error type.

3.4.2 Questionnaire

The primary instrument utilized for data collection was a questionnaire, which comprised of both closed and open-ended questions. The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain information on the typical mistakes made by English majors and their opinions on how to fix these problems. The survey was structured into three main sections, which included questions about participants' background information, rating scale and open-ended questions to gather participants' suggestions for improvement. Overall, the questionnaire was structured in a way that allowed researchers to gather both quantitative and qualitative data related to participants' perceptions and experiences with translation. The quantitative data gathered from the translations completed by fourth-year students provided an additional layer of information that could be used to further inform the research findings.

3.4.3 Interview

Alongside the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Interviews with a sub-sample of 42 participants were conducted in addition to the questionnaire to elicit more in-depth and complex insights about their experiences as English majors. The students were coded as Student 1, Student 2, etc. Due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews, data gathering was able to be flexible and adaptable. The Interview Protocol was designed to gather data from students majoring in English Translation and Interpreting for a research study focused on common translation mistakes and solutions. The questions covered topics such as why some students succeed in learning foreign languages, specifically English, while others do not, as well as difficulties faced during translation courses and how they were resolved. Participants were also asked about any apps or websites they use for translation, especially in light of the advent of ChatGPT. The information gathered from the questionnaire was intended for research purposes only and would not be used for any other purposes. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaire closed with a section for personal information, including the name of the interviewee and their course year. By providing a set of standardized questions to all participants, researchers can ensure consistency across interviews and reduce the risk of bias entering through the questions asked.

3.5 Data analysis methods

3.5.1 Baseline survey

After the baseline survey had been conducted and the data gathered, the researchers used Excel for data analysis. Then the authors used the COUNTIF function to determine the number of times a specific translation mistake has been reported by the respondents. Additionally, the responses were sorted and then counted to determine the frequency of each theme. Furthermore, the researchers created charts and graphs to present the results in a clear and concise manner.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

The quantitative data about students' extent of involvement and perceptions obtained from the questionnaire were coded and analysed, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences

(SPSS) version 22. The data analysis from questionnaires was mainly based on the calculation of frequency, the mean, the median and the mode. Firstly, the researcher ran a reliability analysis test for each cluster of each part and for the whole questionnaire, following the generally accepted rule that reliability above 0.6 demonstrates an appropriate level. Subsequently, the frequency procedure was run to statistically identify the number of students in Cohorts, translation courses and translation mistakes were run to identify. Overall, the statistical analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire enabled the researcher to identify patterns, trends, and relationships in the data. The use of SPSS, a popular statistical software package, allowed for efficient data analysis and interpretation, and the results obtained could inform teaching practices in translation courses and improve student outcomes.

3.5.3 Interview

The information gathered from the interviews was coded and transcribed as part of the qualitative data analysis process. In order to make conclusions and offer answers to the problems highlighted in the study, thematic analysis was utilized to find themes and patterns in the data. Qualitative data presented a detailed understanding of teachers' observations regarding students' translation errors. The researcher carried out two stages of processing the interview data such as classifying the responses and analysing those classified responses. First, the responses of the interviewees were classified as similar perceptions or observations. Following that, the categorized responses were analysed. The responses were interpreted in order to illuminate the interviewees' meanings and implications.

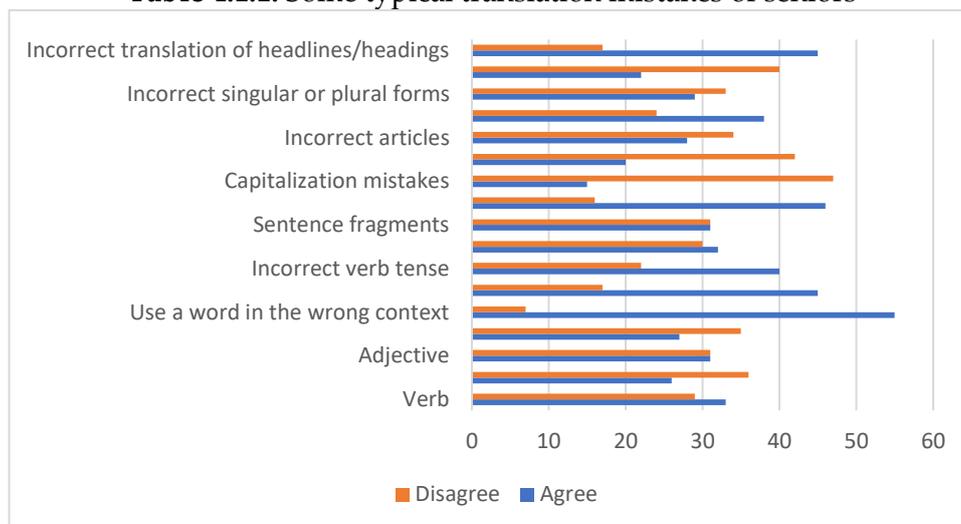
4. Findings and discussions

4.1 Quantitative results

4.1.1 Baseline survey

Based on the given data, it appears that the most commonly agreed upon translation mistake is the "Use of a word in the wrong context" (55 agreements), while the least commonly agreed upon mistake is "Capitalization mistakes" (15 agreements). Additionally, there are no error types that have a clear consensus, as the amount of agreements range from 15 to 55, with each error also having a significant amount of disagreements. This suggests that there is a variety of translation errors that students make, and different students may prioritize different error types. Further analysis could be conducted to examine any possible demographic patterns or trends within the data, such as differences between male and female students or students of different academic levels. Additionally, it may be useful to conduct further research using other methods, such as interviews or observations, to gain a deeper understanding of the specific translation errors made by students and their underlying causes.

Table 4.1.1: Some typical translation mistakes of seniors



4.1.2 Questionnaire

A. Reliability

Table 4.1.2: Reliability Statistics Output using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.854	25

The reliability statistics output that shows "Cronbach's alpha" and "N of Items" indicates the results of a reliability analysis performed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The concept of Cronbach's alpha as a measure of reliability was introduced by Lee J. Cronbach in 1951 in his seminal paper "Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests" published in the journal *Psychometrika*. Since then, Cronbach's alpha has become one of the most commonly used measures of reliability in psychology and other social sciences. The recommendation of a minimum value of 0.7 for acceptable reliability is based on expert consensus and guidelines in the field of psychometrics. The Cronbach's alpha value ranges from 0 to 1, and higher values indicate greater internal consistency. Typically, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable for research purposes. In this case, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.854, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the 25 items. This means that these items reliably measure the same underlying construct. The "N of Items" indicates the number of items included in the scale for which the reliability was assessed. In this case, N of items is equal to 25.

Table 4.1.3: Respondent Profile and Course Involvement

Q1.3					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	63	100.0	100.0	100.0

Based on the statistics provided, we can infer that 63 respondents answered a survey question about whether they learned Advanced Translation and what courses they learned. 100% of

these respondents indicated that they are seniors who learn Advanced Translation. Therefore, we can conclude that all 63 respondents learn Advanced Translation, based on the valid responses that were provided. By selecting senior students who have taken Advanced Translation, I hope to gain insights into the types of translation errors that are commonly made by students with more experience in translation. This can help identify areas where further education and training may be needed, as well as inform strategies for improving students' translation skills. To conduct this study, you may need to design a survey or questionnaire that asks students to provide examples of translation mistakes they have made or to rate their own proficiency in various aspects of translation to improve translation education and training in the future.

B. Descriptive crosstabs

Table 4.1.4: Crosstabulation of Section I and Section II Data

SecI	1	2	3	4	5
SecII	0	3	11	5	0

The table above shows a crosstabulation of data from Section I and Section II, with the frequencies of each combination of values displayed in the cells. Section I has five possible values (1-5), while Section II has six possible values (0-5). The frequencies of each combination of values are shown in the table. For example, there is one respondent who scored a 1 in Section I and a 1 in Section II, and there are 11 respondents who scored a 3 in Section I and a 2 in Section II. The total row and column show the total number of respondents for each section and each question, respectively. This crosstabulation table can be used to identify patterns and relationships between responses in different sections or questions, which can inform further analyses or research.

Table 4.1.5: Results of Chisquare Test and Correlation Analysis

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	572.212 ^a	450	.000
Likelihood Ratio	228.493	450	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	14.743	1	.000

As clearly seen from the table, when the researcher run Chi-square Test and correlation, then got a p -value of 0.000. The p -value, which represents the probability of observing a result as extreme as the one obtained under the null hypothesis, is 0.000 for both tests. If the p -value is less than or equal to 0.05, a statistically significant association between the variables can be concluded. Therefore, in this case, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between students' translation mistakes and potential solutions based on the hypothesis. In this case, if students make translation mistakes, they will have a solution base on the hypothesis. This finding can be used to inform strategies for improving students' translation skills.

4.2 Qualitative results

Firstly, the researchers asked why some students excel in translation learning while others do not achieve the desired results. Sixty-seven per cent of them believed that due to different learning style, led to different results. Thirty-one percent of them thought that due to students' own motivations and interests. The rest thought that teaching methods led to translation success.

Student 1 said: *"Students are no longer interested in their majors in general and in English in particular."*

Student 2 added: *"We, I think due to their own ability in the process of self-study and teaching methods."*

Student 3 expressed: *"Besides the same environment and learning conditions, the knowledge background, study potential, study motivation and self-discipline can be considered as crucial factors affecting the output of every process, especially English translation skills."*

These results are quite different from Loana Vultur (2021). Translation learning is a challenging skill that requires dedication, practice, and a love for language. However, some students are able to achieve great success in this field, while others struggle to achieve their desired results. Based on research and experience, there are five key factors that contribute to successful translation learning. It requires motivation, practice, feedback, curiosity, and patience. By developing these five factors, students can increase their chances of success in translation learning. However, it is important to note that success in translation learning is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each student has a unique learning style and approach that works best for them. Therefore, it is essential to continue experimenting to find the learning style that works best for you. With time, practice, and the right mindset, anyone can become a successful translator.

Secondly, students were asked what difficulties they had during learning specific translation courses such as technical translation, I learned that students face a range of challenges. 86% students had troubled with complex technical jargon in a specialized field. 6% students struggled with the different meanings of words in varying contexts. 3% students faced obstacles in learning about idioms and proverbs in both Vietnamese and English. 1% encountered cultural barriers when translating from English to Vietnamese.

Student 1 posed his ideas: *"I had some troubles when I translated some articles because some words they have lots of different meaning in different context."*

Student 2 also stated: *"Of course, yes. However, I just had a chance to register into the basic course of Translation, which is Theory of Translation, in COVID-19 pandemic. That put numerous obstacles in my study, but the most noticeable challenge I had to face in this course is the idioms and proverbs in Vietnamese and English. One of the most obvious examples is the translated version of "Đừng núi này trông núi nọ". In fact, it is the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence."*

Student 3 said: *"I faced with many terminology terms and complicated phrasal verbs when translating. For example, technical translation is a specific area and it has its own vocabulary and terms. Therefore, sometimes I don't know how to translate them into Vietnamese."*

Student 4 stated: *"I have encountered many problems of culture when translating English into Vietnamese."*

Also from students' perspectives, terminology caused even obsession inside "a newbie" like Student 3. This finding and Elizabeth Hampson (2021)' study has several features in common. She discusses the various challenges that translators face when working with language. She highlights problems such as cultural differences, idiomatic expressions, technical terms, and literary style, all of which can make the translation process more complicated. She also provides some tips and techniques for overcoming these difficulties and improving the quality of translations.

Thirdly, we discussed how these difficulties are resolved. Forty-three students have shared their methods to address their translation problems. Forty-seven per cent of them used English apps and dictionaries to learn how to use words in different situations. Twenty per cent of them check and memorize idioms and proverbs. Seven per cent of them check technical terms and jargons by using Google, Vdict or ChatGPT. The rest of the students think that students should break down translation assignments into many parts, and then check difficult parts. After that, try to understand the meaning or context of the whole sentence.

Student 1 said: *"I started to learn more about how to use words in different situations through some English app or dictionary."*

Student 2 also added *"The only method I utilized to deal with this difficulty is always checking idioms and proverbs first and then learning them by heart."*

Student 3 expressed his way: *"To address these problems, I check jargons by Google, Vdict and ChatGPT."*

Student 4 also gave out her ideas: *"I suggest breaking down a translation assignment into smaller parts and focusing on difficult sections. We should understand the meaning and context of the whole sentence after analyzing individual parts."*

There are marked differences between these results and Nataly Kelly (2017)'s study. She describes some of the most frequent mistakes that are made during the translation process. She also provides some tips for how to avoid making these mistakes, such as working with native translators and double-checking your work for accuracy.

Finally, we examined the use of apps and websites that aid in translation, especially with the advent of ChatGPT. One of the significant advantages of ChatGPT is its translation capabilities. ChatGPT has been trained on large amounts of text data from multiple languages, which allows it to accurately translate natural language conversations in real time. This makes ChatGPT an excellent tool for breaking down language barriers and opening up communication channels between people from different cultures and languages. The choice of a specific tool often depends on the student's personal preferences and needs. Forty-two students use Google Translate. In addition, some students type a question on Google and check the reliability of the translation by searching for the translated version. Fifteen students suggest using ChatGPT and tratusoha, while 27 students prefer TFlat, Oxford, or Cambridge dictionary for looking up words and have never used GPT for translation.

Student 1 said: *"I used Google Translate or Microsoft Translator when I am translating an article or a context."*

Student 2 stated: *"I've never used or thought of using ChatGPT for English translation. In that way, my frequently used technique is typing the question on Google like "How do we call "Đúng*

núi này trông núi nọ" in English?". After getting some pieces of translation, I check the reliability by just typing the translated version on searching engine to confirm whether the native speakers use it in that way or not. Although this method takes quite much time and effort, it is dependable."

Student 3 expressed his ideas: *"With the advent of technology, I tend to use ChatGPT, Google Translate, and tratusoha. I suggest these tools that can assist students to have an accurate translation."*

Student 4 said, *"Uhm...TFlat is my choice to look up new words. Besides that, I also use Oxford or Cambridge dictionaries to facilitate my translation. I have never tried to use GPT for my translation."*

In summary, the techniques suggested in this part have been proposed by students at CTU. Some of them were even considered to be very useful tools in addressing students' translation mistakes. So as to truly master these techniques, students need persistent practice and constant efforts to enhance their language competence and knowledge. After some interviews about the ways students do the translating, I saw that most of them work alone. They rarely shared or discussed any translation versions with each other. That is why their final results were not good as expected.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

In order to triangulate and provide the most thorough and trustworthy information, a mix of both quantitative and qualitative methods using three instruments—document observation, questionnaire, and interview—helped discover fascinating areas of parallels and differences. The following might be used, to sum up the excellent results.

5.2 Limitations

The present study has attempted to investigate the common mistakes of English-majored seniors at Department of English Language and Culture, School of Foreign Languages (EFL), Can Tho University (CTU) as well as to compare the results to those of previous studies. Sixty-three seniors who were enrolled in academic language programs took part in this research. The study's findings reveal that CTU students found it difficult to find equivalent words in translation. Despite some of the present study's contributions, there are still some limitations. The most important limitation lies in the number of participants. The current study is a small-scale research project with a limited student sample size (N=63) gathered from only Can Tho University. With a bigger sample size, it would be worthwhile to investigate students' perceptions of translation errors. Due to personal constraints, the current investigation was limited to a certain milieu as well as EFL students hailed from the Mekong Delta. Additionally, the research instrument is another limitation of this study. This research limited understanding of each learner's educational background. More in-depth findings may be obtained if the current study used other research instruments, such as an observation scaling checklist, aptitude test, or experiment, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the translation errors. To evaluate the extent to which students' preferences are similar or different, additional research is required for students at various levels of CTU participating in interviews. In terms of recommendations for future research, only juniors and seniors were

included in this study; therefore, further study in this field should be performed, with a greater number of participants and compare perceptions based on EFL students' majors.

5.3 Implications

The study's objectives were to examine the English-to-Vietnamese translation mistakes made by SFL, CTU English major students and to provide some pedagogical implications for improving the students' translation skills. Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions can be made for improving the English-to-Vietnamese translation skills of SFL, CTU English major students:

- EFL students should focus on improving their reading comprehension skills in English, so that they can accurately understand the meaning of the source text before trying to translate it.
- Classroom EFL teachers should provide more students' training sessions to help them develop translation skills for identifying and avoiding common translation mistakes. This can involve the use of dictionaries and other resources that can be used to assist translation work.
- EFL students should be encouraged to practice translation skills regularly through assignments with the help of classroom EFL teachers.
- Department of English Language and Culture Board should provide EFL students with opportunities to practice translating a variety of text types (e.g., technical documents, legal texts, literary works, etc.).
- Further research by teachers and students could be conducted to identify specific training strategies or interventions that can be used to help students improve their translation skills.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the limitations highlighted in the present study, several recommendations for further research can be made:

- For sample size: Conducting a study with a larger number of participants beyond the current study's sample size would provide more comprehensive and accurate results. Additionally, including participants from other universities or educational settings could increase the generalizability of the findings.
- As for varied research instruments: Future studies could incorporate a range of research instruments to gather a more detailed understanding of students' translation skills. For example, observation scaling checklists, aptitude tests, and experiments could all be used to provide a more comprehensive picture of translation errors.
- Regarding exploring students' perceptions: Conducting studies that investigate students' perceptions about translation errors would be helpful in understanding students' views in their own terms.
- In the light of collecting data beyond juniors and seniors: The present study only included seniors; however, conducting studies that include freshmen could allow researchers to better pinpoint when students' errors occur and when intervention is

needed. Furthermore, conducting studies that compare majors could provide additional insight into how different majors approach translation tasks.

- In terms of conducting further beyond the Mekong Delta, south of Vietnam: To obtain a more comprehensive understanding of translation errors, more research conducted beyond the Mekong Delta region in Vietnam, covering a broader range of students from different regions of the country, could be beneficial.

Overall, by incorporating a range of research instruments, increasing sample size, exploring students' perceptions, and conducting studies with a broader range of participants and regions, future research can further advance our understanding of students' translation skills and help us to develop targeted interventions to enhance these skills.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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