THE IMPACT OF TRANSLATION ON LANGUAGE LEARNING - AN INSIGHT FROM THE FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO TRANSLATION

Nguyen Thi Thu Huong*

*Faculty of English, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang,
131 Lương Nhu Hoc, Khue Trung Ward, Cam Le District, Da Nang, Vietnam*

Abstract: Translation or Grammar - Translation method (GTM) in its new form has made a comeback in language teaching after decades of neglect due to its limitations. This paper presents the impact of translation on students' English learning in a tertiary English language program in Vietnam. The methodology was based on a contrastive examination of students' written and spoken comments on the translation tasks and students' translation solutions both before and after the translation workshops. The students demonstrated improved awareness of communicative contexts of texts or communicative language use and enhanced text comprehension. The study reinstates the enhanced role of translation in language teaching particularly when translation is defined from the functional approach to translation. GTM in its new form can still be relevant in Vietnam and other similar contexts.

Keywords: Grammar - Translation Method (GTM), language teaching, functional approach to translation, language use, text comprehension

---

* Corresponding author.
 Email address: ntthhuong@ufl.udn.vn

TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA DỊCH THUẬT ĐỐI VỚI VIỆC HỌC NGÔN NGỮ - GÓC NHÌN TỪ CÁCH TIẾP CẬN CHỨC NĂNG TRONG DỊCH THUẬT

Nguyễn Thị Thu Hướng

Khoa Tiếng Anh, Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học Đà Nẵng,
131 Lương Nhữ Học, Phường Khuê Trung, Quận Cẩm Lệ, Đà Nẵng, Việt Nam

Tóm tắt: Phương pháp Dịch thuật - Ngữ pháp (GTM) dưới hình thức mới đã quay trở lại trong giảng dạy ngôn ngữ sau nhiều thập kỷ bị xem nhẹ do những hạn chế của phương pháp này. Bài báo này trình bày tác động của dịch thuật đối với việc học tiếng Anh của sinh viên trong một chương trình đào tạo tiếng Anh bậc đại học tại Việt Nam. Phương pháp nghiên cứu dựa trên việc đối chiếu và phân tích định tính các bài phản hồi bằng hình thức viết và nói của sinh viên về các nhiệm vụ dịch thuật cũng như các phương án dịch của sinh viên trước và sau các hội thảo về dịch thuật. Kết quả cho thấy sinh viên có nhận thức tốt hơn về ngữ cảnh giao tiếp của văn bản và việc sử dụng ngôn ngữ trong giao tiếp, đồng thời nâng cao khả năng hiểu văn bản. Nghiên cứu khẳng định vai trò quan trọng của dịch thuật trong giảng dạy ngôn ngữ, đặc biệt khi dịch thuật được định nghĩa theo cách tiếp cận chức năng. Phương pháp GTM dưới hình thức mới vẫn có thể phù hợp với bối cảnh giảng dạy tiếng Anh tại Việt Nam và các môi trường giáo dục tương tự.

Từ khóa: phương pháp Dịch thuật - Ngữ pháp (GTM), giảng dạy ngôn ngữ, cách tiếp cận chức năng trong dịch thuật, sử dụng ngôn ngữ, hiểu văn bản

1. Introduction

Translation has traditionally been excluded from language classrooms due to its association with the limitations of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM). However, in recent years, it has regained attention for its beneficial effects on students' language skills. Research on the role of translation in language education suggests that language learning is not solely based on structural or behaviorist principles, which align with "formalist, non-communicative views of language" (Colina, 2002, p. 4). Scholars such as Cook (2010) and Colina and Lardford (2018) have started to emphasize the communicative aspects of translation, highlighting its role in facilitating communication. Despite this shift, the communicative function of translation remains uncommon in many language learning environments. Additionally, numerous studies on translation, including those by Adil (2020), Lee (2013), Valdeón (2015), and Yusupov (2022), tend to focus on linguistic aspects or lack sufficient empirical data.

Based on the communicative view of translation, this study goes beyond the contrastive analysis activity and introduces to learners aspects of translation from a functional approach to translation. While many studies on this approach explore the effectiveness of this approach on learner's translation skills and knowledge, this paper presents how translation, from the functionalist viewpoint, contributes to learners' increased awareness of text and language use, which is part of language competence.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Translation in Language Teaching

After being marginalized in language teaching for decades due to its connection with the GTM, translation has once again been recognized as a valuable tool in language education. At the very least, it does not hinder language development or disrupt second language (L2) acquisition (Malmkjaer, 1998). For instance, Duff (1989) argues that translation helps students become more aware of first language (L1) influence on L2 and equips them with strategies to address issues arising from language interference. It enhances learners' linguistic knowledge (Belpoliti & Plascencia, 2013; Benelhadj Djelloul, & Neddar, 2017; Ebbert-Hübner & Maas, 2017; Valdeón, 2015), language skills (D'Amore, 2014; Lee, 2013; Mbeudeu, 2017; Yusupov, 2022), communicative ability (Adil, 2020), humanistic perspectives (Navidinia, Akar, & Hendevalan, 2019) and autonomy (Rafiqa, Yasim, Fajriani & Saleh, 2019). Translation enables students to develop confidence and self-esteem and it is favourably regarded by both students and teachers (Canga-Alonson & Rubio-Goitia, 2016; Kelly & Bruen, 2015).

The matter of concern is not whether translation is useful or not, but rather, how to use it for what purpose and to what effect. In studies in support of translation in language teaching including Lee (2013) and Valdeón (2015), translation has been used as a contrastive analysis activity in which sentences in the L1 and the L2 are compared and contrasted. The purpose of such an activity has been to enable students to learn isolated vocabulary items and grammatical sentential structures rather than focusing on contextual features of translation tasks or treating translation as a skill by itself. Most studies have prioritised students' memory of linguistic items to their functional use of language. The effect of translation on the learner's language knowledge has been finitely compared with other language activities. Generally, most of the studies did not focus on the meaningfulness of linguistic items which can only be achieved by placing them in contexts. In other words, the linguistic view of translation is still common in studies supporting translation, which is similar to those against translation. In fact, House (2008) claims that a linguistic view of translation is held among those who plead against and for the use of translation in language teaching.

Linguistic approaches to translation (based on contrastive linguistics) do not consider the contextual use of words and sentences. It is important to note that translation is not the same as contrastive linguistics. Emphasising the need to understand the differences between the two fields, House (2008) explains how "langue" or the language system differs from "parole" or concrete utterances in texts and insists that translation is performed at the level of parole rather than langue. This means that translators must choose among various target equivalents. According to House, "(w)hile contrastive linguistics tends to focus on the language system, translation is concerned with the reali(s)ation of that system in acts of communication" (p. 136). In fact, translation tasks based on contrastive analysis do not offer learners opportunities to improve their ability to achieve communicative goals in using a L2.

Language learning and translating both emphasise learners' ability to communicate (Carreres & Noriega-Sánchez, 2011, 2021; Colina, 2002). Colina (2002) relates the concept of communicative language competence by Savignon (1972, 1983) and Lee and VanPatten (1995) to communicative translation competence by Kiraly (1995). She maintains that both activities aim at improving learners' ability to express, interpret, and negotiate meaning in communicative situations. In other words, communicative language competence is achieved by interacting with the input rather than learning formal aspects of the language while

communicative translation competence enables learners to act appropriately in communicative translation tasks. In the same vein, Carreres (2014) refers to the concept of communicative competence developed by Canale and Swain (1980) including grammatical competence (the knowledge of linguistic aspects of languages), sociolinguistic competence (understanding of the social contexts and cultures), discourse competence (knowledge of text types and text type conventions) and strategic competence (strategies to enhance communication).

Sociolinguistic competence and communicative competence are linked with the appropriate use of language in various contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980). To facilitate effective communication, learners should be aware of language functions including "instrumental" functions (e.g., Reiss' (1981) operative function of text) and "imaginative" functions (e.g., relevant to figures of speech). In language learning, learners are expected to understand the social contexts in which communication takes place, including who the participants are and what the communicative purpose is. Accordingly, learners' awareness of communicative contexts of texts and communicative language use, can enhance their ability to comprehend texts. This is aligned with Bachman's (1990) description of a language learning activity (assessment, planning, and execution). For example, in comprehending a text, learners must assess the situation (e.g., the author, our background knowledge, and our reading expectations) before planning available resources (e.g., knowledge of vocabulary and the subject matter relevant to job descriptions) and adopting different reading strategies to achieve the goal of comprehension.

The discussion which aligns with Nguyen (2024) reinstates the communicative view of translation in language teaching, which helps justify the adoption of the functional approach to translation, an emerging trend in using translation in language teaching

2.2. The Functional Approach to Translation

Functional approaches to translation have shifted the focus from a purely linguistic perspective to viewing translation as a communicative and intercultural activity. This approach, initially proposed by Reiss (1981) and later expanded in Nord's (2005) text-oriented translation model, emphasizes that translation should be guided by its intended purpose or the function of the target text (TT). This model enables translators to gain a deep understanding of the source text (ST) and make informed decisions based on the intended function of the translation. The translator needs to figure out extratextual and intratextual factors. The former includes "sender" (text producer or writer), "sender's intention", "audience" (reader), "medium" (channel), "place of communication", "time of communication", "motive for communication" (why a text is produced), and "text function" while the latter includes subject matter, content, presupposition, text composition (or structure), non-verbal elements, lexis, sentence structure and suprasegmental features (e.g., italic or bold type).

Several studies have suggested integrating functionalist principles, particularly those of Nord, into translation instruction within language programs. Colina and Lafford (2018) provide examples of translation activities that emphasize the influence of contextual factors - such as text, author, reader, and function - on text comprehension and production. Specifically, they present both top-down and bottom-up genre-based approaches to text analysis, considering various textual elements. Károly (2014) and Chen (2010) implement the functional theoretical framework and Nord's text analysis model into foreign language programs with the aim of developing students' translation competence. These studies focus on students' awareness of translation problems and difficulties (based on Nord's category of problems). Nguyen (2022) who discusses the function of translation maintains that translation not only involves the transfer of a message from one language to another, but it is crucial in foreign language teaching

and learning. While these studies aim at improving learners' translation skills, little research sheds light on the impact of translation on language learning from the functionalist viewpoint.

In this study, translation workshops introduced to the students basic concepts in translation. Text analysis activities allowed students to discuss text type, extratextual features (author, text function, reader, medium, and place/time of communication) and intratextual features (subject matter, content, vocabulary, sentence structure, and non-verbal elements) (from Nord, 2005). The students were also introduced to foreignising and domesticating strategies (Aixelá, 1996). Foreignising strategies include keeping the ST form, translating literally, transcribing, using footnotes or a glossary, and incorporating additions and explanations (along with the ST items retained or outside the translated text). Domesticating strategies consist of omission (the ST form omitted), addition (further information added), and substitution (the ST form changed or replaced with another TT neutral form). Finally, students reflected on translation choices and checked if translations are appropriate or not.

Nguyen (2020, 2023a, 2023b) adopts the functional approach to explore the integration of consciousness-raising and the functional approach to translation in enhancing students' understanding of various aspects of the translation process. This present study which replicates Nguyen (2023a, 2023b) work particularly focuses on a detailed examination of the impact of translation, from the functionalist viewpoint, on learners' language awareness of text features and related language learning aspects. In other words, the study answers the research question: How does translation impact learners' language awareness?

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

Thirty Vietnamese female students enrolled in an introductory translation course (Translation 1) at a foreign language university in Vietnam were randomly selected for this study. Translation 1 was one of three core translation courses in the English language curriculum, designed to enhance students' language proficiency while developing their translation skills.

While some participants had no prior experience with translation courses, they had completed mandatory integrated English skills courses. These courses aimed to help students achieve a B2 (upper-intermediate) proficiency level, as defined by the Council of Europe's Language Policy Division (2009). The prerequisite courses were taken during their second year of study. During their first two years, the students had not undertaken any courses in translation. Therefore, they took part in this study as language learners who are beginner translators who largely depend on literal translation and rigidly retain the ST vocabulary and structures in the translation. Their lack of awareness about situational factors, such as the reader and medium of publication, prevents them from achieving translations that fulfil communicative functions.

In English classes, there is commonly a higher percentage of females, and the same holds for this group of participants, most of whom are women. Therefore, the impact of gender on the translation process cannot be determined.
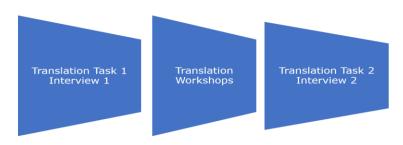
3.2. The Research Procedure

This study took place during the first week of the Translation 1 course, outside the students' regular class hours. Participation was entirely voluntary, and the students first attended a briefing session where they were informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Notably, before this study, the students had not received formal instruction on articulating their translation challenges.

In the initial phase, 30 third-year students (identified as students 1 to 30) completed Translation Task 1, which involved translating two texts while documenting any difficulties they encountered. Afterwards, 15 out of the 30 students voluntarily participated in individual interviews (Interview 1/Int. 1) to further elaborate on their translation difficulties. Before the interviews, they were given 10 minutes to review their translation task responses.

The second phase included all 30 students attending three consecutive workshops, held immediately after completing Translation Task 1. One day after the final workshop, all the participants completed Translation Task 2, which followed the same format as Translation Task 1. Finally, the students who had participated in the first round of interviews also took part in a follow-up interview (Interview 2/Int. 2) to reflect on their experiences. This research was granted ethical clearance approval by the University of Queensland, Australia (Ethical Clearance Application Number: 15-13).

Figure 1

Data Collection Procedure

3.3. Translation Workshops

Table 1

Workshop Contents

Workshops	Contents
Workshop 1	"Good" translation Workshop 1A: Introduction: What is a "good" translation Workshop 1B: Definition of translation and the role of the translator Workshop 1 C: Variety of texts
Workshop 2	Understanding texts Workshop 2A: Text analysis Workshop 2B: Text analysis II Workshop 2C: Text analysis III
Workshop 3	The notion of "accuracy Workshop 3A: Translation strategies Workshop 3B: Omissions, additions, and substitutions Workshop 3C: What is "accuracy"?

The workshops incorporated features that were not previously emphasised in translation teaching in the English program at the chosen university in Vietnam such as text analysis, translation strategies, and reflection on translation. They aimed to raise the students' awareness of the translation process by formally drawing their attention to text analysis, translation strategies, and reflections guided by functional approaches to translation.

Table 1 provides an overview of the content covered in three workshops, each lasting 150 minutes and structured into three 50-minute sessions.

Workshop 1 encouraged students to reconsider their understanding of high-quality translation. Through in-depth discussions, they reflected on their prior assumptions about translation and their general perceptions of a translator's role. The session also introduced key aspects of the profession, including the responsibilities of translators, ethical considerations, and the various types of texts they may encounter.

Workshop 2 highlighted the significance of text analysis as a fundamental step in the translation process. Students were introduced to essential textual features that require careful attention when translating. These features, along with different text types, were explained using deductive metalinguistic descriptions to strengthen their analytical skills.

Workshop 3 focused on translation strategies. Students examined published Vietnamese translations to identify the strategies applied and assessed their effectiveness. In the final session, they reflected on their understanding of translation accuracy and developed their own definitions of what constitutes a high-quality translation.

3.4. Translation Tasks

Before and after the translation workshops, students completed comparable translation tasks, each divided into two parts: Task 1a and Task 1b (before the workshops) and Task 2a and Task 2b (after the workshops). The task sheets maintained a consistent format, including a section for students to complete their translations and another for them to describe the challenges they encountered during the process.

These tasks shared several key characteristics, such as structure, permitted reference materials, time constraints, text length, translation direction (from the second language to the native language), text types, topics, complexity, linguistic features, and students' flexibility in determining the order of translation (See Table 2 below). The tasks were carefully designed to align with students' English proficiency, ensuring both comprehension and optimal performance. At the same time, maintaining consistent conditions provided a reliable framework for analyzing students' awareness of the translation process in depth.

Table 2

Texts Used in the Translation Tasks

Text features	Translation Task 1		Translation Task 2	
	Task 1a	Task 1b	Task 2a	Task 2b
Word total	67	68	60	75
Text type	Government fact sheet	Children's story	Government fact sheet	Children's story
Topic	Environment	Children's daily life	Environment	Children's daily life
TextEvaluator score	330	390	440	210
Features that might extract students' diverse strategies	Title 1a	- Personal pronoun ("He 1b") - Figures of speech	- Title 2a	- Personal pronoun ("He 2b") - Figures of speech

After completing each task, students were required to document at least five challenges they faced while translating. These reflections recorded both before and after the workshops (referred to as Writ. 1 and Writ. 2), align with Gile's perspective that such notes provide valuable insights into students' cognitive processes during translation, shedding light on both individual and shared difficulties as well as the strategies they employed (Gile, 2004, p. 2).

3.5. Interviews

In this study, interviews were essential in complementing the written comments students provided about their translation challenges. They allowed students to elaborate on their reflections and share additional insights that may not have been fully conveyed in their written responses due to time limitations or variations in English proficiency. During the interviews, students were encouraged to respond to neutral clarification questions designed to further explore the content of their written comments in the translation tasks. The questions included "What are your difficulties in translation?" or "Can you explain this translation?" to avoid any biases in research.

3.6. Data Analysis

Data analysis was based on themes related to language learning including text features, functional language use and reading comprehension. Text features include text type, extratextual features (author, text function, reader, medium, and place/time of communication) and intratextual features (subject matter, content, vocabulary, sentence structure, and non-verbal elements). In terms of functional language use, learners can mention "context" or "situation" when they discuss linguistic features. Comprehension strategies refer to the use of general reading strategies and the use of dictionaries. The increase in these features after the workshops can indicate how translation contributes to language learning.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Number of Text Features Raised by the Students

The workshops presented text analysis activities in which the students were encouraged to discuss text type, extratextual features (author, text function, reader, medium, and place/time of communication) and intratextual features (subject matter, content, vocabulary, sentence structure, and non-verbal elements). The total number of text features referred to by the students in Interview 2 was 94, which was more than double that of Interview 1. Before the workshops, most of the students (12 out of 15 students) referred to 2 or 3 features. Two students mentioned 4 features and 1 student referred to 6 features. After the workshops, all of the students raised more than 4 features. Four students noticed 6 features. Another 4 students referred to 7 features. Three students mentioned 8 features.

Table 3

The Number of Text Features Raised by the Students in Interviews Before and After the Workshops

Features	Interview 1	Interview 2
Text type	9	11
Author	4	9
Text function	0	6
Reader	2	15
Medium	0	1
Subject matter	4	11
Content	4	11
Vocabulary	14	15
Sentence structure	9	8
Non-verbal elements	1	7

Table 3 depicts the increase in the number of students who noticed various text features after the workshops. While minor differences were observed in comments on text type and linguistic intratextual features, more marked contrasts occurred in comments on some extratextual features and non-linguistic intratextual features. There was not much difference in the number of students who raised the topic of text type in both interviews, with 9 students in the first interview and 11 students in the second. During both of the interviews, some students described the text types using the names of specific types of text, such as "instruction", "instructive text", "advertisement", "promulgation" (Task 1a and Task 2a), "picture book", or "funny story" (Task 1b and Task 2b).

A much higher number of the students referred to the extratextual features in Interview 2. The most significant change was concerned with reader. Previously noticed by only 2 students, it was later a commonly raised concept among 15 students. Nine out of the 15 students clearly indicated who the reader was, such as "Vietnamese people in Australia" (Task 2a) and "(Vietnamese) children" (Task 2b). The number of students who talked about the author after the workshops more than doubled (9 students, compared with 4 students before the workshops). Two students referred to the "government" (Student 8, Int. 2) or "NSW government" (Student 10, Int. 2) in discussing the translation of Text 2a. Other extratextual features, including medium and text function, were only referred to after the workshops (1 and 6 student(s), respectively). One student (Student 10) mentioned the website on which the text was published. Five of the six students who commented on the text function clearly explained it. For example, some students mentioned that the purpose of the text (Text 2a) was "to persuade people to turn to natural cleaning" (Student 1, Int. 2) or "to call for the avoidance of chemicals" (Student 11, Int. 2).

In the category of intratextual features, the students referred more frequently to non-linguistic text features (non-verbal elements, subject matter, and content) than linguistic ones (vocabulary and expressions, and sentences and sentence structures). The number of students commenting on non-verbal elements rose from 1 to 7 and the figures for the students' commenting on content and subject matter after the workshops nearly tripled the numbers before the workshops. After the workshops, some students referred to not only the pictures presented in the texts but also the capitalised word - "Eden" (Text 2a), brackets, and logo. Eleven of the students discussed the specific content after the workshops, compared with the four students who noticed it beforehand. These students talked more about what happened in the story (Text 2b) than what was written in Text 2a. For example, they described what the characters in the story were feeling and/or doing, what types of characteristics the characters displayed, or the relationships between the characters. The pattern for subject matter was similar to that of content. In the second interview, up to 10 of the 11 students who mentioned subject matter also talked about "natural cleaning" in different ways, depending on their understanding of the subject matter. For example,

I understand that if we use safe alternative cleaning products, cleaning will be natural and fresh. (Student 2, Int. 2)

A clean environment is also related to a better world or something like that. (Student 10, Int. 2)

There was not a considerable change in the students' reporting about linguistic items they had difficulty with while translating. The number of students who discussed sentences and sentence structures in Interview 1 and Interview 2 were 9 and 8, respectively. The figures for vocabulary and expressions were 14 in the pre-workshop interviews and 15 in the post-workshop interviews. However, after the workshops, more students paid attention to specific sentence types with 5 students referring to relative clauses, complex sentences, and imperative sentences, while

only 1 student clearly talked about complex sentences before the workshops. In the second interview, 12 students talked about specific types of vocabulary and expressions including idioms, phrasal verbs, or metaphors compared with 9 students in the first interview. The differences in the students' description of linguistic features are not significant enough to draw conclusions about improvements in the students' awareness of linguistic features. The students probably already had a strong belief that vocabulary was important in translation and that this belief did not change much after the workshops. For other features, particularly extratextual ones, they went from a low knowledge base; therefore, a more marked change was evident.

4.2. Awareness of Language and Context

Before the workshops, most of the students were mainly concerned about local linguistic features and they did not pay much attention to the context in which these linguistic features were manifested (11 out of 15 students briefly mentioned the term "context" or "situation" but they did not elaborate on what it referred to). However, after the workshops, while linguistic features remained the central focus of the students' comments, these features were examined with reference to more contextual elements. Firstly, some students demonstrated their awareness of functional language (i.e., language is appropriately used for a specific purpose). For instance, in explaining their understanding of and solution to "green cleaning" (Task 2a), Student 8 referred to the "instrumental" function of language. The student indicated that they understood the ST function and considered using appropriate (target) language to achieve certain purposes. They must have been aware of the operative function of the text.

> My difficulty was that when I did not have an idea of the text function, I would have a vague understanding and would not know how to produce an accurate translation. I could perform the translation more easily after I had recognised the text function, which was that the government encouraged people to use natural or "green" products instead of chemical products for cleaning. (Student 8, Int. 2)

Some students referred to "imaginative" functions (i.e., learners understand and create jokes, metaphors, or other figurative uses of language). For example, after the workshops, Student 2 expressed an understanding of figurative meanings of the phrase "a dead leaf blown in the wind" (Text 2b):

> That is an imaginative phrase about leaves being blown in the wind. Previously, I wasn't able to conjure the image of the soul leaving the body. The texts provided in the workshops contain pictures and illustrations that captured the imagination. Actions may stimulate one's imagination about other things...

Student 2 also demonstrated their sensitivity to figures of speech and cultural expressions. They expressed a need to interpret a term by its connotative meaning rather than simply relying on its literal or referential meaning. A number of other students demonstrated a similar awareness of figures of speech including "Eden" (Task 2a) and "bad books" (Task 2b).

> The literal meaning in that context was that "leaves fall because of blowing winds", wasn't it? Its figurative meaning should be "tâm trạng bị hồn lìa khỏi xác" [BT: the mood is like the soul leaving the body]. (Student 2, Int. 2)

Before the workshops, few students (Students 5, 6, and 10) referred to the context in general terms including "situation" and "the surrounding words and phrases". However, after the workshops many more students paid attention to the relationship between participants within the story (Text 2b) and within the broader context of text (i.e., in relation to the reader). For example, a number of students indicated the formality and politeness conveyed through the use of personal pronouns such as "you" and "he". Their understanding of this formality was

due to their attention to not only the in-text context (e.g., participants in stories, Student 3) but also the situation in which the translated language was used (Student 15).

> In this text, it seemed that when the girl was talking about the boy, she seemed to be blaming him. So, I used the pronoun "nó" to refer to the boy ["nó", a Vietnamese personal pronoun often used in informal cases can be neutral or negative]. But the girl and the boy were friends. I used the first-person form of the word "nó". But I wondered whether the word "nó" was impolite in the context of friendship. "Tôi và nó" [BT: I and you], I guess. (Student 3, Int. 2)

> The readers mentioned were Vietnamese people in Australia, so I did not know whether I should use "bạn" [a form of address used among those in equal relationships], "quý vị" [addressed formally] or any other appropriate personal pronouns. In this text, I used "bạn" [the workshops did not focus on the use of Vietnamese personal pronouns]. (Student 15, Int. 2)

Furthermore, in pre-workshop interviews, only four students (Students 2, 3, 4, and 9) briefly referred to "recycling", the subject matter of Text 1a which was evident from the title "Easy recycling" (Title 1a). Student 2 expressed a lack of understanding of recycling: "I could not imagine what recycling is". However, in post-workshop interviews, many students (11 out of 15) clearly indicated their awareness or understanding of subject matter.

> I looked at the text and the picture provided implied cleaning using natural substances rather than chemical products, and cleaning involving a manual method rather than machines [Text 2a]. (Student 1, Int. 2)

> I understand that these words refer to ways of cleaning [Text 2a]. (Student 2, Int. 2)

Overall, as the result of text analysis activities which were intensively presented in Workshop 2, the students showed an increased awareness and understanding of the texts. This improvement was evidenced by the increased number of text features commented on by each student and the increased number of students referring to the types of features. While most of the students raised only 2 to 3 features before the workshops, the majority (11 students) elaborated on between 6 and 8 features in their second interviews. Furthermore, many features (particularly the extratextual features) were noticed more commonly by the students after the workshops. Of the extratextual features, the reader was referred to the most frequently by the students after the workshops. Even though "author" was the second most frequently mentioned feature, not many students clearly indicated who the authors were (except for Students 8 and 10 who referred to "the government" in Task 2a). While students' noticing of text function was absent from the first interviews, it was clearly mentioned by more than one-third of the students in the second interview. Similar to the trend observed with extratextual features, non-linguistic intratextual features, including content, subject matter, and non-verbal elements were noticed more frequently by the students after the workshops. More than half of the students referred to the extratextual features and the non-linguistic intratextual features after the workshops, compared with less than one-third of the students who did so before the workshops. The students seemed to have a better understanding of the contexts of the ST and contextualised meanings within the ST.

In fact, students' new awareness of some sociolinguistic aspects of language or functional language use was revealed after the workshops, which was not evident before the workshops. Sociolinguistic aspects which form part of sociolinguistic competence and communicative competence are concerned with the appropriate use of language in various contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980). The students' awareness of these aspects was revealed in comments about "instrumental" functions (e.g., operative function of text) and "imaginative" functions (e.g., relevant to figures of speech).

Furthermore, in post-workshop interviews, the students demonstrated an awareness of

elements of communicative language use as found in Bachman's (1990) description of a language learning activity (assessment, planning, and execution). In language learning, learners should understand the social contexts in which communication takes place, including who the participants are and what the communicative purpose is. Despite the differences between translating and language learning, it is reasonable to assume that such demonstrations would benefit the students' language reception and production in the future. This aligns with House's (2008) use of translation in foreign language classes to improve learners' "receptive and productive aspects of communicative competence" (p. 147). The findings about the students' awareness of language use also provide empirical evidence for the similarities of communicative competence and translation competence posited by Carreres (2014), Carreres & Noriega-Sánchez (2011) and Colina (2002).

The students' enhanced awareness of language use after the workshops corresponded with their increased awareness of extratextual features as incorporated into the workshop activities. Károly (2014) who has also introduced Nord's text analysis and functional approaches to translation in an undergraduate English program in Hungary also reports that text analysis enhances students' attention to the relationship between a text and its social and cultural context. Therefore, text analysis activities in the workshops may have contributed to the students' improved awareness of communicative contexts of texts and communicative language use, which also affected their enhanced ability to comprehend texts as shown in the next section.

4.3. Reading Comprehension

Table 4

The Students' Reading Comprehension Strategies Mentioned in Interviews before and after the Workshops

Comprehension Strategies	Interview 1	Interview 2
Use of general reading strategies	4	11
Use of dictionary	12	6

Comprehension strategies refer to two types of the following strategies: the use of general reading strategies and the use of dictionaries.

4.3.1. Use of general reading strategies

Before the workshops, the students rarely reported general reading strategies for comprehension. General reading strategies included rereading the whole text, considering surrounding words, phrases, and sentences and relating to text features (e.g., pictures and text structure) and translation briefs. Only Student 3 reported having to reread the story to grasp the meanings of words and phrases. Students 5, 6, and 10 considered the context described in general terms and/or considered the surrounding words, phrases, and sentences to infer the meanings of words. Student 6 referred to the picture in the text as an aid to understanding the words.

After the workshops, a number of the students (11 students) diversified their reported comprehension strategies and referred to more text features which had assisted their comprehension. Firstly, Students 3 and 7 said that they needed to perform multiple readings in order to understand the meanings of words and phrases. Secondly, Students 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, and 14 focused on a variety of features of texts including non-verbal elements, content and subject matter in understanding the "deeper meaning" of texts. Student 1, for instance, explained that the picture enabled her to understand the subject matter of the text: "I looked at the text [Task

2a] and the picture provided implied cleaning using natural substances rather than chemical products, and cleaning involving a manual method rather than machines" (Student 1, Int. 2). Student 10 referred to the content of Text 2b:

> I gradually guessed what was missing in this sentence "I did something in the yard" ... The boy was miserable because he would not let anybody talk to him. (Student 10, Int. 2)

Some students also paid attention to the role of the text structure in understanding the content and context of the text (Students 3, 4, 5, 9, and 13). They rationalised that decision by explaining that only reading the extracts of the text or the story shown in the brackets did not enable them to properly understand the text. Students 3 and 4 mentioned that when they did not have access to the whole texts, they did not have a general idea of the story (Text 2b). This indicated the students' attention to the macrostructure (i.e., chapter) of the text rather than only focusing on words, phrases, and sentences.

> Because I only read a small section of the text in brackets rather than the whole story, I did not have an overview of the story. (Student 3, Int. 2)

> I only read part of the story, so I found it hard to understand the overall context or content of the story. (Student 4, Int. 2)

Student 7 raised many features at the same time from multiple reading to referring to non-verbal elements.

> At first, when I had a quick look at it, I thought it meant "dọn dẹp một cách xanh" [BT: cleaning in a green way]. But when I read more closely and considered the circumstance, pictures, context, and the environmental protection, I translated into "dọn dẹp một cách xanh sạch đẹp" [BT: cleaning in a green clean and nice way]. (Student 7, Int. 2)

Finally, Student 9 referred to the translation brief in their comprehension of word meanings. They reported having to "reread the requirement(s) of the task" and that using that strategy made it easier to understand and translate the text.

> After attending the three workshops, I understand that when we have difficulty with the comprehension of meanings, we can look at the pictures and reread the task requirement(s). So, I did not have much difficulty with this text. (Student 9, Int. 2)

When students made a good use of general reading strategies and consideration of the general context, they might not have had to check dictionaries for vocabulary comprehension as illustrated below.

4.3.2. Use of dictionary

The students used their dictionaries to find the meanings of unfamiliar words or aid in comprehending vocabulary and sentences more frequently before the workshops, with 12 students reporting the use of this strategy compared with only six students after the workshops. Before the workshops, two students (7 and 9) explained that they needed dictionaries because of their lack of vocabulary.

> As my knowledge of vocabulary is still limited, I needed to consult the dictionary for some strange, specialised words that I could not understand. (Student 9, Int. 1)

After the workshops, some students still emphasised the role of dictionaries in word comprehension. But they were more aware of the need to improve their vocabulary to reduce their dependence on dictionaries.

> I could not understand the word until I checked it in the dictionary... I think I should improve my vocabulary to reduce my dependence on dictionaries. (Student 1, Int. 2)

In dealing with comprehension problems, the students were less dependent on

dictionary use after the workshops. Instead, they tried to improve their comprehension in several ways, from multiple readings, paying attention to the text structure and taking into account the translation briefs. They also considered the non-linguistic features of the text, such as non-verbal elements, content, and subject matter.

Generally, before the workshops, most of the students (12 of 15 students interviewed) said that they had to check the dictionary to understand ST words and phrases; however, after the workshops, only 6 students referred to this strategy. The reason for this reduction in reporting of dictionary use for ST comprehension might be partly linked with their new attention to various text features that assisted their ST comprehension. After the workshops, the students read the ST for gist by paying attention to non-verbal features including, text structure, subject matter, pictures and brackets and/or the interaction of these features. For instance, Students 3 and 4 were concerned that their understanding of the content of the story would be affected by their access to sections of the story rather than the whole text (Task 2b). After the workshops, the students extended their adoption of comprehension strategies to those that were not covered in the workshops. The increased use of general reading strategies demonstrated the students' top-down approach in comprehending the ST (they saw texts as a whole rather than strings of isolated words and sentences). Obviously, text analysis activities and other translation tasks in the workshops may have contributed to the students' text comprehension or their receptive language skill development.

5. Conclusion

The study presents the impact of translation on English language learning in an English program in a Vietnamese university. After short translation workshops, the participating students became more aware of the contextualised meanings of linguistic items and recognised the importance of extratextual features during both ST comprehension. They began to analyse the ST as a whole, considering its non-linguistic extratextual and intratextual features rather than focusing on isolated lexical ST items. In fact, students' awareness of communicative aspects was generally enhanced. They also tended to adopt comprehension strategies, particularly general reading skills more frequently.

Language and translation learning should be driven by a common communicative view of language and translation, and the two should be mutually informative. Students will be then less focused on the idea of language as a linguistic code than they are now. The results of this study have demonstrated that translation can enhance students' sociolinguistic awareness of language. In addition, it seems beneficial to discuss with teachers of English the possible incorporation of text analysis in teaching English skills (e.g., reading) in order to assist students' English learning. It also seems beneficial to discuss with lecturers of English the possible incorporation of elements of the translation process such as text analysis in teaching English skills (e.g., reading) in order to assist students' English learning. Generally, GTM in its revised version informed by the functionalists in translation can be encouraged in Vietnam and other similar contexts where translation holds its values. Future studies are needed to yield more evidence to the potential use of translation in language teaching at different levels.

References

Adil, M. (2020). Exploring the role of translation in communicative language teaching or the communicative approach. *SAGE Open*, *10*(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020924403

Aixelá, J. F. (1996). Culture-specific items in translation. In R. Alvarez & M. C. A. Vidal (Eds.), *Translation, power, subversion* (Vol. 8.) (pp. 52-78). Multilingual Matters.

Nguyen, T. T. H. (2020). Enhancing Students' Problem Identification in Translation Teaching in an English Language Program. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, *36*(4), 63-79. https://doi.org/10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4575

Nguyen, T. T. H. (2023a). The application of consciousness-raising in teaching translation in a Vietnamese tertiary English language program. *Translation & Interpreting*, *15*(1), 200-215. Doi: The application of consciousness-raising in teaching translation in a Vietnamese tertiary English language program | Nguyen | Translation & Interpreting (trans-int.org)

Nguyen, T. T. H. (2023b). The use of a functional approach to translation in enhancing students' translation process -the case of a Vietnamese foreign language program. *JIRSEA*, *21*(2), 113-133. http://www.seaairweb.info/journal/articles/JIRSEA_v21_n01/JIRSEA_v21_n01_All.pdf

Nguyen, T. T. H. (2024). Translation in Language Teaching - The Need for Redefinition of Translation. *AsiaCALL Online Journal*, *15*(1), 19–33. https://doi.org/10.54855/acoj.241512

Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford University Press.

Belpoliti, F., & Plascencia, A. (2013). Translation techniques in the Spanish for heritage learners' classroom: Promoting lexical development. In D. Tsagari & G. Floros (Eds.), *Translation in language teaching and assessment* (pp. 65-92). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Benelhadj Djelloul, D., & Neddar, B. A. (2017). The usefulness of translation in foreign language teaching: Teachers' attitudes and perceptions. *Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies, 1*(3). http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3031503

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 1-47. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/I.1.1

Canga-Alonso, A., & Rubio-Goitia, A. (2016). Students' reflections on pedagogical translation in Spanish as a foreign language. *Tejuelo, 23*(1), 132-157. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/72046888.pdf

Carreres, Á. (2014). Translation as a means and as an end: Reassessing the divide. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 8*(1), 123-135. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2014.908561

Carreres, Á., & Noriega-Sánchez, M. (2011). Translation in language teaching: Insights from professional translator training. *The Language Learning Journal, 39*(3), 281-297. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2011.567356

Carreres, Á., & Noriega-Sánchez, M. (2021). The translation turn: A communicative approach to translation in the language classroom. In T. Beaven & F. Rosell-Aguilar (Eds), *Innovative language pedagogy report* (pp. 83-89). Research-publishing.net. https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2021.50.1240

Colina, S. (2002). Second language acquisition, language teaching and translation studies. *Translator: Studies in Intercultural Communication, 8*(1), 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2002.10799114

Colina, S., & Lafford, B. A. (2018). Translation in Spanish language teaching: The integration of a "fifth skill" in the second language curriculum. *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching*, *4*(2), 110-123. https://doi.org/10.1080/23247797.2017.1407127

Cook, G. (2010). *Translation in language teaching: An argument for reassessment*. Oxford University Press.

Council of Europe, Language Policy Division. (2009). *Relating language examinations to the common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR). https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/relating-examinations-to-the-cefr

D'Amore, A. M. (2014). The role of translation in language teaching: Back to GT in ELT? In Y. Cui & W. Zhao (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching methods in language*. IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-6615-3.ch008

Gile, D. (2004). Integrated problem and decision reporting as a translator training tool. *The Journal of Specialised Translation, 2*, 2-20. https://www.jostrans.org/issue02/art_gile.php

House, J. (2008). Using translation to improve pragmatic competence. In E. Alco'n Soler & A. Martinez-Flor (Eds.)*, Investigating pragmatics in foreign language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 3-25). Multilingual Matters.

Ebbert-Hübner, C., & Maas, C. (2017). Can translation improve EFL students' grammatical accuracy. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 5*(4), 191-202. http://eltsjournal.org/archive/value5%20issue4/23-5-4-17.pdf

Károly, A. (2014). Translation in foreign language teaching: A case study from a functional perspective. *Linguistics and Education, 25*, 90-107. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2013.09.009

Kelly, N., & Bruen, J. (2015). Translation as a pedagogical tool in the foreign language classroom: A qualitative study of attitudes and behaviours. *Language Teaching Research, 19*(2), 150-168. http://doi.org/10.1177/1362168814541720

Lee, T. (2013). Incorporating translation into the language classroom and its potential impacts upon L2 learners. In D. Tsagari & G. Floros (Eds.), *Translation in language teaching and assessment* (pp. 3-22). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Malmkjær, K. (1998). Introduction: Translation and language teaching. In K. Malmkjaer (Ed.), *Translation & language teaching: Language teaching & translation*. St. Jerome Publishing.

Mbeudeu, c. D. (2017). Introducing translation-based activities in teaching English as a foreign language: A step towards the improvement of learners' accurate use of words and expressions in writing. *Research in pedagogy, 7*(1), 76-89. http://research.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2217-7337_v07_n01_p076.pdf

Navidinia, H., Akar, M. & Hendevalan, J. (2019). Using translation in language teaching: Exploring advantages and disadvantages from linguistic, humanistic and practical Perspectives. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 7*(2). 12-18. http://eltsjournal.org/archive/value7%20issue2/2-7-2-19.pdf

Nguyen, M. C. (2022). Some basic functions of translation. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies, 38*(2), 151-161. https://doi.org/10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4832

Nord, C. (2005). *Text analysis in translation: Theory, methodology, and didactic application of a model for translation-oriented text analysis*. Rodopi.

Rafiqa, R., Yasim, S., Fajriani, N., & Saleh, H. (2019). Development of translation learning package on task-based language teaching to Improve learner's autonomy of English education students. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research, 8*(11), 2494-2497. https://www.ijstr.org/paper-references.php?ref=IJSTR-1019-23503

Reiss, K. (1981). Type, kind and individuality of text: Decision making in translation. *Poetics Today, 2*(4), 121-131. http://doi.org/10.2307/1772491

Valdeón, R. A. (2015). The (ab)use of taboo lexis in audiovisual translation: Raising awareness of pragmatic variation in English-Spanish. *Intercultural Pragmatics, 12*(3), 363-385. http://doi.org/10.1515/ip-2015-0018

Yusupov, O. Y. (2022). The importance of translation in teaching foreign languages. *Uchenyy XXI veka, 10*(91), 46-47. http://doi.org/10.15350/24103586.2022.10.10