

ASSESSMENT ON VIETNAMESE-ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF OBJECT LABELS AT VIETNAMESE WOMEN'S MUSEUM THROUGH FOREIGN TOURISTS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: Translation of culture-specific items has posed many difficulties to translators as it requires thorough knowledge of both languages and cultures. This study aims to investigate the assessment of foreign tourists on the translation of object labels at Vietnamese Women's Museum and to shed light on tourist's preferences for cultural word translation procedures. In order to fulfil these objectives, a mixed-method research was conducted in which questionnaire and interview were used as the primary data collection instruments. The model proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) was applied to analyze the procedures of the cultural word translation. The findings showed that the translation at Vietnamese Women's Museum generally came up to tourists' expectation and successfully helped them understand the majority of Vietnamese culture exhibited at the museum. However, some contents relating to religion or Vietnamese customs such as Mother worshipping, consecration ritual, 13 celestial Mothers full-month ceremony and traditional outfits such as fabric-making or fabric-dyeing methods, names of traditional costumes caused some challenges to the readers. Suggestions from tourists were valuable for both translators and the museum to improve their translation and display at the museum.

Keywords: translation, tourists' assessment, culture-specific items

1. Introduction

Translated tourism texts like brochures, museum objects' descriptions or advertisements present as a bridge connecting local culture to foreign visitors (Muñoz, 2011, p. 45) and a necessary means to stimulate the tourism industry of the host country. Tourism text translation in Vietnam, however, has not been evaluated by any standardized quality assessment framework. The lack of adequate and proper translation quality assessment (TQA), to a certain extent, has led

to translators' failure in response to readers' expectations and cultural confusion among visitors. Although various studies on TQA on tourism-relating texts from the translator's point of view were conducted (Tourey, 1995; Pierini, 2007; Terestyényi, 2011; Narváez & Zambrana, 2014; Rezaei & Kuhl, 2014), there are limited still number of studies on TQA from readers' perspectives. Because readers are the end-users of the translating process, their evaluation would be a potential means to measure the quality of a translation. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the assessment of foreign tourists who are popular end-users of the process on the translation of culture-

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specific items at the Vietnamese Women's Museum (Hanoi).

Vietnamese-English translation of object labels in Vietnamese Women's Museum was chosen to be assessed in this study for two reasons. Firstly, the museum has a wide range of Vietnamese multi-cultural features including more than 1000 materials, photos and objects which are displayed in the permanent exhibition to show a significant role of Vietnamese women through separate yet connected sections. In other words, the museum can provide an equivalent source for the data collection and analysis stage. Secondly, due to its reputation as a tourist attraction in Hanoi, this place often welcomes a large number of foreign tourists, which would allow the researchers to access and conduct interviews with the tourists easily.

This study was conducted to answer the two following questions:

Research question 1: How did foreign tourists assess the translation quality of object labels at Vietnamese Women's Museum?

Research question 2: What are their preferences for the translated object labels at Vietnamese Women's Museum?

The first research question is to find out the tourists' assessment on how object labels at Vietnamese Women's Museum were translated. The findings can present the tourists' understanding of the conveyed message and to what extent the museum can express Vietnamese culture to the foreigners. Moreover, the research also sheds light on tourist's preferences for cultural word translation procedures and their suggestions for better translation if there are through the second question.

2. Literature review

2.1. Translation assessment

Nida (1964) and Nida and Taber (1974) were well-known researchers who paid

attention to the quality of a text which was translated from one language to another. Their research focused on the question "what is a good translation?". Nida (1964) pointed out the closest natural equivalent in which the quality of translation can be evaluated by the maximum equivalent relationship between the forms and contents when language A translated into language B. Meanwhile, in *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Nida and Taber (1974) tested the translation based on the extent of verbal correspondence as well as the amount of dynamic equivalence. This means not only the verbal consistency in translation but also how the public possibly responds to it must be accounted for in TQA.

Differing from Nida and Taber's TQA approach, Steiner (1975) evaluated the translation from the opposite direction. By posing the question "what is a bad translation?", Steiner described "a bad translator" as the one that was inadequate to source text because the translator might misconstrue the origin, have limited linguistic ability in his language, or make the stylistic or psycholinguistic mistakes and inappropriate sensibility. Thanks to an overview of bad translation, translators can be aware of translation-related mistakes and avoid them to be good translators.

Unlike theories from Nida and Taber (1974) and Steiner (1975), Newmark (1988) did not focus merely on the equivalence of source text (ST) and target text (TT), but developed the evaluation of translation from various criteria, including both internal and external elements affecting assessment on translation. In *the Textbook of Translation*, Newmark (1988) indicated that translation criticism was a vital component of the translation process as it helped translators improve their competence, expand their knowledge and understanding as well as suggested various options for later

translation. Accordingly, he suggested that translation evaluation should cover:

1. Analysis of ST, focusing on intention and functional aspects;
2. Interpretation of ST's purpose, the translator's method, and the potential readership;
3. Selective but representative detail comparison of TT to the original;
4. Evaluation of translation from the translator or critic who can be a university teacher or an examiner;
5. Assessment of translation when it is placed in TT culture or discipline.

There are two new things in Newmark's approach. Firstly, readership was pointed out as one of the criteria for translation assessment. In other words, readers' perspectives could be applied in translation quality assessment. Secondly, Newmark also proposed that the assessment should be concerning culture and discipline in TT.

Steiner (1998) assessed a translation based on register theories and argued that not only metafunctional equivalences (i.e. experiential, logical, interpersonal, textual meaning, and understood pragmatic meanings by non-functional linguists) but also the register, the context that the text was put in, needs to be considered. Three register components that Steiner provided were: *field*, *tenor*, and *mode*. In the aspect of *field*, the assessment had to consider the subject matter, the goal orientation, and social activities. *Tenor* refers to agentive role, social role, social distance (level of formality and politeness), and effect were paid attention. Last but not least, in the aspect of *mode*, language role (constitutive and ancillary), the channel of discourse and medium of discourse need to be examined.

From all the approaches above, it could be seen that a translated text can be evaluated through several different criteria and no fixed model was sufficient to apply

in criticizing translation. The assessor should consider factors like translators' intentions, social contexts, translation's purpose and possible responses from readers to choose an appropriate model or a set of assessment criteria for the assessing process. In this research, readers' assessment on translation quality was the main focus. The readers who are foreign tourists visiting the Vietnamese Women's Museum have some knowledge of Vietnamese culture and expectations for understanding further. They, therefore, would be the objective examiners on how good the translation quality in the museum was.

2.2. Cultural translation

2.2.1. Definition of culture-specific items

There have been different definitions of culture-specific items in the history of translation studies. The definition of culture-specific items or cultural words was introduced by Newmark (1988) as "words that denote a specific material cultural object". Four years later, Baker (1992, p. 21) extended the concept and claimed that it could be "abstract or concrete... and may relate to a religious belief, a social custom, or even a type of food...". However, it is indisputable that one of the functions of culture-specific items is to reflect the culture within the language. Therefore, it can be defined as "elements of the text that are connected to certain concepts in the foreign culture (history, art, literature) which might be unknown to the readers of the target text" (Aixela, 1996, p. 14).

In terms of categorization of culture-specific items, Newmark (1988) divided them into five categories as follows:

- Ecology

This category comprises animals, plants, local winds, mountains, and plains among others. All these words can be translated

literally, with the additional culture-free explanation text where they cannot be understood denotatively or figuratively. Here are some examples of ecology terms found in Vietnamese Women's Museum: Cành cây Mây me-Tree branches, Lúa nước-Aquatic rice, Rễ cây Móc Mây-Root of the Moc May tree, etc.

- Material culture

Concepts like food, clothes, housing, transports, and communications all belong to the category "material culture". In Vietnamese-English translation, these words are often translated using transference procedure and descriptive equivalent for the purpose of both corresponding to the general readership and educating readers in case there is a new technology or knowledge. The following examples are taken from the translation at the Vietnamese Women's Museum: Cốm-Young sticky rice, nem-Vietnamese Springroll, Váy ống-Tubular skirt, Váy xếp ly-Pleated skirts, etc.

- Social Culture: This is a group of works and leisure terms like names of human labor, entertainment, hobbies, or sports.

- Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts

This category consists of political, social, legal, religious, and artistic aspects which may refer to the institutional terms of the political and social life of a country. Like others, this category has a variety of terms which cannot be easily translated into English. As a result, they are often translated as the two following examples: The title for the head of state like 'Quan Lớn Tuần Tranh' could be translated in two ways: being kept in its original version for educated readership or 'Great Mandarin Tuan Tranh' for a general one. Or religious activities 'Lễ cúng Mẹ' is known in translated document as 'The cult of the celestial mothers, Cung Mu'.

- Gestures and habits

There are usually non-linguistic features which can be found in the form of names of regular behaviors and movements. It should be noted that words in this category often create ambiguity due to differences between function and description in gestures and habits among cultures can create. For example, kissing fingertips for greeting or praising or spit for blessing occurs in one culture and not in others.

2.2.2. *The problem of untranslatability of culture-specific items*

Culture-specific items, in many cases, cannot be translated because there is no equivalence in terms of linguistic or cultural aspects or both in source language (SL) and target language (TL). According to Catford (1965), 'linguistic untranslatability' occurs when "the functionally relevant features include some which are formal features of the language of the SL text. If the TL has no formally corresponding feature, the text, or the item, is (relatively) untranslatable". However, the key often lies in the cultural-concept discrepancies between SL and TL or cultural untranslatability. "What appears to be a quite different problem arises, however, when a situational feature, functionally relevant for the SL text, is completely absent in the culture of which the TL is a part" (Catford, 1965, p. 99). Take the term 'áo bà ba' in Vietnamese as a typical example, it is nearly impossible to find an equivalent translation of it in English because of the cultural gap between Vietnamese and English cultures.

Because of that, Bhabha (2012) claimed that cultural translation could be defined as a process in which there were no restricted texts, and the focus was on general cultural processes rather than finite linguist products. This could give an overview of the translation at Vietnamese Women's Museum as the content of the displayed exhibition is

exclusively characterized for Vietnamese cultures including terms in cultivation and daily life activities, household tools related to agriculture identity, religious practices, national social features, customs and history.

2.2.3. *Vinay and Darbelnet's (2000) translation procedures for translating culture-specific items*

According to Newmark (1988), translation procedures are regarded as methods applied by translators when they formulate an equivalence to transfer elements of meaning from the Source Text (ST) to the Target Text (TT). In contrast to translation strategies, which are usually understood as the translators' global approach or plan of action on a given text, based on their intention, translation procedures are used for sentences and smaller units of language within that text.

When it comes to cultural translation, Venuti (1995, 2008) proposed two major strategies: Domestication and Foreignization. Domestication relates to translation procedures in which a transparent and fluent style is

adopted to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for TL readers. As Domestication is applied, the translator has to risk imposing his or her voice, abolishing some messages in terms of culture, style and description of the original author (LaPlante, 2008). On the other hand, Foreignization refers to a target text produced in a way that deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997). Foreignization is suitable for target audiences who prefer a source-oriented translation. Those are somehow knowledgeable about the SL culture and want to understand cultural references and foreign traits of the text.

The two translation strategies have been used by various researchers, including Georges (1998), Laviosa-Braithwaite (1998) and Vinay and Darbelnet (2000). In their study, Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) proposed seven translation procedures which translators could apply when translating culture-specific items as following:

Table 1. Translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000)

Domestication	Foreignization
Transposition	Borrowing (Transference)
Modulation	Calque (Through-translation)
Equivalence	Literal translation
Adaptation	

Four procedures including Transposition, Modulation, Equivalence, and Adaptation were categorized into Domestication group. Transposition refers to the change of grammar from SL to TL. For example, it can be the change from singular to plural, the change when a specific SL structure does not exist in the TL, when literal translation is possible but not appropriate for the TL, and the replacement of a lexical gap with the grammatical structure.

Modulation is defined as the variation through a change of perspectives. This procedure can be (a) abstract for concrete ('golden heart', lòng tốt), (b) cause for effect ('he walked out of our sight', chúng tôi không nhìn thấy anh ta nữa), (c) one part for another ('I bought this shirt for an arm and a leg', tôi mua cái áo này với giá cắt cổ), (d) reversal of terms ('I lent him my bike', anh ta mượn xe tôi), (e) active for passive, (f) space for time ('at

primary school’, hồi còn đi học), (g) change of symbols (‘she is as lazy as a lizard’, cô ấy lười như hủi), (h) positive and negative. Equivalence is applied to different terms in the same situation. In a simple way, these terms refer to notices, familiar alternatives, phrases and idioms. The last procedure in this category is Adaptation, which is the use of recognized equivalent between two situations.

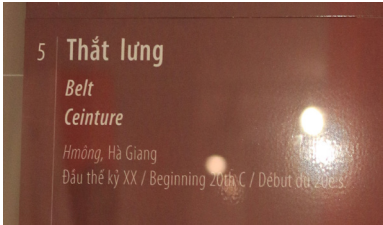
Borrowing or Transference, Calque or Through-translation and Literal translation belong to Foreignization group. Borrowing or Transference procedure is the process of

transferring a SL word into a TL text in order to give the sense of intimacy between cultures and readers. Literal translation of common collocations, names of organization, and components of compounds, or phrases is listed as Calque or Through-translation. Meanwhile, Literal translation means SL text is translated literally into TL as their meanings are corresponsive to other alternative procedures.

To make it more straightforward, here are some examples of the object label translation at Vietnamese Women’s Museum according to Vinay and Darbelnet (2000)’s procedures:

Table 2. Translation procedures applied to translate object labels at Vietnamese Women’s Museum

Strategies	Vietnamese translation	English translation	Object labels’ Image	
	Transposition	Mang thai	The pregnant woman	
	Modulation	None	None	
Domestication	Equivalence	Đòn gánh	Shoulder pole	
	Adaptation	Hệ thống thờ Mẫu	The Mother Goddess Pantheon	

	Transference	Ao dai	Ao dai	
Foreignization	Calque	None	None	
	Literal Translation	Thắt lưng	Belt	

In this study, the authors decided to choose Vinay and Darbelnet (2000)’s categorization for the reasons that the procedures proposed in this model are concise in the manner and the items are not overlapped with each other. As a result, it will be easy to comprehend, analyze, and apply. Moreover, the taxonomy of translation procedures provides a closer look to encourage one to look beyond simple structural alterations between SL and TL. The role of the translator, as a result, could be examined as a creative intermediary between the original author and his or her target audience in the process of translation-mediated communication.

2.3. Translation quality assessment through readers’ perspectives

The term “quality” is defined by European Organization for Quality Control as “the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy a given need” (Wenger, 1981). Agreed or not, a translation should be considered as a product or service which satisfies the needs of understanding and communication of its customers who, in this case, are readers in TL. In other words, readers are the end-users

of the process, and their role in translation quality assessment does matter. Nida (2001) in *Language and culture: Contexts in translating* pointed out that “What is important is the extent to which receptors correctly understand and appreciate the translated text”. This statement reemphasized Newmark’s (1988) view when he suggested using a communicative approach rather than a semantic approach in vocative text translation for the reason that the former “conveys the message and effect more effectively to the readers” (as cited in Lim & Loi, 2015, p. 8). Additionally, Pinto (2001) believes that “the quality of translation is a perception that depends directly on the degree of satisfaction reached by its readers” (Pinto, 2001, p. 297). He also attaches the importance of examining readers’ needs and expectations in formulating translation’s specific objectives. One of the most noteworthy studies should be mentioned here is the one by Hickey (2003) in which he compared lay readers’ assessment with that of translation experts. The findings of his research concluded that lay readers can point out “a large array of translation problems such as translationese, illogicality and contextual inappropriateness and that their judgments can provide revealing insights into

the quality of translation” (as cited in Lim & Loi, 2015, p. 10).

The readers always make inferences and create meaning when dealing with words of the translated texts; therefore, their evaluation should be taken into account. Nevertheless, level, as well as value of the potential assessment, may depend on the readers’ awareness of “culture, their perceptual abilities and their schemata, and the ability to reconstruct the text style according to their interests and tastes” (Yenkimaleki, 2016, p. 139). In his study, Yenkimaleki also pointed out that the readers usually experience two types of processing when encountering the text in general and translation in particular. One is “bottom-up processing” in which understanding of the text’s meaning is almost immediate as the readers are familiar with vocabulary and structures. In contrast, understanding the meaning associated with hypothesizing and delay is involved in top-down processing when the readers have to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary and structures. Obviously, the two processing might widely vary based on the age, educational level, familiarity with the subject content and other features of readers. However, one thing that can be highlighted here is understanding readers’ competence is critical for translators to choose the appropriate translation approach in order to achieve a good translation. For example, the choice of domestication or foreignization translation strategy (familiar or unfamiliar words) depends on the fact that who the readers are and what their assumptions about the context are. Xu (2016) claimed that the target of any translation is equivalent to the ST in terms of the reader’s reaction to the text as a result of interaction between the reader’s schematic knowledge and the textual realization. The criterion of translation quality is then how to construct the closest sets of

dynamic interactions among schemata in the TT reader’s mind via the textual form.

In short, the target-text readers who consume the end product should be considered as potential assessors to measure the success or failure of a translation. Their response may contribute to not only significant comments on the effectiveness of the translation process but also further recommendations to improve the translation version. In this study, as the primary source of visitors to the Vietnamese Women’s Museum, foreign tourists would be chosen to the readers for assessment.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Subject and Participants

The main subject of the study was object labels displayed at Vietnamese Women’s Museum in its six major sections, namely women’s marriage, birth, family life, mother worshipping, women in history, and women’s fashion. The first part about marriage and birth includes the objects of wedding offerings, gifts, bride and groom clothes, invitation cards, or medications for mothers from different ethnic groups in Vietnam. The Vietnamese Mother-worshipping religion, war weapons, daily household goods, items, clothes or motif techniques are presented in other parts. All the contents are typically diverse in culture-specific items, which makes them the adequate subjects of this research.

The labels can be divided into two main types including the short titles in white bold with the name on the board indicating what the object was and the long description next to the short one indicating further information of the object, its usage, material, ownership, or related custom. The collected data was over 700 images of all object labels. A list of

477 Vietnamese-English translations, which were short titles in bold and some outstanding phrases related to sewing techniques of long titles, were then selected for further assessment.

Forty foreign visitors from English-speaking countries, including the USA, England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand were invited to be participants in this study. First, they were all tourists visiting the Vietnamese Women's Museum for the first time. This would assure the naturalness of participants' interest in the Vietnamese culture displayed at the museum. Second, as their Western cultural background would differentiate them from Vietnamese culture knowledge, this might result in significant findings in their evaluation of object labels' translation in the Vietnamese Women's Museum. It should be noted that these participants came from different working fields ranging from education (40%), business (25%), health care (15%) to art and entertainment (15%).

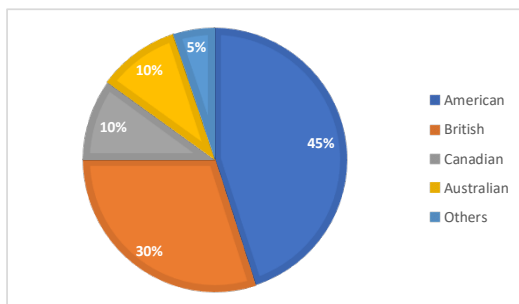


Chart 1. Tourists' nationality

Regarding tourists' self-evaluation on their understanding of Vietnamese culture, the majority (70%) rated their knowledge as "fair" while 30% thought they rarely knew about Vietnamese culture and no one rated "good".

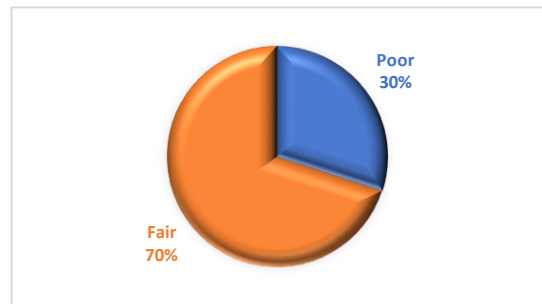


Chart 2. Tourists' self-evaluation on their understanding of Vietnamese culture

3.2. Data collection instruments

A questionnaire and follow-up interview were conducted to collect data in this study. The two-page questionnaire (see **Appendix 1** for a full version of the questionnaire) contained two parts. The first part was to collect participants' background information, including their nationalities, occupations, ages and genders. The second part had five questions: the first three questions investigating tourist's difficulties in understanding the translation and their explanation; the fourth asking about their overall evaluation for translation quality at the Vietnamese Women's Museum and the last re-checked their self-evaluation on the understanding of the translation. In order to answer it, the participants were asked to interpret five Vietnamese culture-related words which had no exact English equivalence.

The survey results, however, could not show cultural understanding of the respondents as well as stories behind their answers. Consequently, an in-depth interview was conducted as soon as the tourists finished answering the questionnaire. It was designed with short questions for the researchers to explain the meaning of translation that foreigners found it difficult to understand in the questionnaire and ask further details about their comments on the translation quality. Also, the respondents' references and recommendations (if there were) to improve the current translation quality of culture-specific items would be clarified.

3.3. Data collection procedures

Stage 1: Pilot questionnaire and interview

To ensure the effectiveness of collected information from the questionnaire and interview, pilot ones were carried out by sending test questionnaires to three native English speakers via email and giving a test questionnaire and interview to 2 actual foreigners visiting Vietnamese Women's Museum. Their answers were revised to complete the final version.

Stage 2: Deliver the questionnaires and conduct the interviews

Face-to-face questionnaires and interviews were carried out to collect data from the 40 foreign visitors from English-speaking countries visiting the Vietnamese Women's Museum. These interviews were conducted in English to guarantee the origin and preciseness of the study. The semi-structure allowed flexibility and naturalness for new questions to be probed in. Both recording and note-taking were used to record data (with agreement and permission from respondents).

This was the procedure to conduct questionnaires and interviews

Step 1: Participant invitation

The researcher guided a private tour for one or two English native speakers at Vietnamese Women's Museum. At the end of the tour, the researcher asked participants for permission to collect data for the study.

Step 2: Questionnaire instructions

The researcher instructed respondents to complete the questionnaire.

Step 3: Completing the questionnaire and interview

The researcher asked respondents to complete the questionnaire and went on with further interview questions.

3.4. Data analysis procedures

Quantitative and qualitative analysis (for survey and interview) was employed to analyze the collected data for this study. After collecting the data from the questionnaire, the tourists' background information and their answers were classified in similar groups of common trends. These data were converted to percentages and presented in graphs. The note from the interview was written down in order to find out the dominant tourists' assessment on translation quality at the Vietnamese Women's Museum.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Research question 1

4.1.1. Tourists' difficulties in understanding

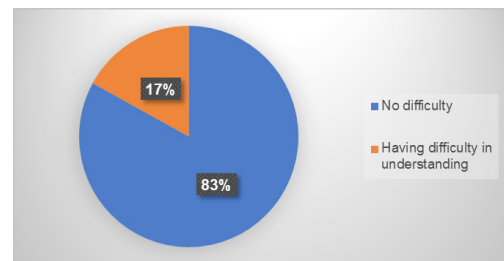


Chart 3. Difficulty in understanding

Chart 3 shows that the majority of the participants found no difficulty in understanding the translation of object labels at the Vietnamese Women's Museum. Several tourists used words like "well-presented translation", "easy to understand", "very clear", "all good" and "well-done translation" to comment on the translation.

However, 17% (7 people) responded that they found it difficult to understand some parts of the translation. The ambiguous and confusing content is often related to marriage, cultivation tools, Mother worshipping, and traditional clothes. In particular, the participants said they hardly understood and were unfamiliar with specialized terms about cloth-making techniques (i.e. 'motif art', 'batik', 'applique', 'ikat'); kinds of society in Vietnamese culture (i.e. 'patrilineal',

‘matrilineal’); names of traditional Vietnamese clothes (i.e. ‘Tu than’, ‘ao dai’), and tools of cultivation (‘sickle’, ‘ploughing’). The other culture-specific items in religious practices like ‘Mother Goddess worshipping’ (‘thờ Mẫu’ in Vietnamese), ‘consecration ritual’ (‘lễ bán khoán’ in Vietnamese) were also on the list.

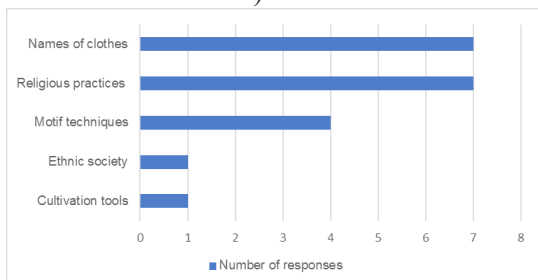


Chart 4. Responses in understanding difficulty

It can also be seen that Vietnamese culture-specific items such as names of clothes, religious practices and motif techniques were rated as the most challenging for the tourists in this study to understand. These words often had no equivalence in English or were not familiar with foreigners in their culture and background knowledge.

4.1.2. Tourists’ translation quality assessment

When being asked about translation quality at the Vietnamese Women’s Museum, almost all tourists showed a high level of satisfaction. To be more specific, 65% of visitors voted “completely satisfied” and 35% rated “quite satisfied”. There was no record of the votes for ‘satisfied’, ‘less satisfied’, or ‘dissatisfied’ (Chart 5).

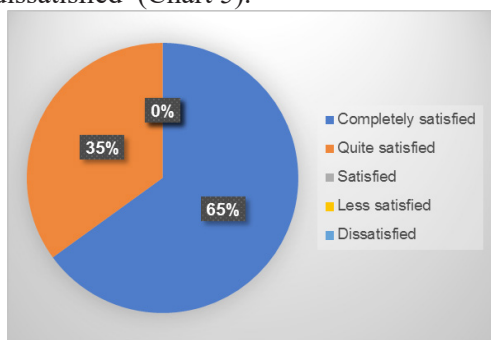


Chart 5. Translation quality satisfaction

The participants also evaluated the percentage of content at the Vietnamese Women Museum that they could understand with ease through the scale of 0 to 10. Half of them had no difficulties in understanding the culture-related content in translation at the museum. Noticeably, there were 20% of tourists who could get the whole meaning of all object labels. Meanwhile, the number of respondents understanding only half of the information was only 5%.

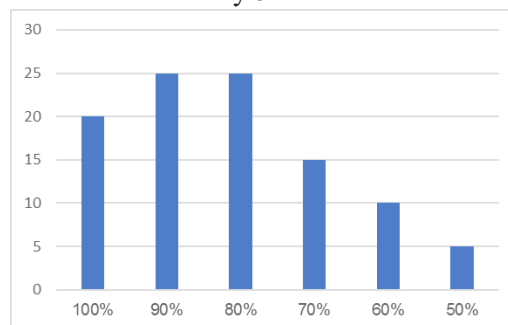


Chart 6. Level of content tourists can understand

4.1.3. Re-check reliability of tourists’ self-evaluation

Believing that all positiveness from the participants in the previous assessment was subjective, the researchers decided to re-check the reliability of tourist self-assessment. All the respondents were asked to explain their understanding of five culture-specific items taken from the museum’s exhibition. They were ‘Celestial Mother’ (‘bà mẹ’), ‘Consecration Ritual’ (‘lễ bán khoán’), ‘Mother Goddess’ (Mẫu), ‘Shoulder Pole’ (‘Quang gánh’), ‘Ao Dai’ (‘áo dài’). These Vietnamese culture-bound words were selected as the researchers noticed that they related to religion, clothes and street vendors, which often caused certain misunderstanding and ambiguity for visitors. To be more specific, the words were given to participants without showing pictures or any other visual aids of them. The result was shown in the table hereafter.

Table 3. Responses of tourists for interpreting cultural translation

No.	Culture-specific items	Definition	Translation Procedure	Translation Strategies	Number of correct responses	Percentages of right answer in 83% (33 people) participants with no difficulty in understanding
1	Celestial mother	13 mothers taking care of baby before birth	Equivalence	Domestication	2	6%
2	Consecration ritual	Ritual of putting the baby's soul in the temple for protection	Equivalence	Domestication	None	0%
3	Mother Goddess	System of four Mothers and Pantheon of Goddess protect/ care for everything	Equivalence	Domestication	18	54,5%
4	Shoulder Pole	The pole for carrying baskets of street vendor	Equivalence	Domestication	23	69,7%
5	Ao dai	Vietnamese traditional dress	Borrowing	Foreignization	1	3%

It can be seen that there was a small number of tourists who could recall the meaning of terms number 1, 2, 5 (only 0%-6% of visitors could interpret correctly). After being explained the meanings of 5 terms, 'ao dai' and 'shoulder pole' could be recalled by 100% tourists, while the percentage for 'Mother Goddess' was 93,9% (31 out of 33). Nevertheless, the percentage remained unchanged for 'celestial mother' and 'consecration ritual' as no tourist was able to remember the section related to the two terms above.

As the data revealed, 'celestial mother' and 'consecration ritual' were the two most poorly understood terms, while 'mother worshipping' along with 'ao dai' and 'shoulder pole' are the more noticeable

ones. The reasons given by tourists was that among five terms of different Vietnamese cultural activities above, 'Mother-Goddess Worshipping' and 'Street Vendor' were exhibited in separated rooms at Vietnamese Women's Museum, while the other three were just shown in small sections of each floor, so these terms are more noticeable and well-informed. Also, the images of street vendors and Vietnamese national dress imprinted in tourists' impression when they first came to Vietnam since they can be seen on the street, at shops, Vietnam Airlines flight attendants' uniforms, tourist handbooks, souvenirs.

In short, despite the fairly satisfactory level of self-evaluation from 83% of participants, the Vietnamese culture-specific words still

posed significant challenges for readers to understand and remember due to dissimilarity between the cultures and languages.

4.2. Research question 2

4.2.1. Tourists' preferences

To investigate the participants' preferences for translation at the museum, the researchers classified object labels' translation into procedures based on Vinay and Darbelbet's model (2000) and noted the tourists' choices of their favored procedures after showing them the classified table. The percentages of translation procedures and strategy used to translate the total of 477 selected object labels at the Vietnamese Women's Museum in this study were illustrated in Chart 7. As Calque and Modulation procedures were not used in translating object labels, the pie chart did not include these two procedures.

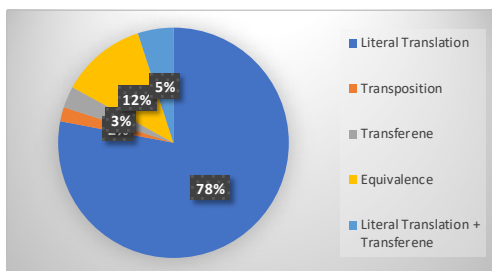


Chart 7. Percentages of translation procedures

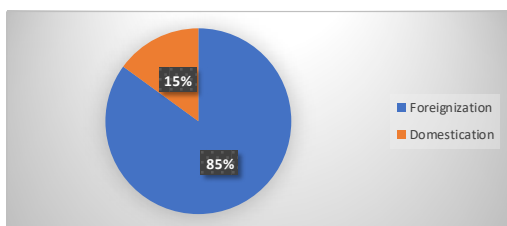


Chart 8. Percentages of translation strategies

As can be seen in the pie chart, literal translation accounted for 78% of translation while other procedures were rarely used

in translation at Vietnamese Women's Museum (only 2%-12% of object labels' translation used other procedures). Similarly, foreignization strategy is employed as much as 85% in translation. From the statistics, it can be seen that the translator(s) of the museum exhibits intended to keep the translation natural and close to readers by mostly using foreignization strategy.

After having been shown the table of classifying procedures and strategies of translation, the tourists' highest preferences of procedure were 'literal translation' at 90%, followed by 'transposition-and 'descriptive equivalence' at 70% and 57,5 % respectively. Other procedures were dismissed as 'hard to understand without explanation', or 'unfamiliar'. The tourists explained that the content whose meaning was conveyed by literal translation procedure was easy to understand no matter the different shape or structure of the object is. They also added that the familiarity with the words helped them visualize the usage or function of the displayed items. In terms of the culture-specific items, "descriptive equivalence was unavoidable" as descriptive translation could maintain the 'culture value' and help them visualize the object. Finally, the tourists did not recognize any differences between literal translation and transposition. As they did not know Vietnamese, grammar changes in transposition procedure could not be recognized from tourists' views.

Overall, literal translation and descriptive equivalence were the most favored procedures in translating at Vietnamese Women's Museum.

4.2.2. Tourists' recommendations

When being asked for recommendations for better translation at Vietnamese Women's Museum (especially the culture-specific items

that are difficult to understand), all the tourists had no other way to translate. Their common explanations were that their familiarity with Vietnamese culture might not be wide enough to recognize without seeing models, pictures, or reading descriptions and explanations. Their suggestions, therefore, were to broaden Vietnamese culture through tourist brochures, booklets, guide books, or advertisements. For example, if ‘áo dài’ is one of the most traditional and typical dresses, so it was appropriate to keep its original Vietnamese name. But for ‘áo tứ thân’, the tourists said they had barely or never seen it before in Vietnamese tourist brochures or advertisements, hence, it should be translated in a descriptive way. For example, it is suggested that the term may be translated as ‘áo tứ thân’ - a traditional Vietnamese costume with four panels.

4.3. Discussion and implication

As can be seen from the results above, there are some suggestions the researchers have withdrawn from. First of all, in general, translation at Vietnamese Women’s Museum came up to tourists’ expectations and successfully delivered the majority content of the museum to help visitors visualize and make them find Vietnamese culture interesting. However, some contents relating to religion or Vietnamese customs (Mother worshipping, consecration ritual, 13 celestial Mothers full-month ceremony) and traditional outfits (fabric-making or fabric-dyeing methods, names of traditional costumes) caused some difficulties for readers. Hence, the Vietnamese Women’s Museum should pay more attention to the display sections of these contents. It is suggested that explanation texts or the introduction of some religious belief and concept, more information, or English description of Vietnamese names can be added in order to help visitors understand more about the Vietnamese culture.

Secondly, Vietnamese culture needs more recognition from foreign visitors. For instance, while most foreigners can recognize traditional costumes’ names from other countries like ‘Hanbok’ from Korean or ‘Kimono’ from Japan, ‘Ao dai’ from Vietnam is hardly retained by tourists unless they have come to Vietnam before. This highlighted that the Vietnamese government or travel agencies should consider spreading images of Vietnamese cultures, including diversity of ethnic minority groups, traditional ceremonies, costumes, cuisines, music, and local customs more internationally. Public media like magazines, advertisements, tourist brochures, handbooks, or social networks can be a useful means in this case. Besides, as these concepts are strange to foreigners from other cultures, they should be introduced informatively and thoroughly in the simple short text so that foreigners can absorb and remember with ease. Last but not least, when the translators want to keep the origin of Vietnamese names, added explanations in English should appear apart from Vietnamese version in order to make readers memorize the content.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed that most tourists (83%), despite their different gender, background, or nationality, found no difficulty in understanding translated terms and no tourists felt ‘dissatisfied’ with the translation. On top of that, the response rates were beyond expectation with only positive votes of ‘completely satisfied’ and ‘quite satisfied’. In contrast, when it comes to the negative side, most tourists still had difficulty in understanding some Vietnamese cultural translations relating to religion and national costumes.

Besides, tourists' preferences for translation were literal translation, transposition, and descriptive equivalent. They also recommended that literal translation should be mostly used because objects share similar features between cultures; therefore, this procedure is simple to understand with visual supports like models or pictures of objects. For Vietnamese culture-specific items that cannot be translated literally, the descriptive equivalent would be helpful for readers to visualize the object. Furthermore, the tourists suggested more detailed explanations for some Vietnamese culture-bound terms as well as wishes for Vietnamese culture to become more popular and advertised in public media. This, to some extent, helps foreigners assess Vietnamese culture easier so that the chance for them to understand cultural translation would be enhanced.

In terms of limitation, this study was conducted on a small scale (40 foreign visitors) at the Vietnamese Women's Museum. This can affect the diversity of tourists' assessment and the result of the study. In addition, the content of the museum covers many aspects and the sizeable exhibitions consist of four floors with smaller sections in various Vietnamese-related areas. Hence, the questionnaires and interviews conducted at the end of the visit can be less qualitative as most tourists cannot remember the difficult translations to understand and their tiredness also made the judgment less precise.

When it comes to recommendations for further studies, it should be noted that further study can be conducted on a larger scale with a larger group of tourists and research subjects in order to enhance the reliability and equality of the research. Additionally, the approach of the study can be explored from another point of view, not only the readers' assessment on

the translation of cultural object labels but also from the translators' perspectives. Last but not least, further research's subject can be different from object labels at Vietnamese's Women Museum. It can be another culture-specific translation at different museums.

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ĐÁNH GIÁ VỀ BẢN DỊCH VIỆT-ANH CÁC MẪU VẬT Ở BẢO TÀNG PHỤ NỮ VIỆT NAM QUA GÓC NHÌN CỦA DU KHÁCH NƯỚC NGOÀI

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Tóm tắt: Dịch từ ngữ văn hóa gây ra nhiều khó khăn cho người dịch vì công việc này đòi hỏi kiến thức sâu rộng về cả ngôn ngữ và văn hóa. Nghiên cứu này nhằm nghiên cứu đánh giá của khách du lịch về bản dịch thuật các mẫu vật tại Bảo tàng Phụ nữ Việt Nam và làm sáng tỏ các ưu tiên của khách du lịch đối với các thủ pháp dịch từ văn hóa. Nhằm hoàn thành các mục tiêu này, một nghiên cứu hỗn hợp đã được thực hiện, trong đó phương pháp điều tra qua bảng hỏi và phỏng vấn đã được sử dụng làm công cụ thu thập dữ liệu chính. Mô hình đề xuất của Vinay và Darbelnet (2000) được sử dụng để phân tích các quy trình dịch thuật được áp dụng trong việc dịch các từ văn hóa. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy nhìn chung bản dịch tại Bảo tàng Phụ nữ Việt Nam đã đáp ứng kỳ vọng và truyền tải thành công phần lớn nội dung, giúp du khách hiểu đa phần nội dung văn hóa được trưng bày tại Bảo tàng. Tuy nhiên, một số nội dung liên quan đến tôn giáo hoặc phong tục ở Việt Nam bao gồm thờ Mẫu, lễ bán khoán, tục cúng Mụ (cúng đầy tháng) và trang phục truyền thống như phương thức may hoặc nhuộm vải, tên trang phục truyền thống) gây ra một số khó khăn cho độc giả. Các đề xuất từ khách du lịch có giá trị cho cả người dịch và Bảo tàng để cải thiện bản dịch và phần trưng bày tại Bảo tàng.

Từ khóa: dịch thuật, đánh giá của khách du lịch, thuật ngữ văn hóa.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

We are a research team from University of Languages and International Studies. We are carrying this survey to collect data for our research “ASSESSMENT ON VIETNAMESE-ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF OBJECT LABELS AT VIETNAMESE WOMEN’S MUSEUM THROUGH FOREIGN TOURISTS’ PERSPECTIVES”

We would be very grateful if you could complete this questionnaire. The information will be used for research purposes only. Thank you for your contribution!

A. Participant’s background

Nationality:..... Gender:.....
Occupation:..... Age:.....

B. Translation Assessment

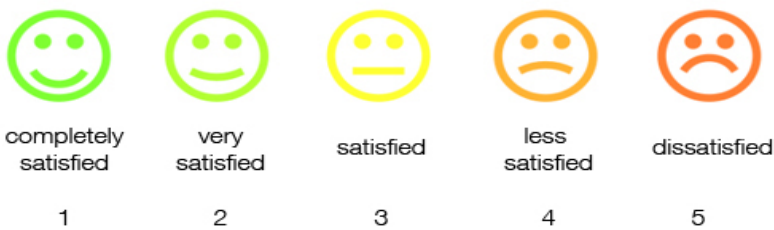
1. In which area of VWM do you find difficult to understand the translating label? (You can choose more than one or none)

- a. Labels related to marriage custom
b. Labels related to birth custom
c. Labels related to women in history
d. Labels related to traditional clothes
e. Labels related to family items
f. Labels related to mother worshipping
g. Labels related to cultivation tools

2. Can you give examples of some translating labels at the museum that you do not understand?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. What do you think about translation quality at Vietnamese Women’s Museum?



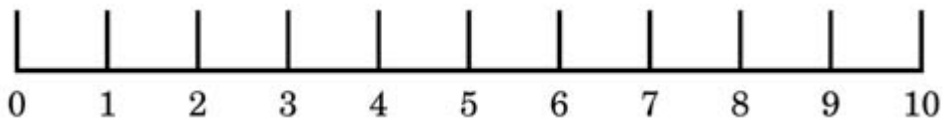
4. What is your general understanding of Vietnamese culture?

- a. Good
- b. Fair
- c. Poor

5. How you interpret the phrases below:

- a. Celestial mother:
- b. Consecration ritual:
- c. Mother Goddess:
- d. Shoulder pole:
- e. Ao dai:

6. From the scale of 1 to 10, please indicate the level of content of the museum translation that you can understand with ease.



This is the end of the questionnaire!

If you are interested in my research or have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me via tranphuonglinh1209@gmail.com. Thank you for your time!

Appendix 2: Interview

Part A: Tourists’ assessment

- 1. Can you explain your answer to question 1? If there is difficulty, can you name the particular factors that make you feel difficult in understanding this field?
- 2. (Explain the meaning of difficult understanding items in question 2 and 5 for participants). After understanding the label(s), do you have any recommendations for better translation?
- 3. What is your general opinion about Vietnamese-English translation of object labels at VWM?

Part B: Tourists’ preference

- 1. What way of translating in the museum do you like best?
(Given the table of classified labels based on different procedures and strategies)

If you are not satisfied with the translation, do you have any suggestions or preference for better translation?