

**Translation and/in Development:
Promoting More Effective Policy
Interventions in Vietnam**

Nguyen Hai Duy Nguyen

B.A., MDevStud.

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Dublin City University

August 2023

Supervisor:

Dr. Patrick Cadwell

Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.



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Acknowledgements

The motivation for completing this PhD research grew out of numerous dialogues about translation, language and terminology in development with my colleagues and community members, particularly those who willingly became my research participants to keep these dialogues going. Although too many to name, I owe many depths of gratitude to each and every one of them. I dedicate this thesis to them in the hope that it voices our shared concerns and makes some valuable contribution to development work in Vietnam and elsewhere.

I can never thank my supervisor, Dr. Patrick Cadwell, enough for his patience, understanding, tireless guidance and support rendered to me during the entire period of the study. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to work with Pat, learn tremendously from him, be challenged and inspired by his insights to become a better researcher.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, DCU for the four-year PhD Research Scholarship which enabled this project to happen in the first place. I would also like to particularly thank the Irish Higher Education Authority for their financial support through the COVID-19 Cost Extension Scheme.

It has been an absolute privilege for me to have presented my research and expanded my “development” network thanks to the support from the DSA Ireland and especially from Dr. Nita Mishra. I have been fortunate to enjoy the benefits of sharing many great discussions with development academics, practitioners and policymakers on the topic and contributing throughout the years to the meaningful DSA Ireland space.

I am thankful to my friends in Ireland, Vietnam and those far away whose physical, emotional and online presence has sustained me through many long days. I will cherish the memories I shared with the PhD cohort at SALIS, CTTS and DCU. It has been an honour and great pleasure to see many pieces of work through completion with them all, despite all the ups and downs that we have been through together.

A special word of thanks goes to my friend and colleague Graham Walker at Plant & Food Research New Zealand who has helped me in more ways than he knows through challenging times.

Finally, to my family, words cannot express how grateful I am for their unconditional love and unwavering encouragement which certainly eased a difficult journey. My mother and my late father were the ones who always spurred me on in this academic pursuit. My father passed away in the second year of the PhD, but I know he would never lose faith in me. Without my younger brother, sister-in-law and lovely niece being the cornerstones of the family and taking care of my mother while I am away, this study could not have come to completion. To my wife, Chi, *cám ơn em* for your unfailing love, the “home” you carry wherever we go and, most of all, for the sacrifice you made in order for me to fulfil this goal.

Publications and presentations from this research

Publications

Nguyễn, Nguyễn (2021). “The issues of translating development terminology in Vietnam: empirical evidence from the perspective of Translation Studies”. *Development Studies Association Ireland (DSA Ireland) Best Student Paper Award 2020*. https://www.dsaireland.org/assets/files/pdf/dsai_student_awards_2020_nguyen_nguyen.pdf.

Nguyễn, Nguyễn (2022). “Scoping out emerging communities of practice of translation in development work in Vietnam: Empirical evidence from the perspective of Translation Studies”. *JosTrans: The Journal of Specialised Translation* 37, 116-138.

Presentations

Nguyễn, Nguyễn and Nhi Phạm (2021). Better-Not-Translated: An Ethnography-informed Study of Problematic Terminology in Development Work in Vietnam. Unpublished conference paper at: *The 2021 Annual Conference of the Development Studies Association Ireland (DSA Ireland) on the Theme “Climates offfor Development”*. 11-NOV-2021 – 12-NOV-2021, Dublin, Ireland.

Nguyễn, Nguyễn (2020). Resilience, Wellbeing and the Issues of Translating Development Terminology in Vietnam. Unpublished conference paper at: *The 2020 Annual Conference of the Development Studies Association Ireland (DSA Ireland) on the Theme “Humanitarianism in Action”*. 29-OCT-2020, Dublin, Ireland.

Nguyễn, Nguyễn (2019). The Problematisation of the Interdisciplinary Relationship between Development and Translation: Scoping Recent Literatures and Examples from Vietnam. Unpublished conference paper at: *The 2019 Annual Conference of the Development Studies Association Ireland (DSA Ireland) on the Theme “(En)gendering Development: Research to Policy and Practice”*. 14-NOV-2019 – 15-NOV-2019, Dublin, Ireland.

Nguyễn, Nguyễn (2019). Problematizing the Relationship between Development and Translation in Vietnam. Unpublished conference paper at: *The 15th International Postgraduate Conference in Translation and Interpreting (IPCITI 2019) on the Theme “Exploring the Benefits of a Multidisciplinary Approach in Translation and Interpreting Studies”*. 22-NOV-2019 – 23-NOV-2019, Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland.

Table of contents

Declaration	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Publications and presentations from this research	iii
Table of contents	iv
Lists of tables and figures	viii
List of abbreviations	ix
Abstract	xi
Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
1.1 Aims of the study	1
1.2 Motivation for the study and the researcher’s positionality	1
1.3 Evolution of the research questions	2
1.4 Methods employed in the study	3
1.5 Thesis structure	4
Chapter 2 – Context	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Understanding development: an overview	7
2.2.1 Theoretical paradigms of development	7
2.2.2 Development policy and development practice	10
2.3 Context of development in Vietnam	12
2.3.1 Development work in Vietnam: the general picture	12
2.3.2 Contextualising vernacular knowledge in development discourse in Vietnam	18
2.4 Understanding terminology and translation equivalence: an overview	20
2.4.1 Terminology	20
2.4.2 Translation equivalence	22
2.5 Conclusion	23
Chapter 3 – Literature review and formulation of research questions	25
3.1 Introduction	25
3.2 Translation, terminology and/in development: the problem space	25
3.2.1 Translation of development as discourse, a meaning-making practice and system of knowledge	25
3.2.2 Translation of terminology in development work	28
3.2.3 Language and development: the changing role of English in development work	32
3.2.4 The role of bi- and multilingual development workers	35
3.2.5 Policies about language and translation in development work	38
3.3 Presentation of the research question and sub-questions	40
3.4 Practice theory and its application in studying translation practices	41
3.5 Conclusion	45
Chapter 4 – Methodology	46
4.1 Introduction	46
4.2 Research tradition	46
4.3 Philosophical underpinnings	47

4.4 Methodological considerations: An ethnographically informed case study approach	48
4.4.1 Case study	48
4.4.2 Ethnography	49
4.4.3 The relevance of an ethnographically informed case study approach in this study	51
4.5 Methodological steps	51
4.5.1 Step 1 – Ethical approval	52
4.5.2 Step 2 – data gathering: Textual analysis	54
4.5.3 Step 3 – data gathering: Semi-structured interviews	59
4.5.4 Step 4 – data gathering: Autoethnography	66
4.5.5 Step 5 – data gathering: Feedback workshop and surveying	67
4.5.6 Step 6 – data gathering: Study of grey literature	68
4.5.7 Step 7 – data analysis: Thematic coding	69
4.5.8 Step 8 – data analysis and elicitation: Triangulation	71
4.6 Style guide to transliterated and translated texts used in this thesis	71
4.7 Conclusion	72
Chapter 5 – Development terms and concepts in Vietnam: varied translation equivalents and different understandings	74
5.1 Introduction	74
5.2 Defining the examples	75
5.3 Varied translation equivalents and different understandings of development terminology and concepts: an incomplete term list	77
5.3.1 <i>Wellbeing</i>	78
5.3.2 <i>Resilience</i>	85
5.3.3 <i>Empowerment</i>	88
5.3.4 <i>Decent work</i>	93
5.3.5 <i>Social accountability</i>	97
5.3.6 <i>Civil society organisations (CSOs)</i>	100
5.3.7 <i>Community-based tourism (CBT)</i>	104
5.3.8 <i>Career counselling</i>	107
5.4 The researcher’s reflections	110
5.5 An answer to SQ1	111
5.6 Conclusion	112
Chapter 6 – Impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy	114
6.1 Introduction	114
6.2 Impact on participation as the enabler of development practice and policy	115
6.2.1 Understanding	117
6.2.2 Trust and power	119
6.3 Impacts of terminology and translation on development practice	123
6.3.1 Diverse practice	123
6.3.2 Local versus introduced practice	126
6.3.3 Responding to political sensitivity	128
6.3.4 Potential benefits of translation and terminology	129
6.3.5 Decolonising development practice	130

6.4 Impacts of terminology and translation on development policy and policy-making	132
6.4.1 Policy disagreements	132
6.4.2 Failure to approve policy	133
6.4.3 Ineffective policy implementation	134
6.4.4 Framing development policy for implementation among local communities and ethnic minorities	135
6.4.5 Absence of concepts in policy discourse and policy-making	136
6.5 The researcher's reflections	137
6.6 An answer to SQ2	138
6.7 Conclusion	140
Chapter 7 – Potential solutions to issues of terminology and translation in development practice	142
7.1 Introduction	142
7.2 Formulate and implement policy on translation and language	143
7.3 Develop and make use of terminology management tools/toolkits	147
7.4 Consider intralingual practices of translation	152
7.4.1 Terminology standardisation: does it always work?	152
7.4.2 Handle political sensitivity	154
7.4.3 <i>Nôm na</i> and the contextualised use of terminology	156
7.5 Consider the use of source language in the translation	160
7.5.1 Code-switching and the advantage of the parentheses	160
7.5.2 Zero-translation	162
7.6 Engage in shared learning	163
7.6.1 Stakeholder consultation on translation and terminology	164
7.6.2 Who should translate in development work?	167
7.7 Improve the translation workflow through connected practices	171
7.8 The researcher's reflections	174
7.9 Answers to SQ3 and SQ4	174
7.10 Conclusion	176
Chapter 8 – The role(s) of translation and terminology in development practice in Vietnam through the lens of Practice Theory	178
8.1 Introduction	178
8.2 Using core concepts of Practice Theory to account for the empirics in this study	179
8.2.1 Materials	180
8.2.2 Competence	182
8.2.3 Meanings	184
8.2.4 Communities of practice	186
8.3 The roles of translation and terminology in development practice explained from the perspective of Practice Theory	189
8.4 Conclusion	191
Chapter 9 – Conclusions	192
9.1 Introduction	192
9.2 Chapter overview	193
9.3 Recommendations	197

9.3.1 Summary of the problems and solutions found in this thesis _____	197
9.3.2 Short, medium and longer term recommendations _____	198
9.3.3 Suggestions for how recommendations could be achieved _____	202
9.4 Contributions to knowledge of this thesis _____	203
9.4.1 Empirical contributions _____	203
9.4.2 Contribution to knowledge of practice _____	203
9.4.3 Theoretical contribution _____	204
9.4.4 Methodological contribution _____	205
9.4.5 Contribution to society and potential social impact _____	205
9.5 Limitations of this thesis _____	206
9.6 Suggestions for future work _____	208
References _____	211
Appendices _____	237
<i>APPENDIX A: Categories of interview topics and indicative questions used in Phase-One and Phase-Two interviews</i> _____	238
<i>APPENDIX B: Phase-One interview report sample</i> _____	242
<i>APPENDIX C: Example of a summarised codebook with coding rules</i> _____	244
<i>APPENDIX D: Feedback workshop survey questionnaire</i> _____	245
<i>APPENDIX E: Final code tree used for thematic analysis</i> _____	246
<i>APPENDIX F: Policy briefs</i> _____	247
<i>APPENDIX G: Anonymised and member-checked interview transcripts</i> _____	252

Lists of tables and figures

Table 1. Corpus statistics extracted from Sketch Engine	57
Table 2. Criteria for selecting participants	61
Table 3. Description of cases	62-63
Table 4. List of terms and concepts emerged from data	76
Table 5. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>wellbeing</i> recorded from data	81
Table 6. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>resilience</i> recorded from data	86
Table 7. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>empowerment</i> recorded from data	90
Table 8. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>decent work</i> recorded from data	95
Table 9. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>social accountability</i> recorded from data	99
Table 10. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>civil society organisations</i> recorded from data	103
Table 11. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>community-based tourism</i> recorded from data	105
Table 12. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of <i>career counselling</i> recorded from data	109
Figure 1. The research process	52
Figure 2. Understanding life in Ireland: A Wellbeing Framework	80
Figure 3-1. Description of SDG8, “Decent work and economic growth”, on the UN Vietnam, Vietnamese version	94
Figure 3-2. Description of SDG8, “Decent work and economic growth”, on the UN Vietnam, English version	94
Figure 4. Main themes from the coding tree presented in Chapter 6	115
Figure 5. Main themes from the coding tree presented in Chapter 7	143
Figure 6. Description of the policy governing translation and language in survey participants’ development project and/or organisation	144
Figure 7. How often development professionals discussed the translation of development terminology with colleagues	149
Figure 8. The process of answering research questions in this thesis	194

List of abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AREP	Aménagement, Recherche, Pôle d'Échanges
CAT	Computerised-assisted Translation
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIG	Common Interest Group
CoP	Community of Practice
CPV	Vietnam Communist Party
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCU REC	Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DS	Development Studies
DSA Ireland	Development Studies Association Ireland
ELT	English Language Teaching
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GNI	Gross National Income
GTT	General Theory of Terminology
GWB	General Wellbeing
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
ISDS	Institute for Social Development Studies
iSEE	Institute for Studies of Society, Economy and Environment
KWIC	Key-Word-In-Context
LDCs	The Language and Development Conferences
LGP	Language for General Purposes
LSP	Language for Specific Purposes
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOHA	Vietnam Ministry of Home Affairs
MOLISA	Vietnam Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSD	Management and Sustainable Development Institute
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RQ	Research question
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Sweden International Development Agent
SL	Source Language
SQ	Sub-question

ST	Source Text
TIS	Translation and Interpreting Studies
TL	Target Language
TS	Translation Studies
TT	Target Text
TVET	Vocational Education and Training Law
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VoIP	Voice over Internet Protocol
VVOB	Education for Development
WB	World Bank
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Abstract

Nguyen Hai Duy Nguyen

Translation and/in Development: Promoting More Effective Policy Interventions in Vietnam

Development necessitates specialised communication involving multiple actors at many levels, especially in Global South contexts. However, this communication is hindered because the discourse, concepts and terminology of development developed in the West are introduced into communities in many parts of the world, including Vietnam, with little evidence that they are being understood or used as intended. Problematic translations of development concepts could have significant real-world impacts on the multidirectional communication between key stakeholders involved in development, impede policy-making and prevent the implementation of development initiatives at local levels. This interdisciplinary PhD project—combining perspectives from Translation Studies and Development Studies with insights gained from real-world development practice—addresses the problem space of communication and mutual understanding in development settings to answer the following overall research question: *What role(s) do translation and terminology have in development practice and policy in Vietnam?*

This research was undertaken using a methodology that combined a case study approach with an ethnographic orientation. Data from in-depth, online interviews with 18 development stakeholders in Vietnam were triangulated with analysis of a 1.1 million-word corpus of development texts, the researcher’s autoethnographic accounts, grey literature, and a specially-designed workshop for stakeholders. Findings suggest that translation of key development concepts in Vietnam is problematic with under-recognised impacts on development practice and policy, and this situation could be improved through policy interventions, better tool use, new translation workflows and practices, and greater shared learning. Overall, analysis in this study suggests that translation and terminology are used by various stakeholders in Vietnam as important enablers to local participation and ownership, achieve meaningful development outcomes through local empowerment and contribute to the decolonisation of development.

Keywords: Translation, terminology, development practice, development policy, Vietnam, interdisciplinarity, vernacular knowledge, practice theory.

所以谓，名也；所谓，实也；名实耦，合也；志行，为也。

Sở dĩ vi, danh dã. Sở vi, thực dã. Danh thực ngẫu, hợp dã. Chí hành, vi dã.

[We call something by its name. What we call by the name is an entity. To associate the name with the entity, we establish a correspondence. By bringing our intentions into practice, we act]

墨子 (Mozi), Chinese thinker (5th—4th century BC)

名不正则言不顺。

Danh bất chính tắc ngôn bất thuận.

[If names are not rectified, speech will not accord with reality]

孔夫子 (Confucius), Chinese thinker (6th—5th century BC)

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Aims of the study

This thesis investigates the communication of ideas about development among stakeholders in Vietnam. Translation is the vehicle through which much of this multidirectional communication occurs. However, it is hindered when development-related concepts and terminology formulated elsewhere—usually in the West and Global North—are introduced into local communities without sufficient evidence that they have been understood and used as intended. This study responded to recent calls to bring into view how language and translation become fundamental attributes in constructing the specialised discourse and knowledge theorised in development (Marais 2020; Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020) and focused on relationships between translation and terminology in particular. The ultimate aim of the research was to contribute to more effective development interventions in Vietnam by making evidence-based recommendations about translation and/in development there.

1.2 Motivation for the study and the researcher’s positionality

The motivation to pursue this research stemmed from my own experience as a bilingual development worker and translator in Vietnam for over a decade. I frequently came across the challenges of communicating development ideas to various groups of co-workers. Almost on a day-to-day basis, my colleagues and I discussed and even debated the difficulties we encountered in translating concepts and terms from English into Vietnamese for our co-workers and community members to understand. We all acknowledged that development knowledge was specialised and involved a wide range of subject fields. We agreed that, in Vietnam, those who undertook translation-related tasks as an important part of development work like us needed to deal with terminology, whatever their professional background. We were aware that new concepts and knowledge were being introduced into the local contexts by institutions, donors and individuals, and we knew that this knowledge needed to be researched and adapted because of possible differences between Western and local value systems. Nevertheless, we sensed that stakeholders’ understandings of such concepts, ideas, discourse, approaches and practice seemed to be primarily associated with the implementation of the agendas of donors, international organisations and programmes. We worried that inconsistent understandings and use of terminology might become

problematic and that limited access to written or spoken information about development would hinder the participation of the communities that we were working for.

Such experiences and dilemmas fascinated me and made me want to know more about *how* and *why* translation and terminology became important mechanisms to facilitate the communication of development knowledge in practice and policy-making in Vietnam—the work my colleagues, the communities and myself all played a part in. Essentially, I wanted to understand in much more detail the roles that translation and terminology played in a context that I felt I knew so well. This first spark of motivation, however, was only built on my personal assumptions from a practitioner positionality. Starting this PhD study from an academic researcher positionality, my curiosity about the topic was further spurred by a growing scholarly interest in research and practice about the general topic of translation and/in development (e.g. Lewis and Mosse 2006; Marais 2014; Footitt, Crack and Tesseur 2018, 2020, among others). While these works provided a solid theoretical foundation for me to begin to understand the questions I had and challenges I experienced as a development practitioner, they also left me a space to problematise in more detail the relationship between translation, terminology and development. The next section further clarifies this problematising process by explaining how the research questions to be answered in this study evolved.

1.3 Evolution of the research questions

As mentioned, this study was first and foremost inspired by my own lived experience of development work in Vietnam and by interactions with colleagues about how and why translation featured in our work. In 2018, to inform the research in a more systematic manner, I conducted a preliminary scoping of prominent lines of literature from both Translation Studies (TS) and Development Studies (DS) to identify a problem space of translation and terminology and/in development and confirm that asking about the roles these topics played would be relevant and valued. This preliminary theoretical groundwork revealed that, although there had already been extremely vast literatures for TS and DS as individual fields of study, the literature on the relationship between development and translation was generally on the rise but remained in short supply. Moreover, while scholarly attention generally focuses on the importance of translation and/in development, relatively little has been written about the day-to-day encounter of the practice of translation and the practice of development being carried out in development work and in different development contexts.

More concisely, although these inquiries have contributed to theorising about development using the prism of language and translation and vice versa, much remains to be studied at the levels of how terminology impacts practice and policy. Therefore, the overall research question to guide this study became: *“What role(s) do translation and terminology have in development practice and policy in Vietnam?”*

I knew that I would need empirical evidence to figure out whether varied understandings and translation equivalents of concepts and terms related to development knowledge between English and Vietnamese were problematic. For this reason, I added a sub-question designed to guide me to such evidence: *“What are illustrative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology?”* My experience as a development practitioner encouraged me to think beyond problems alone and to investigate potential impacts and solutions, as well. As I became more familiar with the problem space and the extensive literature on TS and DS, I saw that there was a useful gap to be filled about how translation and terminology might affect the contexts of practitioners’ every day development work. To this end, I added two further sub-questions to my study: *“What are the impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy?”* and *“What are potential solutions to terminology and translation problems in development practice and policy?”* Finally, within an ethnographic orientation that allows for new discoveries and the elaboration of new questions as the study develops, I came to realise the importance of local voices, especially once I began to engage with Vietnamese development stakeholders as a researcher. I saw that the cases I was now studying—real development stakeholders in Vietnam—gave priorities to several vernacular practices in development among the local communities they worked with to overcome challenges with understanding introduced concepts and translating terms. This importance prompted the final question: *“What is the relevance of local communities’ vernacular knowledge to development practice and policy?”*

1.4 Methods employed in the study

This research employed a combination of a case study approach with an ethnographic orientation in order to answer these research questions. A case study in TS typically involves a flexible investigation into a case or unit of translation specified as a translation activity, a translation product or individuals and institutions who engage with translation in a certain context (Susam-Sarajeva 2009). A case study allows that multiple realities and knowledge

may be embedded or constructed by observers through experience and perception (Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin 1993; Stake 1995) and is suited to seeking answers to *how* and *why* questions (Yin 2009). The concept of a role can involve how a phenomenon is involved in an activity and how much influence it has on it (Longman Dictionary 2022). As such, it seemed reasonable that a case study would be appropriate for providing answers to some of the questions I had. However, I also needed a method that would allow me to account for my complex practitioner-researcher positionality. For this reason, I added an ethnographic orientation to my case study. Doing so meant that I as the researcher could be identified as a case under examination (Brewer 2000) and that the socio-cultural roles of translation (Bachmann-Medick 1996; Sturge 2014) and individual and institutional positionalities of translation-related practices (Risku 2014) could be engaged with in the study. The methodology that I adopted was inspired by other works about the sociological contexts of TS such as translation in institutional and community-based settings (Flynn 2007; Koskinen 2008), translation-policy related issues in development NGOs (Tesseur 2014), trust in translation and interpreting in disaster situations (Cadwell 2015) and the role of terminology in migration crisis (Mariani 2018). This methodology generated several rich datasets which incorporated insights from (1) two phases of online interviews with development actors (2) my own autoethnographic accounts (3) textual analysis in the form of term extraction from a bilingual parallel corpus of development texts in English and Vietnamese, (4) a study of grey literature, and (5) a specially-designed workshop for stakeholders. Data were analysed using a thematic analytical strategy and triangulated to generate evidence-based discussions about the aspects of translation and terminology raised specifically in each sub-question.

1.5 Thesis structure

This present thesis consists of nine chapters. Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** places this study in context. It explains why it is necessary to learn about this particular topic at this particular time. It provides to a reader of any disciplinary background relevant underpinning knowledge about the theoretical paradigms of development, terminology and translation equivalence that are required to follow the arguments of this thesis. In addition, it describes some defining features of development policy and practice, and contextualises development work in Vietnamese as well as vernacular knowledge in development discourse in Vietnam.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to reviewing the literature, studies and theories relevant to this research. It presents the interdisciplinary problem space of the study, which is developed and refined from broad language-related and translation-related discussions in the literatures of TS and DS. As practice becomes central to an understanding of some arguments in this thesis, an overview of practice theory is also portrayed in Chapter 3 to help the reader understand its relevance and critiques. With the specific problems identified from the problem space to guide the formulation of research questions, the chapter ends with a restatement of the research questions that the thesis answers.

Chapter 4 explains the overall methods, philosophical assumptions and datasets of the thesis. The chapter specifies the steps undertaken for data gathering through corpus-building, interviews, the researcher's reflections, survey and grey literature study, then for data analysis using thematic coding and triangulation.

Chapter 5 analyses eight different examples of how development-related concepts are understood and terms are translated with varied equivalents into the Vietnamese language by development stakeholders. The discussions of these examples are based on empirical findings from triangulating textual analysis data, grey literature and interview insights, then reflected upon in the researcher's autoethnographic accounts. This chapter provides an answer to the first sub-question concerning illustrative examples of problems with development concepts and terminology.

Chapter 6 reveals the real-life impacts of terminology and translation on development practice and policy in Vietnam, therefore providing an answer to the second sub-question. The analysis and structure of this chapter vividly represent the outcomes of triangulation through a thematic analytical strategy of the various datasets gathered in this study including interview data, textual analysis data, survey data, grey literature and autoethnographic data.

Chapter 7 focuses on problem-solving aspects to problems of translation and terminology. In this chapter, the role of vernacular knowledge in development discourse in Vietnam will also be addressed as a category of solutions recommended by research participants. As a result, this chapter answers the third sub-question concerning problem-solving and the fourth sub-question concerning vernacular knowledge, with rich descriptions and empirical evidence from the study's diverse datasets.

Chapter 8 departs from the descriptive and empirical answers of sub-questions in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Instead, it applies fundamental ideas of practice theory to account for and explain what has been observed in the preceding chapters. In doing so, it suggests an answer to the principal research question on the roles of translation and terminology in development that is relevant not only to the specific context of this case study of Vietnam, but that can also be tested as a hypothesis in other development settings.

Chapter 9 summarises and evaluates the findings of the research. First, it suggests recommendations for key development stakeholders based on the study's findings. Next, it highlights the main contributions this thesis has to offer. The chapter then reflects some limitations of the study, and lastly, identifies some suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2 – Context

2.1 Introduction

This is a thesis about translation and terminology, however, it deals with these subjects specifically in the context of development in Vietnam. Furthermore, as an interdisciplinary work, this study encompasses certain underlying ideas about development that readers from TS need to know as well as ideas about translation and terminology that readers from DS need to know to follow the main arguments of the thesis. With that in mind, Section 2.2 explains development policy and development practice in general. Section 2.3 provides an overview of the context of development in Vietnam specifically. Finally, Section 2.4 summarises some key understandings of terminology and translation equivalence that are relevant to this thesis.

2.2 Understanding development: an overview

Development encompasses complex practice with a rich history of related academic research. Key ideas involved in the theory, policy, and practice of development are summarised here.

2.2.1 Theoretical paradigms of development

The concepts of *development* and *underdevelopment* are often thought to have origins in two periods. The first period can be seen in the early global historical context of colonialism, particularly linked to the ending of the First World War. Rist (2014) points out that *development* (and also *wellbeing*) were mentioned for the first time in history in the Treaty of Versailles signed on 28 June, 1919:

[T]o those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the *wellbeing and development* of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

(The Treaty of Versailles 1919, 56 Article 22, my emphasis)

The second period can be seen as the genesis of modern development and traces the formulation of development to the immediate post-war period with the proposal of United States President Truman's Point Four Programme in his inaugural speech in 1947.

[W]e must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for *the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas*.

(Truman 1949, 21, my emphasis)

This was the first time the adjective *underdeveloped* was used in a text intended for such wide circulation to refer to economically backward areas, and that it was the responsibility of rich, *developed* nations to develop poorer countries in their own image (Nustad 1996). Customarily the noun *underdevelopment* became effective in the early policy and economic imperatives in development, or in *development practice*, through *development projects* to represent the solutions brought forth by development experts and practitioners which generally stresses the *non-West* catching up with, and generally imitating, the *West* (Desai and Potter 2014). In other words, in this late colonial period, the formulations of development projects were closely allied with a belief in modernisation from which development was demonstrated as a linear process towards a modern Western society and economy, hence development should be facilitated in such a way in the non-West.

This symbiotic relation between development and underdevelopment is referred to by Rist (2014, 72) as a “terminological innovation” which altered the meaning of development itself, by relating it in a new way to underdevelopment. To provide an example, drawing on the belief that development is a linear process, the ultimate goal of development aid was to address the gap between development and underdevelopment, and the conventional approach of development interventions has been for donors to provide external input as aid, then the aid-recipients would become gradually capable to develop. Fukuda-Parr and Lopes (2002) assert that this assumption is problematic as development is not attainable by all due to the lack of clarity accompanying many debates on development where concepts that seem well-known enough are used in discussion without being defined. The common refusal to determine what many concepts mean has contributed to the confused nature of many development interventions. Yet as far as the history of development is concerned, Rist (2014) asserts that these changes in meanings were not merely semantic but rather an alternative way to see the world. This viewpoint is vital in discussing the “power of words” in development, as Dodds (2014, 41) points out that the implications of these notions continue to be examined and interrogated by key authors of political science and DS (Slater 1993; Sidaway 2012).

Throughout different periods of theoretical evolution such as modernisation theory and dependency theory in the 1960s and the post-development era in the 1980s and 1990s, divergent paradigms have placed more conceptual burdens on how development is understood and studied. By the 2000s, development started to be discussed as a heterogeneous system differentiated by socio-economic and cultural factors, such as race, religion, class, caste, profession, gender, language and cultural traditions (Servaes and Malikhaio 2005; Tyson 2013). By asserting that development has long aspired to cross-disciplinarity, many contemporary development theorists also point out that, more often than not, development is studied at the interface of economics, political science and sociology (Kanbur 2002; Hulme 2003). Consequently, over the past three decades, development has come to be understood as a structural transformation “which implies cultural, political, social and economic change” (Rassool, Heugh, and Mansoor 2007, 6). Haque (1999, 274) suggests that “there is no universal framework of development for all societies”.

More recently, Brett (2009) suggests that development theories should be viewed in an interdisciplinary way because some tend to focus more on economics, some focus more on political science and some focus more on sociology. This suggestion implies a bias in conceptualising and explaining development. This conceptual bias also urges theorists to consider the crisis of development, the gap between theory and application and the failure of the development process as challenged by non-Western development strategies. For Escobar (1995), development discourse has been constructed to legitimise the voice of Western experts and undermine those of local people. Development discourse is seen as an objective form of knowledge through the regularity of development practices and interventions being invented and adopted by Western institutions (Ferguson 1994). This particular discourse, as asserted by Kiely (1999), does not reflect but actually constructs reality, closes off alternative ways of thinking, and so constitutes a form of power. Lie (2007, 55) labelled this a “one-size-fits-all” approach that again emphasised Escobar’s statement (1995) that development had become a form of knowledge characterised by regularity in dispersion where development agencies reproduce the very discourse they are shaped by. According to Olivier de Sardan (2005), development should, instead, be viewed as a hermeneutic process in which foreign ideas need to be localised through interpretive processes. In the language of hermeneutics, this process can be described as connecting the two infinite orders (Tymoczko 2002). In fact, the term development itself contains a

“nebulous notion of embeddedness of extremely variable cultural traits” (Olivier de Sardan 2005, 92) and cannot avoid the process of cultural and language borrowing.

In essence, at least three definitions of development can be provided, one or more of which are either dismissed or favoured by different members of the international development community (Sumner and Tribe 2008). First, development is defined as a long-term, historical process of qualitative and quantitative change, which entails a successive transformation to meet people’s basic needs and improve their livelihoods (ibid.). Second, development is a dominant discourse of Western modernity, which entails the dominance of Western approaches to development practice (ibid.). Third, development is policy-related and implementable as short- and medium-term outcomes of desirable targets such as the United Nations’ initiatives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ibid.).

This thesis adopted this tripartite definition of development and used it as a theoretical lens to guide parts of the investigation. The next section focuses particularly on policy and practice because of their centrality to the concerns of this thesis.

2.2.2 Development policy and development practice

Over the so-called “development decades” announced by the United Nations (1961 – 1970, 1971 – 1980, 1981 – 1990, 1990 – 2000), different approaches to understanding development policy have evolved according to new theoretical paradigms of development (Von Hauff, Kuhnke, and Hobelsberger 2017). Traditionally, policy-related research projects range from being simply descriptive of certain policies to interrogative about donor policy through particular theoretical lenses (Unwin 2006) as well as bridging the gap between research, policy and practice (Young 2005) and so forth. It appears, however, these studies frequently rule out the fundamental ingredient that supports their inquiries: a scoping definition of development policy.

The above-mentioned absence of definition was pointed out perhaps for the first time by Gasper and Apthorpe (1996) as they made an extremely important contribution to unravel the different meanings of development policies and argued that the work on development policy was weakly connected to the work on policy discourse and methods of analysis. Three different approaches were recommended to look at development policy discourse, namely the argumentation approach, the linguistic-semantic approach and the ideological-political

approach (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996). The work of Gasper and Apthorpe (1996) was among the first to champion the argumentation approach by introducing a collection of policy discourse and patterns of argumentation in international development—ones that, as they emphasised, would clarify discourse analysis of *policy-stating*, *-arguing* and *-justifying* to provide a rewarding way to consider development policy. The argumentation of Gasper and Apthorpe (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, 6) accentuated the plurality in interpreting and using development discourse, and the consequence on defining policy that entailed a new rhetoric and meaning complexity around circulation of policy statement, policy release, policy initiative, policy-talk and policy-making.

Under the lens of the argumentation approach, development policy was perceived to oscillate between the extremes of discourse and actual outputs that came from policy-making, hence implying a practice dimension. Then, Cornwall and Brock (2005) took one step further to specifically challenge the so-called “buzzwords” of development policy such as *participation*, *empowerment* and *poverty reduction*. While this inquiry echoes with existing work to deconstruct the development discourse (Gardner and Lewis 1996; Gasper and Apthorpe 1996), the approach was more ideological-political because Cornwall and Brock (2005) spotlighted the importance of these words from development policy in how development practice was shaped, then questioned whether their presence in the language of the most influential development agencies would really represent a considerable shift in approach or simply an appropriation of more nice-sounding language to dress up “business as usual” (p. 1044).

More recently, a more historical approach to understand development policy is recommended by Von Hauff et al. (2017). They broadly define development policy as all measures implemented by developing and industrialised countries in order to improve the living conditions of the population in developing countries as well as processes of change in developing countries, whereby necessary adaptation measures by the industrialised countries are disregarded. An example, as provided by Von Hauff et al. (2017), is seen from the shift of development policy into sustainability by outlining a history of documented development policy frameworks as well as emerging donors’ fields of development practice. In brief, in the second decade of the 21st century, the idea of practice became central to definitions of development. Most customarily, development practice is defined specifically as the practice of development agencies enacted through development programmes, projects and policies to represent the solutions yielded by development experts and practitioners, which generally

stress catching up with the West (Thomas 2000; Desai and Potter 2014). At this level of practice, development can be directly related to the achievement of measurable goals and outcomes implemented for beneficiaries mostly in the Global South. For example, one of the most clearly defined themes of practice in the development sector nowadays might demonstrate the delivery of the SDGs.

It is clear, then, that development policy and practice can be understood in a number of different ways and are frequently interrelated. A number of these understandings informed this study at different points. In general, however, this thesis adopted the broad definition of development policy of Von Hauff et al. (2017) explained above, which encompasses all measures and processes of change to improve living conditions for the population of a developing country. Furthermore, practice theory (which will be explained in detail in later chapters in Sections 3.4 and 8.2) was used to clarify a final operational understanding of practice in this thesis.

The preceding sections have explained key constructs of development knowledge required to understand this thesis. The next section specifies such contextual features with a focus on development in Vietnam.

2.3 Context of development in Vietnam

Vietnam is located in the east of the Indochina Peninsula with a population of about 98 million people (General Statistics Office of Vietnam 2022). The country joined the group of middle-income countries in 2010 and had a GNI per capita in 2020 of around US\$2,650 (World Bank 2020).

2.3.1 Development work in Vietnam: the general picture

Since the adoption of the comprehensive reform of economic and social life policy called *Đổi Mới* [renovation/innovation] in 1986 which breathed a new life into its development, Vietnam has made important achievements in economic development and social progress while promoting a market economy under the socialist system (socialist-oriented market economy). The goal of becoming a developing country with modern industry and upper-middle income by 2030, approved at the 13th Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party (CPV) in 2021, has become Vietnam's main development goal as ascertained in the Official Congress Documentation (Communist Party of Vietnam 2021). It can be said that Vietnam

is at a critical juncture on development issues as a communist regime rapidly opening up to the global economy.

In line with viewing development practice as the achievement and delivery of measurable goals and outcomes such as the MDGs and SDGs (see Section 2.2.1), Vietnam has recently embarked on a coherent practice to integrate and localise sustainable development into its national policy. According to Võ (2022), by the end of the MDG implementation period in 2015, three out of eight MDG targets had been achieved by Vietnam, including poverty reduction, primary education universalisation and gender equality, among remarkable results for other targets. Vietnam has been widely recognised by the international community to have innovatively and successfully localised the MDGs by integrating the goals into national and local socio-economic development strategies and plans. At the same time, the country's phasing mechanisms of implementing its 10-year national development strategies and 5-year and annual socio-economic plans have contributed effectively to the integration by allocating resources to realise the implementation of the goals. Similarly, Vietnam continues to go on the chosen path to localise the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to establish a National Action Plan which specifically includes its versions of the 17 SDGs and 115 specific goals that have been made consistent with the country's development conditions and priorities (Government of Vietnam 2017).

Development and humanitarian aid to Vietnam comes from both bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In 2016, Vietnam received bilateral aid from more than 20 countries, while 90 percent of total multilateral aid to Vietnam came from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided to Vietnam by donors has been allocated mainly to the economic, society and environment sectors and strongly aligned with the country's periodically-reviewed development visions strategies such as the 10-year socio-economic development strategy for the period of 2021 – 2030, and the 5-year socio-economic development plan for the period of 2021 – 2025 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2016). On the other hand, it was estimated that development aid to Vietnam has totalled US\$4.3 billion over the last two decades (Oxfam 2019), much of which through the assistance of more than 1,000 international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).

To date, there are still not enough statistics on the specific areas and domains of development work of development organisations in Vietnam, especially of NGOs. In general, the fields

of development interventions in Vietnam are often associated with specific goals, visions, interests and locations of work of these NGOs as well as the conditions of the localities where development programmes and projects are implemented. For this reason, it can be said that these fields of work—domains of development practice in Vietnam—are interdisciplinary and embody diversity. Fields range from poverty reduction to humanitarian relief, charity, volunteering and philanthropy, community development, infrastructure, social inequality, social welfare, citizen participation, human rights, gender, institutional capacity building, state responsibility, education, climate change, health and quality of life, environment and natural resources, clean water, socio-cultural development, to climate change and agriculture and livelihoods support for disadvantaged communities, to broadly name just a few. These fields compile an incomplete synthesis, and have been acknowledged in the publications and reports of donors and NGOs as well as related studies on the role and activities of NGOs, their cooperation with government agencies, state management in relation to NGOs (X. T. Nguyễn 2008; Thang and Nguyễn 2010; K. N. Nguyễn 2011; V. Đ. Phạm 2018). Some NGOs even customise and concretise their interventions based on local socio-economic conditions and people's needs (T. T. B. Phạm 2018).

The diversifying nature and scope of development work in Vietnam has given opportunities for a wide range of stakeholder engagement. For example, participating in development assistance and the social sector widely nowadays are civil society organisations, community-based organisations, social enterprises and other groups labelled as social delivery organisations (SDOs). Although the total number of these entities is difficult to ascertain, they comprise a body of development actors that bring significant impact to the socio-economic development of Vietnam. In its *Doing Good Index 2020* report, the Centre for Asian Philanthropy and Society (2020) estimates that the number of these stakeholders may be up to tens of thousands including non-profits of various forms at the local level such as cooperatives, clubs, centres, local community-based groups, funds, foundations and associations.

It is worth noticing that the definitions of stakeholders in Vietnam seem blurred because of their shared values and contribution in the development process through their diverse fields of work. For example, SDOs are defined broadly as organisations that provide social benefits within the given political framework of each nation or groups who work in areas associated with basic human needs such as education, health, poverty alleviation and environment

(Shapiro 2018). The 2014 Enterprise Law has formalised social enterprises in Vietnam; however, they have existed in many different legal forms such as NGOs, charity organisations, clubs, cooperatives and businesses with social goals. To date, the acronym “NGO” and its Vietnamese translation, “tổ chức phi chính phủ”, are commonly used in both legal documents and government policies to represent the entire civil society and non-profit sectors (British Council Vietnam 2016)¹. In this regard, civil society organisations (CSOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) are also referred to as NGOs, and the term “NGOs and other issue-oriented organisations” can be applied to the specific classification of civic organisations and entities working on education and information, social welfare, charity work and counselling, applied research (e.g., concerning rural and urban development), training and consulting, community development, environmental protection, improving the political system, and so on (Wischermann 2010). It is also not uncommon that Vietnamese NGOs label themselves as institutes, such as the Management and Sustainable Development Institute (MSD) and the Institute for Social Development Studies (ISDS)², among others.

Oxfam (2019) estimates that, currently, there are around 500 INGOs actively working to support over 3,000 programmes and projects which focus on gender, health, education, ethnic minority poverty reduction, and environmental protection in Vietnam. In general, these NGOs play not only a direct role in coordinating and facilitating development work in Vietnam, but also an indirect but important role in mobilising aid and funding for development projects from donors and foundations (iSEE 2010). They also play a role in development research and apply research findings into practice and policy-making via making recommendations for implementation models that are suitable to local conditions and creating shared values programmes and projects (Whetter 2006; Q. H. Lê 2017). To facilitate NGOs’ localised implementation, well-educated and English speaking locals are often employed as NGO programme managers and staff, as observed by Whetter (2006). As

¹ As far as the researcher is aware, there is no official abbreviated synonym for “NGO” in Vietnamese.

² See the homepages of these two organisations for more details: <https://msdvietnam.give.asia/> and <https://isds.org.vn/en/>

a result, language/linguistic capacity and cultural capital have been a prioritised quality in the hiring pool of development and humanitarian workers and NGO staff (Small 2019). Analysis of a corpus of development job descriptions in Vietnam indicate that, while translation is clearly defined for the specific role of translators/interpreters, either full-time, in-house or outsourced, in NGOs and development projects, these tasks are also desirable and often explicitly embedded in the job descriptions of project officers, facilitators, coordinators, administrators, consultants, communication officers, assistants, and so on (N. Nguyễn 2022).

In addition to the fact that English becomes an indispensable part of the overall linguistic capacity of development workers in particular and of development work in general, it must be emphasised that Vietnamese language ability (popularly referred to as Kinh) plays a very important role in development planning as well as in the participation of ethnic minority communities in development initiatives, although this consideration is not often mentioned if development projects and organisations do not work directly with these communities. Indeed, over the years, many projects and organisations working with minority communities have noted that an inability to speak Kinh is a major obstacle to understanding knowledge, participating in technical training and accessing information of these local stakeholders, in parallel with possible benefits development initiatives may have gained from indigenous knowledge and local cultural values (iSEE 2014; Q. N. Nguyễn et al. 2020). The limited ability to speak and write Kinh affects the ethnic communities' opportunities to participate in development projects because development ideas in the projects are mainly communicated in Kinh, so community members with better educational backgrounds are more advantageous obviously in having their voices heard (UNDP 2021). To mainstream these ideas in local development initiatives in the languages of some populous ethnic groups such as Khmer, Êđê, Jarai, Bahnar, Champa, Hmong, Thai, Sedang, Tày, to name a few, what is translated from Kinh certainly cannot convey the meaning equally and inclusively for these communities (Aus4Equality 2019).

Besides the local communities as development beneficiary stakeholders, typical government stakeholders in this model are the social-political or mass organisations such as the Vietnam Fatherland Front (Mặt trận Tổ quốc Việt Nam), Vietnam Women's Union (Hội Liên hiệp Phụ nữ Việt Nam), Vietnam Farmers' Union (Hội Nông dân Việt Nam), Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union (Đoàn Thanh niên Cộng sản Hồ Chí Minh), the Vietnam War Veteran Association (Hội Cựu chiến binh Việt Nam), and others, who represent the interests

of such groups while participating in the political system with their own principles, purposes, and features (Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam 1990; Centre for Asian Philanthropy and Society 2020). Along with the above-mentioned organisation stakeholders are local stakeholders in the state system to facilitate resource allocation, budget and development funding from both the state and donors. Holding the role of orientation and state management for development activities with the participation of the above stakeholders are the key political institutions and government stakeholders such as the CPV, the National Assembly committees and the administration from central ministries to provincial, district and communal people's committees (Kääriä, Phan, and Öberg 2009).

Sidel (2010) points out that the CPV and the state have retained their control over the general picture of the development and non-profit sector with special attention to a small number of organisations that are perceived to be potential political challengers or to harbour those who might emerge as potential challengers in political or policy terms. A clear trend of change in recent years is that, in addition to the “traditional” fields, many organisations have started operating in areas such as human rights, grassroots democracy, state governance and civil society development. This trend is stated by many NGOs in their operational strategies in the coming years, as they observe that the need for poverty alleviation is no longer as urgent as before, and the Vietnamese government has more resources to invest in disadvantaged areas thanks to its outstanding economic development achievements over the past decades (Centre for Asian Philanthropy and Society 2020; Đỗ 2021). In addition, issues of human rights, the development of the civil society, social accountability and state responsibility are increasingly important to Vietnam's efforts for comprehensive and sustainable development.

In sum, the above overview of development in the context of Vietnam reveals that the country has shown tremendous progress in its socio-economic development since *Đổi Mới*. In recent years, with the realisation of global development frameworks through the process of localisation and integration into the country's development strategies, development work has been more and more diverse, as manifested in the growth in quality and fields of operation of development stakeholders including NGOs. Domains of development work in Vietnam may range from large-scale, policy-making and cross-cutting issues across the SDGs to more issue-based and context-specific interventions at local levels to target marginalised groups and disadvantaged areas at the grassroots levels. Although the state and political system still maintain a certain degree of control over several aspects of development

activities of NGOs or CSOs, key development actors in Vietnam have been able to participate in the policy-making process as well as issue-based advocacy.

Later chapters of this thesis, particularly Chapters 6 and 7, will show that development stakeholders in Vietnam interviewed for this study occasionally refer to a particular vernacular practice called *nôm na* in communicating development ideas. As not all readers may be familiar with this concept, the next section provides an explanation.

2.3.2 Contextualising vernacular knowledge in development discourse in Vietnam

In Vietnam, there is a long-standing tradition of how vernacular knowledge is contextualised. Although vernacular knowledge may be broad, it is an important discourse in communicating about development in Vietnamese language. One example of widely-used vernacular discourse in this field is called *nôm na*.

The historical and dictionary meanings of *nôm na* may resolve around the possible root word *nôm*. Notably, this was observed in the first known dictionary of Vietnamese language, *Đại Nam Quốc Âm Tự Vị* by Huỳnh Tịnh Paulus Của (1895). Hoàng Phê (2003), in his *Từ điển tiếng Việt* (A dictionary of Vietnamese language), proposes that *nôm na* was derived from *Nôm* (noun, as in *Chữ Nôm* [*Nôm* script]), and shared the meaning of *nôm* (adjective) which was *simple and honest with respect to Vietnamese language* (V. Đ. Lê and Lê 1970). Specifically, *Nôm* or *Chữ Nôm* is often defined as a popular, traditional yet unique script of Vietnamese people—the Southerners (V. Đ. Lê and Lê 1970; Thompson 1988; Q. H. Nguyễn 2009), created by borrowing characters from the Chinese scripts, often based on the combination of two Chinese characters to lend it the sound and meaning (P. Hoàng 2003). Early lexicographic examinations of *Nôm* established its status as the vernacular script, a writing system of common language (de Rhodes 1651; Huỳnh 1895). Originally used to record names of people and places, *Nôm* found its way into literature and other domains of the Vietnamese language and culture (D. A. Đào 1975), then became a popular vehicle of communication using simple, non-specialised expressions to explain specialised knowledge in abundant fields such as philosophy, history, laws, religion, military, administration and mathematics (K. K. Nguyễn 1974; Trần 2019).

In its form as a verb, *nôm na*, also *nói* [to speak] *nôm* and *nói nôm na* means to use the mother tongue to make a simple, colloquial and vernacular speech (Q. H. Nguyễn 2014), to have a way of speech and write that is simple, with no rules and standards (N. Ý. Nguyễn

1999) and to speak the vernacular common in the country and in the general public (de Rhodes 1651; Huỳnh 1895). More recently, *nôm na* is recorded as a noun to refer to the both the vernacular language (Phan 2020) and a demotic script open for general use (Bùi 2003) to make simple speech and expression of common, ordinary people, often from rural areas (P. Hoàng 2003).

The above lexicographic exploration indicates that *nôm na* can be conceptualised as a vernacular practice in communicating information and knowledge, either specialised or non-specialised. There are also specific precedents for the use of *nôm na* in development discourse in Vietnam. For example, in an article in the Vietnam E-magazine of Business (vnbusiness.vn) dated 11 October 2017 titled “*Nôm na hóa*” *khái niệm bền vững*, it was reported that the Deputy Prime Minister Vũ Đức Đam petitioned the Vietnam Business Council for Sustainable Development (VBCSD) at the Vietnam Corporate Sustainability Forum 2017 to make the concept of “sustainable development” more *nôm na* so that the concept could become more comprehensible to entrepreneurs, startups and small and micro enterprises (T. Lê 2017). More recently, on 20 August 2019, in his remark given at the Conference for Economic Development of the Central Region co-hosted by the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the People’s Committee of Bình Định Province, Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc mentioned *nôm na* when he emphasised that it was necessary for the cities and provinces in the Central Region of Vietnam to avoid contradictions with regard to their selection of prioritised strategies for economic development. This view, as Phúc described in a *nôm na* way, is to avoid the situation of “*hai chân không giẫm vào nhau* [sic]” [“the two feet not stepping on each other”], in order to “*có được bước đi nhanh và không vấp ngã* [sic]” [“to walk fast and not stumble”] (Người Lao Động Newspaper 2019). From these examples, it is worth noticing that in the current national discourse and narratives about development, not only has *nôm na* come forth as an effective expression given by Vietnamese top leaders, it is also promoted as a practice in communicating development ideas (such as sustainable development).

While readers of this interdisciplinary thesis who are unfamiliar with some aspects of development will benefit from an understanding of the key constructs discussed so far, readers who are unfamiliar with some aspects of translation will benefit from the remaining sections in this chapter.

2.4 Understanding terminology and translation equivalence: an overview

Some arguments in this thesis rely on a basic understanding of terminology, its translation and the centrality of translation equivalence as a concept to link the two.

2.4.1 Terminology

Although terminology has been created, used and investigated for a long time, it was not until the twentieth century that the study of terminology really gained a disciplinary status, no matter how contested this view had been (Cabr e 1998; Cabr e and Sager 1998; Temmerman 2000). Terminology can refer to a number of different but related ideas. It can be a set or a group of specialised words or multiple-word expressions that belong to a particular field of knowledge. For example, we can speak of the terminology of DS, or sustainable development terminology (Glavi c and Lukman 2007). Second, terminology is used by a group of specialists (such as development practitioners) and can also be used by a social entity (for instance, within a development programme) therefore can essentially serve as the basis for specialist communication (Horv ath 2016). Third, terminology can also refer to the study and the methodology of dealing with concepts and terms (Horv ath 2016). The study and methodology of terminology can be approached from different theoretical backgrounds such as computational, communicative, and lexical-semantic, and all rely on the construction of corpora, or collections of texts (Cabr e and Sager 1998; Faber and L'Homme 2014). In this regard, corpora (singular corpus) are often characterised either in one single language (monolingual corpora) or in two or more languages (bilingual or multilingual corpora) as objects of literary or linguistic study (Altenberg and Granger 2002; Kenny 2009). While a parallel corpus is a compilation of two or more monolingual (sub)corpora which are translations of each other, a comparable corpus consists of source language (SL) and target language (TL) texts which are not necessarily translations of each other but commonly concerning the same subject matters, domains, text-types and produced within the same time periods (Kenny 2009; Sketch Engine 2022).

In a similar way, different perspectives can be taken on defining the idea of a term, but notions of specialisation are common to all. Wright and Budin (2001, 13) define terms as words that are assigned to concepts used in the special languages that occur in subject-field or domain-related texts. This definition raises the distinction that there is language for general purposes (LGP), which we all use to discuss everyday matters, and language for

specific purposes (LSP), which specialists in particular use to discuss matters related only to a certain field of specialised knowledge (Pavel and Nolet 2001; COTSOES 2003). LSP rather than LGP is the concern of terminology work. While a term can be a lexical unit whose meaning is determined within a specialised domain, it can be similar to words in general language, however, terms and words are not conceived as synonyms (L'Homme 2015). What makes terms different to words in general language is the specific and detailed meaning which they have in their context or specialised field. Nevertheless, some argue that there can be an unclear boundary between terminology and general language, which makes the task of defining a term highly speculative (Daille 1996; Bowker 2019).

Under Eugen Wüster's General (or Traditional) Theory of Terminology (GTT) (1931), a term is defined as the designation of only one concept. This idea that one concept will have only one linguistic designation (called a term) became a fundamental principle to guide terminology work (Temmerman 2000) and implies a focus on standardisation (Ananiadou 1994). Standardisation is defined as a normative process to ensure that terms conform to specific standards and rules (Warburton 2014) and is often a means by which we can understand a term as part of a larger system of related concepts (Alberts 2001). Terminology standardisation under GTT ultimately has a goal to eliminate the ambiguity of varied term uses to designate a concept in scientific and technical communication, however, this influential view can be debatable in reality because standardisation always involves a choice among competing terms (Drame 2006). It is not unusual to observe that some concepts are designated by more than one term.

Regardless of debates over the plausibility of a one-to-one match between terms and concepts, there always exists a relationship, either imputed or causal, among a concept, its linguistic designation (or term), and those who need to process them (such as a speaker or a translator), and it is important to ensure that there is an alignment of meaning between them all (Ogden and Richards 1923; Kagalovsky and Moehr 2003). This semantic triangle illustrates the complexity of working with terminology, especially across languages (de Keizer, Abu-Hanna, and Zwetsloot-Schonk 2000), and especially in the context of new term formation and the spread of terms across systems of knowledge.

Sager (1997) suggests that there are three categories for the formation of terms: primary, secondary and multilingual (*ibid.*). Primary term formation, usually a spontaneous and monolingual activity, occurs when a definition needs to be provided to a newly created

concept to present itself to existing ones in a given knowledge structure via a new term (ibid.). Secondary term formation is more frequently subject to the introduction of new terms either within one conceptual system or into another conceptual system of knowledge (ibid.). This type of formation is often connected to the role of dominant languages such as English in scientific and technical research where terms are transposed into other languages through linguistic phenomena such as borrowing, loan translation, paraphrasing, parallel translation, adaptation and complete new creation (ibid.). The third category, multilingual term formation, is characterised as a two-step process starting with the creation of a term in a particular language (primary term formation), then the term is translated into other languages (secondary term formation) (ibid.). In short, when specialist communication takes place across linguistic and cultural boundaries, frequently the building of new term equivalents might be necessitated from varied linguistic phenomena, based on the second category of term formation (Sager 1997). Furthermore, empirical terminology research using parallel corpora built from parallel texts (i.e. a body of original texts along with their translations, see Kenny [2001]) faces a challenge of defining whether equivalence should be assessed at the word-level or above-word-level (Panou 2013). This all makes equivalence a central concern in terminological translation.

2.4.2 Translation equivalence

The notion of translation equivalence refers to the same-ness that might be obtained between the SL (the language from which a source is translated) and the TL (the language into which a source is to be translated), yet it also emerges as a controversial one (Kenny 2009). Prominent names in TS have developed different views as to which extent translation equivalence is defined and how it can be achieved (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958; Jakobson 1959; Catford 1965; Nida and Taber 1969; Snell-Hornby 1988; M. Baker 1992). An example is the highly influential definition established by Toury (1995) that, while translation is what is accepted as translation, equivalence is an empirical category that is established *a posteriori* which means that it is decided upon by translators (Catford 1965; Toury 1995).

Venuti (1995) revisited the question of equivalence stemming from the special nature of translation and stated that translation was often viewed with suspicion as it had to transition between “a domesticating method” and a “foreignising method” to reproduce the foreign texts with linguistic and cultural values that were intelligible to the TL reader (1995, 81). By defining translation as the rewriting and a replacement of the linguistic and cultural

differences of a text in the SL with a text using vernacular language and discourse in the TL, Venuti (1995) has posed the problem of translation equivalence in a comprehensive and complex way.

According to Newmark (1988), equivalence is not meant to be equal and/or balanced in meaning but a process of translation. The literature has become substantial on the contested paradigm of equivalence with reference to the importance of culture, communication and agency. Following the cultural turn in the 1960s then the 1980s, the word translation nowadays covers a broad spectrum of possible definitions (Munday 2001). For example, translation can be defined as a form of intercultural communication which includes and prioritises a more contextualised and socio-culturally oriented process (Savytska 2017). In this regard, translation equivalence has been re-examined from many non-linguistic perspectives as well, and the long-standing discussion of translation equivalence continues in many other theories in TS, including descriptive TS (Toury 1995), Skopos theory (Reiss and Vermeer 2014) and theories of the cultural politics of translation (Venuti 1995). Common to these theories is a general view that it is not only language that is translated and that needs to be equivalent, but rather texts that are situated in social and cultural contexts. For instance, by stating that “context precedes text”, Halliday and Hasan (1980, 7) recognise that the context of translation can be expanded to decide matters of appropriate equivalence in awareness of cultural aspects and situation. It also helps to investigate the long-established claims about cultural appropriateness through translation for the construction of social reality through communicative texts, as suggested by Nida and Taber (1969), Newmark (1988), and more recently, by Gentzler, Bassnett and Trivedi (2012) and Bandia (2014).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided the reader with an overview of key theoretical constructs from the subject fields of development, terminology and translation that are helpful to understand subsequent arguments in this interdisciplinary thesis. This chapter was also an acknowledgment of the position held by some that discussing development relies on multiple realities and that development itself should be seen as an interdisciplinarity (Arce and Long 2000; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Brett 2009). Then, the chapter placed the overall topic of translation and/in development in a particular context: development work in Vietnam. As such, it provided an overview of key issues in that context and background information on a particular type of vernacular knowledge common in Vietnam (*nôm na*) that are going to be

relevant to later analysis and discussion and that a reader who is unfamiliar with Vietnam would not be expected to know. Now that this background information has been supplied, the next chapter, Chapter 3, will review the TS and DS literatures to make a systematic presentation of the problem space that this thesis engages with: a problematised link between translation, terminology and/in development.

Chapter 3 – Literature review and formulation of research questions

3.1 Introduction

This research investigates possible roles of translation and terminology in Vietnam through an analysis of development policy, practice and problem-solving. These inquiries will engage with the literatures of both TS and DS broadly to provide the reader with a scoping of academic research concerning the topic, establishing a problem space of the current study (Section 3.2). Together with the contextual knowledge of development, terminology and translation equivalence presented in the preceding chapter, the problem space revealed through a review of literature supplies the groundwork to formulate the research questions of this thesis (Section 3.3). Finally, the chapter ends with a review and critique of practice theory (Section 3.4) due to its relevance to the problem space and explanatory power for central arguments and key analysis in this thesis.

3.2 Translation, terminology and/in development: the problem space

The scoping of interdisciplinary discussions in this chapter takes a thematically structured approach to identify key arguments from existing bodies of works produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners by organising the review systematically as themes broadly related to the topic under investigation (Saldanha and O'Brien 2013; Fink 2014). The themes centre on how translation and terminology and/in development relate to issues of discourse, meaning, knowledge, development work itself, the particular roles of English and bi- and multilingual workers in this context, and broad questions of policy. The first sub-section deals with discourse, meaning and knowledge.

3.2.1 Translation of development as discourse, a meaning-making practice and system of knowledge

To date, it seems common that the role and process of translation in development has been referred to mostly in a figurative and metaphorical way in which the understanding of translation was not restricted to a phenomena between language and culture. This categorisation responds directly to the important viewpoint of Ferguson (1994) that development discourse is an objective form of knowledge which is invented, adopted by Western institutions then interpreted into practices and interventions. In fact, while the literature on intralingual or intersemiotic translation in translation is more limited, the

figurative and intercultural view of translation in development has been more discussed, mainly focusing on the domain of translating development knowledge into policies and practice, in other words, aspects of knowledge translation in different development contexts (Ferguson 1994; Cernea 1995; Escobar 1995; Marais 2014). This line of inquiries also attempts to relate processes of knowledge translation with the role of intermediaries and brokers, using a predefined framework for a research-to-policy orientation (Lewis and Mosse 2006). While discussing whether “good policy is unimplementable”, Mosse (2004) believes that the task of “unifying” development policies or project designs:

[r]equires the constant work of translation (of policy goals into practical interests; practical interests back into policy goals), which is the task of skilled brokers (managers, consultants, fieldworkers, community leaders) who read the meaning of a project into the different institutional languages of its stakeholders (Mosse 2004, 647).

Escobar (1995) and Cernea (1995) were among the early scholars to see the need for a knowledge translation process based on existing cultural differences. While discussing “alternatives to development”, Escobar (1995, 225) stated “cultural difference is also at the root of post-development”. He believed that cultural differences carry in themselves the possibilities for transforming social life: “Out of hybrid or minority cultural situations might emerge other ways of building economies, of dealing with basic needs, of coming together into social groups” (ibid.).

In the 1990s, Robert Chambers (1995; 1997)—an influential development scholar and practitioner—asked, *Whose Reality Counts?* to explain that diverse, local realities of development are often incompatible with the realities imposed by development professionals. Because of the multiple realities of development, this question manifests a gap that is becoming more and more visible in development thinking. This gap exists not only in the literature of development, which mostly has been introduced and expanded on by Western scholars, but also in contemporary development practice which, according to Ferguson (1994), is built on the objective knowledge through different realities, and formalised practices and interventions brought by Western institutions. The conceptualisation and discourse of development speak to another fundamental gap between the theory and application with reference to power (Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995; Kiely 1999) in the accounts of multiple realities and the interdisciplinarity of development (Arce and Long 2000; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Brett 2009). Responding to the call in academia to explore this issue of power, it is strongly suggested that the aspects of language and culture

are essential not only in culturally-embedded contexts but also in the contemporary development practice of Western and non-Western institutions (Coleman 2002; Marais 2014).

Lie (2007) also questions whether or not discourses can be re-constructed or even de-constructed. He calls it a “great fallacy” when one assumes a very strict causality between discourse and practice, and maintains that discourse cannot be hegemonic and always gets local expressions as knowledge becomes contextualised when it is distributed (p. 56). The development discourse, he continues, as analysed from the donors’ side,

...is not necessarily what happens locally among recipients. Transformations and translations occur as the realms of donor and recipient encounter, and an analytical focus on actors as bearers and articulators of knowledge enables them to identify such processes. (Lie 2007, 56)

In like manner, other scholars call for an ethnographic examination of the concept of “social interface” and how official discourses compare to the strategies and language games of local people who face new and increasingly global social relations (Long and Long 1992; Arce and Long 2000). Through this, and returning to Foucault’s notion of discursive power, the critiques of development have focused on how localised practices adopt and change the ideologies imposed on them by modernising development agents.

From the perspective of TS, the above gaps are accentuated, for example, by Marais (2014) who takes the opinion of Theron (2008) that development is done on behalf of somebody else, and accordingly, if the multiple realities of development are to be reconciled, they can be studied linguistically and cross-culturally. Marais (2014) also raises Theron’s important second argument that the disciplinary nature of Western knowledge is not suited to the conceptualisation of development. This argument vividly speaks for the highly critical issue of translating development concepts in other non-Western contexts. That is to say, the approach to translating concepts within development practice has always been hindered by a socio-linguistic “lag” due to the fast construction of interdisciplinary concepts. A theoretical approach to translation of disciplinary knowledge to guide this process is recognisably important for this reason. This approach, as asserted by Marais (2019; 2020), is to view development as a meaning-making process which implies within itself a translation aspect. This is based on the semiotics-sociology of translation (Latour 2005; Marais 2019) to conceptualise translation as a intersemiotic process alongside the traditional intralingual and interlingual aspects in Jakobson’s (1959) triadic division of translation.

Marais (2020) makes a categorical call to address the view that when translation is understood as tasks of translating theory into practice and policy, it should be conceptualised semiotically rather than (inter)linguistically in a way that development patterns or trajectories in many contexts as knowledge may be communicated at an unconscious level and a prelinguistic level.

To sum up the first theme, this section has shown that international and local development programmes increasingly serve as entry points for intervention from the outside to contribute to social if not political change. Practitioners and scholars alike are re-thinking and debating the fundamentals of development, and their call for a figurative embodiment of translation of the core principles of development, aid, partnership and participation into practical measures (for example, policy and practice) is giving rise to a process of re-definition, which introduces new understandings and rapid formation of new concepts and terminology. In the meantime, more and more development knowledge has been produced to widen the pool of development ideas. This situation speaks to the problem of whether the effectiveness of translating (or not translating) newly adopted development knowledge and concepts are distinct barriers to development. Considering the need for re-definition and the epistemological assumption that development is an interdisciplinary phenomenon which embeds in itself multiple realities and interpretations, it is valid to question the role of the translation of development terminology in this process. In the next section, existing literature on this topic will be reviewed.

3.2.2 Translation of terminology in development work

A general view of academics and practitioners is that development dialogue is often distracted by a vocabulary that creates more ambiguity than brings comfort to lives in distress and opacity in terminology adds to the fog that often surrounds its use (Chinsman 2006). Chinsman (2006, 89) rather satirically adds, “[n]o other profession has mangled the English language with such efficiency, and yet remains credible”. This speaks for the fact that English terms in development convey different meanings to different people and in different contexts.

Terminology in development needs examination on multiple levels to deal with controversial usages in theories and practice. A great deal of scholarly effort has been made to challenge the most fundamental and timeworn keyword: *development* (Schmidt 1994; Parpart, Rai, and

Staudt 2002). The term “developing countries”, according to Polese (2015, 5), is sometimes skeptically looked at since it might imply that the developing ones are moving in the direction of the developed ones. This concise note is built on the critique that the West is trying to promote in what is called *the developing world* institutions, procedures and practices that do not exist, or do not function properly, in the West itself (Carothers 2002). Then, in the field of language in development and English language teaching (ELT), awareness of the many problems with terminology and development has been raised extensively in the same vein as critiques from post-colonial and development authors. For instance, Appleby et al. (2002) view certain umbrella keywords in the as problematic, expressly *development, underdeveloped, developing countries, the Third World*, along with others. As much as the notion of development more generally remains useful if also problematic, the suggestion is to avoid the patronising overtones of these terms by replacing them with other labels; for instance, disrupting the supposed transparency of the label *developing countries, countries in development* and *countries under development* could be used to signal both the continuing use of the notion of development and the continuing problematic of the relations different countries enter into as they undergo change. This disruptive approach resonates with the one adopted by Rist (2014) to alter the meaning of *development* by relating it to *underdevelopment* already explained in Section 2.2.1.

The translation of development discourse has gained growing attention since the mid-2000s with a focus on the significance of terminology as “buzzwords and fuzzwords” (Cornwall and Eade 2010) with more and more examples of donors’ uses of terminology coming into interrogation. Contested meanings of well-established buzzwords such as *empowerment, accountability, poverty reduction* and *participation* have been critically questioned by Cornwall and Eade (2010) and related to epistemological and practical significance of impact on the making and shaping of development policy (Cornwall and Brock 2005). For example, with reference to the role of human rights as formulated in the MDGs, Alston (2004) argues that, as a proxy terminology, *participation* has been used in the abstract and not related to a specific context and has remarkably little assured meaning, while many discussions of the need for participation in the development process are hollow and tokenistic. The main debate comes from contrasting dimensions of understandings and implementation of *participation*; for one side, the result tends to assert that *participation* can invoke the whole gambit of relevant civil and political rights, while the other side can insist that it is a much less inclusive term that is better understood in terms of its traditional, more

localised, and limited usage in development discourse in which informed and active engagement in decision-making is generally referred to (Alston 2004; McInerney-Lankford 2013). With regard to the discourse of civil society, an example can be drawn from case study analysis of Saleminck (2006) of the fuzzy meaning of *civil society* in the Vietnamese context and the contested visions of development and civil society. Accordingly, the terms *civil society* and *participation* were misunderstood and mistranslated constantly during the ultimately unsuccessful search for a common discursive ground. Various groups and actors tried to deal with such a disjuncture in the field by holding on to their own interpretations and sustaining the discursive edifice that legitimised their development projects toward their own respective constituencies, while turning a blind eye to alternative interpretations espoused by counterparts, beneficiaries, or other actors (Saleminck 2006, 105–122). In a similar way in the field of sustainable development, Glavič and Lukman (2007) attempted to clarify ambiguity and classify around 51 (monolingual/English) terms based on a review of definitions using a literature survey approach.

In the area of evaluation of development programmes, the terminology of routine monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tasks carried out by development projects were also under investigation. For example, Coleman (2002) pointed out that, in the vocabulary of development evaluation itself, many terms have not been defined but would appear to be used interchangeably in parallel situations to refer to confusing concepts in evaluation such as *outputs achieved*, *outcomes achieved* and *broader impact* (Kruse et al. 1997). In this case study meta-analysis of 210 development evaluation programmes, Coleman (2002) then draws the conclusion that there is as little standardisation of terminology, even among the major international players in development, as there is in the field of language education for development. Most recently, Tesseur and Crack (2020) discussed the impact of terms on policy-making and implementation of development initiatives at local levels using two case studies in Kyrgyzstan and Malawi, analysing such terms as *sexual rights*, *advocacy*, *civil society*, *gender*, *equal rights*, *theory of change*, *stakeholders*, *franchising*, *lobbying*, *freedom*, *accountability*, *sustainability*, *equality*, *development*, *vulnerability*, and *resilience*, to name a few. These contributions primarily highlight the need to engage with challenges concerning development discourse, the ambiguity of development vocabulary and the production of meanings with examples of critiques on keywords in conceptualising the link between terminology and/in development.

There have been specific initiatives aimed at drawing policymakers' attention to the importance of terminology translation in development, although the literature remains limited. To date, the most significant initiative can be the *Guidelines for Terminology Policies: Formulating and Implementing Terminology Policy in Language Communities* of UNESCO in 2005 that set out that "the terminology policy thus should not be looked upon as an isolated matter, but as a document that is coordinated with the general development strategy or policy and/or other development-related strategies and policies" (UNESCO 2005, 27). Accordingly, one key objective is to link terminology policy to scientific-technical translation policies and related policies of managing multilingual communication processes (UNESCO 2005). Furthermore, multilingualism has shifted from being not only related to the language discipline but also intended as a pragmatic solution for international organisations to identify their own language policy, especially when being viewed as the overarching context where translation-oriented terminologies are formed (Sager 1997; Thelen 2015). As such, other examples of policies to draw policymakers' attention to the importance of terminology translation include the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe 1992), which describes terminology aspects stressing the value of multiculturalism and multilingualism, and from the OECD's *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management* (2002) established by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to set out norms for procedures and terminology in development cooperation specifically in M&E.

Due to the interdisciplinary perspectives of development theory and practice (Kotzé and Kotzé 2007; Rassool, Heugh, and Mansoor 2007; Kalman 2009; Brett 2009; Moreno-Rivero 2018), inquiries of interdisciplinary knowledge often necessitate the building of new terminology for communicative competence, hence a need for acquiring a working knowledge of terminology and concepts (Repko 2008). Communicative competence has become a burden since it requires the ability to comprehend and translate disciplinary-specific terminology to make it accessible to others, regardless of their fields of expertise (Klein 2010). However, building the new terminologies requires data in multiple languages, and a lack of parallel and comparable corpora for many specialised and emerging domains has been noted (Vintar 2001; Terryn, Hoste, and Lefever 2020).

In brief, the second theme of this literature review suggested several challenges in the relation between terminology and development and its translation. These challenges concern the ambiguity and contested meanings of development vocabulary, drawing policymakers'

attention to the importance of terminology translation in development, the production of new terminology to improve communicative competence. In general, what was lacking from many of the existing discussions of the challenges in the relationship between terminology translation and development work was in-depth, context-specific examination as well as concrete suggestions for problem-solving to overcome these challenges. While criticism of the lack of clarity in development “buzzwords and fuzzwords” (Cornwall and Eade 2010) was prevalent in this section, Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur (2020) noted particular dependence on anglophone buzzwords in development. To examine this issue further, the place of language in development and the particular role of English will be the next theme of this literature review.

3.2.3 Language and development: the changing role of English in development work

To conceptualise the link between language and development, Markee (2002, 265) posed a question, “What are the important definitional and terminological issues in language in development?” Then, to search for the answer for this question, a working definition of language in development was offered, which:

[f]ocuses on the resolution of practical language-related problems in the context of individual and societal development, where language is defined in terms of communicative competence, and development, as a reduction in participants’ vulnerability to things they do not control”

(Markee 2002, 266)

Markee then challenged the use of language in development of other scholars who were working on similar aspects such as Appleby et al. (2002), Cleghorn and Rollnick (2002), Martin and Lomperis (2002), Williams and Cooke (2002) and Bruthiaux (2008) to reveal that these works were either in broad terms unable to capture the complexities of development or rather neutral on the proper breadth for a definition. Particularly, the use of language in development was questioned both in terms of theories and practice by Markee (2002) in the subfields of (a) basic definitional issues, (b) issues of the locus and scope of language in development, and (c) the role of English and other languages.

Language and development started to become an acknowledged topic in the 1990s which saw the strong urge for the acceptance of difference and diversity as the potential element to make various groups and communities more equal. This was a response to monolingual and monocultural policies shaped on Western models and projects that created formidable

obstacles to inclusion, development and progress, proposed in the influential works of early scholars such as Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson, and Rannut (1994). This process was first described to a large extent in the area of language-in-development by Savage (1997), Appleby et al. (2002) and Taylor-Leech (2009). In association with modernisation processes, ELT and language planning in developing countries can be understood as development aid, and thus can contribute to the spread of English associated with globalisation processes (Pennycook 2000). As pointed out by Appleby et al. (2002), these processes had been well discussed (Holliday 1994; Kramsch and Sullivan 1996) to suggest reflective and collaborative approaches suitable for development contexts “as a step forward towards listening to voices from the periphery” (p. 317). However, for periphery contexts, there are problems of understanding the discourses of development which influence relationships between aid donors and recipients. To address these problems, more recent justifications look to promote an interdisciplinary approach combining perspectives from anthropology, linguistics, economics, education, development, cultural studies, etc. For example, Rassool et al. (2007) persuasively examine the relationships between language, education and development on the one hand, and the hegemonic and unequal power relations engendered by colonialism and its legacy on the other.

Coleman (2017) points out that the discussion on language and development has been going on for more than 40 years, perhaps starting with the studies of Fox (1975) to present survey results of the Ford Foundation projects which were considered as development projects to promote language planning in Third World countries. Yet the discussion still lacks in-depth academic analysis. In his significant work to track the milestones in and the changing relationships between language planning and development aid, Coleman (2017) provides an in-depth and perhaps the most comprehensive literature review of language policy in connection with development aid. Specifically, his argument spans across a chronological sequence of three “development phases”, namely the “institutionalisation of development” (c.1945 – c.1974), “human development” (c.1975 – c.1999) and “development goals” (c.2000 to present) with detailed reference to the proceedings of the Language and Development Conferences (LDCs) series (Coleman 2017, 444–445). Accordingly, since the first conference in Bangkok, Thailand in 1993, LDCs take place biennially, with prominent studies covering multiple aspects of the roles that languages play in development by addressing issues of world, national, second and minority languages in relation to human, social, cultural and economic development (Coleman 2017). Drawing on the works of

Savage (1997) and Rao (2017), Coleman (2017) concludes that the contemporary focus of the cross-disciplinary investigations has been on the role of English in development.

In fact, the role of English has been firmly problematised in scholarly discussions on the connection between language and development. Specifically, the significant position of global English with implications in culture, development and pedagogy were problematised as a set of six models by Pennycook (2000), then condensed by Appleby et al. (2002) into four principal forms of the relationship between language and development: (1) language in development, where English is viewed as playing an essential role in socio-economic development, (2) language as development, with English being taught as an end in itself, (3) language for development, where English is used as a tool for other domains of development, and, (4) language of development, or the discourses that construct the ways with development happens. Furthermore, to bring to the fore the fundamentals of more contemporary discussions on the aspects of language and development, the two roles of English identified by Coleman (2010) also seem relevant, i.e. (1) unlocking development opportunities and accessing crucial information, and (2) acting as an impartial language in contexts where other available languages would be unacceptable.

Many scholars from both language studies and DS have investigated the possible impacts English has in the professional relationships between local and expatriate partners in development, intercultural communication and benefits from exogenous sources of information, including Appleby et al. (2002), Santos (2007) and Baker (2011). These investigations also spotlight various concepts of language and power in postcolonial contexts such as linguistic imperialism, linguistic racism, language politics, language/linguistic capital, bilingualism as much as the downside of monolingualism as a mark of privilege and dominance (Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson, and Rannut 1994; Méndez García and Pérez Cañado 2005; Santos 2007; Harrison 2008; Fortier 2018; Roth 2019). Building on language and power, Heugh (2013) refers to the ability of language skills of bi- or multilingual aid workers as “bridging capital” to express the hegemony of English in the fact that monolingual English speakers can rely on their bi- or multilingual colleagues (Méndez García and Pérez Cañado 2005).

For Bruthiaux (2008), English is seen as suggestive of development, economic growth and other societal aspects which are often, however uncritically, grouped under the umbrella term *globalisation*. However, Bruthiaux (2008) continues, for the different statuses of

development over time to address the root causes of poverty, direct participation through English remains a hollow concept. With English being widely considered by donor agencies as the de facto language for development in developing countries, significant scholarly effort has been made to analyse the key roles of English in development and in the settings of Third World countries (Bowers 1997; Crystal 2003; Bámgbóşé 2014; Coleman 2017). At this stage, it is worth noting, as pointed out by Coleman (2017), that the attitudes towards English have changed from seeing language as an essential support for development projects to viewing it as a threat and an obstacle.

Finally, contemporary attention to language in DS still focuses on the “discourse of development” rather than the role of linguistic capital in multilingual settings (Roth 2019). In multilingual settings, language comes into contact with the local and technical knowledge systems (Marais 2014) with translation as a particular medium. Cronin (2013) calls for control of the speakers of languages that are less spoken than English over the translation process to use it as an enabling force instead of suffering it as a disabling intrusion. Understanding translation as such cannot be dissociated from a broader conceptualisation of development. Addressing these problems can highlight the impact, consequences and future implications of a search both for practical (in terms of the making of language-related policies) and theoretical contribution to development. Such discussion of linguistic capital leads to the next theme of this review: the role of bi- and multilingual development workers.

3.2.4 The role of bi- and multilingual development workers

The literature in this chapter so far has raised the issue of power. Power is aligned with the fact that development agents often assume the position of legitimate speakers (Appleby et al. 2002) in light of Bourdieu’s system of language and symbolic power (1991). This subsection continues to expand on this issue by reviewing inquiries in which the roles of bi- and multilingual development brokers emerge as a means to assist in the negotiation of meanings and knowledge and facilitate effective communication among key development stakeholders and agents. In particular, a frequent argument is that bi- and multilingual development workers need to embrace the task of translation, which is often made invisible in many settings in their development brokering and mediating roles, to negotiate between the introduced and existing values of local culture and knowledge (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Bernacka 2012; Roth 2019; Heywood and Harding 2021).

The publication of *Development Brokers and Translators. The Ethnography of Aid and Agencies*, edited by Lewis and Mosse in 2006, can be considered as a milestone in investigations into the role of development workers as “brokers and translators”. Drawing on theoretical inspiration from Latour’s actor-network theory (1987) and Long’s actor-oriented approach to development and change (2001), Lewis and Mosse (2006) discuss development agencies’ roles as “brokers and translators”, largely in a figurative and metaphorical way which can be linked to the aspects of intercultural translation and knowledge translation. A brokerage and translation approach specifically recuperates human agency—especially of aid recipients and NGO fieldworkers—often glossed over or theoretically dismissed in simplistic models from radical critiques of NGOs.

Situated in this logic, brokers emerge as an essential actor to bridge the gaps of cultural differences and the development process can be analysed and understood from an anthropological (or indeed sociological) approach (Olivier de Sardan 2005). However, the cross-cultural nature of some development programmes has spawned much misguided writing about the anthropologist’s role as “intercultural broker”. According to Cernea (1995), this concept was first developed in the 1950s by Wolf (1956) but ended up frequently trivialised by practices that marginalised the utility of the anthropologist, miscast as a mere guide or translator of the local vernacular to team co-members. Since the development agents’ vital task of brokerage is embedded deeply into society and the interaction among social actors, anthropologists can have substantial contributions in training development agents in the field (Olivier de Sardan 2005).

Another category of brokers and translators in development beyond anthropologists has been identified, for instance, by Roth (2015, 4), who focuses on “national staff” as skilled professionals—but holding supporting roles in many cases—who act as the agent, the broker and the facilitator. Bicker, Pottier and Sillitoe (2003) view the facilitator as the only representative who is seen as both a direct stakeholder and better able to adapt to cultural differences and this aligns with positions on the existing literature that discuss participatory approaches in development in recent decades (Chambers 1983; Chambers 1997; Quintana 2004; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Lewis and Mosse 2006; Jacobs 2014). This also concurs with the cross-cultural dimensions of translation suggested by Tymoczko (2002) and Katan (2009). Moreover, an explicit role for interlingual translation in formal NGO structures has been recognised, although this has only been observed in a small number of NGOs, albeit major development players, with their own dedicated translation departments (Tesseur 2015,

2018; Crack 2019). Furthermore, although NGOs and development agencies seem to have sufficient language capacity to communicate with local partners, not all of these organisations have policies in language and translation (Footitt 2017; Crack 2019). In fact, these studies show growing efforts in TS to identify the second outcome of this negotiation process: pinpointing the role of “language intermediaries” undertaken by the multilingual staff of development agencies and arguing that this role has been made invisible in development practice due to the low priority of translation and language in development. In this regard, the work of Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur (2020) has been the cornerstone to propose more scrutiny into aspects of “linguistic hospitality” and “contact zones” of aid and development to recognise values of local languages of the “foreign others” in aid and development.

In contrast, the role of bi- and multilingual development workers in inequality reproduction through the brokerage and translation that they carry out in development agencies and NGO projects is also discussed in the literature. Some works examine the ways in which communities are defined as worthy recipients of NGO aid by this brokerage and translation (Barrett, Carter, and Timmer 2010). Acuto (2014) pulls together timely analyses by mostly practitioner scholars about the ways in which humanitarian agencies strategise about “humanitarian space”, gaining access to offer life-saving assistance. This negotiation can involve compromising or translating core or classic humanitarian values such as humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence and universality (Mac Ginty and Peterson 2015). The work of M. Thayer (2009) offers a nuanced ethnographic analysis and critique of the ways in which NGOs privilege Northern feminist concepts and structures. Not simply an issue of translation, these concepts and priorities are often felt as impositions and inappropriate to address local realities. Others focus on language and development in bilingual societies from ethnographic perspectives (Aikman 1999; Street 2001). In a different context, Kalman (2009) discusses the way in which literacy mediators abbreviate the distance between the powerful and the less powerful.

Switching back and forth between different social interfaces at the encounters of development practice (Ferguson 1994) requires the development practitioner to envisage the clashes of these interfaces as when they engage in translation which can be related to navigating through “infinite orders” (Tymoczko 2002) of different disciplines and knowledge systems. These clashes are described by Marais (2014) as a major tension between a local popular knowledge system and the technical knowledge system introduced

by development agents which calls for mediation and the apparatus of translation. Olivier de Sardan (2005, 166–167) calls the development process a “mediated process” when realising that development agents are speaking “on behalf of their authorities, and they speak in different languages in many ways”. According to Olivier de Sardan (2005), language matters become even more complex especially in circumstances that need brokering and facilitation because one needs to consider not only the native language of participants and the many local dialects but also the language of brokering, the language of project management, and the language of development itself. That is to mention the problem of lost-in-translation and there are myriads of circumstances in indigenous cultures when “words often do not translate because elements in one culture are not found in another” (Gilbert 1999; Finnegan and Matveev 2002, 17).

In summary, the fourth theme in this presentation of the problem space points to a need for bi- and multilingual development workers to embrace the task of translation—often made invisible in many settings—in their development brokering and mediating roles in order to facilitate effective communication while maintaining existing values of local culture and knowledge. To facilitate effective communication, development practitioners working as facilitators, also often assuming the role of brokers, are expected to translate new values of development into comprehensible terms for project beneficiaries and the surrounding society, whilst maintaining existing values of local culture and knowledge. This function, as Lewis and Mosse (2006) put it, is to negotiate meanings, definitions, and mutuality. An outcome of this, according to Salemink (2006), is to reach a common language in a development context. In this regard, problematising translation carried out by bi- and multilingual development workers is related not only to the linguistic form of translation but also to the encounters at the site of development, encounters between people who speak different languages, which, literally and figuratively, need to be translated into one common goal that is defined in the development strategies and policies. This leads to the final theme: a more detailed review of how policy is treated in the literature.

3.2.5 Policies about language and translation in development work

A foundational multilingualism is given to international organisations because of their importance as information providers and users and where “translation volume has grown exponentially across the spectrum of international organisations” (Jocelyne 2000, 81). According to Coleman (2017), in the time of the new global hybridity—to use the word of

Pieterse (1993)—translation is on the increase but in the direction of overwhelmingly from and into English. Concerning the knowledge of vernacular languages in development work in particular, recently Peters (2016) points out that the multilingual skills of national staff are essentialised, taken for granted and made invisible. In fact, the invisibility of multilingual staff of agencies such as NGOs in development, peace making and conflict settings acting as “language intermediaries” has been strongly voiced in the works of Kelly and Baker (2013) and most recently, by Crack (2019) and Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur (2020).

Based on these concerns, a significant amount of contemporary research on translation and/in development has been focused on and proactively in favour of translation and language policies and practices at international development agencies. Notably among these domains are interdisciplinary and institutional multilingualism in the international NGO sphere (Tesseur 2014; Footitt 2017; Moreno-Rivero 2018; Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020), translation challenges at NGOs (Tesseur 2017), community translation and translation in crisis communication (Federici and Cadwell 2018), and current shifts in translation and intercultural communication studies in development (Hamaidia, Methven, and Woodin 2018). With regards to institutional multilingualism in organisations, apart from the key problems on language and translation raised earlier in this chapter, the big picture as argued by Tesseur (2014), is that, power is exercised through language use and by making strategic choices about what information is to be made available and in which languages—hence the importance of translation. Tesseur (2014), further to Pym, Shlesinger and Simeoni (2008), also calls for institutional multilingualism at NGOs to be explored in depth, as this raises questions concerning translation ethics and activism, as well as translation quality, consistency, deadlines, and the use of translation guidelines. Recently, by addressing the close relationship between globalisation processes and the spread of English as lingua franca, Roth (2019) has broken new ground for looking into the role of linguistic capital in multilingual settings such as aid work and demonstrating how linguistic capital intersects with other aspects of inequality in the global context of aid organisations.

To conclude this thematic review of relevant literature on translation and/in development from TS and DS, a problem space divided into five key domains has been identified:

- i. The figurative translation of development as discourse, a meaning-making practice and, more broadly, a system of knowledge;
- ii. The need for engagement with the translation of key terminology in development;

- iii. The changing role of English from being an essential support to a possible threat and obstacle in many development projects;
- iv. The need for bi- and multilingual development workers to embrace the task of translation in order to facilitate effective communication while maintaining existing values of local culture and knowledge; and
- v. Policies about translation in development practice, especially in the NGO sector, and particularly to establish policies that recognise development workers' language skills as part of NGOs' and local communities' capacity building.

In general, this problem space provides a convincing justification for the importance of translation and terminology to development and describes a need to investigate the translation of terminology further, especially as situated in a particular context of development. In addition, the diversity of theoretical perspectives in the problem space about translation as a figurative, meaning-making practice and as an interlingual, intralingual, or intersemiotic practice suggests that a precise role for translation and especially the translation of terminology remains unclear. All these views may be valid and valuable, however, detailed empirical data about translation's role in development work would help to elucidate these complex phenomena and theoretical propositions. Furthermore, debates and contentions in the problem space about such topics as the role of English in development and the role of bi- and multilingual development workers suggest disagreement over the impacts of terminology translation on development as well as over potential solutions to any problems observed in the space. Finally, while policy has been shown to be a considerable existing area of interest and investigation, the issue of practice and concrete examples of the work of terminology translation in development remains relatively less researched.

3.3 Presentation of the research question and sub-questions

With the above arguments in mind, and when applied to the Vietnam context, the problem space prompted one principal and overarching research question (RQ): ***What role(s) do translation and terminology have in development practice and policy in Vietnam?***

Then, the thematic domains of the problem space suggested three further guiding questions—or sub-questions (SQs)—to support the central objective of the study, namely:

- i. What are illustrative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology? (SQ1)

- ii. What are the impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy? (SQ2)
- iii. What are potential solutions to terminology and translation problems in development practice and policy? (SQ3)

As the study developed, the importance of local voices, which was a recurring theme in the literature review, became more prominent. As a result, one final sub-question was added to the study, namely:

- iv. What is the relevance of local communities' vernacular knowledge to development practice and policy? (SQ4)

Many aspects of the research question and sub-questions relate either directly or indirectly to development work and development workers. As such, a theory of why people do what they do in the way that they do is worthy of exploration. The final section of this chapter will present common principles of practice theory and review general arguments and critiques from the literature on theories of how and why people work that will be called on in later analysis carried out in this thesis (see especially the practice theoretical framework of analysis laid out in Chapter 8).

3.4 Practice theory and its application in studying translation practices

The questioning of why people do what they do in everyday activities or professional settings has its root in Marxist, Wittgensteinian and Heideggerian philosophies (Olohan 2017). However, the conceptualisation of human practices as a theory is believed to come from the works of notable theorists, including Bourdieu (1977), Foucault (1980) and Giddens (1984). To date practice theory has been considered a broad intellectual landscape to span across various domains and disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, cultural theory, science and technology, education and learning (Postill 2011). A close resemblance has been recognised between constructivism—the theory which asserts that knowledge should be actively constructed and not passively received (Mascolo and Fischer 2005)—and practice theory, as both concern a meta-theoretical approach rather than a single theoretical body of knowledge in explaining practice from prescriptive, descriptive and empirical analysis (Walter 2019; Eggeling 2021).

With the notion of practice at the core of analysis, practice theory explains the interaction between individual agency of behaviours and social or institutional structures (Reckwitz 2002). Taken up in the 1970s and 1980s, the conceptualisation of practice and praxeological ideas was refined in the course of anthropology's "turn to practice" initiated by Ortner (1984, 127). Especially during the second phase of practice theory in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, as outlined by Warde (2005), practice began to be framed as performances of socially recognisable entities (Schatzki 1996) and a patterned and routinised type of behaviour comprised of various interconnected elements (Reckwitz 2002). More recently, Schatzki (2017) identified four main features, or types of epistemological beliefs to classify practice theories and guide practice-based research, namely (1) the belief that practices are central to social life, (2) the belief that practices are social entities in which multiple people can participate, (3) the belief that practices are interconnected and form complexities, constellations and fields, and (4) the belief that every social phenomenon comes into existence from or constitutes these complexities.

Practice theory is critiqued mainly because of the fact that social theorists have often diverged on their characterisations of practices over the years, thus it is said to lack a consensual and unified conceptualisation of a theory (Postill 2011). Such diversification can be seen from the multiple and varied theoretical concepts used by different scholars to describe and explain how practices are composed. These include, for example, habitus, field, and capital (Bourdieu 1977), structure, agents and recursivity (Giddens 1984), people, materials, understandings, rules and teleo-affective structures (Schatzki 2002), mind and bodily activities, activities, objects and their use, knowledge and know-how (Reckwitz 2002), materials, skills, and image (Pantzar and Shove 2010), sayings, doings, and relatings (Kemmis and Mutton 2012), and materials, competence and meaning (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012).

Another important critique to practice-based research, according to Miettinen, Paavola, and Pohjola (2012), lies on the focus on embodied actions of practice theory, which may entail methodological limits in examining the change of practice over time. In overcoming this drawback, several methodological strategies have been developed lately. For example, in the field of organisational and management studies, four research approaches have been suggested by Nicolini and Monteiro (2017). The first is described as a situational approach to examine practices within orderly scenes, for example, at a workplace meeting. Second, a genealogic or temporal approach will be effective to focus on how and why practices

develop, emerge, change, and dissolve to examine the dynamics of social practices. The third involves a configurational approach to analyse how geographically dispersed practices can be interconnected and configure constellations. Finally, a dialectical approach is recommended to compare and contrast two or more practices that may have commonalities or be in co-evolution, conflict or interference to explain the power dynamics arising from the practice. While the first approach should involve on-site observation or actions, ethnographic methods can be suitably employed in the latter and typically include observation, interviews and/or the study of documents or a combination of these methods. An ethnography-oriented methodology with similar methodological steps is also recommended by Schatzki (2002) to specifically study the intermediaries in practice, which may include particular actors or material objects.

In addition to the above strategies, it is recommended that empirical perspectives should be employed to describe how practices emerge and evolve based on examination of the change of the interconnected elements which co-constitute practice (Krasny et al. 2015). Recent examples of this strategy are seen from the works of Seyfang and Haxeltine (2007) examining the growth of grassroots and social innovations in civil society, of Pantzar and Shove (2010) about the growing popularity of Nordic walking as a practice, and of Shove and Walker (2010) about socio-technical transitions in sustainable ways of life, to name only a few.

The adoption of practice-theoretical frameworks is on the rise in social sciences to tackle the challenge of reductionist views that are often observed in interdisciplinary research and are expressed in the forms of biases about individualistic accounts and system perspectives related to orders, systemic principles, structures and hierarchies (Spaargaren, Weenink, and Lamers 2016). In DS, practice-based thinking has been a fundamental framework, for example, in examining interdisciplinary concurrences with policy research and information science (Sumner 2006; Austin and Carnochan 2020; Kaszynska, Kimbell, and Bailey 2022). Some other domains in DS to which the application of practice theory has been extended include development education evaluation (Zozimo 2016) and ICT4D (information and communication technologies for development) (Singh, Díaz Andrade, and Techatassanasoontorn 2018).

About the encounter of TS with practice theory, the literature is also prospering. A prominent ontological attempt was made by Olohan (2017) who acknowledged the heterogeneous

versions of theoretical approaches but innovatively applied practice-theoretical thinking to study the relationship between practice and knowledge, or the knowing-in-practice aspect of translation, rather than aspects of the translator's cognitive processes of translators or textual features of translation. More recently and systematically, the usefulness of this productive framework has been reaffirmed in Olohan's work, *Translation and Practice Theory* (2020), which systematically addresses practice-based challenges faced by translation professionals and establishes a salient approach for translation and interpreting studies (TIS) in varied contexts of time and space. In this systematic framework, special attention has also been paid by Olohan to the theoretical modelling developed by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012) based on three core elements of materials, competence and meanings as constituting elements of practice engaged actively by practitioners to perform interventions. Accordingly in this model, materials are defined as any objects, infrastructures, tools, hardwares and the body itself, competence embodies the multiple forms of understanding and practical knowledgeability, while meaning encompasses the social and symbolic significance of participation at any one moment in a practice (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012, 23–24). Several authors have looked for ways to account for the complexity and interconnection of practices, for example, through the analytical category of “connected practice” or “constellations of practice” (2020, 93–116) formulated by Olohan (2020) which links closely with theories of family resemblances (Schatzki 2017), loose networks of praxeological thinking (Reckwitz 2002), the constellation of concepts exhibiting overlapping similarities (Nicolini 2012) as well as the complex of practices (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012).

A further critical aspect to the application of practice theory, as observed by Postill (2011), is the conformity between practice and its context because, as Giddens (1984) argues, individual agency cannot be separated from its day-to-day context. Context plays a role in the constitution of a practice and, thus, a practice can only be understood when situated within this specific context. Among conceptual responses to this critique arose the concept of a community of practice (CoP; plural CoPs). Originally developed and systematised by Wenger (1998), CoPs come forth as a powerful theoretical lens to study the situatedness of the actor, their experience and engagement with practice, and their relationship with a possibly wider network or community of similar agents within the broader context of their society. A CoP is “a group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002, 4). Use of the concept of CoPs

has gained momentum in TS, with a growing body of literature to explore the dynamics of interactions facilitated by diverse groups who practise translation and/or interpreting either professionally or non-professionally via shared learning in a variety of contexts (Cadwell, Federici, and O'Brien 2022). Key theoretical constructs involved in CoPs include domain and interaction (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002), knowledge, problems and practice (Li et al. 2009; Mason 2014) and artefacts, resources and tools (Wenger 1998; Li et al. 2009; Pyrko, Dörfler, and Eden 2017). These frequently used concepts can be controversial, however. For example, specifying CoP indicators as static theoretical components may not effectively address dynamics of power, trust and predispositions (Williams-Newball 2014). In addition, it may lead to individualised work being devalued due to contention over defining the aspect of “community” in emergent relationships around a practice (Cox 2005).

In sum, this section has provided a general overview of practice theory by describing its main principles, conceptual compositions, critiques and scopes of application. Relevant ideas from practice theory introduced in this section will be taken up again in Chapter 8 to construct a theoretical framework to account for and explain empirical findings about translation, terminology and development that will be discussed throughout this analytical chapters of thesis (Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed relevant literature from TS and DS on the topics of translation and terminology and/in development. The review strongly endorsed and outlined the academic rationale to study a link between TS and DS, from which possible roles of terminology and translation can be questioned. It elaborated a problem space around a number of key themes from the literature and presented a central research question and four sub-questions specific to the context of development in Vietnam that corresponded to these themes. The chapter also described relevant main points of practice theory as well as scholarly works in TS applying practice theory to suggest its applicability as a theoretical framework to explain and account for what will be observed in subsequent analytical chapters of the thesis. Before proceeding to any discussion of analysis, the next chapter, Chapter 4, will explain the methodology and research design used to answer the central research question and sub-questions posed in this study.

Chapter 4 – Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe the methodology and research design used to answer the main research question and sub-questions of this study: an ethnographically informed case study. First, the research tradition (Section 4.2) and philosophical assumptions (Section 4.3) that underpin this study will be outlined. Then, the key methodological considerations involved in a case study that is informed by ethnography will be explained (Section 4.4). The chapter will go on to summarise the research design for how specific methodological steps in this research were taken, along with how diverse data points were brought together and analysed (Section 4.5). A brief style guide to describe how example pieces of text used in this research have been transliterated and translated in this thesis is also provided to ensure that the presentation of analysed data in upcoming chapters is understandable (Section 4.6).

4.2 Research tradition

This study can be situated within the sociology of translation (Wolf and Fukari 2007). The sociology of translation emerged from a succession of “turns” in TS (Snell-Hornby 2006) such as the “cultural” turn (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990) then the “sociological” turn (Wolf 2012; Tyulenev 2014) and shifted the focus of interest in TS from textual and interlingual factors to non-lingual factors such as the socio-cultural role of translators that influence the outcomes of translation, for example, through meaning-making and negotiation to impact the society. According to Tyulenev (2014), the turn started with sociolinguistic approaches to translation in the 1960s to include cultural and ideological aspects and context. Since the 1980s, the focus has been shifted to highlight the integrated role of translator as agent, or how translation can contribute towards other domains including development and social anthropology, since language has to be seen as an integral part of culture (Snell-Hornby 2006). One of the most recent attempts to address the meaning of the concept of culture and its impact on translation is the extensive study of Katan (1999; 2009). Other studies in this tradition have dealt with issues like power, discourse and ideology in translation, liberating TS from its previously confined and narrow linguistic perspectives, such as Tymoczko and Gentzler (2002), Müller (2007) and Schäffner, Tcaciuc and Tesseur (2014).

In line with this tradition, the present research approached translation as a socially regulated activity (Hermans 1997; Tesseur 2015), a complexity (Marais 2014) and a vehicle of

development as a meaning-making process (Marais 2020). Furthermore, by acknowledging the social and cultural context in which translation took place, knowledge about translation and development could be reinforced, deepened and produced by using methodological considerations inherited from both TS and sociology, all of which will be presented with more detail in later sections.

4.3 Philosophical underpinnings

My philosophical view as a researcher in this study has been shaped by my rationalisation about the complexities of development knowledge and of development policy and practice. The major assumption was related to the argument made earlier that multiple realities existed in development (see Section 3.2.1), and my own subjective reality was one of these. Because I was a Vietnamese development worker who later came to Ireland to do academic research, this subjectivity came from a two-faceted positionality of the insider/outsider and also of the practitioner/researcher. Such positionality and existing views may have influenced how I gathered, elicited and analysed case study data, considering my motive to explore others' realities and how they make sense of their social worlds, intentions, motivations and subjective experiences (Carter et al. 2014).

The articulation of a research design must be also based on answering questions around ontology (how we perceive the world), epistemology (what is possible to know about the world and how we get to know it) and methodology (what tools we use to interpret what we know) (Walsh 2005). Considering my positionality explained above, I chose to situate this study in a constructivist ontological and epistemological frame, which allowed for the knowledge about these multiple realities to be constructed by observers through experience and perception (Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin 1993; Stake 1995; Creswell 2014). By questioning the existence of an objective truth, constructivism argues that reality is relational and neither subjective nor objective (Colwill 2012), therefore in this research, constructivism allowed my own engagement with research as well as my own perceptions about multiple realities of development to be valued and considered (Ferguson 1994). It is important that this philosophical frame of constructivism is explicitly stated because, while the research tradition of sociology of translation was clarified to guide the disciplinary orientation of the knowledge generated from this study, clear epistemics will elucidate then enable the evaluation of that knowledge (Margolis 2004) and enable a reader to evaluate appropriately the new knowledge that has been generated in this thesis.

4.4 Methodological considerations: An ethnographically informed case study approach

This research blends a case study and ethnography because this combination was deemed appropriate to study the complexity of themes identified in the problem space and generate answers to research questions posed. While a case study was the central framework, several core principles and elements from ethnography were also added, especially to allow me to deal with my positionality, i.e. my insider/outsider and practitioner/research statuses. The core ideas, assumptions and traditions of both the case study and ethnographic approaches to research will now be discussed.

4.4.1 Case study

Case study research has been strongly suited to and extensively used for research design in TS (Susam-Sarajeva 2009). Specifically, in qualitative data analysis, a case study offers in-depth interpretation to unstructured data and even to a small number of units of analysis while focusing on the wholeness of these units in order to avoid omitting any relevant detail. There have been various definitions of the case study research method and consequent implications of these definitions on case study research design, especially from social sciences. Yin (2009, 2) defined a case study as the preferred method when (1) the main research questions are *how* or *why* questions; (2) the researcher has little or no control over behavioural events; and (3) the focus of study is a contemporary (as opposed to entirely historical) phenomenon. The case study approach can also be recognised for its merits for working with a small-sized group of participants (Stake 1995; Yin 2009). To be more consistent with perspectives in TS, in this thesis, case study is defined mainly from and subject to the theoretical vistas of Susam-Sarajeva (2009) as an inquiry to understand about a case or unit of translation that might be specified as a translation activity, a translation product or individuals and institutions who engage with translation in a real-world context.

The above definition is strengthened when some common features such as similar experiences or cause-and-effect relationship of the units of analysis, or its strength as a form of description that is complex, holistic and involving a myriad of not highly isolated variables are also considered (Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin 1993; Stake 1995). Cadwell (2015) argues that in TS, a case study design can be flexible to be adopted either to a realist orientation that assumes the existence of an independent reality to be studied, or as a constructivist-relativist orientation that assumes multiple realities, the knowledge of which

is constructed by observers through their experience and perception. This flexibility also emerges as a strong approach to data triangulation, especially when dealing with different empirical data points which may include interviews, observations, artefacts, field notes, and documentary evidence.

One of the weaknesses of the case study approach in general is that usually the unit of analysis is not explained clearly (Susam-Sarajeva 2009). In the current thesis, this shortcoming was mitigated. To analyse the role of translation and terminology, the study used the cases of 18 development stakeholders in Vietnam as participants through two phases of interviews, along with me as the researcher as an additional 19th case for autoethnographic analysis. Based on the definition given earlier, it is not unusual for cases to be people, and these cases have been identified broadly in the Context chapter (see Section 2.3.1) as well as specifically in this chapter (see Section 4.5.3.1 for profiles of interview participants). Data analysis in this study was focused first on the interview responses of these 19 cases and their perceptions and experiences of the main objects of enquiry: translation and terminology and/in development. These responses were then triangulated with a variety of data points from textual analysis, grey literature, feedback workshop responses and the researcher's autoethnographic reflective journal.

4.4.2 Ethnography

Ethnography has increasingly emerged as a methodological approach to capture social meanings and ordinary activities in naturally occurring settings involving the researcher participating directly in the setting or, and in many cases, in activities to systematically collect data without imposing any external meanings on participants (Brewer 2000). Although the present research was not an ethnography in full scale, this definition covers the elements of ethnography that were embarked on in this study.

In a broad sense, increasing needs for interdisciplinary research have established a strong foundation for ethnographic approaches in TS, for example, in setting out the affinity between translation and anthropology from which ethnography finds the origin of itself (Koskinen 2000; M. Wolf 2002; Bahadır 2004; Flynn 2007; Hubscher-Davidson 2011; Tesseur 2014). For over three decades, there seems to have been an increasing wealth in methods and techniques for researchers to adopt, since there are always considerations for the variety and complexity of data gathering and analysis. In translation and interpreting

research, ethnography is emphasised to be more than a method but a methodology (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2015) to build on Garfinkel's (1967) "ethnomethodology" as an alternative approach to mainstream sociological research. Although it may be argued that it has not yet been grounded as a research approach, ethnography has often been referred to as qualitative methods or ethnographic methods in TS (Koskinen 2006; Angelelli 2015). On the other hand, the ethnographic approach is no longer new in the manner that it has been combined with other methods such as corpus analysis, case study and other ethnographically-oriented methods to generate more empirical data.

For example, the important shift to study the settings and contexts of translation has long enabled a comprehensive demonstration of different communities of language users, with the conceptualisation of "ethnography of communication" or "ethnography of speaking" (Hymes 1963). In specific areas where language-related practices are featured such as in linguistic anthropology, social linguistics and cross-cultural communication, Hyme's work is important to allow for language to be emancipated of its context by socio-cultural factors and social setting interaction of language use. Ethnographic methodologies are also appropriate to study the interaction between translators and their positionalities in the translation process happening on-site, for instance, in educational settings or at the workplace (Risku 2014). Ethnography has come to be widely recognised as a viable and versatile approach and methodological framework in studying the contexts in which translation might happen and play an essential socio-cultural role, notably in multicultural conceptions and misconceptions in translation (Bachmann-Medick 1996), representing Others (Sturge 2014), professionalism, ethics and collaborative practices (Cadwell 2015).

Nowadays, the lines between traditional ethnography and ethnography of digital traces are becoming blurred (Kozinets 2010; Skågeby 2011; Hallett and Barber 2014). Where the understanding of the "field" in ethnography is broadened as a complex entity that is not bounded (Atkinson 2015), methodological approaches also expand to include digital and online components in computer-mediated environments (Clarke 2000; Hine 2017), typically with online qualitative interviews using VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) technologies (Iacono, Symonds, and Brown 2016).

4.4.3 The relevance of an ethnographically informed case study approach in this study

The original plan in this PhD project was for a full ethnography with fieldwork to be carried out in Vietnam. However, as a result of travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020–2022—Years 2–4 of this research—the original methodology needed to be modified. Instead of a full ethnography, a case study informed by ethnography was chosen. The approach was inspired by different elements of other works about the sociological contexts of TS. Specifically, it took inspiration from ethnographic methods of enquiry into institutional and community-based settings (Flynn 2007; Koskinen 2008) and development NGOs (Tesseur 2014), the combination of ethnographic elements with a case study approach (Cadwell 2015) and the use of in-depth textual analysis through corpus linguistic methods to support a broader ethnographic enquiry (Mariani 2018).

This shift in approach disrupted and delayed progress in the research for several months. However, the redesigned approach was still consistent with the research tradition, philosophical underpinnings, and researcher positionality of the original plan. A case study—under Susam-Sarajeva’s (2009) definition as an inquiry into the ways in which a translation activity is conducted in a real world context (see Section 4.4.1)—still allowed for the answering of the same research questions in the same problem space through the triangulation of a number of rich datasets. At the same time, the ethnographic tradition provided techniques for me to navigate a fluid insider/outsider positionality (Dodworth 2018) and engage in a negotiation of positionality as a co-participant (Clifford 1988) or a practitioner-cum-researcher or practisearcher (Gile 1994).

Overall, the research traditions, philosophical underpinning and methodological considerations described in the chapter so far were used to create the research paradigm of ethnographically informed case study. This paradigm guided the choice of all methodological steps for data gathering and analysis. The next section explains the steps taken to answer the study’s overall research question and sub-questions under this paradigm.

4.5 Methodological steps

In this section, a historical approach is used to present the research process as a “methodological recipe” which explains *why* actual steps and techniques were applied as well as *what* was done under each step and technique. Figure 1 summarises the overall process as well as the data points obtained from this process.

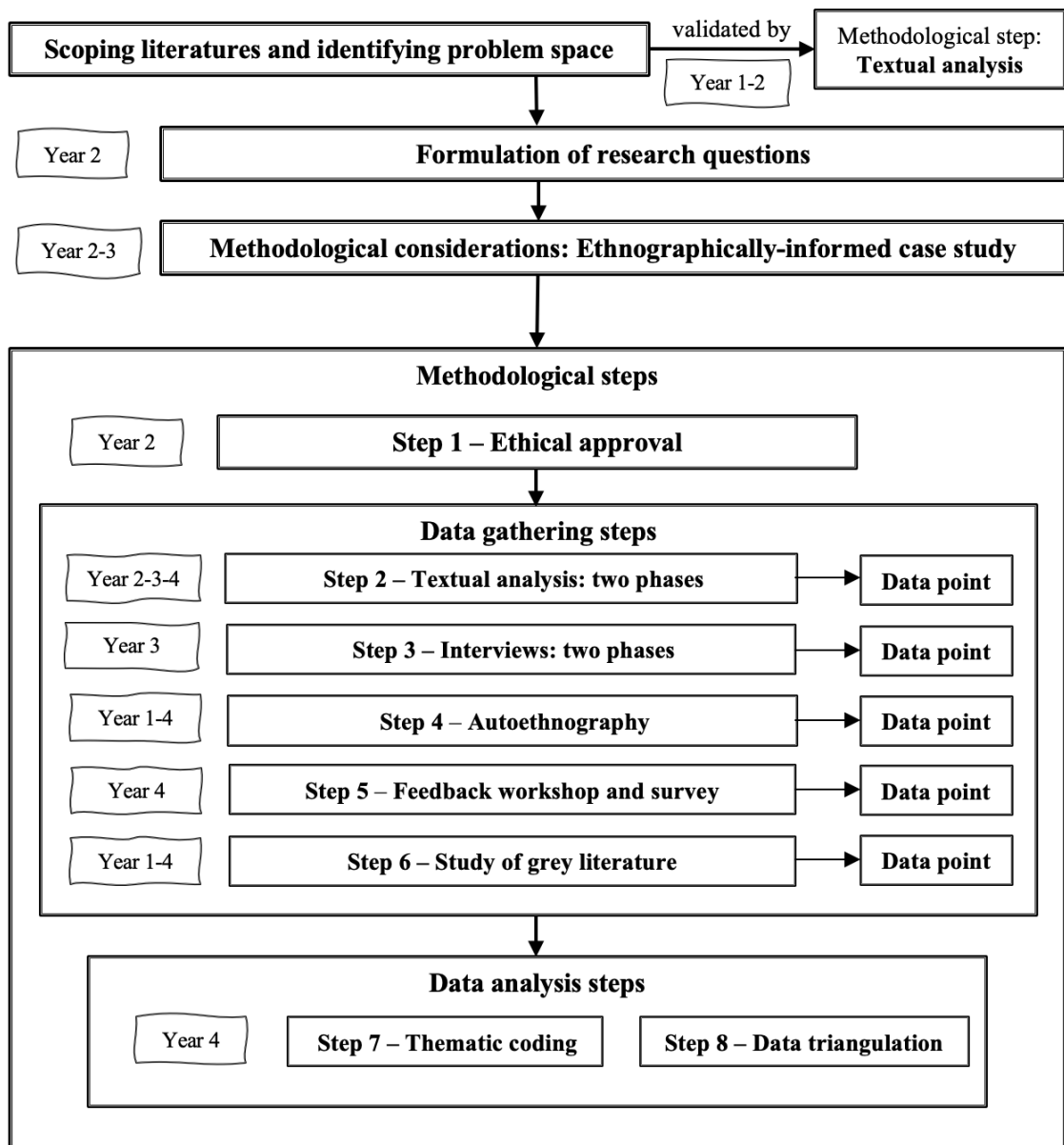


Figure 1. The research process

4.5.1 Step 1: Ethical approval

Ethical considerations were persistent during the whole research process and were not confined to particular implementation of methodological steps (Lunn 2014). Ethical issues were considered to two main extents in this study.

The first involved the issues of possible risks for participants, their consent, anonymity, trust, transparency and privacy. The level of risk was considered low and was justified because:

- Participants were not exposed to risks nor vulnerable beyond the level of everyday life;

- The methodological steps taken were not invasive, nor were they likely to cause distress;
- The topics participants dealt with were not sensitive.

All participants provided their informed consent before taking part in the study. Participants' personal data was anonymised to the extent possible. A code rather than a name was associated with each participant's identity and the key to this code was destroyed at the end of data analysis. No sensitive information was asked of participants and all data collected was anonymised. Participants were able to drive parts of the research process (Bryman 2001) by deciding on whether they were willing to be interviewed in a second phase, or by providing feedback on the research through a survey. After the interviews, participants were given the opportunity to listen to the audio recordings of their interviews and comment on whether or not their expectations were fulfilled. Participants who would like one were given a copy of their interview transcripts and a chance to check them for accuracy. Ethical approval was granted by DCU's Research Ethics Committee prior to the start of this research under the approval code DCUREC/2020/026 and reapproved following the methodological redesign under the same code.

The second set of ethical issues concerned my navigation of positionality and subjectivity when deciding on which data was prioritised in use for presentation. As explained in Section 4.3, my positionality was complex as insider and outsider, researcher and practitioner as well as researcher and co-participant. Ethical bias may arise due to this positionality and its associated power relations with participants (Berger 2015), especially along the continuum between "insider" and "outsider" extremes (Scheyvens, Nowak, and Scheyvens 2014). It was my ethical duty to be aware of this continuum, and I did my best to operate effectively along it and mitigate potential power imbalances. Overall, my previous "insider" status in development work in Vietnam had almost no influence on development actors and community members who participated in the study due to the strong partnership and trust built between us in the research. On the contrary, the "outsider" positionality as someone who interviewed former co-workers from Vietnam posed a challenge with some government official participants not being open to discussions on politics-related aspects. As political aspects were not the focus of the interviews, this was not a significant ethical problem. Finally, as I identified myself as a case to study alongside participants, this made my own experiences a topic of investigation (Ellis 2004) and helped me make use of the lens of the

“self” in data interpretation and evaluation (Panourgia 2000). This principle was helpful to mitigate the vulnerabilities in relation to language and power to which some participants may have been exposed.

4.5.2 Step 2 – data gathering: Textual analysis

This data gathering step of textual analysis served several key purposes: (1) to respond to the consideration to reinforce the sociological and contextual views of translation in a systematic way with empirical evidence (Saldanha and O’Brien 2013), (2) to validate the identified problem space and by this, validate the formulation of research questions, then (3) in particular, to address SQ1 with representative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology. Term extraction was carried out to provide authentic and evident examples of varied translation equivalents for development terminology.

This step was taken in two phases. The first phase was conducted in Year 2 as a preliminary study to systematically and empirically validate the five general problems with translation and/in development (see Section 3.2). Crucially, term examples generated in this initial phase were also used to prepare interview questions, as will be explained in Section 4.5.3 below. The second phase happened in Year 3 and 4 to answer the SQ1 with a larger body of textual data and at a more intensive level of analysis.

Overall, this step involved the creation of a body of authentic and authoritative texts on development in both English and Vietnamese as the primary dataset that took the form of a self-built, digital bilingual parallel corpus for analysis. The corpus was interrogated using the corpus query tool Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al. 2004) by identifying candidate terms from one language, then searching for their translation equivalents from a bilingual/multilingual corpus based on an alignment mechanism or occurrence frequency. As mentioned in Section 2.4, existing approaches toward defining and obtaining translation equivalence are still topics of debates. For this reason, in the current thesis, the understanding of equivalents was not confined within any existing theoretical frameworks. Instead, when it comes to translation of textual materials, a more practical proposition which was closer to the approaches of formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence suggested by Nida and Taber (1969) was taken. Accordingly, when term extraction and bilingual corpus analysis from selected textual data were discussed, equivalents of original terms in English or Vietnamese

could be presented more literally as word-for-word rendering. In other cases, when discussing interview participants' views on possible or various translation equivalents for specific development terms, a sense-for-sense and non-literal rendering approach was applied to convey better possible socio-cultural dimensions that surfaced from participants' responses (see the style guide in Section 4.6 for a description of how these renditions are presented in the thesis).

Below, this overall process of textual analysis is explained in more detail in a series of sub-steps.

4.5.2.1 Sub-step 2.1: Sourcing authoritative texts

I was not aware of any English – Vietnamese parallel corpora specially built for the domain of development in Vietnam. Aiming at building such a corpus, I sourced parallel texts in this particular domain, meaning that each text in the SL (L1) has an equivalent translation in the TL (L2). The main criteria for text sourcing was based on the availability of the texts. I could access bilingual texts such as policy documents, reports, training documents and publications of open access thanks to my network of colleagues established during my time as a development practitioner. Produced and circulated in the period of approximately twenty years (2001–2021), the original texts and their translations had equal validity and importance in use by development organisations in their projects and initiatives, and by development stakeholders in Vietnam. Based on my own judgment as a development worker, these documents were assumed to be representative of the population of such texts about development in Vietnam. While in the preliminary phase, only ten pairs of full bilingual texts were chosen, later on this dataset was enlarged to have twenty pairs of texts in several contemporary sub-domains of development work namely Rural development, Climate change, Poverty reduction, Sustainable livelihoods, Gender equality, Development M&E, Development policy, COVID-19, and so on.

The corpus is not being made available as open data at this stage to protect participant identity.

4.5.2.2 Sub-step 2.2: Preparing the corpus: text alignment

Text alignment was a lengthy but essential next sub-step to prepare to process the parallel corpus of bilingual texts. Alignment involves ensuring that each sentence in the L1 corpus

corresponds correctly to an equivalent sentence in the L2 corpus. As sentences can be moved and adapted in the process of translation, alignment is not always a simple task, and it requires relevant language and translation competence. To perform text alignment, I carried out two operations:

- i. L1 and L2 texts in *pdf*, *doc* and *docx* formats were converted into plain texts in *txt* format, using the open-source PDF to Text Converter Expert tool, to make sure they were editable for alignment. In several cases, after this conversion, texts needed to be saved in the Unicode UTF-8 encoding method so that accented letters and diacritical marks in computerised texts in Vietnamese language were readable in *txt* format (Ngô and Trần 2009);
- ii. Once readability of texts was guaranteed, alignment at the sentence level (Gale and Church 1993) was performed using the open-source tool LF Aligner (Farkas 2015) which offered a friendly graphic user interface (GUI) on Windows platform. To overcome the issue of mismatched sentence length in English and Vietnamese (C. H. Nguyễn 2014), the LF Aligner workspace allowed manually splitting and shifting either proper sentences or sentence fragments as meaningful units (Tiedemann 2011). In fact, these manual operations improved the reliability of sentence alignment in the study, although in many cases outputs were not accurately one-to-one aligned but rather corresponded sentences on a one-to-many or many-to-one basis.

The next sub-step of textual analysis involved compilation of the digital corpus.

4.5.2.3 Sub-step 2.3: Compiling the corpus

I uploaded the prepared and aligned pairs of texts onto Sketch Engine using its “Create corpus” functionality. In doing so, the paired texts were processed by the Sketch Engine tool according to predefined sets of parameters to convert the texts into data formats that would be suitable for further manipulation and analysis in the tool. Then, by exploring the “Corpus details and statistics” tab on Sketch Engine, the statistical description of the compiled corpus could be obtained. Table 1 below presents the main statistical features of the corpus in use:

Corpus name: DEVETEXT		
Type: Bilingual parallel corpus of English – Vietnamese		
Domain: Development		
Sub-domains: Rural development, Climate change, Poverty reduction, Sustainable livelihoods, Gender equality, Development monitoring and evaluation, Development policy, COVID-19		
Number of input texts: 20 pairs		
Current counts	English	Vietnamese
Tokens	529,080	745,400
Words	441,926	648,919
Sentences	29,566	29,775

Table 1. Corpus statistics extracted from Sketch Engine

It should be noted in the statistics in Table 1 that a corpus can be described in terms of the words contained in it. However, for some textual analysis it may be more useful to report the number of tokens or number of types in a corpus rather than the number of words. A token is frequently a word but may be anything between spaces in a corpus (such as a digit, punctuation, etc.) and is the smallest constitutive unit of a corpus (Sketch Engine 2022). A type is a unique word form in a corpus, and it is sometimes useful to report how many different words are present in the collection of texts. Considering the concept-oriented and domain-related feature of this terminology-oriented textual analysis (see again Section 2.4.1), which focuses mainly on the examination of equivalents of terms and not so much on their micro-linguistic features, focusing on the word level in Table 1 and in other parts of this thesis is sufficient.

4.5.2.4 Sub-step 2.4: Corpus queries on Sketch Engine to analyse bilingual terms

This corpus was a motivated collection of texts. I wanted to use it to analyse how key development-related terms were treated in translation in this body of authoritative and naturally occurring bilingual texts. In the preliminary phase of textual analysis, I selected examples of terms considered problematic in development practice in Vietnam such as *wellbeing*, *resilience* and others for analysis using purposive sampling (Saldanha and O'Brien 2013). This purposive sampling was based on examples from the literature, the expert judgment of the researcher as a development worker of over a decade, as well as advice from former colleagues. In the second phase, however, the identification of terms for analysis was built on examples that had been nominated and revealed as problematic terms by participants throughout 27 interviews. A comprehensive list of the terms analysed in the corpus will be provided in Chapter 5.

With the terms for examination identified, this sub-step involved searching for each term and its equivalents from the bilingual texts through corpus queries operated on Sketch Engine by means of parallel concordances (to search for terms in L1 and display the results together with their aligned translation equivalents), Key-Word-In-Context (KWIC) (to highlight a searched item in a concordance) and frequency distribution (the number of occurrences of a search item, or *hits*) (Kilgarriff et al. 2004). Specifically, this sub-step involved the following operations for each term under examination:

- i. Search for each nominated item in L1 of the parallel corpus using the Concordance functionality of Sketch Engine;
- ii. Search for the nominated item found in L1 using the Parallel Concordance functionality to display the search results together with the equivalent(s) in the aligned corpus L2 observed in the results from the previous operation as the aligned translated segment(s). A term in L1 to yield different results in L2 using Parallel Concordance would be considered a salient example of having multiple translated equivalents in L2.
- iii. Compare the occurrence frequencies (hits) of any different equivalents in L2 of the nominated item that had been searched for in L1.

By looking at the yielded results of terms being displayed with multiple equivalents, one could argue that they were examples of inconsistency in translation and of different uses in different contexts depending on the specialised domain of the texts.

At the time when this research was carried out, Sketch Engine did not support tokenisation, lemmatisation and tagging for Vietnamese, possibly due to difficulties with lexical database processing. This may have led to shortcomings in the queries made in this sub-step. Nevertheless, this computer-assisted analysis provided useful textual evidence on which to base interview questions and to answer SQ1 about evidence of varied equivalents and understandings of development terms (as will be shown in Chapter 5). Furthermore, at the time of writing and to the best of my knowledge, this English – Vietnamese parallel corpus is likely the first self-built corpus in the specialised domain of development in Vietnam.

With illustrative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology in hand, the next step in the research design was to conduct interviews with key development stakeholders in Vietnam.

4.5.3 Step 3 – data gathering: Semi-structured interviews

Doing interviews is a useful and increasingly important participant-oriented methodological step in many domains of TS (Saldanha and O'Brien 2013). It is also common that interviews are employed within an ethnographic or case study research paradigm (Koskinen 2008; Hubscher-Davidson 2011; Cadwell 2015). Interviews have also been usefully combined in TS with participant observations or textual and corpus analysis (Tesseur 2015; Mariani 2018). Interviews can be designed to be structured to involve the strict use of carefully prepared questions, unstructured as a free-flowing process using guiding questions or semi-structured where categories of topics and open-ended questions are used (Saldanha and O'Brien 2013). Interviews can also be conducted as face-to-face, by telephone or online dialogic interaction with individuals and groups (Fielding 2003). As pointed out by Bartolini and Nauert (2020), using interviews with various stakeholders in translation research can generate novel and unanticipated knowledge that might not be found from textual data.

In the current project, while the step of textual and corpus analysis was to gather empirical data more on the linguistic aspect of terms and their translation equivalents (Koskinen 2008), the step of interviews was designed for gathering more qualitative data on the sociological and practice aspects of terms and translation. Consistently embracing the view of development as a meaning-making process (Marais 2020), I chose to do semi-structured interviews because of the long-standing consideration that this type of interview also manifests a meaning-making process due to its priority in knowledge co-construction between interviewer and interviewees by which lifeworld stories were shared and contributed by both parties (Seidman 1998). The semi-structured interviews were designed to be one-on-one and diphasic. The purpose of having this two-phased strategy was to minimise the manipulation and/or artifice in data interpretation and analysis because of subjectivity that might have arisen from the researcher's positionality or system of relevancy (Wengraf 2001). Originally, face-to-face interviews in Vietnam were intended for Year 2 and 3 of the project but the outbreak of COVID-19 prevented this plan from happening. To follow the shift in research design (see Section 4.4.3), upon agreement with participants, all interviews were conducted online via Zoom discussions, with supporting contacts via text messages and emails. Although I was initially concerned that fully online interviews might exclude some participants, especially community members, this was not the case: all participants already had Internet access either at work or at home and had been familiar with using mobile devices and laptops for Internet telephony.

Below, this overall process of semi-structured interviewing online is explained in more detail in a series of sub-steps.

4.5.3.1 Sub-step 3.1: Recruiting participants and identifying cases

The goal of the interviews was to gather experiences and perceptions of development stakeholders in Vietnam related to translation and terminology. As soon as ethical approval was granted in March 2020, I contacted development stakeholders from organisations and projects in Vietnam with whom I already had had a professional relationship. Based on the general identification of key development stakeholders in Vietnam (see again Section 2.3.1), it was expected that participants would represent four groups, namely (1) development practitioners, (2) representatives of development organisations/agencies and policy-making institutions, (3) local communities members and (4) academics depending on how they identified their roles in development work. Because an ethnographically informed case study is not to generate statistical data (Cadwell 2015), a fixed target sample size was not required. Instead, the recruitment of participants could be related to the technique of purposive sampling in the case study approach (Yin 2009). I extended informal requests to 18 individuals and they all agreed to participate in the interviews. As I also identified myself as a case for consideration in this study due to my practitioner/researcher status, there were 19 cases in total. The general criteria used for selecting participants are outlined in Table 2, and a description of the profiles of the 19 cases is provided in Table 3.

Group	Description	Criteria
Group 1	Development practitioners and professionals (international and local)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not a minor (defined in Vietnamese law as a person younger than 18) • working as a development practitioner in Vietnam • has extensive experience in participating in development projects (local and national contexts) or other countries (international contexts) • speaking Vietnamese, English or both • engaging with translation and terminology at work • have access to Internet-connected devices
Group 2	Development agencies and policy-making institutions (donors, government, NGOs, social enterprises, civil society, SDOs, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not a minor • working as staff in a Vietnamese or international development agency or policy-making institution which is operating in Vietnam • has extensive experience in participating in development projects (local and national contexts) or other countries (international contexts) • speaking Vietnamese, English or both • engaging with translation and terminology at work • have access to Internet-connected devices
Group 3	Local government representatives and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not a minor • a member of the community that participate in the implementation of development projects • speaking Vietnamese, English or both • have access to Internet-connected devices
Group 4	Academia (lecturers, researchers, students, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not a minor • involved in the research or education, either in the broader spheres of DS or in specific areas considered relevant in development (eg. international studies, climate change, etc.) • speaking Vietnamese, English or both • have access to Internet-connected devices

Table 2. Criteria for selecting participants

Case/code	Status in this study	Development stakeholder status	Experience with translation and interpreting			(Sub)domains of development work	Gender (F/M)	Language(s) spoken	Participation in interviews
			Yes, only for development	Yes, also in other fields	No				
P1	Interview participant 1	Development practitioner, NGO worker	√	√		Gender equality, women empowerment, sustainable livelihoods, community-based tourism, mental wellbeing	F	Vietnamese and English	Phase 1 (Ph1) & Phase 2 (Ph2)
P2	Interview participant 2	Development practitioner, NGO worker	√	√		Gender equality, women empowerment, sustainable livelihoods, community-based tourism, social accountability	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P3	Interview participant 3	Development practitioner	√	√		Education, policy-making	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P4	Interview participant 4	Development practitioner, representative of donor	√	√		Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable development	M	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P5	Interview participant 5	Development practitioner, NGO worker, academic researcher	√	√		Climate change, community-based tourism, vocational training, policy-making	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P6	Interview participant 6	Development practitioner, NGO worker, academic researcher	√	√		Gender equality, climate change, vocational training	M	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P7	Interview participant 7	Development practitioner	√	√		Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable development	M	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P8	Interview participant 8	Development practitioner, NGO worker	√	√		Sustainable development, climate change	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P9	Interview participant 9	Development practitioner, NGO worker	√	√		Mental wellbeing	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P10	Interview participant 10	NGO worker	√	√		Sustainable development, climate change	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P11	Interview participant 11	Development practitioner, NGO worker,	√	√		Sustainable development, sustainable agriculture, mental wellbeing	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2

		academic researcher						
P12	Interview participant 12	Development practitioner, NGO worker, academic researcher	√	√	Education, social welfare, policy-making	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P13	Interview participant 13	Development practitioner, representative of donor	√	√	Sustainable development, sustainable agriculture, policy-making	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P14	Interview participant 14	Representative of local government, community member	√	√	Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, climate change, fisheries	M	Vietnamese and English	Ph1 & Ph2
P15	Interview participant 15	Academic researcher	√		Rights-based policy-making, climate change, gender equality	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P16	Interview participant 16	Local community member		√	Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, climate change	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P17	Interview participant 17	Local community member		√	Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, climate change	F	Vietnamese	Ph1
P18	Interview participant 18	Development practitioner, NGO worker	√	√	Sustainable development, sustainable agriculture, policy-making	F	Vietnamese and English	Ph1
P19	The researcher himself	Development practitioner, academic researcher	√	√	Sustainable livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, climate change, fisheries, wellbeing, cross-cutting issues	M	Vietnamese and English	

Table 3. Description of cases

4.5.3.3 Sub-step 3.2: Identifying categories of interview topics

Because of the open-ended and semi-structured nature of the interviews, precisely-worded interview questions were not developed before the interviews happened. It was determined that broad, thematic categories of topics and open-ended, guiding questions would be used instead. Specifically, these categories were shaped broadly around the five general problems identified in the problem space of translation and/in development, and specifically around the principal RQ and SQs (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3). Moreover, as presented earlier, textual analysis findings played a critical role in designing interview questions around terminology, especially for Phase-One interview questions. Then, Phase-Two questions were stimulated by the topics discussed in Phase-One interviews. The thematic categories of topics are as outlined below:

i. Phase-One interviews:

Interview questions during this phase were open-ended and semi-structured around the categories of:

- Category 1: Experience of terminology in day-to-day development work
- Category 2: Examples of different translations of terminology in day-to-day development work
- Category 3: Views on local knowledge versus introduced knowledge in development work
- Category 4: Views on the role of terminology and translation in development work
- Category 5: Other topics emerging during the interviews or needed to be addressed, mainly at the choice of participants

ii. Phase-Two interviews:

Based on initial analysis of themes identified from participants' responses during Phase One, and also built on the research questions and problem space, the central themes of Phase-Two interviews covered the categories of:

- Category 1: Problem-solving
- Category 2: Shared learning

- Category 3: General reflections, including topics emerging during the interviews or needed to be addressed, mainly at the choice of participants

(See Appendix A for a comprehensive list of open-ended questions used in Phase-One and Phase-Two interviews.)

These categories and open-ended questions were translated into Vietnamese and circulated to interview participants prior to the interviews to allow them time for deeper reflection. Two pilot interviews were then carried out online with one contact in Ireland who was a researcher in DS and one development practitioner in Vietnam. These transcripts of these pilot interviews were not included as data for analysis in this project. Piloting was necessary because not only did it ensure the thematic categories and open-ended questions were satisfactory in gathering desirable data but also the language was fine tuned to be more understandable and appropriate. The pilot interviews also helped me become aware of any logistic issues, the possible duration of an interview, smoothen my interview skills, and practise transcribing and analysis techniques at a preliminary level.

4.5.3.4 Sub-step 3.3: Conducting the interviews

I began to carry out the actual interviews in October 2020 at the beginning of Year 3 of the PhD. The timeframe to complete this sub-step was six months to cover the following phases:

- i. Phase-One interviews: 18 interviews were conducted within a two-month period.
- ii. A “reflection” break of two months to allow participants and me to engage in a reflexive process about the interviews and about their thoughts on translation, terminology and development in their daily practice.
- iii. Phase-Two interviews: 9 interviews were conducted with selected participants from Phase One who agreed to be re-interviewed, also within a two-month period.

After giving informed consent to participate on Google Forms, participants were interviewed individually, in Vietnamese or English as appropriate, for approximately one hour, according to the semi-structured question protocol. Given the ethnographic nature of this methodological step, small changes to original planning occurred from time to time, mostly in response to requests made by my participants because of time difference. Brief reports of the interviews were produced and sent to participants upon their requests (an example of an

anonymised Phase-One interview report is provided in Appendix B). Finally, 27 semi-structured interviews were completed in total.

4.5.3.5 Sub-step 3.4: Recording, transcription and translation of transcripts

This “post-interview” sub-step involved the three main operations of recording, transcription and translation of transcripts. As per participants’ consent, all interviews were recorded using the Zoom video recording feature and audio was extracted automatically following completion. The transcription of audio recordings began almost immediately after the completion of each phase. In Phase-One, I carried out transcription solely. For Phase-Two, a paid, trusted transcribing service who did not know participants was hired to carry out the transcription of interviews. Transcription followed a “clean” verbatim logic consistently (Clark et al. 2017) to preserve the meaning of the responses while stammering, filler words and any ambient background noise could be edited out. I alone translated all transcripts from Vietnamese into English. In the translation process, the units of meaning between source text and target text in the translated transcripts remained the same. However, I focused on what participants said rather than how they said it and occasionally made slight edits to the content and form to improve readability and achieve a more effective translation in English. Anonymised, member-checked transcripts of the interviews translated into English are provided in Appendix G. Two participants asked for their transcripts not to be included to protect their anonymity.

4.5.4 Step 4 – data gathering: Autoethnography

I was constantly aware in this study of my engagement in a process of negotiating my positionality between the insider/outsider–practitioner/researcher polarities (Scheyvens and Storey 2014). In other words, my conduct of writing myself in these positions alongside the participants made my own reflection a topic of investigation in its own right (Ellis 2004). In this regard, I practised reflection throughout the study and used the lens of the “self” within the social context of development work where I came from (Panourgia 2000) and followed an autoethnographic method. Defined broadly as how the researcher understands themselves and is understood in relation to others (Eyben 2014), autoethnography is also characterised by the representation of the “self” (auto) placed in the power dynamics with individuals or groups of “others” (ethno) in the form of writing (graphy) (Holt 2003; Adams, Ellis, and Jones 2017). In other words, how I understood myself informed what I wrote and how I

participated in the construct of meanings, therefore helping me navigate my subjectivity in conducting different steps in data gathering as well as in data interpretation, evaluation and analysis (Angen 2000; Wengraf 2001).

The timeframe of autoethnography in this study was not limited to any certain stage. Instead, this reflexive enquiry was adopted throughout the research process from Year 1 to Year 4. My autoethnographic accounts were recorded in the forms of reflective journals kept immediately after each meeting with my supervisor as well as notes taken during and soon after each interview. Later in the research process, I read back at these notes and journals and wrote up further thoughts about the interviews and meetings. Gradually, these notes and journals comprised an important ethnographic data point to be used as vignettes or short autoethnographic accounts for triangulation and were incorporated into the arguments at the end of each analytical chapter as a fundamental analytical technique to answer the research questions.

4.5.5 Step 5 – data gathering: Feedback workshop and surveying

While the interviews and autoethnographic reflections were designed to contribute answers to all the sub-questions and main research question of the thesis, a feedback workshop and survey was designed to gather targeted data likely to help answer SQ4 about the relevance of local communities' vernacular knowledge to development practice and policy. As explained in Section 1.3, this sub-question evolved once I began to engage with Vietnamese development stakeholders as a researcher. As a result, I felt that further data gathering specifically on this topic would be beneficial. Furthermore, in consultation with my supervisor, I planned that a workshop would be organised in the PhD project as a form of research outreach, besides publications, conference presentations and so on, so that preliminary findings from this study would be made known not only to academics but also non-academics in Vietnam and beyond as soon as possible to benefit their work in development.

With this in mind, I organised an one-hour online workshop on Zoom in February 2022 with the cooperation of the Development Studied Association of Ireland (DSA Ireland). Attendees were mainly Irish and Vietnamese development practitioners and policy champions. This mixed participation was to aim to extend consideration of some key issues in the thesis beyond the context of Vietnam alone. By hearing from stakeholders and policy

champions in Vietnam and other contexts, the aim was to be able to compare and contrast the experiences and perceptions of the main cases under study (Vietnamese development stakeholders) with a similar class of stakeholders working elsewhere. Attendees all received an abstract about the session and plain language statement about the overall research project before the session. These documents explained the workshop, its aims, and the fact that in addition to the presentation of preliminary research findings, there would also be a research survey component to the proceedings. All attendees provided their informed consent to be offered the option to participate in the research survey part of the workshop and allow the session to be recorded before joining.

In the first part of the session, I presented an overview of preliminary findings from my study about translation and/in development. Then, I played a video about vernacular understanding from Vietnam and real-world examples of terminology in development that I co-created with a Vietnamese development practitioner colleague and that they narrated to give an authentic local voice of a current practitioner in the field. Next, I shared an online survey with attendees entitled “Impacts of translation and terminology in your context of development work” on SurveyMonkey built on nine questions to generate multiple-choice answers. The session ended with an open-ended discussion about terminology, translation and development policy. In all, the survey was for research purposes and the other elements of the workshop were for outreach and dissemination purposes.

The survey questionnaire can be seen in Appendix D. Unfortunately, only 8 attendees provided a usable response to the survey. As a result, it constitutes only a small further data point for triangulation with the other data points in the overall ethnographically informed case study.

4.5.6 Step 6 – data gathering: Study of grey literature

So far, the methodological steps have shown that data in this study was made up of textual analysis of terms in a bilingual corpus of development texts, transcripts of semi-structured online interviews with 18 key development stakeholders in Vietnam, autoethnographic researcher accounts, and a survey taken of Irish and Vietnamese development practitioners and policy champions during a feedback workshop. The final data for inclusion in analysis and triangulation in this study was a body of relevant grey literature about development. This literature was gathered from several sources. From my work as a development practitioner,

I was able to source public domain publications, reports, policy documents, media coverage, and social media content, from large donors, development organisations, Vietnam government agencies and other development stakeholders. Several sources were also recommended by colleagues or shared by interview participants as they thought I could benefit from the real-life evidence to support their stories. To ensure the authority, timeliness and relevance of the literature, I checked sources, dates of publications and general topics. Only data from this literature that I deemed to be authoritative, timely and relevant to answering the research questions were used for comparing and contrasting with this study's other data points. These grey literature texts were not included in the corpus for textual analysis because it could not be established that they were appropriate parallel texts (i.e. a text with both an official Vietnamese and English version) and/or they were texts taken from language for general purposes and not the specialised language and domains of knowledge relevant to development work in Vietnam. The grey literature relied on to support arguments in this thesis will be presented in the analytical chapters to follow.

4.5.7 Step 7 – data analysis: Thematic coding

Having completed the methodological steps for data gathering, the research moved on to an analysis phase. While some analysis was done during Phase-One interviews, I implemented a formal thematic analytical strategy immediately after that, drawing on the phased coding strategy developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) because of its relevance to a constructivist epistemology. I adapted their phased strategy slightly because, as mentioned in Section 4.5.3.4, the narrative insights of participants might have changed throughout the reflexive process after Phase-One and into Phase-Two interviews, possibly requiring a reorganisation of themes and patterns of data. This adaptation was reasonable because the case study approach allows for flexibility in analysis to better fit with multiple datasets and the research questions (Patton 1990). The final outcomes from this step were qualitative data that was coded, thematic and presented in a systematic way for triangulation with other data points to answer the specific research questions.

It is important to note that, although the strategy to coding was based on a phased process suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), it did not follow this strategy and their six-phased workflow in a strict sense in this sub-step.

Below, my overall operationalisation of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic coding is explained in more detail in a series of sub-steps.

4.5.7.1 Sub-step 6.1: Familiarise with data

This sub-step started during Phase-One interviews when I began to do some initial analysis, i.e. getting familiar with the depth and breadth of data by “repeatedly reading” it (Braun and Clarke 2006, 87). I also read, transcribed, then translated into English the Phase-One data by myself. For Phase-Two, interview transcription was assisted by a trusted service provider, but I read and translated the data alone. This analytical sub-step was complemented with the autoethnographic step by recording initially emerged themes in reflective journals and notes. I discussed initial themes with my supervisor after Phase-One interviews to identify thematic topics for Phase-Two interviews.

4.5.7.2 Sub-step 6.2: Generate codes

Initial coding after Phase-One interviews was facilitated through simple notes and spreadsheets and was based on *a priori* codes derived from the five main problem space themes (see Section 3.2) and the research questions. These included basic coding rules to explain the units of meaning represented by the code.

Once Phase-Two interviews were completed, I conducted more systematic thematic analysis of all data from 27 interviews transcribed, translated and coded with the support of the NVivo software (Richards and Morse 2012). Rules for inclusion of the codes were established and used consistently throughout this process. While the basic coding system after Phase-One interviews represented broad categories, later these rules for inclusions described in more detail each code in the form of “propositional statements” (Saldaña 2009). This created a codebook of codes and their rules. I then evaluated these codes by re-reading the transcripts to see if passages satisfied these rules (see Appendix C for an example codebook of rules for inclusion and number of codes).

4.5.7.3 Sub-step 6.3: Search for themes

The search for themes involved the organisation of codes into broader categories both at descriptive and interpretive levels. In particular, these categories were organised on NVivo from a range of *a priori* descriptive codes, descriptive codes and *a posteriori* codes with the rules for inclusion and evaluation based on the research questions, participants' responses

and the researcher's inductive reasoning, respectively (Saldaña 2009; Swain 2018). I continued this process up to a stage when I observed saturation through repeated and similar patterns from the data, and the coding process was considered exhaustive to the extent that no new categories, themes and codes needed to be created (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Corbin and Strauss). Then, a final phase entailed "a thorough scan" by which I went through the whole transcripts again, checked all categories and coding rules as well as compared them with his notes to ensure that the final categories, themes, all coded data, annotations and notes had come together as a basis for written presentation. The final outcome of thematic coding was visualised as a robust coding tree with 16 codes being organised into four broad themes to describe the organisation of the interview dataset on which the analyses in this thesis largely rely (Appendix E). These codes and themes derived from the interview data were then triangulated with the other datasets in this thesis.

4.5.8 Step 8 – data analysis and elicitation: Triangulation

Triangulation of data is about taking a variety of data points from two or more methods of data gathering and/or in several theoretical approaches and viewing them together (Saldanha and O'Brien 2013; Flick 2018). This technique has been favoured as a practice in various methodologies and not restricted to case study and ethnography in translation research (Alves 2003; Saldanha and O'Brien 2013). Substantially, the benefit of combining several methodologies such as text analysis and ethnographic methods as a form of triangulation has proven to be useful (Fairclough 2003; Tesseur 2015). I compared and contrasted the interview codes and themes and data, the results of textual analysis, my autoethnographic accounts, survey responses elicited in the feedback workshop and data from a collection of grey literature. I performed this analysis until the most reasonable explanation related to the cases under investigation could be achieved (Stake 1995).

4.6 Style guide to transliterated and translated texts used in this thesis

A final issue of method requires brief discussion before moving to the analytical chapters of this thesis. In order for a reader who does not know Vietnamese to understand some of the arguments in this thesis, transliterations and word-for-word or sense-for-sense gloss translations of some terms and phrases have been included, especially in the chapters that follow. These glosses have been made from Vietnamese into English and vice versa and are simply to facilitate a reader's understanding of the arguments. In many cases, these are not

“official” translations because they have not been used in official documents or speeches or by large donors and development organisations in Vietnam. In such cases, the original terms and phrases will be in italicised text, while the transliterations or glosses will be in normal text, indicated within square brackets. For example:

phúc lợi [welfare]
social protection [an sinh xã hội]

It also is important to note that these meanings, for the purpose of reference, are synthesised from dictionaries, mainly the *Từ điển Anh – Việt/English – Vietnamese Dictionary* (2005) and *Từ điển Anh – Việt/Vietnamese – English Dictionary* (2001) by the Vietnam Institute of Linguistics, and from the researcher’s own notes.

Based on this recognition, a mechanism of presenting development terminology and their translations and reporting terminological analysis (for example, by way of corpus analysis) in this study can be established to use as a guiding principle for the reader to understand the relevant analysis on terminology in this thesis. Specifically, a term will be displayed: (1) in a SL, which, in most cases, will be English or Vietnamese, and (2) with a description of the context of its use. Then, to present the translation of a term, at least three steps are involved, namely: (1) presenting the term in the SL, (2) indicating the context or specialised domain of its use and translation, and (3) displaying the translated term, or its equivalence, as occurred in the TL. Using translation as a means, the communication of the translated term then involves a consideration of how to effectively present it in the TL with equivalent expressions.

4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, to answer the research questions formulated around the broad problems of translation and terminology in development, this study was designed to fit under several theoretical and methodological umbrellas. First, this chapter showed that, in the tradition of sociology of translation, the study was situated in a constructivist worldview that supported the inquiries into sociological and contextual realities and complexity of translation and/in development constructed by experience and perceptions not only of others but also shaped by the researcher’s insider/outsider–practitioner/researcher status. Second, this positionality, however, could be navigated and analysed under the research paradigm of an ethnographically informed case study. The components of this paradigm—a case study and

ethnography—were described and critiqued in detail in this chapter. Third, this methodology effectuated relevant methodological steps and techniques consisting of ethical approval, data gathering steps (textual analysis, interviews, autoethnography, survey and study of grey literature) and data elicitation and analysis steps (thematic coding and triangulation). Finally, the chapter explained the stylistic conventions that will be used in the thesis to present terms and phrases in their original language and in gloss translations or transliterations.

With a detailed explanation of how the research question and sub-questions of this thesis were answered, the next chapter will present an answer to the first research sub-question: *What are illustrative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology?*

Chapter 5 – Development terms and concepts in Vietnam: varied translation equivalents and different understandings

“*Tam sao thất bản*”

[Three reproductions {make} seven versions]

—*Vietnamese idiom*

5.1 Introduction

From the literature review, a research gap has been identified in relation to the shortage of critical inquiries into highly charged buzzwords embedded in development policy and practice (Cornwall and Brock 2005; Glavič and Lukman 2007; Cornwall and Eade 2010; Tesseur and Crack 2020) (see Section 3.2.2). This gap has led to the second research question being posed in the study: *What are illustrative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology?* (SQ1). This chapter addresses this question and shows that these multiple equivalents and understandings are adopted by and communicated among development stakeholders in Vietnam. As explained in Sections 4.5.2 and 4.5.8, the question is answered through the triangulation of the results of textual analysis of a bilingual Vietnamese – English parallel corpus of 20 pairs of development-related documents totalling approximately 1.27 million tokens/1.1 million words, with transcripts of interviews held with 18 stakeholders in Vietnamese development work over two phases. In addition, the mentioned data points are also cross-examined with relevant texts from grey literature on development which were not included in the corpus because they were not appropriate Vietnamese – English parallel texts and/or contained insufficiently specialised language and with autoethnographic researcher reflections.

The chapter begins with a brief review of how examples of terms were chosen for illustration based on their emergence from the data and the methodological steps taken towards the analysis (Section 5.2). Then, the chosen example terms—*wellbeing/well-being/well being, resilience, empowerment, decent work, social accountability, civil society organisations (CSOs), community-based tourism (CBT)* and *career counselling*—will be discussed in detail (Section 5.3). This will include analysis of typical characteristics and context of use of each concept, how each is labelled in English, how the English labels were translated into Vietnamese, and an evaluation of the term and concept mainly drawn from qualitative

insights from interview data. The remainder of the chapter consists of the researcher's reflexive accounts as an autoethnographic data point (Section 5.4) and a summary answer to SQ1 (Section 5.5).

5.2 Defining the examples

The collection of texts comprising the first data point being used for analysis in this chapter—corpus data—was relatively small in size. However, they were authoritative, timely and representative of the population of such texts about eight (sub)domains of development work in Vietnam including rural development, climate change, poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods, gender equality, development M&E, development policy and COVID-19, as described in Section 4.5.2.3. The second data point—interview data—encompassed participants' responses about examples of development concepts and terms considered to be problematic by them, and more broadly about the overall development discourse being used by development stakeholders in Vietnam (see Section 4.5.3). The third data point was grey literature from various sources of public domains (see Section 4.5.6), notably from the UN Vietnam website, the Government of Ireland's Wellbeing framework, the Vietnam Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) bulletin and other media coverages. This data point was used to showcase evidence for use of terms in development discourse more broadly beyond the specialised language parallel corpus. In other words, the examples used in this analysis are defined as noteworthy development-related concepts as are the corresponding linguistic designations—or terms—to label them.

Table 4 below summarises the specific examples of original concepts evidently surfaced from the three main data points: corpus data, interview data and grey literature.

	Original concepts	Presence in the collected data points		
		Corpus data	Interview data	Grey literature
1	<i>advocacy</i>	√	√	√
2	<i>biodynamics</i>		√	
3	<i>career consulting</i>		√	
4	<i>civil society organisations (CSOs)</i>	√	√	√
5	<i>common interest groups/CIGs</i>	√	√	√
6	<i>community-based tourism (CBT)</i>		√	√
7	<i>(career/vocational) counselling/counseling</i>		√	
8	<i>decent work</i>	√	√	√
9	<i>democracy</i>		√	
10	<i>democratisation</i>		√	
11	<i>domestic violence</i>		√	√
12	<i>drop out</i>		√	
13	<i>effective coverage</i>		√	
14	<i>effectiveness</i>		√	
15	<i>efficiency</i>		√	
16	<i>empathy</i>		√	
17	<i>empowerment</i>	√	√	√
18	<i>enrolment</i>		√	
19	<i>environmental footprint</i>		√	
20	<i>gender inequality</i>		√	√
21	<i>gender responsive</i>		√	√
22	<i>gender sensitive</i>		√	√
23	<i>gender transformative</i>		√	√
24	<i>gender-based violence</i>		√	√
25	<i>governance</i>		√	√
26	<i>inclusive development</i>		√	√
27	<i>inclusiveness</i>		√	
28	<i>integrity</i>		√	
29	<i>legal coverage</i>		√	
30	<i>mental health</i>		√	
31	<i>mental wellbeing</i>		√	
32	<i>mindfulness</i>		√	√
33	<i>promotion</i>		√	
34	<i>regenerative tourism</i>		√	
35	<i>repetition</i>		√	
36	<i>resilience</i>	√	√	
37	<i>social accountability</i>	√	√	√
38	<i>social audit</i>	√	√	√
39	<i>STEM lessons</i>		√	
40	<i>sustainability</i>		√	
41	<i>sustainable development</i>		√	√
42	<i>commercial sex workers</i>		√	
43	<i>wellbeing/well-being</i>	√	√	√
44	<i>xã hội hóa</i>		√	

Table 4. List of terms and concepts emerged from data

The presentation of this table is not to claim any statistical significance. Instead, it is to illustrate primarily who talked about what in the interviews and observations from corpus data, and therefore it gives us a sense of the breadth and depth of data. Because this chapter presents this data using an ethnographically informed case study approach, it values each chosen term as an authoritative case under qualitative investigation. As the discussion will show, terms that were voiced by only one participant are just as qualitatively important as terms mentioned by all participants.

In addition, the terms in Table 4 do not typify a complete list of all reachable terminology being used in development practice, whether in the context of Vietnam or more broadly, even though they come from real-world evidence. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the systematic and detailed bilingual textual analysis used to generate examples combined with key stakeholder interview data and general grey literature on development discourse provides convincing support that the eight example concepts and their associated terms chosen for discussion are prevalent and representative evidence of a phenomenon of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of development terminology and concepts.

5.3 Varied translation equivalents and different understandings of development terminology and concepts: an incomplete term list

The eight examples of concepts and terms being discussed in this section are:

- *wellbeing/well-being/well being*
- *resilience*
- *empowerment*
- *decent work*
- *social accountability*
- *civil society organisations (CSOs)*
- *community-based tourism (CBT)*
- *career counselling*

Specifically, each example will be discussed along the line of its conceptual characteristics and context of use mainly drawn from grey literature, then an evaluation of its equivalent designations/terms which is accompanied by relevant support from textual and interview

data. Ultimately the analysis of each example will be directed towards showcasing that there are varied equivalents to answer SQ1, then establishing whether this is likely and potentially a problem for development policy and/or practice in Vietnam as foundation work for answering further research questions later in the thesis.

5.3.1 Wellbeing

5.3.1.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

Wellbeing is one of the promoted themes in the SDGs within the 2030 Agenda of the UN (2015). However, the search for a full meaning of *wellbeing* is not yet complete. According to Lee, Kim and Phillips (2015), the word *wellbeing* was first used as early as the 16th century, and its original meaning closely associated with Aristotle's ethical concept of *eudaemonia* which is defined as "the condition of human flourish or of living well" by the Encyclopaedia Britannica. While it has emerged as a buzzword of the 21st century, *wellbeing* is nonetheless a complex and multi-dimensional concept. It may encompass a number of subjective factors such as the basic material for individuals' good life (for example, food, income, shelter), physical and mental health, good social relations (for example, positive relationships with family and friends), personal safety (security) and freedom of choice and action (such as personal fulfilment and freedom of expression) (Masterson et al. 2019). However, *wellbeing* may also be objective as an exceptionally large amount of interdisciplinary work has been devoted to understanding *wellbeing* as a collective concept by defining objective indicators for measuring its dimensions such as income and wealth of nations. As such, the understanding of *wellbeing* has been in the midst of a contradiction over the conceptual categories of being subjective or objective, or both.

Perhaps the shift of understanding *wellbeing* as an objective and collective concept was boldly marked in 2010 by the announcement of David Cameron, then the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. In a speech given on 25 November 2010, Cameron admitted that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was an incomplete way to measure the country's progress and that it was a critical time for the country to shift its focus from GDP to GWB (general wellbeing). He declared:

From April next year [2011], we will start measuring our progress as a country, not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving; not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life.

(The United Kingdom Government 2010, n.p.)

In fact, according to Gadrey and Jany-Catrice (2006), while GDP implies the desire of nations for “more having” in the development process, it remains the global indicator since the early 1990s to measure wealth. However, this major economic indicator tells us little about the actual *wellbeing* and freedom of individual citizens because it neglects other crucial factors such as public care and social organisation (Anand and Sen 2000). Echoing this consideration, the OECD in 2017 pointed out that macroeconomic statistics, such as GDP, no longer provided a sufficiently detailed picture of the living conditions that ordinary people experience. After firmly stating how improvements in the *wellbeing* of people and households are important to societal progress, they introduced a framework which set out key dimensions for understanding and measuring people’s *wellbeing* through a series of OECD Statistics Working Papers in the period of 2018 – 2020. Among these, perhaps most representative was the work by Llena-Nozal, Martin, and Murin (2019) which defined *wellbeing* as a matured statistical and measurement agenda being adopted by a growing number of countries to guide decision-making and inform budgetary processes.

In 2019, New Zealand became the first country in the world to have its own “wellbeing budget” which, instead of using the traditional economic metrics such as GDP, has favoured a broader system including human health and safety and flourishing to measure the success of policies. Very recently, on 6 July 2021, the Government of Ireland introduced for the first time an initiative called the Wellbeing Framework for Ireland (Government of Ireland 2021) with the vision of enabling all people to live fulfilled lives now and into the future. In terms of implementation, the framework entails a comprehensive set of measures to reflect the impact of public policy, then create a holistic, comprehensive picture of quality of life and how society is progressing as opposed to traditional approaches for measuring economic performance which often do not capture broader aspects, including the environmental impact or people’s lived experiences. Conceptually, the 11 dimensions to define the aspects of lives being fulfilled under this Wellbeing Framework include Subjective wellbeing, Mental and physical health, Income and wealth, Knowledge and skills, Housing and local area environment, Climate and biodiversity, Safety and security, Work and job quality, Time use, Community, social connections and cultural participation and Civic engagement and cultural expression (Figure 2).

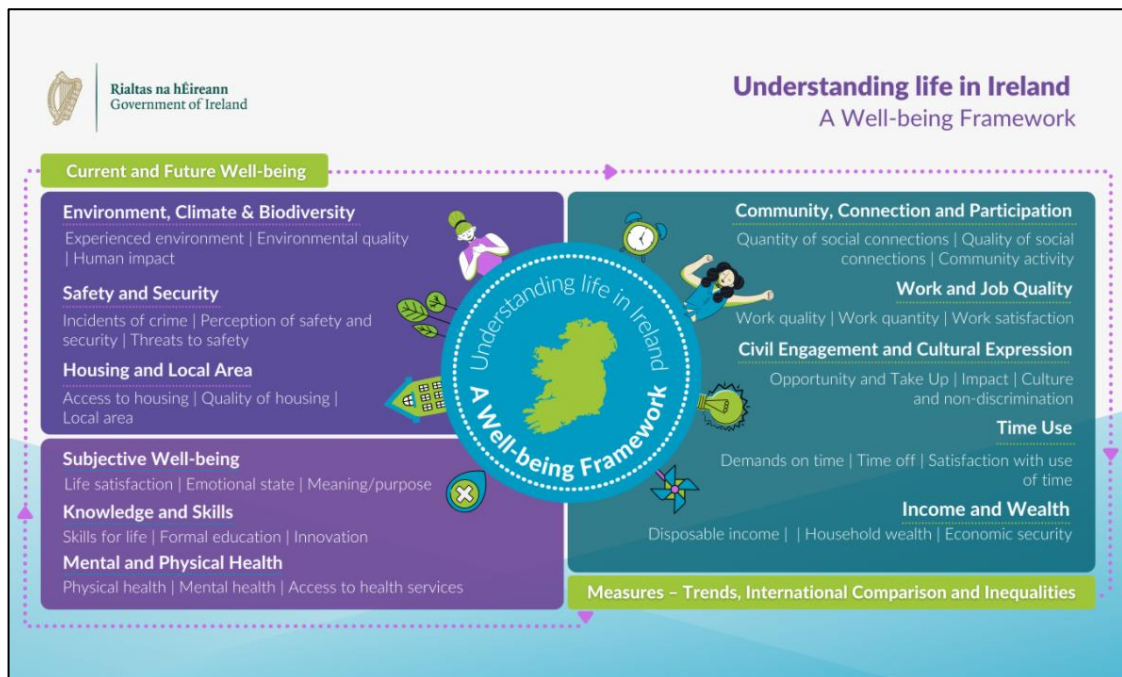


Figure 2. Understanding life in Ireland: A Wellbeing Framework (Government of Ireland 2021)

5.3.1.2 Labelling this concept in English

To label the concept, at least three different designations/terms in English are commonly found and used interchangeably as synonyms: *well-being*, *well being* and *wellbeing*. For example, *well-being* is found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Stevenson 2010). From a cursory glance, this hyphenated term is used frequently in prestigious references such as in the *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Well-being* (Fletcher 2016) and believed to be the preferred form in the United States and Canada (Bignell 2017) to designate an opposition to the concept *ill-being*. The non-hyphenated version, *wellbeing*, however, is no less frequently seen in many contemporary works such as *Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements* by the New York Times bestselling authors Tom Rath and Jim Harter (2010). It is pointed out by Grammarist (2022), an online platform about English grammar and spelling since 2009, that *wellbeing* is acceptable in the United Kingdom and other English-speaking countries, despite *well-being*, *well being* and *wellbeing* being generally the same word.

From reviewing both grey and academic literature on the concept in this current research, I frequently came across *wellbeing* and *well-being* as two most common terms to label the same concept. In this thesis, *wellbeing* is used based on the view that it should refer more broadly to a topic of inquiry rather than to a concept that is specifically opposite to *ill-being* (International Journal of Wellbeing 2011).

5.3.1.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

Manifold Vietnamese designations for the concept *wellbeing* have been recorded in this study, notably from textual analysis data, interview data and grey literature, as shown in Table 5.

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>wellbeing</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	phúc lợi	welfare	√ (9 hits)	√	
2	sức khỏe	health	√ (9 hits)	√	
3	đời sống	life conditions	√ (6 hits)		
4	cuộc sống	life	√ (5 hits)		
5	mức sống	living standards	√ (4 hits)		
6	sinh kế	livelihoods	√ (3 hits)		
7	sự phát triển kinh tế - xã hội	socio-economic development	√ (2 hits)		
8	đời sống kinh tế - xã hội	one's social and economic status	√ (1 hit)		
9	khả năng vươn lên thoát nghèo	ability to break away from poverty	√ (1 hit)		
10	hạnh phúc	happiness		√	√
11	cuộc sống tốt	good life		√	√
12	tình trạng ổn định	stability		√	
13	tình trạng bền vững	sustainability		√	
14	khá giả	well-off		√	
15	an lạc (an nhiên, an yên)	peace		√	
16	bình an – thư thái	safe, sound and at ease		√	
17	thư thái	welfare		√	
18	điều kiện kinh tế	economic conditions		√	
19	phúc lợi xã hội	social welfare		√	
20	khỏe mạnh	good health		√	
21	thịnh vượng	prosperity		√	
22	cuộc sống thịnh vượng	prosperous life		√	
23	triển nở	fulfilment		√	

Table 5. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *wellbeing* recorded from data

Specifically, from textual analysis data, with a small number of occurrences, or *hits*, of totally 40 of the key word *well*being* in the English texts, I was able to retrieve nine different Vietnamese equivalents in the Vietnamese texts. In particular, *phúc lợi* [welfare] and *sức khỏe* [health] had the highest frequency of use in the texts (nine *hits*). Others were *đời sống* [life conditions], *cuộc sống* [life], *mức sống* [living standards], *sinh kế* [livelihoods], *sự phát triển kinh tế - xã hội* [socio-economic development], *đời sống kinh tế - xã hội* [one's social and economic status] and *khả năng vươn lên thoát nghèo* [ability to emerge from poverty].

Corresponding to the aspects of *wellbeing* indicated in corpus data, there were 15 different equivalents of the term recorded from Phase-One and Phase-Two interviews, namely: *hạnh phúc* [happiness], *cuộc sống tốt* [good life], *tình trạng ổn định* [stability], *tình trạng bền vững* [sustainability], *khá giả* [well-off], *an lạc, an nhiên, an yên* [peace], *bình an – thư thái* [safe, sound and at ease], *phúc lợi* [welfare], *điều kiện kinh tế* [economic conditions] *phúc*

lợi xã hội [social welfare], *sức khỏe* [health], *khỏe mạnh* [good health], *thịnh vượng* [prosperity], *cuộc sống thịnh vượng* [prosperous life] and *triển nở* [fulfilment].

Then, the two different designations found in interview data, namely *cuộc sống tốt* [good life] and *hạnh phúc* [happiness], were deemed “official” translations for the term *wellbeing* from the grey literature used in this study as they were observed in the Vietnamese description of SDG3 on the official Vietnam United Nations website (2020) and often referred to by the community of development workers in Vietnam whenever they needed to translate the term.

5.3.1.4 Evaluation

The comprehension and realisation of a general understanding of *wellbeing* in Vietnam—especially in the development sector—is still in its infancy, as is its incorporation into national policy, the development sector and existing frameworks for measurement. This situation has arisen for two reasons. First, because Vietnam is still in the stage of catching up with the speed of globalisation, new concepts and knowledge introduced into the local contexts by institutions, organisations and individuals are still being researched and adapted because of the difference in value systems. In other words, one must bear in mind the local approaches and value systems toward understanding and achieving *wellbeing* (T. Q. N. Nguyễn 2016). Second, the understanding and implementation of *wellbeing* in Vietnam seem to be primarily associated with the adoption and implementation of the SDGs as well as the agendas of international development organisations and programmes, in a process of integrating and localising these agendas into the country’s national policy, as stated in Section 2.3.1.

For example, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been no exception from the process of adjustment and localisation. Not until 2017 and almost two years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by the UN Member States in September 2015 was the *National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* promulgated (under Decision 622/QĐ-TTg dated 10 May 2017 by the Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc) with the support of UNDP and in consultation with ministries, provincial agencies, civil society and development partners. This national action plan set out the Vietnamese versions of the 17 SDGs and 115 specific targets (compared with the global 17 goals and 169 targets) after considering and reviewing Vietnam’s development strategies, policies and programmes to

see how well they aligned with the original SDGs. Then in 2019, an official roadmap for implementing the localised SDGs until 2030 was established (under Decision 681/QĐ-TTg dated 4 June 2019 by the Prime Minister) and promoted across all sectors, levels and localities (under the Government’s Resolution 136/NQ-CP). The Vietnam Directorate for Standards, Metrology and Quality (see Ministry of Science and Technology [2021]) evaluates that the national and global goals and descriptions align well and are quite similar in understanding. Accordingly, the official Vietnamese version for SDG 3, “*Good health and wellbeing*” is “*Đảm bảo cuộc sống khỏe mạnh và tăng cường phúc lợi cho mọi người ở mọi lứa tuổi*” [Ensure healthy life and enhance welfare for people of all ages]³.

However, from interview data, *wellbeing* was also reported to be not only difficult to understand but also problematic in a number of ways. The general perception was that, even though the participants understood the concept well in English, the equivalents they had to use when they translated the term into Vietnamese did not convey the original meaning well enough because there were highly diverse aspects of meaning associated with the original term and concept. It was not surprising when experienced development practitioners, such as Participant 1 and Participant 6, admitted consistently in the two phases of interviews that they did not know how to translate *wellbeing* into Vietnamese, because any equivalent would turn out inaccurate. As the quotes from these participants’ Phase-Two interviews show, both emphasised the multiple aspects of meanings *wellbeing* actually covered in various fields of development work (see transcript lines 5420 – 5421 and 5813 – 5816 in Appendix G for the full interview context).

Uh, we can’t translate *wellbeing*. That’s right. We don’t know how to translate that. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

With *wellbeing*, I find it still very challenging for me, although *wellbeing* is a term I use often, but if I want to translate it into Vietnamese, I am still not convinced by a translation that makes me feel comfortable and confident to use. (P6-Ph1, NGO worker/researcher)

Because of this challenge, the practice of adopting the UN equivalents to translate *wellbeing* had become popular to ensure consistency, especially in document translation, despite the

³ *Phúc lợi* was particularly transliterated as *welfare* in this example by me based on the textual analysis result which was also presented in Table 5.

view that they may not be the best translations. This practice was plainly reported by a development worker which was also resonated by other participants (for example, see transcript lines 7495 – 7501 for Participant 11’s opinion in Appendix G).

[W]e all take the translation of UN Vietnam for the SDGs as a reference point. However, even the translation of the SDGs by UN Vietnam has different versions. In the short version, *wellbeing* in SDG3 is translated as *cuộc sống tốt*, but in the interpretation it is translated as *hạnh phúc*. (P8-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

But interestingly and importantly, some participants pointed out that the equivalents they used in their work did not correspond with the official translation of the Vietnamese government, *phúc lợi* [welfare] (Vietnam Directorate for Standards, Metrology and Quality 2021), nor with the above official Vietnam UN translations, *sức khỏe/khỏe mạnh* [good health].

It is difficult in that many people also understand that *wellbeing* is not *phúc lợi*, although in English it has a meaning of *welfare*, but it is not *phúc lợi* as understood the meaning of *phúc lợi* in Vietnamese. Then they have to avoid that, and they see in its multiple meanings, there is an element of *khỏe mạnh* so they translate it as *khỏe mạnh*. In other contexts it may be fine, but unfortunately in the SDGs it comes along with the word *health* which causes a problem. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Yet, even though participants may have had different preferences over how the term should be translated, they were well aware of the fact that, because there were no agreed-upon equivalents, alternative versions had to be used interchangeably across different specific domains, depending on the audience and context of use.

[I]t depends on the specific field, on the audience and context (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

In fact, a number of examples were given by participants with reference to how *wellbeing* could also be translated in many different ways to better suit the mentioned factors regarding domains, audience and contexts of use. When the concept was associated with ecological wellbeing or economic wellbeing in several development projects, *wellbeing* could be translated as *tình trạng ổn định* [stability], *điều kiện kinh tế* [economic conditions] and *khá giả* [well-off] (see transcript lines 7019 – 7035 and 7086 – 7194, Appendix G for instances given by Participant 4 and Participant 14, respectively):

In a nutshell, from grey literature, there were three different equivalents in Vietnamese for *wellbeing* regarded as “official” translations for the term, namely *phúc lợi* (the Vietnamese government’s version), *cuộc sống tốt* and *hạnh phúc* (both UN versions). Corpus data provided nine different translation equivalents for *wellbeing*, while the interview dataset revealed another 15 different equivalents (Table 5). It seemed that, the more domains of development from which *wellbeing* was used, the more equivalents there would be, when we compared the eight (sub)domains of development to which corpus data belonged (see Table 1, Section 4.5.2.3) against the broader domains to which participants’ work belonged such as mental wellbeing, social welfare, civic engagement, to name a few.

5.3.2 Resilience

5.3.2.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

Besides *wellbeing*, *resilience* has arisen strongly to become a concept and term embedded in the current spheres of humanitarian, aid and development work as well as in disaster risk reduction and vulnerability (Matthews 2020). While *resilience* is one of the two objects mentioned explicitly in SDG13 (Target 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related disasters), it has also been the main spirit of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Major development agencies and donors have had their own definitions and implementation frameworks of *resilience*, including the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) (2009), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (2012), the European Commission (2012), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (2012) and the OECD (2013). As specified in a report by the European Commission (2015), *resilience* roughly belongs to the three types of capacities of absorption, adaptation and transformation.

However, Sturgess and Sparrey (2016), in their publication for the DFID (now Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office), “*What is resilience?*”, asserted that there was no standard definition of the term; instead, it is multi-sectoral with a long history of use since the 1970s across different disciplines including behavioural social science and psychology, ecology, economics, engineering and infrastructure as well as disaster risk reduction and development assistance. In development practice nowadays, *resilience* represents a multi-level approach to deal with change. For example, *resilience* has been given special attention

in the Irish Government’s Wellbeing Framework mentioned above, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to highlight Irish people’s resilience, their innovation, creativity, community spirit and willingness to contribute towards the collective goods (Government of Ireland 2021).

5.3.2.2 Labelling this concept in English

In this study, I was aware that the appearance of a new concept, whether a borrowed one from other areas of specialisation or a newly created term, may bring about various synonymous terms (Silvia and Nolet 2001). Furthermore, it is important to restate that development practice is interdisciplinary and the fields of work are highly diverse (see Section 2.3.1). Nevertheless, from the eight different areas of development work represented in corpus data and around fifteen other areas of work of interview participants (see Table 3 in 4.5.3.1), only one English term was used to label the concept: *resilience*.

5.3.2.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

This study recorded 13 different Vietnamese equivalents to designate the concept *resilience* in total (Table 6). Among these, *khả năng thích ứng* [adaptability] was the most frequently yielded equivalent from textual analysis data (with 70 hits). Three equivalents found from the corpus, namely *khả năng thích ứng* [adaptability], *khả năng phục hồi* [ability to recovery] and *khả năng ứng phó* [ability to endurance], were also found in interview data. None of the recorded equivalents were observed in the grey literature reviewed by me.

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>resilience</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	khả năng thích ứng	adaptability	√ (70 hits)	√	
2	khả năng phục hồi	ability to recover	√ (51 hits)	√	
3	khả năng ứng phó	ability to endure	√ (9 hits)	√	
4	khả năng chống chịu	ability to resist	√ (20 hits)		
5	khả năng chống chọi	ability to confront	√ (7 hits)		
6	khả năng kháng cự	ability to safeguard	√ (7 hits)		
7	sức bật tinh thần	mental impulse		√	
8	khả năng vượt khó	ability to overcome difficulties		√	
9	khả năng chống chịu bền bỉ	resistance and durability		√	
10	khả năng phục hồi sau tổn thất	ability to recover from damage		√	
11	bền vững	sustainability		√	
12	vững mạnh	firmness and strength		√	
13	kiên cường	unbending		√	

Table 6. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *resilience* recorded from data

5.3.2.4 Evaluation

In the context of Vietnam, *resilience* has been increasingly discussed by various international donors to promote Vietnam's transition toward sustainable development. However, to date, like the example of *wellbeing*, there has been no agreed equivalent in Vietnamese to translate *resilience*, and an unclear understanding of the concept might potentially impact policy-making and the effectiveness of development initiatives. As a case in point, until November 2017, *resilience* was never mentioned in any official government documents or speeches in Vietnam. Without an official explanation of the concept so far, *resilience* remains absent in the practical activities of local experts and in policy-making (AREP South Asia 2018).

This finding supports the claim that the translation equivalent of *resilience* most frequently lines up to the specific domain of climate change adaptation. This predominant equivalent is heavily conceptually associated with environmental discourse. The comment below from an interview participant resonates with the mentioned claim:

Resilience is mentioned again and again in the development sector and particularly related to climate change. (P7-Ph1, development practitioner)

However, the chosen texts in the corpus dealt with much more than climate change and *resilience* is used in many other (sub)domains of development beyond environmental development, for example, in projects which focus on improving the mental health of vulnerable groups:

Resilience in this area [mental health] has been around for a long time and we still translate it as *khả năng phục hồi* in a personal perspective. However, recently, when I consulting with others, I see other translations, namely *sức bất tinh thần* [spiritual pliancy] and *khả năng vượt khó* [ability to overcome difficulties]. (P9-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

It was interesting that when asked about different equivalents in Vietnamese for *resilience* that participants knew or had used at work, their responses were very often given in the form of questions for the researcher. This tells us that, while the participants acknowledged that there was no standard translation equivalent for the term, they themselves were even not entirely certain about the existing equivalents. For example, the following question was not only asked by a donor representative about the commonly-used equivalent *khả năng chống chịu* [ability to endure] but also by other development practitioners and NGO workers during the interviews (see transcript lines 1711 – 1718 and 3191 – 3198 in Appendix G for similar questions from Participant 4 and Participant 8, respectively):

Actually, like I said, there won't be a standard translation. For example, when I say *resilience* of a community, and during storms and floods... do they usually translate it as *khả năng chống chịu* [ability to endure]? (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

However, it was not uncommon that participants observed or had already created different equivalents for the term in more common, non-specialised language for stakeholders to understand even from the same specialised areas or (sub)domains of their development work:

There are many translations for *resilience*, and I find most of them “*nôm na*”, such as *bền vững, vững mạnh, kiên cường*, and so on. None of them properly summarises the essence of *resilience*, so it has to be “*nôm na*”, expressed as a series of words for people to understand. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

To summarise, the multiple Vietnamese equivalents of the term *resilience* recorded in this study validated participants' responses from the interviews about their different understandings about the concept across various areas of development work. Although there was no uniform/standard translation, one common linguistic form of the different equivalents, however, represented a sense of ability to change or responding to change (i.e. *the ability to* + action, eg. *recover, adapt, endure, sustain*, and so on). Altogether, these disparities in translation and understanding of *resilience* resonated well with the multi-sectoral nature of the concept (Sturges and Sparrey 2016).

5.3.3 Empowerment

5.3.3.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

Much literature has been written about *empowerment* as a mainstream and extremely central concept in development in the 1980s (Cornwall 2016). However, the concept has proven complex to define and understand in its long history. Widely operationalised in the policies and programmes of bilateral and multilateral agencies as well as NGOs (Oakley and Clayton 2000), it is hard to imagine nowadays any contemporary development initiative not pursuing *empowerment* as a goal or an approach to implementation. Like the presence of *wellbeing* and *resilience* in the SDGs, *empowerment* is explicitly integrated in the mission statement of SDG5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. In this manner, one often comes across *gender empowerment, women empowerment, community empowerment, youth empowerment*, and so on, as popular compounds that appear in the language of many development interventions.

Similar to the cases previously discussed in this chapter, *empowerment* is extremely difficult to grasp. Rowland (1998) pointed out that the concept was ill-defined in development discourse and practice, and users tended to assume that the meaning would be understood without a proper explanation. Oakley and Clayton (2000) suggest that we must recognise this conceptual shortcoming before attempting to assess the course of empowerment of any particular development intervention.

Synchronously, if *empowerment* has become central in development discourse, *power* is central to understanding this concept. In this regard, a rather concise definition of *empowerment* was given by Sen (1997, 2): “Empowerment is, first and foremost, about power; changing power relations in favour of those who previously exercised little power over their own lives”. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) (2006) conceptualised *empowerment* as an emancipation process in which the disadvantaged could be empowered to exercise their rights, obtain access to resources and participate actively in the process of shaping society and making decisions.

Among the many definitions from the time *empowerment* first appeared in the 1980s in the development landscape (Cornwall 2016) until recently, this thesis has listed two such definitions given by Sen (1997) and SDC (2006) because these two definitions are very closely related to the collected data on how *empowerment* was understood and translated into Vietnamese. To reaffirm the observation of Luttrell et al. (2009) that *empowerment* does not translate easily or equally into several languages, both the textual and interview datasets illustrated varied translation equivalents and how the concept was understood differently in the Vietnam context based on the tensions created by linking *empowerment* to the elements of *power* and *rights* which were explicitly prescribed in the mentioned definitions.

5.3.3.2 Labelling this concept in English

Empowerment has been the only English term to designate the corresponding concept in this study.

5.3.3.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

From corpus data, *empowerment* was most often translated as *trao quyền* [giving power/rights] (23 hits). The second frequently used equivalent for the term was *nâng cao vị thế* [elevating the status] (9 hits). The other two different versions were *thúc đẩy quyền năng*

[promoting power] and *phân quyền* [sharing power/rights] which appeared much less often. From the interviews, 5 new equivalents were recorded apart from *trao quyền* and *nâng cao vị thế* which were also found in corpus data (Table 7).

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>empowerment</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	trao quyền	giving power/rights	√ (23 hits)	√	
2	nâng cao vị thế	elevating the status	√ (9 hits)	√	
3	thúc đẩy quyền năng	promoting power	√ (1 hit)		
4	phân quyền	sharing power/rights	√ (1 hit)		
5	tạo quyền	creating power/rights		√	
6	tăng quyền	increasing power/rights		√	
7	nâng cao quyền năng	increasing power		√	
8	nâng cao năng lực	building the capacity		√	
9	thúc đẩy sự tham gia	promoting participation		√	

Table 7. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *empowerment* recorded from data

5.3.3.4 Evaluation

If we merely consider these translations as different versions used in different contexts and for different audiences, *empowerment* may seem similar to the previously discussed examples, at least on the surface. However, we may also see that, in fact, the specific Vietnamese versions with the element of *quyền* embedded in it, such as *trao quyền* and *phân quyền*, are understood in two different ways, depending on whether *quyền* is understood either as power or rights, because both *power* and *rights* are dictionary equivalent translations of *quyền* in any Vietnamese – English dictionary (whereas *quyền*, *quyền năng* and *quyền lực* are the dictionary translations for *power*). From here, we not only begin to observe fundamental differences in understanding the concept of *empowerment*, but also see their close relationship with the two definitions of Sen’s (1997) and SDC’s (2006). Since *quyền* as *rights* has been considered a sensitive matter in Vietnam (see Section 2.3.1), it might hinder development work.

So many people can think of *rights* and politically sensitive issues such as *nhân quyền* [human rights], then *empowerment* will not be accepted in many contexts in Vietnam and it will hinder development work. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Indeed, this fundamental difference was confirmed by participants to relate to political sensitivity and power imbalance as participants referred to *trao quyền* [giving rights] as the conventional equivalent for *empowerment* in the current situation:

But in Vietnam’s political system at the present time, they will not accept the expression *trao quyền*, because *trao quyền* can be understood as “do whatever you like”. (P8-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The quoted development practitioner revealed above how *empowerment* was translated as *trao quyền* entailed a disagreement among stakeholders in practice. Consequently, because of this tension, many participants shared this opinion and reported that they needed to completely change from translating *empowerment* as *trao quyền* into, for example, *nâng cao quyền năng* [increasing the power] or *nâng cao năng lực* [building the capacity] (for example, see transcript lines 5730 – 5738 and 5740 – 5744 in Appendix G for Participant 6’s approach). In another example, an NGO worker talked about how *trao quyền* as *giving rights* prevented the approval of their project at local levels, and once again, they had to “tweaked” the translation to make it sound more appropriate:

[T]here were cases that, if *trao quyền* was used in documents for submission for project approval, then the project may not be approved [...] But if that could be changed to *thúc đẩy sự tham gia của thanh niên* [promoting youth participation] for example, then it got approved. (P8-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

That *quyền* in *trao quyền* was understood as *rights* was not only verified by the participants, by also by the development stakeholders they worked with on a day-to-day basis—in the event that these stakeholders did not fully understand what *empowerment* meant but immediately referred to *quyền* as *rights*.

For example, when I work with single moms, and I introduce, “today I come from [redacted] to work to “empower” you...” [laughter], then the sisters will not understand what *empowerment* means [...] Then they’ll ask, “What *rights* do you give me here?” [laughter]. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

However, although *quyền* as *rights* can be a problematic interpretation because of political sensitivity in the current Vietnamese context, it can also be turned into an advantage. The following opinion of a participant showed that the element of *quyền* as *rights* could be integrated into the understanding of *empowerment* as a premise to promote rights, and thereby empowered people such as women could exercise their rights as a consequence of *empowerment*.

Some parties still have problems with the translation of this term and they think that the problem lies in the fact that we often associate *empowerment* with the element *quyền*, ie. *rights*. I think this element should be included in the understanding of *empowerment*, specifically *empowering women* may also mean that many parties are now also trying to create conditions for women to exercise their *quyền*, *rights* such

as “the right to self-nominate... as a candidate for a seat in the National Assembly” for example. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

We have seen in the term list how *empowerment* was also related to *participation* as observed in the equivalent *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* [promote participation] (see Table 7). The following stories of development practitioners who often had to organise training events and conferences on the topic of *empowerment* explained more clearly how *empowerment* was also understood as a process where the translator and other stakeholders were all involved as facilitators and co-creators of that process. In particular, by using a translation that was different to *trao quyền* and more friendly, the stakeholders (for example, the local women, the Women’s Union and the Youth Union [see Section 2.3.1 for a description of these stakeholders’ roles] as mentioned in one of the stories below) would understand *empowerment* as an opportunity to participate in a development initiative. Vice versa, where *power* was translated as *quyền* or *quyền lực*, then the local understanding of *empowerment* might bring about reservation among stakeholders to participate.

[I]t may cause reservations among stakeholders if we translate *power* as *quyền* or *quyền lực*. (P10-Ph2, NGO worker)

So I’d say, translation also contributes to the process of changing the approach in development work [...] For example, on the same conference poster, “*Women Empowerment*” is translated as “*Hội thảo trao quyền cho phụ nữ*”; it is possible that people such as single moms do not necessarily understand what *trao quyền* means and they don’t find it relevant to them so they are curious and ask, “Can I attend?” [...] So such communication has inadvertently excluded many people who need to be approached. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In fact, to overcome hindrance to participation and development work, there have been organisations and individual development workers who have started to adopt other equivalents, for example, *tăng quyền* [increasing power/rights] and *tạo quyền* [creating power/rights] which reflected a change not only in understanding the concept but also in the approach of implementation (for example, see transcript lines 6159 – 6169 in Appendix G for the opinion from Participant 2). Having said this, the element of *quyền* and its English equivalents *rights* and *power* remain as the core spirit in understanding the concept.

To conclude, from the two datasets, 9 different translation equivalents for *empowerment* were observed. Both textual and interview data showed that *trao quyền* was the most common equivalent being used in development work in Vietnam. However, different understandings of *empowerment* have evolved around the tension created through and a level

of resistance when the element *quyền* can refer to both *power* and *rights*. These different understandings necessitate the formulation of different translations for the term by development practitioners. This formulation implies two opposite views being observed from the participants' responses. First, it reveals that those who engage with the translation of *empowerment* are aware that it is how the term is translated that determines their approach to development work (for example, as in preserving the element of *quyền* as *rights* in the understanding and translation of *empowerment* to promote the exercise of rights of women during the empowerment process, or to use more user-friendly equivalents to promote participation and avoid political sensitivity). The second view is that, the way development agencies and practitioners understand the concept and their approach may well determine how they translate the term in different ways (for example, how an organisation decides whether they should *trao quyền* [giving power/rights], *tăng quyền* [increasing power/rights] or *tạo quyền* [creating power/rights] for/to their development stakeholders in practice).

5.3.4 Decent work

5.3.4.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

On 11 March 2021, an article in Vietnamese language titled “*Mở rộng diện bao phủ an sinh xã hội qua phát triển việc làm bền vững*” [Expanding social security coverage through developing decent work] was published on the official bulletin of the MOLISA (2021). The first and second paragraphs of the article read:

Đây là thông tin được đưa ra tại Hội thảo đánh giá cuối kỳ về việc làm thỏa đáng giai đoạn 2017- 2021 do Bộ LĐ-TBXH phối hợp với ILO Việt Nam tổ chức ngày 10/3 tại Hà Nội [This is the information provided at the Final Review Conference on decent work for the period 2017-2021 organised by the MOLISA in collaboration with ILO Vietnam on March 10 in Hà Nội].

Việc làm thỏa đáng và các trụ cột về tạo việc làm, an sinh xã hội, quyền tại nơi làm việc và đối thoại xã hội đã trở thành những thành phần không thể thiếu của Chương trình nghị sự về Phát triển Bền vững 2030. Ở Việt Nam, việc làm thỏa đáng từ lâu đã được xem là một cấu phần của nền kinh tế thị trường theo định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa đang được xây dựng [Decent work and its pillars of employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue have become integral components of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In Vietnam, decent work has long been seen as a component of the socialist-oriented market economy which is under construction].

As an outcome of the above event, in September of the same year, the ILO published the report entitled *Country Programme Review: Viet Nam Decent Work, Country Programme*

2017 – 2021. The title of the official Vietnamese version of the same report was *Đánh giá Chương trình Hợp tác Quốc gia về Việc làm Bền vững tại Việt Nam, giai đoạn 2017 – 2021*.

Because the MOLISA article and the ILO reports (in English and Vietnamese) share the same policy agenda of *decent work*, one might observe two different translation equivalents for *decent work*, namely *việc làm bền vững* [sustainable work] and *việc làm thỏa đáng* [satisfactory work]. It is also noticeable that in the title and the two quoted paragraphs of the above article, the two different Vietnamese equivalents were used. Besides *công việc tốt* [good work], *việc làm tốt, thỏa đáng* [good and satisfactory work] was the Vietnamese version for *decent work* in the description of SDG8 on the UN Vietnam website (Figures 3-1 and 3-2).

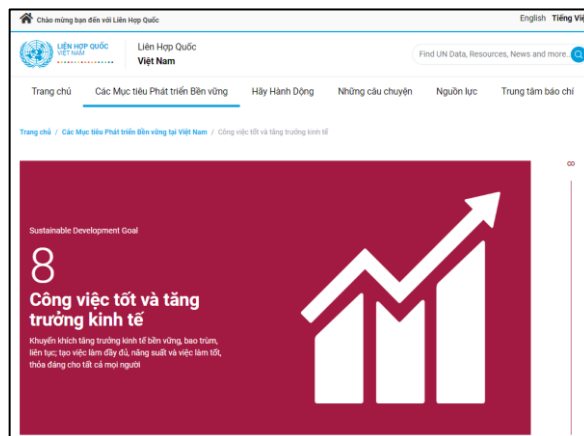


Figure 3-1. Description of SDG8, “Decent work and economic growth”, on the UN Vietnam, Vietnamese version

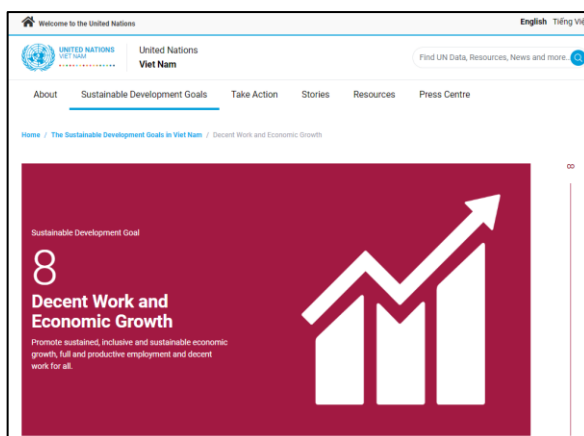


Figure 3-2. Description of SDG8, “Decent work and economic growth”, on the UN Vietnam, English version

5.3.4.2 Labelling this concept in English

Consistently throughout the study, *decent work* has been found as the only English label to designate the concept.

5.3.4.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

As mentioned above, two equivalents were observed from grey literature, namely *công việc tốt* [good work] and *việc làm tốt, thỏa đáng* [good and satisfactory work]. However, these two equivalents were not found in either the textual analysis data or interview data, which together yielded five other equivalents to translate *decent work* (Table 8).

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>decent work</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	<i>công việc tốt</i>	good work			√
2	<i>việc làm tốt, thỏa đáng</i>	good and satisfactory work			√
3	<i>việc làm đầy đủ và thu nhập ổn định</i>	full employment with stable income	√ (1 hit)		
4	<i>việc làm ổn định</i>	stable employment/work	√ (2 hits)		
5	<i>việc làm bền vững</i>	sustainable work		√	
6	<i>việc làm thỏa đáng</i>	satisfactory work		√	
7	<i>việc làm xứng đáng</i>	deserving work		√	

Table 8. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *decent work* recorded from data

5.3.4.4 Evaluation

Again, the example of *decent work* exemplified different understandings of development stakeholders in Vietnam about concepts introduced by major development players and donors including the central government, the ILO and the UN through their descriptions of the SDGs. Participants also considered *decent work* a problematic term to translate into Vietnamese for a number of reasons.

For example, aware of both *việc làm bền vững* and *việc làm thỏa đáng* being the seemingly official equivalents of *decent work*, an interview participant reflected on their experience of having to decide between the two during a meeting with local government organisations and CSOs in which they were tasked to provide simultaneous interpreting:

This is a term coined by ILO, and translated by the Vietnamese as *việc làm bền vững*. We see that *bền vững* and *decent* are two completely different concepts [...] because that was simultaneous interpreting, I couldn't explain to the audience [...] I decided not to translate *decent work* as *việc làm bền vững* but *việc làm thỏa đáng* [satisfactory work]. (P7-Ph1, development practitioner)

It was interesting that the participant related the element of *bền vững* in *việc làm bền vững* to *bền vững* in *phát triển bền vững* which was *sustainable* [development]. While *phát triển bền vững* is obviously the official equivalent for sustainable development, *bền vững* is indeed the dictionary meaning of *sustainable*. It was also interesting that the participant explained how they preferred to relate *decent* to *thỏa đáng* [satisfactory] and *xứng đáng* [deserving]. In fact, since the dictionary equivalent for *thỏa đáng* is *satisfactory*, *việc làm thỏa đáng* from the above story can also be translated into English as *satisfactory work*. But above all, the preferred translation in this particular case, as decided by the participant, was *việc làm thỏa đáng* with a clear distinction to *việc làm bền vững*, which was understood by the participant as “*that it does not change, it is always stable, people do not change jobs, etc.*” In the same interview, the participant attempted to provide a concise definition for *decent work* as follows:

In my opinion, this term should be explained in the direction of it being a normal job that generates a stable income, being done on a day-to-day basis and for a long time. (P7-Ph1, development practitioner)

However, having to choose a certain translation equivalent for *decent work* would not work sometimes in development and some levels of explanation were needed to bring about the full understanding of development ideas such as *decent work* in the communication with various stakeholders, as revealed in the following comment from a development practitioner/researcher:

Because the above concepts are too broad, it is not possible to have a translation that summarises the meaning. What I want to say is, in development work with many stakeholders with different backgrounds in knowledge, we must handle it in a way that we combine some possible translations with a certain level of explanation. (P12-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

The element *ổn định* [stable] illustrated in the corpus data coincided with the understanding of a participant about *decent work*, although they thought *ổn định* was only one aspect of decent work:

The common interpretation and translation for this term is *công việc ổn định* [stable job], or *đủ sống* [a job to ensure sufficient living]. But speaking in a “*nôm na*” way, *decent* is about meeting certain requirements, and *ổn định* [stability] is just one of those requirements. (P12-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

A new aspect of *decent* was also discussed by another participant who related decent to dignity, hence recommended that *decent work* should also be inclusive of the aspect of maintaining the dignity of employees:

It is work to make money, but how work should be to ensure that the dignity of the employee is maintained, not exploited or abused [...] It is a work of quality, not a work that is simply labour-intensive, but there is an implication of quality in it. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

5.3.5 Social accountability

5.3.5.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

It is challenging to find a consensus in understanding and translating *social accountability*. Like *power* in *empowerment*, defining *social accountability* has resulted in various dimensions in practice associated with the concept of *accountability* which is central in political science and financial accounting but bearing disparate meanings (Lindberg 2013). A great deal of efforts to conceptualise *social accountability* in the development world has been made since its first emergence in the 2000s (Joshi and Houtzager 2012).

Mario Marcel, the Senior Director of the World Bank's Governance Global Practice called *social accountability* a buzzword but also the "new normal" in development (2015). The World Bank began its work on *social accountability* in 2001 with the growing belief that this was the key instrument to address governance issues, increase development effectiveness through improved public service delivery and more informed policy design as well as empowerment, although the most frequently cited World Bank definition of the concept only came to light in 2004. Accordingly, *social accountability* is an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement whereby ordinary citizens and/or civil society organisations participate directly or indirectly in exacting (Malena, Forster, and Singh 2004).

In the context of Vietnam, a high level of enthusiasm from big development agencies like the World Bank and UNDP has been observed in leading the rise of *social accountability*. To adapt to the changing local socio-political needs arising from the country's transition towards being a middle-income country, the focus on INGOs in Vietnam has also been shifted to developmental governance, including capacity building, empowerment, participation in decision-making, market governance, and social accountability (V. T. Nguyễn et al. 2015; Tạ 2016).

The most comprehensive and in-depth investigation on *social accountability* in the development sector in Vietnam is the study of Tạ (2016). According to Tạ (2016), *social accountability* was first introduced into Vietnam around 2003/04 together with the pilot adoption of the Citizen Report Card by the World Bank, the Sweden International Development Agent (SIDA) and the Vietnam Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) as a joint effort to implement *social accountability*. Since then, the term has attracted attention and interest of many organisations, especially NGOs.

In the Vietnam context, as observed in an earlier work of Vasavakul (2014, 44), *accountability* was defined as the responsibility to explain and present (a case or a justification), or answerability, and translated as *trách nhiệm giải trình*, which is almost a word-for-word translation (i.e. *trách nhiệm* [responsibility] *giải trình* [to explain]). L. Hoàng (2017) points out, in Article 3.1 of the Vietnam Government's Decree 90/2013/ND-CP dated 8 August 2013 regulating the accountability of state agencies in implementing assigned duties and authorities, *accountability* (of state agencies) is defined as the “responsibility of state agencies to provide, explain, and clarify information about the execution of their assigned duties and authorities, and their responsibilities in implementing such duties and authorities”. L. Hoàng (2017) seemed to have endorsed the Vasavakul's (2014) earlier translation for *accountability* which was *trách nhiệm giải trình*.

5.3.5.2 Labelling this concept in English

Social accountability has been the English label for the concept as found in this study.

5.3.5.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

In general, the textual and interview datasets unveiled 4 different translation equivalents in Vietnamese for *social accountability* (Table 9). Among the 3 versions found in interview data, *trách nhiệm giải trình* was also recorded in grey literature but not in the textual analysis corpus data. However, from corpus data, one new Vietnamese equivalent to translate *social accountability* was found: *trách nhiệm xã hội*. This is a more simplified, word-for-word translation which referred to accountability as *trách nhiệm* (to combine with *xã hội* [social]) and not as the seemingly official *trách nhiệm giải trình*.

	Vietnamese equivalents of social accountability	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	trách nhiệm giải trình	responsibility to explain		√	√
2	trách nhiệm xã hội	social responsibility	√ (1 hit)		√
3	kiểm toán xã hội	social audit		√	
4	giám sát xã hội	social monitoring		√	

Table 9. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of social accountability recorded from data

5.3.5.4 Evaluation

The data points, especially from interviews, reiterated well the challenges of defining *social accountability* in the literature, particularly regarding the mixed perspectives around the core notion of *accountability*.

One NGO worker reported that *trách nhiệm giải trình* as the translation for *social accountability* is most commonly used by UNICEF in their development work in Vietnam. However, the participant also revealed that the aspects of *kiểm toán* [audit] or *giám sát* [monitor] should also be incorporated in the understanding of the concept (see also transcript lines 6170 – 6181, Appendix G for a similar relation by the same participant in the Phase-Two interview):

Social accountability, many organisations including UNICEF translate that as *trách nhiệm giải trình*. (P2-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Indeed, according to Tạ (2016), *kiểm toán xã hội* [social audit] was also the translation equivalent for *social accountability* introduced by the World Bank, then promoted and used widely by UNICEF Vietnam. From here, we can see that it is evident that the inconsistency in understanding the concept of *social accountability* has led to differences in “their approach of doing development”. This difference in practice, although all expressed in a language that has been concretised in the localised tools for implementing *social accountability* of the World Bank and UNICEF, has made this translation (*kiểm toán xã hội*) perhaps the most often criticised one as it leads to misunderstandings mainly because one will directly refer *kiểm toán* [audit] to financial audit.

The government doesn't like these and so it doesn't want organisations to carry out those activities [laughter], because in their thinking, the audit here is about the numbers, money, finance... because it's *kiểm toán* [audit], a very sensitive thing [...] *Kiểm toán xã hội* sounds so stressful. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

This finding resonates with Tạ's (2016) observation that since *kiểm toán* [audit] may suggest supervision on money issues which is considered as sensitive in the context of Vietnam, using this translation in this context may prevent stakeholders from participating in the implementation. However, this problem seems to extend to the entire terminology used in the area of *social accountability* and not just how it is translated as *kiểm toán xã hội*. In the next quotation, the participant acknowledged that there was another equivalent, *giám sát xã hội* [social monitoring], but even this translation had proven problematic:

But if we say that we come in to *giám sát* [monitor] and more, to *giám sát xã hội* [monitor the society]... sometimes I think because of the old point of view, when that practice was not popular, it sounded very “counter-revolutionary” [...] What they [the government] are most afraid of is us trying to “find worms in the leaves” and point out their mistakes. And as an international organisation, we might bring those mistakes to the world abroad. Usually they will be most afraid of such things. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In a nutshell, while *social accountability* is no longer a new concept, development organisations in Vietnam perceive it differently in many aspects. In the context of Vietnam, it is understandable that organisations are using the term *trách nhiệm giải trình* as the major equivalent for the English designation, and this Vietnamese label has been recognised in legal documents and promoted by the major development players such as the World Bank or UNICEF. However, even so, this usage might not be accepted by all development stakeholders, especially those from local governments. This implies that the different equivalents may sound confrontational and evoke some loss of the sense of participation.

5.3.6 Civil society organisations (CSOs)

5.3.6.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

In Vietnamese language, the two compound nouns *xã hội dân sự* [civil society] and *xã hội công dân* [civic society] are often used to denote the concept of *civil society*. When discussing these two translations, Hannah (2007) pointed out that, despite the unclear etymology, while *xã hội công dân* seemed to have been preferred in official Vietnamese writings in the early 1990s when international donors began pressurising Vietnam to include civil society in development plans, in present-day Vietnam, however, *xã hội dân sự* has become more favoured. In their *Handbook of International Relations Terminology*, Đào and Lê (2013) adopted the term *xã hội dân sự* to define *civil society* as a public space where citizens and groups could engage in political activities independently from the government.

Civil society is composed of NGOs that are able to rebalance the influence of the state, or can prevent the state from overpowering and dominating the entire society.

In this manner, nowadays, *tổ chức xã hội dân sự* [civil society organisations] has become the most widely-used and official Vietnamese label to translate the terms *civil society organisations* (CSO). With just a simple Google search, we can observe a considerably large number of publications and official documents of major international institutions and development organisations in which this Vietnamese term has been used. For example, available on my computer at this time of writing are 3 such documents: Asian Development Bank's *Báo cáo tóm tắt về xã hội dân sự: Việt Nam (Civil Society Briefs: Vietnam)* (2011), the Asian Development Bank's *Civil Society Organisations: Sourcebook—A Guide to Cooperation with CSOs* (Asian Development Bank 2009), and the Office of the United Nation High Commissioner for Human Rights' *Handbook for Civil Society* (2008), among thousands of other documents, publications and other articles in the media.

In academia, in various studies both in English and Vietnamese on the subject of civil society in Vietnam, the term *tổ chức xã hội dân sự* is also used uniformly, such as in the journal article titled *Tham gia của tổ chức xã hội dân sự vào giám sát và đánh giá lĩnh vực ODA tại Việt Nam* [The participation of civil society organisations in the monitoring and evaluation of the ODA sector in Vietnam] by Hà and Lê (2012), and in the doctoral study titled *Civil society activism in authoritarian contexts: (re)structuring state-society relations in Vietnam* by Vũ at the University of Bath (2017), to name only a few. Other renowned and well-cited international scholars also use the terms *xã hội dân sự* and *tổ chức xã hội dân sự* respectively to translate civil society and CSOs (Salemink 2006; C. A. Thayer 2009).

We can also acknowledge the presence in 2015 of the *Tuyên bố của các Tổ chức Xã hội dân sự độc lập/A brief statement by genuine Vietnamese civil society organisations* in Vietnamese and English jointly signed and issued by a cluster of 21 organisations. In the bilingual text, these organisations also jointly labelled themselves as *tổ chức xã hội dân sự*.

However, in the context of Vietnam, *civil society* apparently represents a foreign agenda and is closely linked to international aid and development. In the language arena, although *xã hội dân sự* and *xã hội công dân* are commonly used as equivalents when translating *civil society* (T. P. Lê 2014), none of these terms is used in official documents as much as several of other approximate equivalents had quite contested denotations and diverse connotations

from their Western meaning (Salemink 2006). In political discourse, interpretations for *civil society* have been widely contested by Vietnamese NGOs, and not widely used in academic and official discourse in Vietnam (C. A. Thayer 2009). While the Vietnam Ministry of Home Affairs is studying how the term *civil society* (together with *civil society organisations* and *non-governmental organisations*) should be officially translated, various groups and actors are still holding on to their own interpretations in practice and sustaining the discursive edifice that legitimise their development projects toward their own respective constituencies (Salemink 2006, 105–122).

In fact, *xã hội dân sự* has become a common phrase in Vietnam but often not understood consistently. Lê Công Định, a prominent human-rights lawyer told the BBC (2014) that, although the direct translation of *civil society* into *xã hội dân sự* seems to be linguistically correct, it was the first fundamental cause of confusion and misunderstanding. He expanded to explain that the phrase *civil society* was derived from the Latin *Societas civilis* and originally from the Greek *koinonia politike*, which actually referred to an open community and sometimes also used to refer to communities that shared a political will. In that sense, translating *civil society* into *xã hội dân sự* may be inaccurate and cause the current government to be unnecessarily concerned. Định proposed that *the civil society* should be translated as *hội dân sự* or *hội đoàn dân sự* [civil associations] (The BBC 2014).

5.3.6.2 Labelling this concept in English

Civil society organisations and the abbreviated term *CSO* have been the only English terms found to label the concept in this study.

5.3.6.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

Beside the five Vietnamese terms to label *civil society organisations* observed in grey literature, namely *tổ chức xã hội dân sự*, *xã hội công dân*, *xã hội dân sự*, *hội dân sự* and *hội đoàn dân sự*, this study recorded three other different equivalents from interview and corpus data, as shown in Table 10.

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>civil society organisations</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	tổ chức xã hội dân sự	civil and social organisations		√	√
2	xã hội công dân	civic society			√
3	xã hội dân sự	civil society			√
4	hội dân sự	civil associations			√
5	hội đoàn dân sự	civil associations			√
6	tổ chức xã hội	social organisations	√ (1 hit)	√	
7	tổ chức chính trị - xã hội liên quan đến công tác cộng đồng	socio-political organisations doing to community work		√	
8	đoàn thể	mass organisations		√	

Table 10. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *civil society organisations* recorded from data

5.3.6.4 Evaluation

That *civil society organisations* was a sensitive concept in the Vietnam context was reflected in the following stories by an interview participant:

A second example is the terms about the *civil society* or *civic space*, *xã hội dân sự* or *các tổ chức xã hội dân sự*. This is extremely sensitive in the Vietnamese context. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

Because of the negative perception about the concept and the term *tổ chức xã hội dân sự*, the above participant explained the reason why a variety of translations for *civil society organisations* had been favoured in practice:

Discourses of this kind make *xã hội dân sự* itself a very negative word, so negative to the extent that when we invited organisations that included CSO groups, that is, those that were already formalised and registered, and community-based organisations, CBOs, which were community organisations, or mass organisations such as the Women's Union and Youth Union, etc., many who participated in that meeting denied and they said, "*I'm not part of xã hội dân sự, I'm not part of CSO*" [...] Dissident organisations don't care, they can call themselves *xã hội dân sự*. But organisations that are inclined to cooperate, or because of the nature of their work, for example in education, in healthcare, for example... naming them *xã hội dân sự* puts them at a disadvantage, so they also ask not to call them *các tổ chức xã hội dân sự* [CSOs] but *các tổ chức xã hội* [social organisations]. Then there is a shift here, that is, in the English texts, they still call themselves *các tổ chức xã hội dân sự*, but when we translate them into Vietnamese, we all use *các tổ chức xã hội* [...] in the context of Vietnam, it is necessary to avoid censorship by using more friendly phraseology to be accepted and institutionalised in legal documents, such as *các tổ chức xã hội*, *các tổ chức chính trị - xã hội liên quan đến công tác cộng đồng* [socio-political organisations doing to community work], *các đoàn thể* [mass organisations], etc. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

Although only illustrated in a single interview with a participant who had the experience with different translations for *civil society*, it could be seen that this illustration shed light on

the issues raised in the literature around the concept. First, *xã hội dân sự* and *các tổ chức xã hội dân sự* continue to become the primary and more official translation as they are used by organisations and stakeholders on texts and documents on the grounds that texts and documents materialise a communication pattern that is more multi-directional in development practice. In situations that are less formal such as in meetings, and where *tổ chức xã hội dân sự* is not the preferred translation for CSOs, we can see that to make things work, 3 different versions were suggested, namely *tổ chức xã hội* [social organisations], *tổ chức chính trị - xã hội liên quan đến công tác cộng đồng* [socio-political organisations doing to community work] and *đoàn thể* [mass organisations], as recorded in Section 5.3.6.3.

5.3.7 Community-based tourism (CBT)

5.3.7.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

Mentioned in development discourses around the world since the 1970s, *community-based tourism (CBT)* has become more well-known in Vietnam since the 1990s. *CBT* is defined by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as a form of ecotourism where the local community has substantial control over, and involvement in, its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community (Denman 2001). From a socio-cultural perspective, *CBT* is explained as a form of sustainable, environmental, social and cultural tourism. It is managed and owned by the community, for the community, with the aim of helping tourists increase their awareness and understanding of the community and the lives of local people. According to Ånstrand (2006, 14), instead of asking “How can communities benefit more from tourism?”, *CBT* asks the question, “How can tourism contribute to the process of community development?”.

However, being defined as such, in Vietnam *CBT* seems to be labelled by several different Vietnamese terms, namely: *du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng* (a word-for-word translation for *CBT*), *du lịch cộng đồng* [community tourism], *phát triển cộng đồng dựa vào du lịch* [tourism-based community development], *du lịch cộng đồng theo hướng bền vững* [sustainable community tourism], *du lịch sinh thái dựa vào cộng đồng* [community-based ecotourism], *du lịch có sự tham gia của cộng đồng* [participatory community tourism] and so on. Despite these diverse labels, there might be primary similarities in the practice of *CBT* in terms of organisational approaches, locations and objectives in developing tourism and the community. Among these labels, the first two seem to be most widely used, especially

in the law and legal documents. For example, an official definition was provided in Clause 15, Article 3 of the 2017 Law on Tourism (effective from 1 January 2018) using the term *du lịch cộng đồng* as follows: “*Du lịch cộng đồng là loại hình du lịch được phát triển trên cơ sở các giá trị văn hóa của cộng đồng, do cộng đồng dân cư quản lý, tổ chức khai thác và hưởng lợi*” [Community tourism is the type of tourism developed on the basis of the cultural values of the community, and managed, exploited and benefited by the local community].

5.3.7.2 Labelling this concept in English

Community-based tourism and the abbreviated term *CBT* have been the only English terms found to label the concept in this study.

5.3.7.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

Mainly from interview data and grey literature, three different Vietnamese designations for *community-based tourism* were recorded, namely *du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng*, *du lịch cộng đồng* and *homestay* (Table 11).

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>community-based tourism</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	<i>du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng</i>	community-based tourism		√	√
2	<i>du lịch cộng đồng</i>	community tourism		√	√
3	<i>homestay</i>	homestay		√	√

Table 11. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *community-based tourism* recorded from data

5.3.7.4 Evaluation

Listing these different terms for the original English terms *community-based tourism (CBT)* as above shed light on the opinions shared by some of the interview participants about one particular way of understanding and translating *CBT* in practice. Let us begin with the following comment from a participant:

[I]n the *community-based tourism* model, the most prominent product is the *homestay* [...] a type of business in this model. But then by gradually shortening it,

now the point of view is that *homestay*⁴ means community-based tourism. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Responses from interview participants also indicated *CBT* was often translated as *du lịch cộng đồng* [community tourism] which may exhibit the misunderstanding by the fact that an aspect of participation should be incorporated but it was not explicit in the Vietnamese term. The same participant explained this situation by comparing the understandings of the concept and the implementation in practice:

People will simply translate as *du lịch cộng đồng* then that leads to the misunderstanding that doing a tour to the community is called *community tourism* and *CBT*, while it should be a business based on the participation of the community and benefit them, and there must be sharing among the people. The two expressions in English and in Vietnamese are very different. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

This opinion was also restated by other development practitioners during the interviews (see transcript lines 849 – 863 and 1866 – 1875 in Appendix G for the similar point of view shared by Participant 2 and Participant 5, respectively).

Using a different way to explain, i.e. linking *CBT* with the former *cooperative* model [*hợp tác xã*]⁵, a participant also signified how *CBT* might be converted into *homestay* in practice:

I think that model, historically it has certain similarities with some of the concepts we already have, like *hợp tác xã*... the kind of everyone working together, making decisions together, and benefiting together [...] In general, everyone understands quite clearly. But later when there are some private models, that is, only one household runs it, and they only do homestay or bed&breakfast, but they also call it *community tourism* [laughter]. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

To sum up, while *CBT* has been formally defined in the law, there are many different ways of understanding and practising *CBT* in reality. Among the different understandings and translation equivalents (Table 11), *homestay* drew a lot of attention from interview

⁴ As far as I am aware, in the field of tourism and hospitality in Vietnam, *homestay* is a loanword and normally not translated into Vietnamese. Homestay is also an established term in English, according to the online Cambridge Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/homestay>).

⁵ The 1996 Law on Cooperatives defines *cooperative/hợp tác xã* as an autonomous economic organisation founded by employees with common needs and interests, voluntarily contributing capital and efforts to establish in accordance with the law to promote the strength of the collective and of each individual cooperative members in order to help each other carry out more effectively production, business and service activities and improve lives, contributing to the country's socio-economic development.

participants because they thought *homestay* did not reflect the concept of *CBT* truthfully. Also, how *CBT* was translated into Vietnamese as *du lịch cộng đồng* may be a case of terminology being distorted when introduced into the local context because it might lead to misunderstandings among stakeholders.

5.3.8 Career counselling

5.3.8.1 Conceptual characteristics and context of use

Presently, as much as the psychology of sustainability and sustainable development has emerged as a new research area, career counselling interventions have been integrated into many areas of development work to promote social justice, poverty alleviation, sustainable development and decent work (Leong, Hartung, and Pearce 2014; Argyropoulou et al. 2020; Maree 2020). In a post-COVID era, this type of interventions have become the focus of the decent work agenda of many development organisations and NGOs (Hughes, Warhurst, and Duarte 2021), for example, through the delivery of guidance services, such as vocational guidance and career counselling, for example, to school students, university students and graduates (Argyropoulou et al. 2020). According to Maree (2020), *career counselling*, *vocational guidance*, *career orientation*, *career education* and *employability counselling* may be used interchangeably across different domains of research and practice due to their conceptual similarities. Holistically, career counselling can be defined as a practice of improving employability skills and making people understand their career paths (Nota and Rossier 2015; Guilbert et al. 2016).

No longer a neglected topic in Vietnam, over the past decade, the practice of career counselling in school settings has received increasing support from students, parents, psychologists and educators to address many pressing issues related to ethics, disciplines, school violence, student suicides, gender stereotypes, exam pressures, psychological disorders, teacher-student relationships, to name a few. Thanks to the proliferating awareness on the topic, career counselling and vocational orientation activities have been introduced to the education curriculum as new subjects in many schools (T. L. Nguyễn et al. 2018; Giang et al. 2020). Career counselling interventions become aligned with not only the practical priorities but also policy-making activities of many government and international organisations such as the National Council of Education and Human Resource Development (under the Ministry of Education and Training), the UN, ILO and NGOs. For example, career

counselling and education has been considered by the CPV and the State as a major policy and task of the political system to meet current demands of human resource development and socio-economic development via the implementation of the national programme entitled “Career Education and Orientation for High School Students in the Period of 2018 – 2025” (Government of Vietnam 2018). Career guidance tools and training materials have been comprehensively produced by a number of NGOs such as the VVOB-Education for Development. As part of a project funded by the Russian Government, “Applying the G20 Training Strategy in Vietnam: A partnership of the ILO and the Russian Federation (Phase 2)”, since 2014, the ILO has collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Training to develop career guidance tools, then in 2020, launched a mobile app called *ILO-Hướng nghiệp* [ILO-Career Guidance] which became available to download on Google Store and Apple Store to help students aged 14 to 19 make right career choices (ILO 2020).

Beyond the education sector, multiple efforts to implement employability interventions by the government and international organisations have also been made, with particular attention to the implementation of the SDGs. Notably, with the Vocational Education and Training Law (TVET) adopted by the National Assembly on 27 November 2014 as the first legislative cornerstone, policy-making has been enabled for employability reform and improvement. Such efforts are also acknowledged in the country’s development cooperation to comprehensively reform TVET from vocational training, career counselling and entrepreneurship for vulnerable groups including the disabled, young people and women with donors and NGOs (GIZ 2016; ILO 2021; Save The Children 2021).

5.3.8.2 Labelling this concept in English

Despite Maree’s (2020) assertion for *career counselling* and at least four other terms (*vocational guidance, career orientation, career education* and *employability counselling*) being synonymous, *career counselling* has been the only English term found to designate the corresponding concept in this study.

5.3.8.3 The varied Vietnamese designations/equivalent terms found in this study

Three different translation equivalents for *career counselling* were recorded from the interviews as displayed in Table 12.

	Vietnamese equivalents of <i>career counselling</i>	transliteration in English	corpus data	interview data	grey literature
1	tư vấn hướng nghiệp	career consulting		√	
2	tư vấn nghề nghiệp	vocational consulting		√	
3	tham vấn nghề nghiệp	career counselling		√	

Table 12. Varied Vietnamese equivalents of *career counselling* recorded from data

5.3.8.4 Evaluation

The example of *career counselling* with three different translations, namely, *tham vấn nghề nghiệp*, *tư vấn hướng nghiệp* and *tư vấn nghề nghiệp*, was specifically raised by one participant in Phase-One and Phase-Two interviews who was an expert in this sub-field in development work in Vietnam with practical experience in translation. Expressly, along with an explanation of the essence of *counselling practice*, this participant hinted that *tư vấn hướng nghiệp* was the translation being used by many in the field without questioning, but the translation chosen by this participant was *tham vấn nghề nghiệp*:

[I]n Vietnam, the term that most people use is *tư vấn hướng nghiệp* [vocational/career consulting], and I think this translation is not debated by anyone. But because I studied social work, and I use *counselling* as *tham vấn* [nghề nghiệp] rather than *tư vấn* [nghề nghiệp], it's different from *consulting* for example. (P6-Ph1, NGO worker/researcher)

More specifically, the participant reported that *tư vấn nghề nghiệp* was a widely used term, and especially by government agencies. This seemed to indicate that this term has been adopted formally by current managing authorities and career counselling service providers in Vietnam. This created a tension for the participant as someone aware of a different translation but not yet in the position to formally straighten out how properly the term should be understood and used with these stakeholders.

So when we were doing *career counselling* for middle school students, a [redacted] expert specialising in *career counselling* came over to do a workshop, at the time I hadn't yet joined the translation team for this conference, everyone had already translated it into *tư vấn nghề* and put it on the banner and invitation letters. But when I joined the team and asked, "If it is *tư vấn hướng nghiệp*, then what is the English term?" The expert said "*counselling*", then I said, "If so, it must be translated as *tham vấn nghề nghiệp* in Vietnamese rather than *tư vấn nghề nghiệp*". I told him it was wrong because *tư vấn nghề nghiệp* was *consulting*. Then he turned to the other translators and said "Why do people translate it in terms of consulting?" They replied, "Because the Agency of Teachers is using this term, and so are all ministries and departments, and there is a whole system of centres providing *tư vấn nghề nghiệp* for students, so it is correct to translate as *tư vấn nghề nghiệp*". (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

When asked if *tư vấn nghề nghiệp* was a problematic translation for *career counselling*, the participant elaborated that the difference in approach was because of the distinction between different practices. However, considering the current practice of the stakeholders, Participant 6 argued the practice may also have fit better with the current translation they used, typically *tư vấn hướng nghiệp* [career consulting] and *tư vấn nghề nghiệp* [vocational consulting] (see transcript lines 2249 – 2275, Appendix G for the context of this participant’s opinion).

In summary, this case presents some differences in the understanding and practice of *career counselling*. Against what was implied as standards introduced from the outside, how local stakeholders labelled their practice as *tư vấn hướng nghiệp* and *tư vấn nghề nghiệp* may fit perfectly with their understandings. It is also understandable that a local practice was labelled with a different term than the term commonly used by specialists, if the introduced practice had been adjusted to better suit local conditions.

5.4 The researcher’s reflections

In reality, from my years working as a development practitioner, I have acquired a certain familiarity with the majority of the examples being discussed in this chapter. This was one reason why I chose these examples for discussion and not the others indexed at the beginning of the chapter (see Table 4, Section 5.2). However, this was not the only reason. This decision-making entailed situations where I had to negotiate the insider/outsider view to control any potential biases or assumptions I may have come into the answer of this research question with. The main tool used by me to control my biases was triangulation, and I chose to include not only concepts I was familiar with but that triangulated strongly with the interview data, textual analysis data, and up-to-date grey literature.

While my personal interest and previous real-life experience of development may have initially caused me to focus on certain terms and concepts, when I triangulated these preliminary findings with other data sources, there were new insights that only came into my focus from the interview data after nearly four years when I was a PhD student and no longer practising development. These insights came from up-to-date sources being shared by participants with me or from my current engagement with grey literature and with newly-published policy documents I had not known about before. I realised that what I had already known about the understanding and translation of the selected examples were mostly only “pieces” of the general picture. For example, in the case of *wellbeing*, 23 different

Vietnamese equivalents for the term were recorded in this study but, from my work experience, I only knew about one third of these Vietnamese designations of *wellbeing* at most.

Overall, my experience with understanding the concepts and examples of term translation was mostly consistent with the experiences and views of this research's participants. Transliterations for terms that I had used in my decade of development work were similar to the equivalents discovered from three data points including interviews, textual analysis and grey literature, and I was pleased to find that. However, I was also open to new discoveries as explained above and made sure to include them in my analysis.

5.5 An answer to SQ1

In order to demonstrate varied translation equivalents and different understandings of development terms and concepts in Vietnam, eight examples of development terminology were chosen for presentation from a list of some 44 concepts identified from this study (see Section 5.2 and Table 4). Although other concepts in the list were not discussed, the eight illustrative examples were chosen as authoritative and triangulated strongly among the datasets in this study: textual analysis data, interview data, grey literature and my own autoethnographic account. Specifically, this chapter recorded 23 equivalents of *wellbeing*, 13 of *resilience*, 9 of *empowerment*, 7 of *decent work*, 4 of *social accountability*, 8 of *civil society organisations*, 3 of *community-based tourism* and 3 of *career counselling*. On this account, establishing that there were varied equivalents of these examples has satisfactorily answered SQ1.

Findings in this chapter are also relevant to serve as strong foundations to address the other questions in this thesis. Strong hints were found from participants' narratives in this chapter about potential impacts of different understandings of development concepts and various equivalents of terms on development policy and practice as well as how such consequences would be dealt with by development stakeholders in Vietnam. The development stakeholders interviewed in this study also raised concerns about the realities of use of development "buzzwords" (Cornwall and Eade 2010) in Vietnam in a number of ways.

First, the majority of the terms under evaluation in this chapter—specifically, *wellbeing*, *empowerment*, *decent work*, *social accountability*, *community-based tourism* and *career counselling*—were explicitly regarded as problematic. Although several Vietnamese

equivalents of these terms were deemed “official” because of their endorsed use by key development actors in Vietnam such as the government, large donors and NGOs, the accordance of English–Vietnamese term pairs has not yet been established. This speaks to the fact that some equivalents were only used in certain (sub)domains of the wide-ranging and multi-domain development work in Vietnam. Second, even when localised from the original English versions for the formulation into the language of practice and policy, several concepts and terms—especially the SDG-related ones such as *wellbeing*, *empowerment* and *decent work*—were used inconsistently and brought in real-world challenges both at the operational levels of delivery and evaluation of development interventions in practice and in policy-making. Then, for these reasons, it was hinted in this chapter that different stakeholders had to deal with such challenges in different ways. They had to borrow existing equivalents that had already been used interchangeably across different (sub)domains of development work, or to create completely new equivalents, as seen in the examples about an NGO creating three different versions of Vietnamese terms for *empowerment* to use in different contexts and with different audiences. They also had to decide on using their own preferred terms because “different perspectives of different organisations determine their own approach” (P1-Ph2). Finally, as participants were aware of the political sensitivity of several concepts and terms such as *empowerment*, *social accountability* and *civil society organisation* in the Vietnam context, they reported that the communication of these concepts and terms may impact participation and need to be negotiated with local and vernacular perspectives, for example, through the use of “friendly terminology”.

In short, while the findings and analysis contained in this chapter have robustly answered SQ1, they have also begun to provide initial, tentative answers to the other sub-questions and overall research question of this thesis that will be taken up and expanded on in subsequent chapters.

5.6 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter demonstrated the answer to SQ1 regarding varied translation equivalents and different understandings of development terminology in Vietnam. It identified a list of 44 concepts with varied English equivalents and understandings by triangulating textual analysis of a bilingual corpus of development documents with semi-structured interviews with key development stakeholders in Vietnam, up-to-date grey literature and a researcher’s autoethnographic accounts. From this list, a number of terms

were isolated for detailed analysis and evaluation: *wellbeing/well-being/well being, resilience, empowerment, decent work, social accountability, civil society organisations (CSOs), community-based tourism (CBT) and career counselling*. Evaluation of the examples showed that development terms were used inconsistently and brought in real-world influence on development work, whether it was the operational and practical context of development such as meetings and fieldwork, or in the shaping and making of policy. The initial, tentative findings about potential impacts of terminology and translation on development practice and policy will now be expanded on and analysed in detail in the following chapter, Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 – Impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy

6.1 Introduction

Indications from participant accounts in the previous chapter were that terminology and translation could have real-world impacts on development work. This chapter will investigate and analyse this issue in more detail to provide an answer to SQ2: *What are the impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy?*

The structure of this chapter derives from the thematic analysis and triangulation of various datasets explained in Sections 4.5.7 and 4.5.8. One of the products of analysis in this thesis was a coding tree, which displayed the main themes and sub-themes generated in this study and their relations. Appendix E shows the full coding tree and Figure 4 represents the elements relevant to this chapter. Based on this relation of themes and sub-themes, the first section of this chapter will begin to answer SQ2 by discussing the impacts of terminology and translation, or their absence, on participation (Section 6.2). Analysis here will focus on ideas of understanding, trust and power. Participation will also be argued to be the enabler of development practice and policy. As a result, the chapter will go on to deal with the impacts of terminology and translation, or their absence, on development practice (Section 6.3). Findings will centre on impacts relating to the diversity of development practice, local versus introduced practices, issues of political sensitivity, potential benefits of translation and terminology as well as issues of decolonisation. In this chapter, analysis of development practice follows next (Section 6.4) and is separated from analysis of development policy due to their distinctive defining features (see Section 2.2.2). However, this distinction might not need to be forcefully sustained as they might emerge as two intertwined concepts of a complexity when being viewed from the perspective of translation (Marais 2020). Analysis of policy deals with impacts related to disagreements, disapproval, ineffective implementation, framing and absence of concepts from discourse. The chapter comes to an end in Section 6.5 with the addition of a researcher autoethnographic account and in Section 6.6 with a summary answer to SQ2.

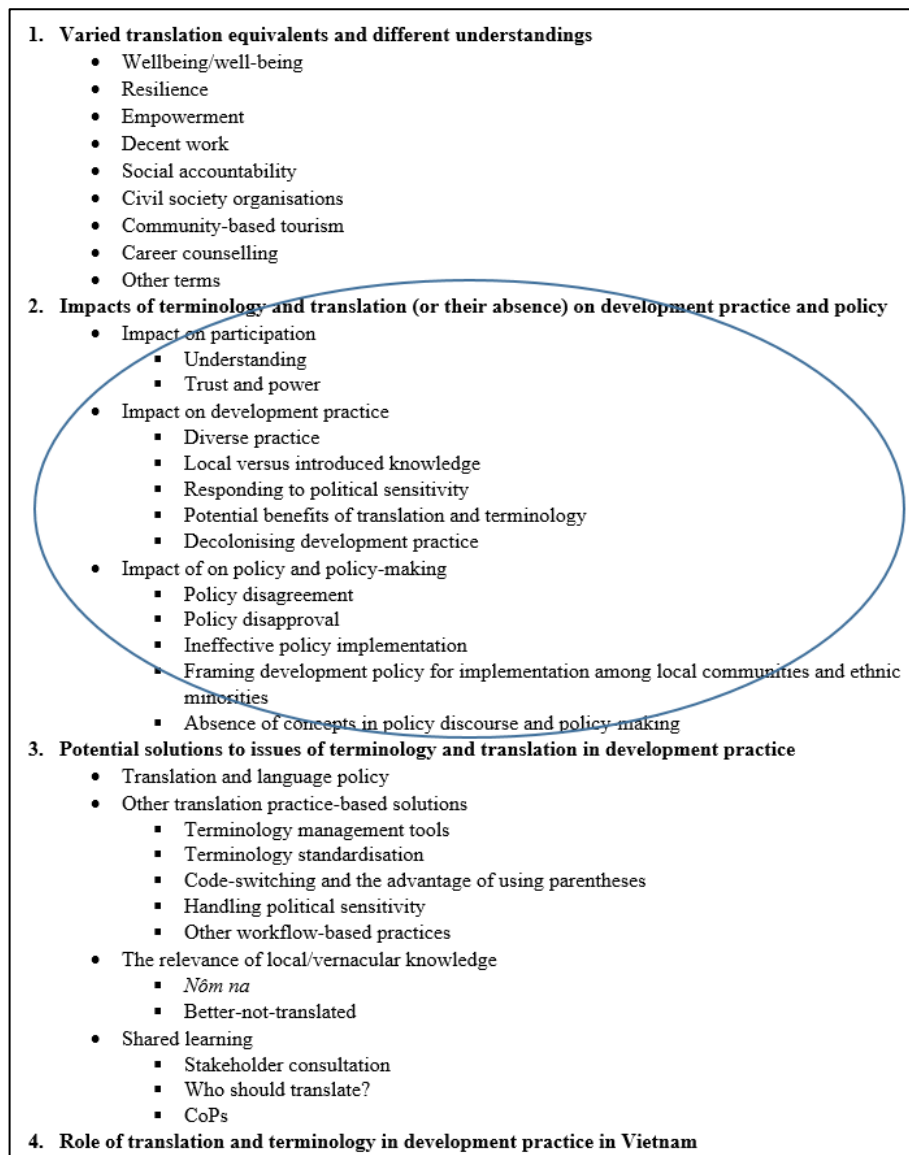


Figure 4: Main themes from the coding tree presented in Chapter 6

6.2 Impact on participation as the enabler of development practice and policy

Although this chapter aims to answer SQ2 about the impact of terminology and translation on development practice and policy, their impacts on participation were revealed explicitly in the direction of ascertaining that participation enabled development practice and policy through translation and the use of terminology. From thematic coding, “impacts of translation and terminology on participation” was derived as a separate theme. Its breadth and depth from participants’ responses was obvious by the fact that they not only related to *participation* as a core example of a concept with obscure meaning in development (Cornwall and Brock 2005) but also as a factor that had weighty impacts on—and more acutely, in a rather “organic” relationship with—the themes of “practice” and “policy”

through translation. In such a manner, discussing participation will be helpful to shed light on later discussions regarding practice and policy in this chapter.

Examples of concepts such as *empowerment*, *social accountability*, *civil society organisations* and *community-based tourism* evoked a close association with the concept *participation* in understanding. Participants pointed out that the frequent usage of the Vietnamese translations to label these concepts were not accepted by all stakeholders and may hinder their participation as they called for the use of more “friendly terminology” so that they could become more participatory in development work. This situation was also reflected in the understanding of *participation* and its element of *participatory*. With varied understandings of *participation*, the practical approach to participation of stakeholders in development practice and policy might differ as a result. One participant explained in the following quote how *participation* and the sense of being *participatory* were perceived and exercised by various stakeholders in general.

[W]ith the idea of *có sự tham gia* [participatory], each stakeholder would apply differently. If we understand the participatory approach [in development], that is, even in project design, at all stages, the people, community and all stakeholders must participate. Some stakeholders say they are applying the participatory approach but I think they’re just saying it for fun. It’s an introduced idea from the outside. And *participation* here [in Vietnam] means that people participate in the project activities, which does not mean that they have input for the whole process from project design to later stages. The level of participation only stops at participating in activities. (P2-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

There is a remarkable and worth-noticing point from the above: to many Vietnamese stakeholders, the participatory approach (in development work) is an introduced idea from “the outside”. In development practice, the participatory approach is not new, and in fact, has emerged strongly since its early advocacy in the 1970s (Freire 1970), and is believed to be the key to resolve many bottom-line issues in development, such as poverty (Chambers 1995). However, this approach is also tied to critiques of both theory and practice (Mohan 2014). For example, this can be seen through scrutiny into the impacts of *participation*, *empowerment* and *poverty reduction* as prominent buzzwords on development policy (Cornwall and Brock 2005) and more recently, of development discourse anatomised by buzzwords used in NGOs’ project implementation and outcome (Tesseur and Crack 2020). Given the above-mentioned scope of understanding, participation was considered a key enabling factor in development practice and policy in the Vietnam context in the way that it

was facilitated by translation and terminology, but at the same time, impeded by these powerful tools.

With any form of thematic analysis or theoretical presentation where different concepts were used together, discussions of different themes may not be separated completely as there would always be overlaps. In this chapter, rather than seeing overlaps as problems, it could be that they end up being revelations. This discussion therefore goes one level deeper to explain firstly that, while participation was reported to influence practice and policy, it was also influenced by several attributing factors: understanding, trust and power. From thematic coding, the two (sub)themes of “understanding” and “trust and power” surfaced from interview data as probable causes of the broader theme of “participation”, and therefore it was possible to link “participation” with codes from data about “understanding” and “trust and power” (Figure 4). From this analysis, understanding, trust and power preceded participation or, in other words, participation was the consequence of understanding, trust and power through terminology and translation. This suggests that terminology and translation fit into participation, understanding, trust and power and were an impact worthy of deeper analysis.

6.2.1 Understanding

What was clear from the data related to this (sub)theme was the cause-and-effect relationship between the understanding of development-related concepts being introduced by large donors and organisations and the local formulation of these concepts into practice and deliverables through the medium of translation. In particular, existing equivalents to translate several terms related to discourse of the SDGs and high-level development ideas (such as *wellbeing*, *resilience*, *empowerment* and *decent work*) were considered unsuitable to the local context and therefore not fully understood by local stakeholders and community. While participants as development practitioners and NGO employees were familiar with and understood these terms and concepts well in English, it happened frequently that they struggled to translate these terms into Vietnamese, or in other cases, to communicate these concepts using the existing Vietnamese equivalents to local stakeholders. This ultimately hindered local stakeholders’ participation in development practice and policy.

Specifically, terminological challenges encountered by development stakeholders in Vietnam had several key consequences to participation. First, there was at times no

consensus on understanding concepts and use of terminology even among bilingual practitioners and translators themselves. Such a discrepancy with understanding urged them to invent new translations that could be more compatible with the practice in reality and more understandable to the stakeholders they worked with, and eventually this added in even more alternative translations for certain terms. Moreover, it was uncertain to participants in the interviews in this study whether using a term considered to be accurate and understood uniformly among stakeholders may guarantee satisfactory participation. For example, one participant pointed out the direct link between using the equivalent *sức khỏe tâm thần* as the translation for *mental health*, which has been an illustrious area of development work in Vietnam, and the engagement with mental health programmes being run by many NGOs in Vietnam. Although the equivalent was explained to be accurate and used widely in this particular field, groups of beneficiaries may have a resistance against it, for the reason that the descriptor *tâm thần* [mentality] has been “burdensome to use” according to the popular mindset towards *bệnh tâm thần* [mental illness].

[W]hen I suggested that there was a group of therapists like this here, and you could learn about this... for free, they didn't join. Because they're afraid that outsiders may know they're in this, they're seeing a therapist, which means they're psychotic, they're crazy. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Because of this burden, an alternative equivalent, *sức khỏe tinh thần* [spiritual health] was suggested by many in the field to somehow lessen the burden. Although not considered accurate, this alternative equivalent may better enable beneficiaries to engage in the programmes, as pointed out later in the same interview by Participant 1 in their Phase-One interview (see transcript lines 416 – 420 and also 422 – 427, Appendix G). Not only was the participation of beneficiaries hindered, the conceptual and terminological barrier made the development stakeholder participants question the impact of the development work they did and the level of development support they brought to the community. Therefore, having multiple translations for certain terms no longer became a burden “as long as people understand the message” to participate:

[W]hat matters is that we do small things to satisfy the values we offer as real support and have a real impact on the beneficiaries [...] It doesn't have to be the accurate terms, it doesn't have to be the right words, as long as people understand the message, they'll feel included and participate better. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

To the above development practitioner, being careful and mindful about the use of terminology was equated to professional standards, while using accurate terms was not as important as getting the message across to beneficiaries. Such efforts to convey the true values being offered as development support aimed to enable better participation of local stakeholders through better understanding of development ideas and concepts, and through this, the real impact of their participation on development work could be realised. On the other hand, when formulating publications about project communication and information to promote stakeholder engagement, the use of unfamiliar terminology continues to be a preclusion to participation. For example, the use of *trao quyền cho phụ nữ* [women empowerment] as an official translation for *empowerment* in the publications of a conference could distance potential attendees from attending that conference. This observation made by a participant in this study again showed that, even when an official translation of a term was used, the understanding may not be conveyed successfully, let alone if it may be inclusive enough to the target groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders (see again Section 5.3.3 for in-depth discussion of the use of *empowerment* in Vietnam).

6.2.2 Trust and power

Compared with other themes that surfaced from the interviews and were conducive to participation, the data on trust and power was not dominant but in fact shed strong light on how the elements of trust and power through translation may impact participation. Elements of trust were found rather interspersedly when participants spoke broadly about the role of translation, and seemed intertwined with insights into power dynamics evolved from the translator's positionality. Dimensions of trust and power highlighted in the interview data mostly point to, firstly, how translation affected their relationship with stakeholders and partners in development, and secondly, how stakeholders perceived the presence and/or absence of translation in development practice and on their participation. Considering the crucial role of bi- and multilingual development workers who translate in development and also have to undertake the role of development brokers and mediators (Olivier de Sardan 2005; Lewis and Mosse 2006), the element of trust in development-related settings can also be viewed in different ways. For instance, trust in a setting involving translation can be viewed as a form of social capital (Cadwell 2015) and/or linguistic capital (Roth 2019), since trust is embedded in the positionality of these workers in the process of translation while acting as the bridge between introduced knowledge and local culture and knowledge.

Specifically from the data, participants applauded and emphasised the importance of translation in the context of development work in Vietnam where relationship building with local stakeholders and partners plays a vital role via translation. It can be said that both the roles of the professional translator in development and of the development practitioner who translates are two-fold: they need to translate for the purpose of communication. However, for information to be communicated effectively, they also need to build trust with the audience.

[I]t is almost a full service to support communication channels and relationships, let's just call it communication and maintain relationships simultaneously, because in an international organisation, the work of colleagues and personnel, in order to make the information flow smoothly, must be through translation or interpreting. That is the bridge to build a relationship or break the relationship, the role of the translator is decisive. (P11-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

At a higher operational level, it was also evident that relationship building via translation and interpreting had been recognised by development organisations in Vietnam even when they outsourced translation. This indicates that building relationships and trust is embedded in the professional requirements of those who translate in development.

I see a very good relationship between my boss and her staff when she understands my work very well and she says that she does not want me to waste time translating technical documents when I can outsource, but they {outsourced translators} won't be able to help me build relationships with partners. (P13-Ph1, development practitioner/donor representative)

Ethically and professionally, the translator in development may also refer to their practice of translation as a source to build self-trust, once the translator became fully aware of their parallel role as the intermediary in development and vice versa. This can be specified as the role of the language intermediary through the practice of "softening" their language that can enable the translator to see professionalism as an opportunity when they became aware of being bilingual as language capital (Roth 2019) and to build relationship with others as social capital (Cadwell 2015).

[M]any times I have not intentionally built a relationship through my translation, but if I stay focused and have feelings, this will serve as the foundation and soften my language [...] The fact that you are a good translator is also an opportunity, that is, you deliver a translation that has a quality. (P13-Ph1, development practitioner/donor representative)

The above finding is fascinating as it offers quite a complex view of both the role of the translator and of trust building through translation in development. The fact that the

translator realised their role not only as a responsibility but also an opportunity reinforces the theoretical perspective towards translation in an alternative reality which necessitates the positive view of trust building in a local non-Western context.

As mentioned earlier, the second dimension of trust attributed to participation related to the absence of translation, which also pointed to issues of lack of understanding as a consequence of the choice of not translating English terms into Vietnamese. This choice arose from the reality that it was challenging for bilingual practitioners to find a Vietnamese equivalent that had a close meaning to translate an English term, as recounted by a participant in the study:

It has already become a habit. I'd not think much about it myself but people'd comment that that was repugnant. They'd commented that I was not maintaining the clarity of Vietnamese language. But in fact, I say those in English because I couldn't find such Vietnamese words that have close-enough meanings. (P3-Ph1, development practitioner)

For example, the use of the original English term *empowerment* could create a stronger impression of the language barrier for beneficiaries, make them feel uncomfortable to participate in the activity as they did not fully understand the concepts, make them think that the clarity of the native Vietnamese language was not maintained, and hence entail distrust in the agenda of practice or policy being implemented:

In fact, people may feel self-pity and frustrated and disempowered when they don't fully understand what I mean by *empowerment*. But then if I'd use *trao quyền*, I'd have to stop and explain again and again how it was the translation of *empowerment* and how *trao quyền* might be implemented in one way or another, then I'd lose my coherence. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The above accounts underlined the status of English in development work. In fact, many NGOs or in many projects nowadays in Vietnam only recruit staff who can speak English and translate, and participants reported on how development workers may exert power on the local stakeholders this way. The fact that development workers in Vietnam seem to collaboratively use English among themselves or in certain professional environments as a practice has created a kind of illusion of power and positionality for them.

[T]he development people sometimes put themselves in a superior position, not only Vietnamese colleagues but also Western colleagues. From going to a village, a province, from the way you stand, from the sitting position to the way you talk and use the language... the community may not like it, but they have to bear it. That's

something we have to be very careful about. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

One major impact of this dynamism on stakeholders' participation was that their ability to ask for information became limited not only because they did not speak English and could not understand certain concepts and terms, even when translated, as experienced by a donor representative:

I see that people misunderstood for a long time, but people do not dare to share with me. Imagine if I went to remote provinces to work with local officials and I kept throwing this or that term, and they didn't fully understand, or could vaguely understand, say 20 or 30 per cent of it. In some cases, gradually they get it right, but there are cases where they keep misunderstanding or don't understand it enough. That is a major impact. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

On the contrary, in fieldwork, the power dynamics seemed to work in a reverse way. Because many community members hardly knew English, they had no access or very little access to the development agenda and ideas being discussed at higher levels, so they would respect development workers who spoke English and could translate. Sometimes local communities saw the translator as a person with power who had the expertise or could communicate directly with experts. The parties that could not speak English needed to trust the translator in this case to facilitate their participation in the decision making process.

[A]t the district level, the stakeholders never have access to what we do, so they will respect us more, and sometimes they see the translator as a person with power because they do not speak English, and they cannot communicate with experts without a translator. So I find that when I go to the field, my positionality improves [...] Then I almost play the role of mediator between those who have power in decision making with beneficiaries. (P6-Ph1, NGO worker/researcher)

In sum, several key impacts of translation and terminology on participation and specifically its attributes and influencing factors such as understanding, trust and power, can be described involving terminology usage, local perceptions of development concepts, the position of English in development communication and the role of the translators. We have also seen that, from the point of view of key development stakeholders in Vietnam interviewed for this study, participation represented a major impact on development practice and policy. In the next section, more specific impacts of terms and translation on development practice will be further elucidated.

6.3 Impacts of terminology and translation on development practice

The sub-headings used in this section are based on their emanation as (sub)themes from thematic coding (see again Figure 4 at the start of this chapter) and focus on impacts related to the diversity of development practice, local versus introduced practices, issues of political sensitivity, potential benefits of translation and terminology as well as issues of decolonisation.

6.3.1 Diverse practice

The majority of participants related that their understanding of development concepts led to diverse or divergent practice, which could be made evident from the perspective of an NGO staff member below:

Each organisation's understanding of a concept in development is reflected in their translation of the term to express that concept, then their approach to development work is also reflected in the understanding. So different perspectives of different organisations determine their own approach. (P2-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In fact, participants' discussions on impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) revolved strongly around the theme of "practice", or more specifically, how participants became aware that the impacts arose from their practice, a kind of knowing-in-practice (Olohan 2017), as they engaged with terminology and translation as stakeholders of development. Particularly, the majority of participants related that their understanding and use of terminology had a strong impact on their approaches in doing development, especially at local levels. They contrasted this with established and conventional approaches being embedded in the original understandings of several key concepts such as *empowerment*, *community-based tourism*, *advocacy*, *participatory (approaches in development)*, *career counselling*, *sustainable development*, *domestic violence*, *social accountability* and others, as described in Chapter 5. However, it is important to keep in mind that there can be concepts labelled by different terms and still effectively communicated. The actual situation was characterised below, by two participants, one working in the domain of community-based tourism and the other in poverty reduction for sustainable development. The two shared a common perspective that, while a term may have multiple translations because of the highly diverse aspects of meanings associated with the original concept, users needed to use alternative equivalents across different and specific domains of development work,

depending on different groups of development stakeholders they worked with, on specific professional contexts and on different purposes of use:

I think it's a problem, because maybe the development workers and those who get the development support don't have the same understanding of the terms [...] Because our project does not translate ourselves but we outsource, it is common for translators to not know who the users are. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

[S]ometimes I am used to using that term to talk to local people, but they don't understand anything. Or if I speak to the government people, they can understand it in a different way. (P2-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Most participants related this circumstance of difficulties in understanding at local levels to the direct consequence of different versions of a term not fitting the local ways of framing their understandings and work. In other words, the introduction of new terminology imposed certain concepts that local stakeholders had not fully understood, while their ways of understanding may have been so different that a concept that was already well defined would make no or little sense for others. Take, for example, the case of *community-based tourism* which was found from the data to have three different equivalents, namely *du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng*, *du lịch cộng đồng* and *homestay*, among others (see Section 5.3.7). Seen through the local ways of framing the understanding of this concept, at least three distinctively different practices came into view. Specifically, these practices were entailed by the crucial facets of “community” [cộng đồng], “participation” and “homestay” which all attributed to how community-based tourism should have been implemented as a development initiative:

[P]eople will not translate as *làm du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng* [doing CBT], but people will simply translate as *du lịch cộng đồng* [community tourism], then that leads to the misunderstanding that traveling to the community is called *community tourism* and *community-based tourism*, while it should be a business based on the participation of the community and benefit them, and there must be sharing among the people. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

[B]y gradually shortening it, now the point of view is that *homestay* means *community-based tourism*. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Having been adopted widely in Vietnam since the 1990s, the understanding of *community-based tourism* seems to have been reduced down to the elements of “community”, “participation” and “homestay” that would permit a certain level of effective communication among local stakeholders, hence a simplified version of subsequent practice (such as *homestay*) (see transcript lines 253 – 257, Appendix G for the above participant's narrative about this process). In its official definition, the concept of *community-based tourism* may

be filled with other aspects of meanings (such as cultural values, see Section 5.3.7) when communicated in other contexts and by other actors such as among policy-makers, in policy documents or at formal meetings.

This characteristic of diverse practice as a direct consequence of divergent understandings and varied translations of terminology was also explicit in a wide range of examples reported by interview participants including *career counselling*, *social accountability*, and *sustainable development*. Participants affirmed that there was not only a clear contrast between the Western donors' agenda and local practice but also a certain level of local resistance when local stakeholders were asked to participate in implementing introduced agendas of development, "simply because it wasn't the local way of understanding" [Participant 6, Phase 1]. This argument strongly supports current questionings of how introduced knowledge systems may or may not fit with local ones (Marais 2014) in the situation that development initiatives tend to be designed and delivered according to donors' own agendas, which may be inappropriate for the local context or not understood by local communities (Tesseur and Crack 2020).

Participants who were NGO officers and project officers recounted being confused when, under many circumstances, it was compulsory for them to adopt certain labels or terms to describe what their work but these labels did not match their understanding and caused confusion. Although it seemed obvious to participants that many of these buzzwords had already become central discourse and a priority of donors and also in development initiatives at local levels, participants related that there was a rush in introducing these buzzwords into the local contexts without really clarifying what the embedded concepts really meant. While some terms had already been translated distinctively into Vietnamese, the same equivalents existed for different terms. Sometimes there was the possibility that the coexisting equivalents were used interchangeably by local stakeholders. For example, in many development stakeholders' views, *gender equality*, *gender development* and *women empowerment* were the same concepts and frequently translated into Vietnamese as *phát triển giới* [gender development]. Here, given stakeholders' need to communicate co-existing terms, their confusion illustrated two types of impacts. First, current practice imposed certain concepts that people had not fully understood. Second, and as a result, there was no clear specification to how clear-cut and specialised practices would be designed, implemented and communicated at local levels.

Many times people do not distinguish between *gender equity*, *gender development* and/or *women empowerment*, and just like that, they use the Vietnamese translation rashly while I see that these are clearly different concepts in English. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The absence of specification also happened to the term *advocacy* work which was commonly translated as *tác động chính sách* [influencing/impacting policies], as related by the same participant:

[*Advocacy* is translated as] *Tác động chính sách* but this is loose in meaning. How to bring about the impact [of advocacy]? Impact at what levels? (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The consistent message from these examples of term use was that donors and international development organisations may have assumed that there was a clear distinction among these lines of development work when introduced at local levels. However, as seen in the examples, in fact, *women empowerment* and *gender equality* were often translated as *phát triển giới* [gender development], therefore may lead to blurred practices. In fact, as can be seen in the case of labelling a development initiative in terms of climate change as in the following example, it became evident that insufficient communication may also bring about confusions about specific types of practice when organisations did not share in advance the detail of their projects and guidance on the scope of work with local communities. This, then, entailed the risk of local stakeholders getting confused and reacting negatively to the practice by asking “What difference does the new practice make?”

I have a friend who works in sustainable development, afforestation and projects related to sustainable livelihood development. The friend went to provide training to a community group on greening bare hills and afforestation and initiatives of forest livelihoods. The friend also told the community why they have to do those, because of climate change for example. Then I heard my friend say that the local reaction was that, the people said, so far the practice had been the same, but now when you came, it turned out to be related to climate change which was something they had never heard of. (P6-Ph1, NGO worker/researcher)

6.3.2 Local versus introduced practice

To follow the preceding theme of diverse practice as an impact of terminology and translation, this section discusses the difference and gap of stakeholders’ understanding between introduced practice and local practice in Vietnam. Here it is also important to acknowledge that donors and NGOs are often not performing well the responsibility of “listening” to local voices, which has been taken for granted (Crack 2019, 163). This

important finding mirrored the situation of inattention or lack of knowledge of these organisations about local ways of doing before practising new development interventions, such as in the following example of *career counselling*:

So if you add in a new term like *tham vấn nghề nghiệp*, it sounds very unfamiliar to them, and that's not their way of doing things. Their way of doing things is simply orienting students on what to do, and does not include using the tools to find out what you fit into and then relying on that assessment tool to offer career options. I think maybe it's not completely wrong, but it's a practice in reality and in the context of vocational training in Vietnam. As for the counselling technique, according to [...] standards, it is very new and different from the current practice in Vietnam. (P6-Ph1, NGO worker/researcher)

The example above typically demonstrated the different realities of meaning-making undertaken by development practitioners and the community groups they worked with. First, while having different backgrounds, interview participants as practitioners had to struggle with the conceptual burdens invested with meanings that differ fundamentally across different (sub)domains and contexts of work such as politics, sociology, economics, technology and science and so on. Then, in their professional settings, applying the understanding of concepts and terms did not come decontextualised. In the real world, there is a certain level of overlap between introduced practice and local practice performed by stakeholders, for example, different government bodies, hence the need to “bring them all together”. In fact, as discussed by participants, it was not uncommon for stakeholders to participate simultaneously in different development projects, taking different roles and responsibilities, and possibly undertaking similar lines of work towards similar goals. However, the issue, as pointed out in the following example, was that parallel lines of work might be conceptualised and written using different terminology, which bring about the impact of “stepping on each other's feet”:

This is not to mention the fact that the same public stakeholders are working on many different projects at the same time, and in each project, different terms are used and circulated. Projects about employment have different terms than projects about tourism... Sometimes I feel it's very difficult for the state to “bring them all together” [...] but each development partner works in a different small area, and then sometimes someone steps on each other's feet without knowing it [...] each party write their project concepts differently and use all different terminology. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

To better clarify the relationship between translation and practice with regards to impacts specifically, it is important to consider the interpretations of other stakeholders of development concepts, such as those benefiting from a development intervention. In general,

an inadequacy was reported by participants in how development organisations, including donors and NGOs, programmes and projects and individual development workers, could synchronise their understandings of concepts and translations terms with those of local stakeholders. This hindered local participation as well as local development practices not being taken into account.

6.3.3 Responding to political sensitivity

The impact of terminology and translation on local political realities was also raised by some participants, and these ideas could be linked with diverse development practice in some ways. Let us return again to the useful example of *empowerment* cited in Section 6.3.1 above. Triangulated data in this study continues to show that, no matter what categories of conceptualisation, how *empowerment* is translated might be considered politically sensitive in Vietnam and result in diverse approaches in evaluating whether an intervention of *empowerment* is effective. To illustrate this diversity, below an NGO worker explained that they chose two different equivalents for the concept of *empowerment*, namely *trao quyền* [giving power/rights] and *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* [promoting participation], depending on what the actual development interventions in practice was about:

[W]hen writing to the government stakeholders, it's possible to use *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* [promoting participation], but when writing to the other side, like in reports for example, I still use *trao quyền* [empowerment]. Because at the end of the day, development work is about seeing if you will ultimately achieve your goals and not judging whether *trao quyền* or *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* is more correct. So I think, whether *trao quyền* happens more or less, *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* is *trao quyền*. (P8-Ph2)

This example illuminates a few key conclusive points. It is obvious that in the Vietnam context, development stakeholders accept that they have to work with multiple equivalents and different understandings. That the above participant switched back and forth with using *trao quyền* in their reports and *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* in discussions with government stakeholders shows that the two types of practice (giving power/rights vs. promoting participation) have been somehow assimilated because of political sensitivity at local levels. As a result, subsequent sets of practice of measuring *empowerment* also need to be adjusted depending on how *empowerment* is translated, mainly built on indications of participation.

6.3.4 Potential benefits of translation and terminology

At this stage, the presentation of a key impact of translation and terminology has been that it can lead to development practice that is not always uniform or consistent and that displays significant diversity and divergences, leading to tensions between local and introduced practice and around political sensitivity. As such, the impact of translation and terminology from this perspective appears to be rather negative. However, an inverse pattern in the case study data could also be observed, meaning that diversity in development practice as an impact of translation and terminology might not necessarily be negative.

For instance, different understandings of concepts and translations of terms may open up a number of new approaches to a certain intervention to many development organisations and practitioners. Interview data suggested that translation and development practice can actually represent a reciprocal relation which is related to the process of negotiating shared meanings (Ciuk and James 2015). One NGO worker explicitly described this relation and used the example of *social accountability* to demonstrate how their NGO and government stakeholders made collaborative efforts to avoid political sensitivity and find a translation which was not problematic to their work, particularly by drawing on a pre-existing practice of the stakeholders and also their term to describe that practice:

So *social accountability* must be translated as *giám sát xã hội*, which is a term borrowed from the Fatherland Front because *giám sát xã hội* has been their mandate. So this local term is already available, even in documents of laws. So we're borrowing it to translate *social accountability*. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

More specifically, it can be argued here that because *giám sát xã hội* has already been a mandate of the Fatherland Front which is considered a stakeholder in development (see Section 2.3.1), relating this local practice to the meaning-making of *social accountability* is a beneficial outcome of both sides' effort to increase local participation by avoiding the problematic equivalent of *trách nhiệm giải trình* which was not preferred by local stakeholders. From the practical perspective, how a local mandate was embraced in the translation of an introduced term and practice shows that ultimately the local ownership of the project has been increased. For local stakeholders in Vietnam, this is a positive approach and it works well for their context.

In fact, this perspective was also reiterated in survey data from the feedback workshop (see Section 4.5.5). When asked about positive impacts of translation and terminology, participants considered that translation would make more efficient communication happen, and eventually would aid the ownership of development work at local levels. More generally, survey responses supported the view that translation helped development professionals as knowledge producers receive and understand language and terminological challenges that might emerge when they saw the need to communicate ideas and terms to audiences of different languages.

6.3.5 Decolonising development practice

Another answer to the survey question in the feedback workshop about the positive impacts of the translation of terminology and concepts on development work was that translation could be viewed as an important vehicle to the decolonisation of development practice. More specifically, participants related that translating development-related discourse would speak for the endeavour of decolonising development practice through the localisation of English terminology. This finding is worth stating because of its relevance to the significance of this endeavour in the literature, especially to most of the aspects of the problem space in this thesis (see Section 3.2).

In fact, defined as the process of withdrawal of a state from its former colony to allow its independence, decolonisation by means of language use to overcome structural racism has been discussed in academia for a long time (Peace Direct 2021). Currently in the development and aid sector, the call for donors, NGOs, policy makers and practitioners to work with local partners to unpack their use of language and terminology is being made more strongly than ever to deconstruct imposed Western theoretical paradigms and approaches to practice (Vásquez-Fernández 2020). Expressly, the asymmetrical power dynamics in aid and development through long-held conventions and expectations about the use of English and sector-specific terminology should be revisited as a collaborative effort (Peace Direct 2021).

The idea recommended by survey participants not only responds well to the above proposals made to donors, NGOs, policy makers, practitioners and local stakeholders in development, it also relates these calls to addressing the problem space in this study. First, it reinforces the need to localise development-related concepts for the deconstruction and decolonising of

Western knowledge from which theoretical constructs of development are established (Ferguson 1994; Cernea 1995; Escobar 1995; Cornwall and Eade 2010; Marais 2014) (see Section 3.2.1). To realise the role of translation, this process of decolonisation also favours the ongoing efforts being made to recognise the necessity of translation and envisage the role of translators development settings with appropriate policy (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Roth 2019; Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020) (see Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5). While this category of finding reflects specifically the role of English from being an essential support to a possible threat and obstacle in many development projects (Appleby et al. 2002; Coleman 2002; Méndez García and Pérez Cañado 2005) (see Section 3.2.3), it also speaks for the need to expand the collaborative efforts of TS academics beyond the Global North contexts for decolonising multilingualism and translation (Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020).

To sum up, this section has discussed the major ideas about how translation and terminology could impact development practice. Triangulated data about examples of concepts were used to characterise these impacts. Different understandings of several concepts, including *community-based tourism*, *career counselling*, *social accountability*, *sustainable development*, *gender equality*, *gender development*, *empowerment* and *advocacy* may lead to diverse development practice, create a gap of understanding for development stakeholders about introduced practice and local practice, and underline political sensitivity through the use of translated terms. It is critical to emphasise at this point that whether the characterised impacts are negative or positive is a matter of opinions and dependent on the participants' perspectives. For example, while the mentioned impacts sometimes can be negatively weighed by development practitioners and organisations, local understandings may also positively facilitate local stakeholders to take greater ownership of their local practices and work collaboratively with practitioners and organisations to overcome terminological issues, as seen from the example of *social accountability*. By the same token, diverse practice caused by different understandings of a concept can also be a potential benefit, for example, through the finding of a suitable equivalent for the term *empowerment*, depending on the actual line of *empowerment* work of an organisation or a project. Finally, from survey data, translation is thought to positively contribute to the decolonisation of development practice, which responds well and validates the problem space identified in this thesis to a theoretical extent.

6.4 Impacts of terminology and translation on development policy and policy-making

Built on previous analyses of the themes “Impacts on participation” and “Impacts on development practice” as enabling and attributing factors, this section discusses the next theme: the main impacts of translation and terminology on policy and policy-making in the context of Vietnam (see again the coding tree in Figure 4). The general argument made in this section is that, as the gaps in understanding development concepts and using varied translation equivalents continue to be considered determinants which brought about divergent practice, they also challenged stakeholders’ participation in the making and implementation of development policy in a number of ways. These challenges relate to disagreements, disapproval, ineffective implementation, framing and absence of concepts from discourse, and each challenge will be analysed in more detail.

6.4.1 Policy disagreements

Interview participants were concerned that, as one main goal of development work is to influence policy, the gap of understanding around terminology and its translation may lead to a disagreement of all parties involved in the policy process whose interests and interactions were shaped by their own understanding. Below, a development practitioner/researcher described this gap as a “technical barrier” and illustrated it with the example of how the concept *inclusiveness* had been officially labelled by two different terms, *phát triển bao trùm* [all-embracing development] or *nền kinh tế tạo sự bao trùm* [an economy that includes all categories], which dominated how the concept was understood across different organisations:

I see from 2017 onwards, the Prime Minister also uses it, and people also translate it as *phát triển bao trùm* [all-embracing development] or *nền kinh tế tạo sự bao trùm* [an economy that includes all categories] and so on, but the translations are not used consistently and in agreement [...] Then the fact that we still use what belongs to the language of the state and the government, and the use itself makes them realise that the two sides are speaking a common language, then okay, that makes it easier to work together. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

The impact here was that inconsistent use of key terms in the policy discourse among different stakeholders not only made the stakeholders (i.e. mid-level organisations) question their own and other organisations’ use of the equivalents but also left the impression that because *inclusiveness* was perceived differently, there would be a discrepancy of conceptual and practical endeavours towards the achievement of *inclusiveness*. i.e., policies to achieve

the same objectives would diverge among stakeholders because they were not “speaking a common language”. There has been little or no cross-institutional and collaborative efforts so far to agree and standardise the translation of policy-related terms among stakeholders in Vietnam. Instead, to avoid policy disagreements and remove this technical barrier, mid-level organisations tend to pursue the “safe” solution and adopt the “official” term being used in the government’s policy discourse, perhaps regardless of its adequacy or appropriateness for the organisation and its policy objectives.

6.4.2 Failure to approve policy

The next impact of translation related directly to policy not being passed due to inaccurate translation and use of terminology. An example was given about how *an sinh xã hội*, which should have been translated as *social protection*, was translated into *social assistance* [bảo trợ xã hội], undermining both the effective communication about policy and the passing of relevant policies in the area of *social protection*:

[T]he problem of *social protection* is also a very basic problem of being inaccurate in the field of *an sinh xã hội* [because it was translated as *social assistance*] that may result as the policy not being passed, for many years now. For the whole year this year, the ILO lobbied the Vietnamese government; they haven’t been able to launch any projects [...] So the impact on policy is relatively serious. (P12-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

We can see now, from the story about translating *inclusiveness* and *an sinh xã hội* [social protection], that again, the impact of translation on policy may originate from the lack of the element of collaboration in systematising the use of terminology in development-related policy-making in Vietnam. The terminological challenge may be encountered by many, especially translators who are not specialised in translation in the development area. It can be even more intensified because of the oversight of other stakeholders such as government officials as policy champions. At the level of policy implementation as in projects, a similar example is given below of how a project may or may not be approved by such policy champions as a result of using of alternative Vietnamese equivalents for the term *empowerment*:

[T]here were cases that, if *trao quyền* was used in documents for submission for project approval, then the project may not be approved [...] Some provincial stakeholders wouldn’t like this translation and they rejected the project, especially they didn’t like when it said *trao quyền cho thanh niên trong phát triển kinh tế - xã hội* [empowering youth in socio-economic development] for example, and the

project would certainly not be approved. (P8-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

6.4.3 Ineffective policy implementation

The confusion in the use of terminology also makes it problematic to implement policy effectively and sufficiently. Where competing concepts coexist, key terms need to be operationalised depending on specific contexts of use and contexts of development-related policy formulation. The differentiation of such concepts and terms is substantial in defining the rationale and scope of policy. Consequently, it is also influential in its specification, which may include its objectives, relevant cross-cutting issues, paths of actions, and also importantly, its target beneficiaries and stakeholders to engage in the policy-making process. In the following example, even within a well-defined scope and understanding of the umbrella term *coverage* [diện bao phủ] in the policy discourse of *social protection* [an sinh xã hội], there was a confusion concerning the two derived concepts *legal coverage* and *effective coverage*. The fact that the terms were not translated in full led to severe impacts on policy implementation at the national level. In essence, because the two competing concepts—*legal coverage* and *effective coverage*—had not existed in the local discourse around *social protection* before they were introduced into policy by ILO from 2015, there was a deficiency with translating the two terms into Vietnamese, even with clear guidance.

They removed all the words *legal* and *effective* and left only the words that in Vietnam at that time were being used, which was *coverage*, *diện bao phủ*. (P12-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

From abroad, the ILO advised us in its 2015 document very clearly about *legal coverage* and *effective coverage* as *diện bao phủ về mặt chính sách* [policy-related coverage] and *diện bao phủ về mặt thực tiễn* [coverage in reality]. These two figures are completely different, and usually *legal coverage* is higher than *effective coverage*. But this was not reflected in the law [...] This one is relatively technical, but it greatly affects the amount of money and the number of people. (P12-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

The clear impact of translation and terminology pointed out from the above example was that policy implementation could become problematic, costly and even fail to be approved at local levels because of a lack of clear distinction in understanding the concept embedded in that policy and an absence of corresponding Vietnamese terms to label it.

6.4.4 Framing development policy for implementation among local communities and ethnic minorities

At points in the argument up to now, impacts of terminology and its translation leading to divergent development practice (Section 6.3.1) and different approaches towards policy-making (Section 6.4.1) have been discussed. However, these discussions have mainly been limited to examples of translating a term from English into Vietnamese. In the study, another (sub)theme of impact came into attention to more precisely focus on the framing of policy through translation to address the discrepancies not only between introduced versus local insights but also from the absence of such conceptual understanding in some vernacular contexts of development work in Vietnam (see Section 2.3.1 for a description of the context of some populous ethnic groups in Vietnam and the distinction between Vietnamese language ability, popularly referred to as Kinh, and other languages). From the data, one of the most powerful example of this type of impacts came from a researcher/NGO worker who described the challenge of translating *domestic violence* from Kinh into Hmong which eventually delineated as problematic implementation of policy and also development practice:

Translating terminology from English into Vietnamese is already a problem, but translating from Kinh to Hmong is another problem. For example, I use the term *domestic violence*, in Hmong they do not have an equivalent for that because they do not have a concept called *domestic violence*. When translating, they must use the equivalent *chồng đánh vợ* [husband beats wife]. But I find that translation problematic and completely misleading, because when talking about violence, for example, there are five categories of violence: social, physical, sexual, economic, and psychological violence. But saying that “husband beats wife” is domestic violence according to the translation of the Hmong people, then all four remaining factors are discarded to only focus on physical violence, which then other acts of violence in terms of social, economic, sexual or psychological control... will be excluded. (P6-Ph1, NGO worker/researcher)

The above participant’s questioning about the conceptualisation and translation of *domestic violence* [bạo lực gia đình] into Hmong language (as *chồng đánh vợ* [husband beats wife]) stimulated a concern of policy framing and implementation at the local level: the vernacular description in Hmong of *domestic violence* seemed categorically more exclusive, hence the absence of words to translate the term from Kinh to Hmong. Here one might work on the assumption that *domestic violence* was translated from English into Vietnamese (Kinh) without any confusion and impacts on policy and practice. However, clearly the translation from Kinh into Hmong was misleading. Therefore, to understand how the vernacular

conceptualisation fits into the policy framework of *domestic violence*, it is important to acknowledge the fact that there are terms which cannot be directly translated into the local language and that the existing approach of communication might work well enough for local stakeholders. From related literature about *gender-based violence*, it is interesting that there has been a similar observation about the language gap in other contexts such as in Rohingya language of Myanmar where the word for *gender* does not exist and is frequently mistranslated into Rohingya as *women*, which makes local people misunderstand *gender-based violence* as *violent women* (The New Humanitarian 2020). As far as terminology goes, this clearly has an impact on how local understanding may decide whether a concept is launched accurately or not.

6.4.5 Absence of concepts in policy discourse and policy-making

A final (sub)theme about the impact of terminology and translation was that key concepts in policy and policy-making in Vietnam may be absent. To a large extent, the above discussed example of translating *domestic violence/bạo lực gia đình* into Hmong can be sufficient to illustrate this impact because, as seen from the participant's narratives, the absence of the concept in the Hmong vernacular constructs has led to an ideological deficiency and a "complete" framing of domestic violence policy to be implemented with Hmong stakeholders. In fact, this type of impact also emerged with other illustrations from interview data.

For example, an NGO worker mentioned that they had not seen *trao quyền* as the translation for *empowerment* officially in the government's policy documents yet. Up to now, even though the equivalent *trao quyền* has gained considerable popularity in the local development practice, its existence and use are only limited within the practical scope of work of development projects and documentation of NGOs and development agencies. This finding becomes coherent with the evidence from interview and textual data about its compatibility with the local political landscape and how alternative equivalents in Vietnamese need to be used to communicate *empowerment* because of its political sensitivity.

I still think *trao quyền* should be used in official documents in Vietnamese, but I haven't seen it yet. It only shows up in project documents, in project activities, for empowering women, empowering youth and these are what the project tries to do, but the term has not been in Vietnamese policy documents. (P8-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Analysis of grey literature for this study also provided the example of the absence of *resilience* in policy-making due to a lack of consensus in understanding the concept. Despite the concept frequently being translated as *khả năng thích ứng* [adaptability] in the sense of climate change adaptation, the textual and interview data analysis described in Section 5.3.2 showed that a total number of 13 different Vietnamese equivalents for *resilience* could be identified, illustrating this lack of consensus. Triangulation with grey literature then demonstrated that, up to 2017, *resilience* was absent in policy-making as well as in official policy discourse in Vietnam (AREP South Asia 2018).

To conclude this section, five (sub)themes of impacts of terminology and translation on policy and policy-making were discussed. Specifically, conceptual and terminological barriers may bring about policy disagreements, as seen from the example of *inclusiveness*. These barriers, together with the political sensitivity embedded in several concepts, may lead to the fact that certain policies cannot be approved, such as about *empowerment* or in the area of *social protection*. In other examples, such as about the concepts and terms *legal coverage* and *effective coverage*, policy implementation might become problematic and not cost-effective if the concept is not understood and the term is not translated consistently. By relating to the example of how *domestic violence* could not be conceptualised and translated properly in Hmong, the circulation of such a concept and its associated term may influence the way policy was framed for ethnic minorities and local communities to ensure that they benefit from the policy. Finally, the absence of several concepts and translations of terms including *domestic violence*, *empowerment* and *resilience* may entail their absence in the local political discourse and policy-making, with possible wider implications for development outcomes.

6.5 The researcher's reflections

Reflecting on my experience with terminology and translation and policy as a research participant, I have long noticed that there have been official documents to regulate the official names of State ministries, departments and agencies. This issue of naming can be related to the example given earlier by Participant 12 of *an sinh xã hội* [social protection]. For instance, in the area of *bảo hiểm xã hội* [social security], issued together with Official Letter 1214/BHXH-HTQT dated 4th April 2019 was an appendix to list the official English names of the head organisation (Vietnam Social Security – VSS) and various departments and divisions under it (Vietnam Social Security 2019). This text came into effect in 2019,

while the example given by the participant was from an event in 2017. Was this an attempt to overcome the challenge of using different names and labels which may have led to difficulties with implementation in policy and practice? It is possible that the answer to this question depends largely on the specific point of time when the event occurred as well as the time when the solution was concretised through the issuance of such a text. Regardless, from my researcher/practitioner positionality, I think this is an appropriate solution. First, translators and relevant parties involved in the use of terms, such as bilingual development practitioners, development organisations and policy champions, could do research to become more aware of official sector-specific terms and names from similar texts and guidelines issued by government stakeholders and mainstream these names and terms for proper use and communication. In addition, such texts and guidelines could be regarded as a tool for standardisation to offer specific benefits to the translation and systematic use of the names of state agencies and government stakeholders in development practice and policy. For this reason, as mentioned in the discussion regarding *an sinh xã hội*, an appropriate collaboration effort for consistency of use of terminology becomes essential at the stage of developing and communicating bilingual policies among development stakeholders.

6.6 An answer to SQ2

Chapter 6 addressed SQ2: *What are the impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy?* As a first element of the answer to this question, it was argued that participation is a key enabling factor to development practice and policy in this context. As such, the impacts of terminology and translation on participation need to be considered. It was found in this case study that understanding, trust and power are all key to participation and all are influenced by translation and terminology. Specifically, terminology usage, local perceptions of development concepts, the position of English in development communication and the role of the translators were all shown to influence understanding, trust and power among stakeholders and, therefore, impact on participation. However, these impacts were complex and context-dependent to a large extent and could not be explained by a clear relationship of cause and effect. Instead, a general explanation would be that, while terminology and translation pose many challenges to relationships of understanding, trust and power between stakeholders and can hinder participation, they can also be used strategically as opportunities to increase participation and, therefore, enable more positive impacts on development practice and policy. Further

findings and analysis in the chapter indicated that impacts of terminology and translation might be positive or negative, as outlined below.

On development practice:

- On the contrary to what is often assumed by donors and development organisations that there are clear distinctions in defining development initiatives, different understandings of concepts and Vietnamese equivalents of terms may show confusion about what is actually implemented at local levels.
- Also at local levels, development practices become blurred and diverse because they are described by the same translated terms that are used to label different introduced concepts across different domains of development work. Many participants in the study referred to this situation as the conceptual burdens created by introduced knowledge which were not yet synchronised and consistent with local knowledge.
- The translations of several key terms labelling central concepts in the current development discourse may be considered politically sensitive in the Vietnam context. As a result, local participation may be compromised, or the practice entailed by the original concepts needs to be overhauled because stakeholders may need to use user-friendly terminology to promote participation and avoid political sensitivity.
- Diverse forms of development practice at local levels as an impact of translation and terminology might not necessarily be negative because it can demonstrate that local stakeholders have taken greater ownership of the projects they participate in.
- The localisation of development-related concepts and terms can endeavour the decolonisation of development practice. While this finding reinforces the call for collaborative efforts to be made by donors, NGOs, policy makers, practitioners and local stakeholders to deconstruct imposed Western-centric development and practice through language use, it also corresponds with addressing of the shift of English from being an essential lingua franca to an obstacle in development and aid.

On development policy:

- Development policy-making may be disagreed among stakeholders due to different understandings of concepts and Vietnamese equivalents of terms.
- Development policy may not be passed due to the inaccurate use of terminology.

- Policy implementation may be hindered by different understandings of concepts and Vietnamese equivalents of terms.
- Policy-making may not be possible due to either the absence of a translated term in the local development discourse or the inconsistent use of multiple translated terms.

While the impacts of terminology and translation on development practice appear to be broadly more positive in the above list, and while their impacts on development policy appear to be broadly more negative, it is important to remember that practice and policy are frequently interrelated in this context (see Section 2.2.2) and can emerge as two intertwined concepts of a complexity when being viewed from the perspective of translation (Marais 2020).

In short, in answer to SQ2, terminology and translation (or their absence) can have a wide-range of impacts on development practice and policy, some positive and some negative, and these impacts can be interrelated in complex ways, especially through the lens of participation.

6.7 Conclusion

Chapter 6 engaged with real-life experience and substantiation of participants of translation and terminology to answer SQ2 about their impacts on development practice and policy. The thematic analysis described in this chapter drew again on multiple datasets: predominantly real-life experiences of participants expressed during semi-structured interviews, but also verified through triangulation with results from the workshop survey and textual analysis, analysis of grey literature as well as autoethnographic researcher reflections. Analysis in this chapter underlined the sociological view of translation and terminology, and it was found that while attention of development stakeholders in Vietnam to translation has generally increased, it results in direct consequences to their development practice as well as the making and shaping of development policies there. This comprehensive landscape of impact contains both positive and negative influences that are highly interrelated, especially when viewed from the perspective of participation. What remains to be known, however, is how development stakeholders in Vietnam engage with translation and terminology, and more specifically, what types of solutions they are implementing or proposing to overcome issues with translation and terminology in real-life scenarios. The chapters up to now have provided

some initial insights about problem-solving but the next chapter, Chapter 7, will analyse this category in a more systematic way to answer both SQ3 and SQ4 of this study.

Chapter 7 – Potential solutions to issues of terminology and translation in development practice

7.1 Introduction

Following the previous presentations of findings and analysis about issues of terminology and translation and the real-life impacts on practice and policy in the context of development in Vietnam, this chapter focuses mainly on problem solving. Analysis in this chapter addresses SQ3: *What are potential solutions to terminology and translation problems in development practice?* At the same time, analysis of data suggested strong links between potential solutions and vernacular knowledge in translation as a vehicle for knowledge transferring. Therefore, a substantial component of analysis in the chapter will also be devoted to articulate the salient role of vernacular knowledge, thus answering SQ4: *What is the relevance of local communities' vernacular knowledge to development policy?*

The structure of this chapter is organised based on the main theme of “potential solutions” and its (sub)themes which are illustrated in the section of the coding tree in Figure 5 (also see Section 4.5.7.3 and Appendix E). The analysis of these themes continues to centre on interview data, but is also triangulated with textual analysis data, survey data, grey literature and autoethnographic data. Sections headings presenting potential solutions in this chapter have been phrased primarily in the form of imperative clauses. This delivery is to emphasise, with empirical guidance, the interpretation of perspectives around problem-solving from the actual development work of participants as key stakeholders. The chapter begins with a recommendation synthesised from participant accounts and triangulated with other relevant data to formulate and implement policy on translation and language (Section 7.2). The next section discusses a need to develop and make use of terminology management tools/toolkits (Section 7.3). We should consider intralingual practices of translation (Section 7.4), the use of source language in the translation (Section 7.5), engage in shared learning (Section 7.6) and improve the translation workflow through connected practices (Section 7.7). The chapter draws to a close in Sections 7.8 and 7.9 with some autoethnographic researcher reflections in Section 7.9 and summary answers to SQ3 and SQ4.

1. **Varied translation equivalents and different understandings**
 - Wellbeing/well-being
 - Resilience
 - Empowerment
 - Decent work
 - Social accountability
 - Civil society organisations
 - Community-based tourism
 - Career counselling
 - Other terms
2. **Impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy**
 - Impact on participation
 - Understanding
 - Trust and power
 - Impact on development practice
 - Diverse practice
 - Local versus introduced knowledge
 - Responding to political sensitivity
 - Potential benefits of translation and terminology
 - Decolonising development practice
 - Impact of on policy and policy-making
 - Policy disagreement
 - Policy disapproval
 - Ineffective policy implementation
 - Framing development policy for implementation among local communities and ethnic minorities
 - Absence of concepts in policy discourse and policy-making
3. **Potential solutions to issues of terminology and translation in development practice**
 - Translation and language policy
 - Other translation practice-based solutions
 - Terminology management tools
 - Terminology standardisation
 - Code-switching and the advantage of using parentheses
 - Handling political sensitivity
 - Other workflow-based practices
 - The relevance of local/vernacular knowledge
 - *Nôm na*
 - Better-not-translated
 - Shared learning
 - Stakeholder consultation
 - Who should translate?
 - CoPs
4. **Role of translation and terminology in development practice in Vietnam**

Figure 5. Main themes from the coding tree presented in Chapter 7

7.2 Formulate and implement policy on translation and language

It is noteworthy to restate that, the general shortage of awareness of language and translation policy in development practice, especially in the NGO sector has been problematised in this thesis (see Section 3.2). Therefore, a key category of solutions voiced by participants as key stakeholders in development work in Vietnam were descriptively policy-based to acknowledge this problem to address the low priority of language and translation in development work. Survey data (see Section 4.5.5) seemed to ascertain this situation clearly to a large extent. When being asked to describe the policy governing translation and language in their development work and organisations, four among the eight surveyed international development professionals said that there was no language or translation policy in their

projects and/or organisations. In three of these instances, survey participants answered that translation and language were being managed ineffectively. Of the participants who said that there was a language/translation policy at work, two considered the policy ineffective (Figure 6).

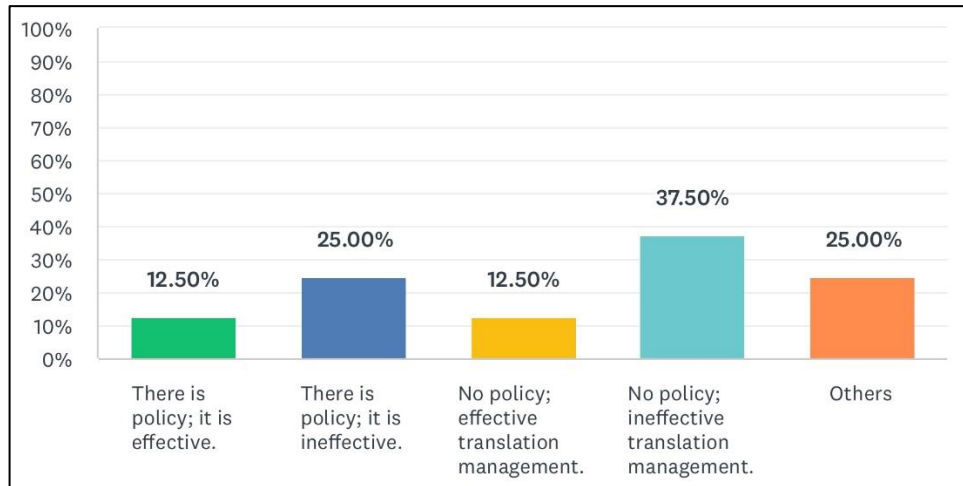


Figure 6. Description of the policy governing translation and language in survey participants' development project and/or organisation

Here, the crucial point to make is that the shortage of policy is vitally related to the underfunding of language and translation (Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020), and this situation is not under any condition different for development organisations working in the context of Vietnam:

[A]most all of them do not have policies or any principles to standardise translation and interpreting practice. It's more momentary and depending on specific needs. Usually, they look at the internal resources of the organisation to arrange resources for translation and interpreting. For example, if you have a staff member who can speak English, then it is not necessary to have a separate in-house translator. Basically, Vietnamese officers do two jobs but are paid one salary [*Laughter*]. (P11-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

In the discussion regarding the general context of development work in Vietnam, it was pointed out that many NGOs or projects nowadays in Vietnam only recruit staff who can speak English and translate (Whetter 2006). Responses from most interview participants reaffirmed this observation, which they also noted when speaking about aspects of trust and power (see Section 6.2.2). This fact indicates a smouldering dynamic that can further elaborate the issue of resources for translation and language in development work there. First, because translation needs tend to appear on an ad hoc basis and depending on specific

work that requires translation, the resources for language and translation are only allocated within the ready-for-use zone of internal resources. However, this has affected the institutional ability to anticipate any needs for language capacity building, translation and the handling of terminology throughout a project, which, according to the following participant, should be seriously considered as a policy-based solution to be implemented at the beginning or in parallel with project implementation:

I think there should be a serious investment into language and translation in a development project, that is, it is necessary to consider budget allocation for [translation/language] policy development, to take it seriously. Capacity building in language should be proactively implemented by the organisation or the project at the outset or parallel to the project implementation. That is, it is necessary to develop specific activities, which can be about standardising terminology for each specific project, or creating favourable conditions for professional translators and the development project team to work together right from the beginning. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

The second commentary is related to the short-term nature of many development projects in Vietnam. Indicators for success measurement are developed usually within a limited timeframe, as underlined by various donors and stakeholders for a long time (Jerve et al. 2003; World Bank 2011; UNDP 2018). This inefficiency has an impact on the cost-effective use of budget and resources for communication activities, in which translation has a role to play. Participant 5 quoted above presented a complexity around this situation in the early phase of the interviews. It is possible and also common that the (usually outsourced) translator who translated a booklet for awareness raising may not know who the target audience and users of the document are and, considering the possibility that these users—such as local community members—may find it difficult to understand the knowledge being transferred, they might just leave it aside. To be specific, the solution this participant recommended was not just about inadequate budgeting that needed attention when a language and translation policy was developed, but it must specify the policy's implementers, users and beneficiaries of translation as well. In other words, a language/translation policy may or may not be effective depending on its intention of being inclusive, which, at a high level, is also a desired value of development work.

[P]rojects are usually short-term, with many different activities. Many times the indicator of a project is just the production and publication of this one document, and there is no target that this document be read by this many people and understood by this many people. The project usually just stops at meeting the criteria like “develop a manual on... organic farming”, then tick the box and then it's done [*Laughter*]. No

one ever wonders if this document is really useful and the target audience will read it or not. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

In the meantime, where resources are available, the recommendation of participants was that a policy on translation and language should be an ideal solution and should come first at an organisational level to overcome the barriers of language and translation in development work. Since such a policy had been absent in many cases, it was reasonable also for participants to envisage a possible purpose of use and composition of it. They related that language training, translation training and terminology handling capacity should become the key components of such a policy, with training materials being developed and maintained for further use for different project cycles and also for shared learning:

[D]evelopment organisations can think of training, and improving the translation and terminology capacity for their staff and they allocate budget and resources for this activity. Ideally, if they can make the training content shareable, say, as videos, for example, on how certain terms are translated, then other parties can benefit from it. Also, these training materials can also be reused for different project cycles. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

Regarding the translation-related and language-related tasks undertaken by stakeholders in Vietnam (see Sections 2.3.1 and also 3.2.4), it was also recommended that an adequate policy about language and translation would also benefit them in several important ways. For the purpose of training, these personnel, including full-time translators/interpreters, bilingual development practitioners and NGO workers and staffers, will be firstly provided with the technical knowledge. They can also have key tools and standard documents shared with them as a good source of references. Then, they will have the opportunity for shared learning through consultation on issues of translation and terminology with other key development actors and stakeholders, including international and local experts in the field and also government officials.

[I]t must be prepared in advance in many forms such as providing easy-to-read and understandable technical documents, or facilitating so they [those who translate and engage with terminology] can interact with key stakeholders before they actually start working, so they should actually speak to foreign experts and Vietnamese specialists, professional officials and those from government departments... Through that, they will understand the technical knowledge of the project. (P14-Ph2, local government representative)

The recommended solution about translation and language policies gives priority to the aspect of competence in translation practices. In fact, what was raised from the triangulation of interview data and survey data not only validates that the absence of language and

translation policies was not isolated to the Vietnam context but also and more broadly, demonstrates the practical and inclusive effort being raised and performed almost instantaneously both in Vietnam and elsewhere to address the issue. This effort also speaks for a prospective outlook on the possibility of having language and translation policies mainstreamed among development agencies, NGOs, across different programmes and projects and across different contexts.

To sum up, participants called for development organisations, projects and programmes to formulate and implement policy on translation and language. To synthesise from data, specific requirements of such a policy-based solution include:

- Sufficient time, resources and budgets must be allocated to develop the policy;
- These must be in place prior to or in parallel with the implementation of development projects;
- The policy must be inclusive, i.e. it needs to specify target implementers, users and beneficiaries, including outsourced translators;
- The policy must compel training on language, translation and terminology, and if necessary, provision of basic and in-depth technical knowledge of the project's areas of work for those who translate, including outsourced translators;
- The policy must include or provide access to adequate training materials and tools to be used across different project cycles such as easy-to-read and understandable technical documents, lexicons, glossaries, term lists and video materials that can be shareable and reused;
- The policy should be mainstreamed with existing policies being used among development agencies, NGOs, across different programmes and projects and across different contexts.

Once in place, there should be elements specifically incorporated into the policies to make them work effectively. Of these elements, having terminology management tools was recommended by participants as another solution which will be discussed in the next section.

7.3 Develop and make use of terminology management tools/toolkits

It needs to be stated foremost that mentions of participants about having specialised tools or toolkits to handle development-related terminology from interviews were plentiful. Almost every Vietnamese participant expressed that they needed to work with terminology on a

frequent basis, although not all of them engaged with or had access to discussions on the way development-related terms should be translated with others such as colleagues at work. They acknowledged that such discussions had become a practice; however, the discussions were limited to the extent of asking each other what equivalents were used the most and not about the actual reasons why such equivalents were dominantly used, i.e. the knowledge and understanding of concepts that determined the translation.

Asking each other how to translate a term is a practice, but if understood in the sense of asking and discussing with each other about the translation process is not. We'd only ask "what does this translate to?" As for why translate like that... between the two translations, which is more meaningful... we don't discuss those. (P2-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Where in-depth discussions did not occur often to the extent of understanding and knowledge, participants explicitly described that, in their organisation or projects, such matters were not taken seriously with enough interest, even when they needed to explain concepts and their "true meanings" to local stakeholders, as mentioned below by an NGO worker. Others saw that discussing the translation of terminology into Vietnamese among NGO workers was not necessary because they spoke English at work and seemed to have already an agreed understanding of concepts and terms in English.

[B]ecause they don't see it as a big problem. I have a feeling that my colleagues don't really understand the nature of these terms to be able to judge the right or wrong of a translation, or to explain to local partners that the true meanings are. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Actually for us, when we do development work, we understand everything in English. Because all the documents are in English, and we discuss in English. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

This trend was also observed in the survey data, which expanded the analysis to contexts other than Vietnam. The majority of survey participants said that they discussed the translation of terminology with others either all the time, frequently or every now and then (see Figure 7). It is also worth noticing that these participants were all English or bilingual speakers, and this means that development practitioners discuss terminology translation regardless of contexts and competences.

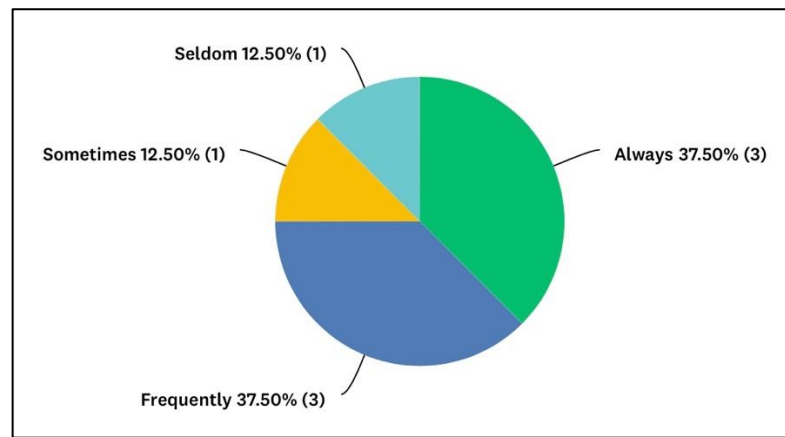


Figure 7. How often development professionals discussed the translation of development terminology with colleagues

The exposition of the frequent need to discuss issues of translation and terminology in different contexts is to show that the recommended solution of having some sorts of tools is about meeting this need. As described earlier, the interrelation between translation and/in development in the local context depicts a practice in which not only professional and outsourced translators but also a wide range of stakeholders are involved (see Sections 2.3.1 and 6.2.2). For this reason, besides the solution of having language and translation policies, interview participants, especially those who were not professional translators, articulated an immediate demand for terminology support tools, such as glossaries and lexicons of terms and lists of acronyms belonging to specific areas of their development work, together with translation handbook and guidelines. The significance of such tools, however, lies in several factors. First, local understandings must be integrated into the information, while the information itself must also be project-specific for the introduced knowledge to be understood by and appropriate to local beneficiaries and the local context. Second, the compiling of the tools would need the potential contribution and inputs of various actors such as language experts and colleagues.

[I]f we have a tool, a specialised lexicon of terms for example that consists of terms being translated from English into Vietnamese which also considers the understandings of the beneficiaries, who are often people with little or no knowledge about the development work or who have not yet understood what our activities are, it will make them understand more easily. Then they feel closer to the knowledge and activities about development, and so it brings in a better and more effective communication. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

So if we build a tool that is a manual or a glossary of terms, the entries must be very specific, and must be explained very specifically in the form of such as, “generally

this term means something like this, but in the project it focuses on this and that aspect...”, then it will be helpful. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

On the necessity of having a tool for categorising acronyms, one participant noted that such a tool had proven useful for stakeholders when dealing with specialised project documents but had been missing in many organisations:

For example, the table of acronyms. It’s a necessity but many don’t do it. But sometimes when I’m reading about the somewhat specialised projects, it sometimes takes time to find acronyms like that. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

It was also clear from the above quote that one of the major purposes of such specialised tools is to establish consistent and standardised resources of terms for better use. The participant added, however, that such tools could also be mainstreamed across different individuals, projects and organisations to become a common learning resource:

[I]t is a good tool for two purposes. First it makes it easier for users, second, it is a good move towards bringing different translators, different translations from different projects closer. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

The participant who commented above had extensive experience working with donors and in development project management. Therefore, they referred the demanded development of translation and terminological tools to the responsibility of donors and projects. Under the present circumstance of not having tools and resources for more official use in development work, there were cases when organisations made use of their induction process to circulate a limited amount of documents as training materials and terminology reference materials for new staff. Following induction, the staff would develop their own glossaries by note-taking at individual levels.

[T]ranslators often maintain a notebook to jot down all such terminology. When a new employee enters the job, the organisation will perform induction for them, then these tools are among the shared training materials and documents. Such tools and problem handling are only used in this “hand-operating” manner. (P10-Ph2, NGO worker)

Actually, in several small-scale projects, such tools have already been developed for the same purposes but not yet made official. For example, two participants spoke about how a terminology management glossary their project team had built was only used for internal purposes but had the potential to be updated and expanded over time in the form of a living document online:

[T]his glossary serves the purpose of internal research so that team members can agree on the language [...] Mainly internally, but it will continue to be updated and expanded. Currently, it is a living document on Google Sheets. (P9-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

If these [different translated equivalents of terms] can be documented, published online and regularly updated, people will be aware of a very good resource becoming available for those who need to translate in development work, then they have options of terms to choose from [...] Or they can also feedback that these translations are not good, these terms need to be translated like this [*Laughter*], then gradually this toolkit will be enriched. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

For the development context of Vietnam, the benefit of such tools can expand beyond the scope of practical assistance to terminology users. An updated, living resource of terminology as suggested above is meaningful in particular to keep track of possible shifts not only in language use but also in the way development knowledge transforms. Ideally, in the process of collaboration and communication, when the knowledge produced in the tools can be back translated into English, it would be more accessible at a broader level and would reflect to a large extent the general picture of development in Vietnam in terms of mapping the changing knowledge and practice through terminology use. This type of benefit was remarkably described by the participant as follows:

[I]f this living document is updated regularly every year, then I can observe the trending knowledge or which understanding and translations are preferred and used frequently in a certain period of time. This way, if we look back after a while, we can see the shift of the development sector in Vietnam. The use of terminology in each period is the clearest evidence of the work, and thereby shows the trends of the development sector. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

To summarise, according to participants, besides being integrated into translation and language policy, either at intra-organisational or inter-organisational levels or across different projects and programmes, terminology management tools have the purposes of (1) becoming a resource for reference and cross-check the use specialised terms, (2) allowing standardisation of the use and translation of terminology (3) enabling better communication of development knowledge to stakeholders, (4) being used as training materials as part of a comprehensive translation and language policy, and (5) at a broader level, being used as a living resource to keep track of the shifts not only of language and terminology use but also in the way development knowledge transforms over time. To combine with the findings from the policy-based solution earlier, such terminology management and support tools/toolkits, as considered useful by participants, may include but not be limited to:

- Translation guidelines and handbooks
- Glossaries and lexicons of specialised terms
- List of acronyms
- Visual materials (such as videos)

Most importantly, participants also asserted that, to develop such tools, the local knowledge and understandings must be recorded, while the content must be project-specific and context-specific to make sure that the knowledge is understandable to local stakeholders and beneficiaries. For example, non-specialist explanations could be integrated into the entries. To facilitate this, the development of such tools should be inclusive and need the inputs not only from development professionals, practitioners and translators as primary users, but also from language experts and local development stakeholders.

7.4 Consider intralingual practices of translation

So far this thesis has operationalised translation in its (1) figurative form as (inter)semiotic translation to become a vehicle of development as a meaning-making process (Marais 2019; 2020), and perhaps more often, (2) an interlingual form by which instances of translation equivalence of terms from a SL into a TL could be obtained. From thematic analysis, however, another aspect of translation emerged to relate some possible solutions recommended by participants with intralingual practices of translation. In this section, therefore, translation can be operationalised in an intralingual form according to Jakobson's (1959) triadic division of translation, which included intralingual translation, interlingual translation and intersemiotic translation (see also Section 3.2.1). Specifically, although not descriptively and explicitly stated by participants, the three solutions presented in this section imply a process of *rewording* (Jakobson 1959), whereby certain thematic practices such as “standardisation”, “handling political sensitivity” and *nôm na* (as vernacular practice of using simple speech, see Section 2.3.2) became involved as problem-solving criteria to get around barriers of inconsistent use of terminology, political sensitivity and diverse understandings within an intralingual space of the SL.

7.4.1 Terminology standardisation: does it always work?

As stated above, one of the main purposes of establishing terminology management tools/toolkits and resources is to standardise terminology in development work in Vietnam. So far, the rationale behind this purpose has come from two passages that arose from the

triangulation of diverse data. First, as findings from previous analyses showcased, there were multiple ways to understand and translate development-related buzzwords in Vietnam (see Chapter 5). Second, interview and survey data showed that some of these buzzwords were considered problematic because they perplexed development practice (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4). In the literature, the promotion of English buzzwords is characterised as a means for key actors to impose their status of power and interest on others in different contexts. For example, bilingual fieldworkers might exert their power on local stakeholders by their use of English and this affects the building of trust with those who have no or little command in English (see Section 6.2.2). In addition, by the introduction of new jargons, donors, NGOs and other actors may set the conceptual terms of their development agenda which enables them to be more competitive (Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020). However, does standardisation always work in the context of Vietnam?

Against these verdicts, it has become clear from this study that standardisation may not be the only suitable option. In Sections 6.2 and 6.3, it was acknowledged that development stakeholders needed to work with multiple equivalents and different understandings and accepted the reality of having relative confusion of meanings through the co-existence of these equivalents and understandings. In fact, the local expression of practice entailed by different understandings may also enable them to gain greater ownership of development work (see Section 6.3.4). To facilitate this advantage and being aware of the absence of a standardised system of terms, they have relied on a borrowing process that allows them to not only make use of the language and narratives being promoted by key actors such as the government and, through this, to also work in line with their existing agendas. Let us look at the two examples below regarding how several development organisations chose to adopt the equivalents being used by government stakeholders to translate *social accountability*, which described precisely how the borrowing process was facilitated:

So *social accountability* must be translated as *giám sát xã hội*, which is a term borrowed from the Fatherland Front because *giám sát xã hội* has been their mandate. So this local term is already available, even in documents of laws. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

It was also common for other development professionals and organisations to borrow and adopt the existing translation equivalents being used in large donors' documents, which were normally referred to as "official" translations:

[F]or me, the solution to difficulties in translation will be to refer to official sources. Personally, I often refer to official UN documents such as UNESCO or UNDP, because in almost every field, they have developed more or less relevant documents and materials. (P11-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

Underlying the above recommended practice was the effort of individual practitioners and organisations to localise and contextualise the use of terminology so that issues of diverse understandings and practices, and even political sensitivity, could be mitigated. Concerning policy, this effort might even be suitable to overcome the “technical barriers” caused by terminology to the making, approval and implementation, as mentioned in Section 6.3. In brief, given the absence of standardisation, development stakeholders have had other choices to deal with the confusion and co-existence of different versions of development buzzwords, and pure language standardisation might not apply well in the local context, given that standardisation itself may be an debatable option to deal with competing terms (Drame 2006) (see again Section 2.4.1 for current debates in terminology and translation studies).

7.4.2 Handle political sensitivity

In the previous discussion on real-world impacts, the theme of political sensitivity in translation emerged as a factor leading to limited participation, and consequently diverse practice, because translated equivalents of terms were not suitable with the local political realities (see Sections 6.2 and 6.3.3). The examples participants related about diverse practice highlighted the ways in which translation was part of the process of meaning-making and negotiating the relevance of the development discourse being communicated in Vietnam with its political and cultural settings. These discussions contributed to the growing scholarship that is critical of the shortage of attention in TS to issues of power and inequality (Olohan 2020).

Several descriptive themes identified in this thesis can provide empirical support to this situation, such as responding to political sensitivity, policy disagreement and policy disapproval (Figures 5). For example, participants talked about making the meanings of *social accountability* and *empowerment* more politically relevant in the local context (see Sections 6.2 and 6.4). We have learnt that, to navigate through the political dislike of local stakeholders about the equivalent *trách nhiệm giải trình* [responsibility to explain] which had been in popular use by NGOs and donors, development practitioners favoured the use of *giám sát xã hội* [social monitoring] to align with the mandate of the local Fatherland Front (see Section 5.3.5 and Section 6.2). In a similar way, *thúc đẩy sự tham gia* [promoting

participation] became a good choice to translate *empowerment* because of the politically sensitive perception around the meanings and translations of *power* (see Sections 5.3.3.4, 6.3.3 and 6.4.2). The outcomes were that, not only did these examples of translations help to minimise the political dislike, they were also observed as a solution to increase participation and local ownership in development projects and considered politically correct translations for use by and with local stakeholders.

More broadly in the development context of Vietnam, participants viewed politically correct language in development work as being as important as in other fields, and even a necessary solution to work with the diversity of stakeholders. They consider that the translator in development work in Vietnam seemed to have a certain level of flexibility to make their translated language more politically correct, and this could be seen as a solution to translate terms that are difficult to translate as opposed to a challenge. For example, to address some groups of stakeholders or beneficiaries, it was required that the translator should use gender-inclusive language, even when the information provided in the source language (which was usually English) was not.

I think if you look up political sensitivity principles in development or translation for example, and go into each field, there will be different things. For example gender, it can be different. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

As to how political sensitivity should be defined then handled in these particular contexts—the area of development and Vietnam—it was noted by participants that development practitioners should pay attention to language matters that might be sensitive such as gender, occupation, ethnicity, and so on. However, participants referred to this practice as a more sophisticated one than interlingual translation. To be more specific, they described two different levels of mediation after the routine translation (for example, from English to Vietnamese) was complete: one being the “invisible translation from Vietnamese into Vietnamese”, and the other about the conduct of respect and honour. Acknowledging these intralingual features is important because it potentially expands the practice of translation in development work beyond texts and language to make it practice of meaning-making (Escobar 1985; Marais 2020). As the following NGO worker reflected, to communicate the concept of *commercial sex workers*, using existing terms in Vietnamese supposedly translated from English may not be effective if one was aware of paying respect to the stakeholders they worked with:

Here, when I do development work, I see people don't use words like "prostitute" but rather say CSW, "sex workers" or "commercial sex workers" [...] It's not about linguistics anymore, it's not about translation anymore, it's about respect, conduct, honour [...] I think instead of trying to find an expression which sounds like translation from English to Vietnamese, here we are invisibly translating from Vietnamese to Vietnamese. (P7-Ph1, development practitioner)

The above description of how political sensitivity is handled in relation to mediation through translation and the use of language also matches one component of the identified problem space in this thesis about the intermediary role of the translator in development work. More precisely, the fact that participants vouched for political sensitivity and related to this solution addresses the general problem about the need for bi- and multilingual development workers to embrace the task of translation in their development brokering and mediating roles to facilitate effective communication while maintaining existing values of local culture and knowledge (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Bernacka 2012).

[W]ith the role and power of the person in the middle, you have to make sure that you can communicate the meaning in situations where you have to "soften" the expression but still have to make your speech politically correct. (P13-Ph1, development practitioner/donor representative)

However, when asked about political sensitivity should be handled in their organisations and projects, participants said it had not been widely and systematically adopted. The importance of handling political sensitivity, therefore, can be seen as a point of consideration for development organisations and projects when they develop language and translation policy.

Depends. Some organisations have them, but none of them have it as a complete practice. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

7.4.3 Nôm na and the contextualised use of terminology

Introduced as vernacular knowledge and the use of simple, common and non-specialised speech (see Section 2.3.2), *nôm na* emerged thoroughly from thematic coding of data as a solution to the translation of development-related terms and communication of concepts in Vietnam (Figure 5). In fact, almost every participant throughout the two phases of interviews said they used *nôm na* as a common practical solution to handle what they referred to as "too broad" concepts, for example, *wellbeing* and *decent work*, with varied equivalents (see Sections 5.3.1.3 and 5.3.4.3 for the explanations of a local government official for the two examples). Specifically for *decent work*, the participant restated below that such concepts were broad. However, they also argued that such concepts were also limited in the way they

were interpreted because any one of the varied Vietnamese equivalents may not be suitable to use consistently in all contexts:

But speaking in a “*nôm na*” way, decent is about meeting certain requirements, and *ổn định* [stability] is just one of those requirements. Because the above concepts are too broad, it is not possible to have a translation that summarises the meaning. (P14-Ph2, local government representative)

Adding to the different conceptualisations of *nôm na* explained in Section 2.3.2, a definition of *nôm na* was then given by the participant. *Nôm na* means, as the participant put it concisely, to have terms “phrased in a way that is easier for these partners to understand and importantly to remember”, and handled “in a way that we combine some possible translations with a certain level of explanation”:

What I want to say is, in development work with many stakeholders with different backgrounds in knowledge, we must handle it in a way that we combine some possible translations with a certain level of explanation. Some of the terms are highly technical which farmers and local partners may not be familiar with, so they need to be phrased in a way that is easier for these partners to understand and importantly to remember. (P14-Ph2, local government representative)

Once a comprehensive understanding of *nôm na* was made clear based on the examples of *wellbeing* and *decent work* in the SDG discourse, its scope of use in development translation and the key factors needed to make it a desirable solution were outlined:

But this depends on three main factors: the context, the people and the time allowed. As when I go to work with farmer households, very often I have to be flexible in handling technical terms that specialised experts had no problem understanding and using. (P14-Ph2, local government representative)

What was also worth noting from the above description was the clear contrast between the technical/specialised knowledge versus vernacular knowledge, but it also responded sufficiently to the tensions in question between these two systems of knowledge. This means that, at a theoretical level, querying these two knowledge systems might give us a strong rationale for examining the role of vernacular knowledge in development. While *nôm na*—by way of explanation using vernacular language and expressions—may be the answer to the call for using “friendly terminology” to promote participation in development work (see Sections 5.3 and 6.2), there are a number of factors to decide its appropriateness. From the above quotation, three factors were identified: the context, the audience and the time allowed. The majority of participants supported this opinion and further added that while *nôm na* could be the solution, for the sake of clarity of knowledge, the original terms and

selected translations could also be provided:

That's right, it takes time, and it depends on the audience. For listeners who have the ability to look up, we handle it as above, that is, we have to provide the original terms with the translation of our choice, and then provide extra information for them to look up [...] When I have time, it is best to explain in detail. (P9-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The importance of *nôm na* as a common practice being adopted by development workers in Vietnam “to get the job done”, especially in the field, has been stated by one participant as follows:

Unknowingly all of us in development work are using that “*nôm na*” way of explaining without realising it is a necessary tool or practice in communication [...] If you don't apply this practice in the field, it's almost impossible to get the job done. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Then, at policy levels, what is the possible role of *nôm na* in the Vietnam context? According to participants, by using *nôm na*, key actors involved in the shaping of language and translation policies in development organisations and projects could prioritise local stakeholders' access to knowledge and meanings as a possible goal and vision of the policies by contextualising the use of terminology and translation. Only one participant with an NGO career mentioned that their organisation had taken into consideration the use of terminology “depending on the stakeholders they worked with” [Participant 2, Phase 2], although this was not formulated as a policy. The majority of bilingual participants shared that there was no clear requirement regarding the use of language and translation in their project or at organisational levels; therefore, *nôm na* would be more of a personal effort to help local stakeholders, such as co-workers or beneficiaries, access the meanings of introduced concepts and terms. Expressly, while the choice of adopting *nôm na* may have come from “a good heart” and a reflexive attitude, participants seemed to expect this practice to be streamlined into policy and guidance on communication of their organisations.

[F]or those who don't speak English, my point is, whatever we do, we help them understand the essence of the problem, because in the end, new ideas come in, new approach introduced, specialised terms included... all looks complicated, but when we really analyse it, it's nothing too complicated. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

To return to the findings in Chapter 5 which put forward the difficulty of local communities in understanding high-level development ideas (see Sections 5.5 and 6.2.1), *nôm na* can be promoted as an intralingual tool to disentangle these key concepts. In the current situation

that development concepts are making their way into local development policy through a process of localisation—such as that of the SDGs—incorporating local knowledge in the form of *nôm na* explanation into the localised policy documents could benefit the understanding of local stakeholders, as related by a participant:

SDGs are not just a statement, they must always be accompanied by a certain explanation. The meanings will also be described more clearly... (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

Also, on the basis of the previous analysis on the impact of translation and terminology on development policy and practice (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4), *nôm na* may facilitate the contextualised delivery of interventions via better local participation in policy-making. For example, once local stakeholders are able to understand development-related concepts more fully, they could give feedback on the use of language in policy documents, and therefore can make development policy more inclusive and enable them to gain better ownership of the interventions.

[W]hen I bring terms to the local community, I must pay attention to sensitiveness when using terms. There must be regular feedback from those who are in contact with these terms. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Several other benefits of *nôm na* as a vernacular approach in translating development concepts and terms were also visible from the data. For example, as the impacts of development work may be decided by learning opportunities for local stakeholders, *nôm na* offers an opportunity for development workers to adjust their practice:

In the past, I think I'd disagree with using such use of the “*nôm na*” language because those Vietnamese “*nôm na*” expressions sound funny and incoherent. But then when I think more deeply, with such education and culture, the majority of people are using the “*nôm na*” language, while only a minority of people who do development work like me, if we separate ourselves from the majority, we will not bring in any impact. If you want people to participate, you must first make them feel like you are part of them, you are like them. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

However, adopting *nôm na* in development communication may not come without a cost. The same participant as above, on a verdict of using *nôm na* in development work, argued that there might be cases when the significance of development projects were compromised without the use of buzzwords. The examples of the absence of the buzzwords *resilience* and *empowerment* in government discourse which affected policy-making can be taken to illustrate this standpoint about development terminology (see Section 6.4.5). Remembering that in an ethnographically informed case study approach, even isolated or unique examples

have value in qualitative analysis (see Section 4.4.3), the authority or experience of one participant's voice below established that *nôm na* may appear to come with a lot of pros but should be weighed up against possible cons.

[I]t is true that now looking back on the long-term benefit, using a simple, lay term for people to remember a very long term phrase may take away the impression of the impact or the significance of those projects. (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In brief, with pros and cons, the importance of *nôm na* in the form of explanation of development-related concepts and terms using vernacular expressions is about contextualising introduced knowledge. Interview data showed that, even with cases of terminology that were difficult to translate or having multiple equivalents without any agreement in use, *nôm na* could be the solution to give local stakeholders access to the meanings. What is more, from triangulation with data about non-Vietnamese contexts, this solution was also relevant to non-Vietnamese contexts of development work based on the view that if the use of terminology was not contextualised, terms could be meaningless for the communities they worked with. Still in the Vietnam context, *nôm na* as an intralingual practice, alongside terminology standardisation and the handling of political sensitivity, helps translators facilitate the communication of that knowledge to make it work with local stakeholders. Therefore, it was recommended that *nôm na* should be integrated in the shaping and making of policy: i.e., both translation policies in development organisations and development policies in a broader sense, in the context of Vietnam. To depart from these intralingual solutions, the next section will discuss the use of source language in the translation of terminology as another problem-solving category as revealed in this study.

7.5 Consider the use of source language in the translation

Specific solutions under this category included code-switching and the choice of better-not-translated or zero-translation, although under several circumstances, these two solutions could complement each other as connected practices that could be applied during the translation process.

7.5.1 Code-switching and the advantage of the parentheses

Code-switching did not emerge from the data as a strong solution for issues of translation and terminology encountered by development practitioners in Vietnam. However, participants did mention it as a practice they used in their communication with local

stakeholders. From their descriptions, participants code-switched or alternated between Vietnamese and English, mostly in the context of verbal conversations in Vietnamese. For example, they described code-switching with Vietnamese community members in a training programme or with other bilingual co-workers in a meeting. In particular, how participants described this practice matches the classic sociolinguistic definition of code-switching such as that of Wardhaugh's (1986), which focused on the speakers' use of different languages, including the SL, in a single discourse without changing the topic. One participant referred to this as a trend in development work which has become a habitual practice of bilingual development workers:

[B]ecause of the habit of using two languages at the same time, many would mix English and Vietnamese when they worked [...] In development work, local stakeholders and those of the previous generations may find this a problem and annoyance, and it may lead to reduced communication efficiency. (P8-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The participant above described the reason why they code-switched as being related to their contact with English terminology. According to them, the general perception towards code-switching was not generally positive, and there had already been examples in real-life situations when this phenomenon on television received negative reactions from the audience. This view is related to the argument made earlier about how the use of English may sometimes lead to mistrust and power issues and consequently hinder participation (see Section 6.2), which was also spotlighted as the changing role of English in development work (see Section 3.2.3). However, the participant went on to explain that, even though they as development workers tried not to code-switch, they struggled from time to time because of the absence of agreed translation equivalents of terms, or because sometimes code-switching made the communication easier between bilingual co-workers if they used original English terms together, given that they both shared the same understanding:

However, there are situations when development workers find that there is no uniform translation for terms, and sometimes they are “stuck” with language, so in some contexts among colleagues, they sometimes have to use the original English terms, leading to the inclusion of both Vietnamese and English in their communication. (P8-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In general, other bilingual development practitioners felt the same perception towards code-switching and had a similar explanation for it—all pointed to the challenge of terminology translation. There was an interesting and important further point made by some, however: an overuse of code-switching may lead to issues of power and positionality possibly

perceived by local stakeholders, despite good reasons to keep the original English term in conversation to avoid misunderstanding:

I find that through the translation process, the content of a word has changed, so I think that sometimes leaving the English term as it is without translating will eliminate the fact that people do not understand correctly [...] But working with local stakeholders, that can be a barrier [...] Local people might think “he is putting himself in a higher position”, or “his thinking is too “Western” so his way of doing things will not be the same as the local way”. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

As much as the advantage of the reference point was observed in verbal communication, it was also seen as a strength in document translation when the translator felt the need to keep the original term in English as a “safe” strategy. The majority of participants said they chose to put the original term in parentheses, even when they were aware of an existing Vietnamese equivalent that was most commonly used, as explicitly stated by a donor representative below:

Sometimes it’s safe to choose the one that’s used the most, and then put in parentheses the English name next to it, so that our users know that we’ve already translated, but in case they don’t trust, they can always check again with the English available. (P4-Ph1, donor representative/development practitioner)

7.5.2 Zero-translation

Participants also discussed a solution that was interestingly related to the significance of vernacular knowledge in development work in Vietnam through the strategy of not translating at all some of the concepts and terms. This direct transfer of the words in the source language to the target language can be described as a tactic of zero-translation (Lako 2020). One participant voiced that, instead of having to struggle in choosing between existing translations for *wellbeing*, they thought that these terms were better-not-translated, even within the organisation or project team, or in fieldwork in the situation when there was not yet a consensus in understanding these broad terms:

[L]ike *wellbeing*, now in our organisation, we don’t translate anymore and everyone uses the English term. But fortunately in our work agenda, we have not yet reached the level of explaining the concept to local communities. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

A similar solution was actually proposed by other participants for *decent work*, *mindfulness*, *mindful practice*, and so on (see transcript lines 3527 – 3530 and 7359 –7377 for opinions from Participant 10 and Participant 11 regarding this solution in Appendix G). According to

these participants, several reasons for this decision were identified. The first reason, as it implied the workplace context in the first story above, might be related to the role of English in NGOs and development agencies. Also, whether the choice of zero-translation is considered a practice of bilingual development practitioners was interconnected to the practice of code-switching which was described to make the communication easier between co-workers when original English terms were used in a standardised way among them (see Section 7.4.1). The second directly related to the observation of participants that some concepts in development were multi-dimensional, and existing Vietnamese labels for these concepts did not fully cover all aspects of meanings. The third reason was closely linked to vernacular knowledge—that is, from the feedback of local stakeholders, even the existing Vietnamese equivalents and *nôm na* explanation were both difficult for them to understand. It was also observed in practice that local perceptions towards concepts—for example, *wellbeing*, *mindfulness*, *resilience* and *empowerment*—presented their unique lived experience or were deeply rooted in the local system of values that was far from the introduced system. For such reasons, some participants’ approaches were not to translate, nor would they choose to use any existing translations to avoid a top-down approach of translation and a reductionist approach of “translating” a lived experience. In these circumstances, better-not-translated may be connected to the use of parentheses for original English terms (in documents) or mentioning them verbally (in conversational settings, for example, in the field), then using *nôm na* or narratives to relate to the essence of the concepts.

In the next section, another emergent category of problem-solving from thematic analysis, shared learning, will be discussed to describe how development stakeholders considered this a good solution to issues of translation and terminology.

7.6 Engage in shared learning

The idea of shared learning, as defined by participants, seemed holistic and had more to do with establishing a partnership between groups with different fields of expertise (i.e. development and translation) to facilitate joint efforts in solving issues of translation and terminology in development. Such a general understanding could be contemplated from the two opinions given below by two development practitioners:

[S]hared learning can be a good approach to create a community that combines development professionals and translators. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

[E]ach party can contribute with the strengths of their expertise. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

Most participants agreed that shared learning would be a good solution to issues of terminology and translation in development practice in Vietnam. They suggested that this solution should receive adequate attention right at the beginning of development programmes and projects, given the usually limited resources and timeframe. What was also important, according to one participant, was that shared learning would become more effective should its scope be expanded to include all groups of development stakeholders:

I think shared learning is also a solution to the translation problem in development, but it should not limit to development practitioners who translate and professional translators, and it should include development stakeholders [...] So right from the start, if there is this component or there is a budget for this, the use of terminology and language will be “legalised” and it will save a lot of time because the timeframe of any project is usually very short. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

Based on this overall recognition of shared learning as an important solution, two areas of particular interest in shared learning were observed: stakeholder consultation and actors.

7.6.1 Stakeholder consultation on translation and terminology

Regarding the first area of particular interest, stakeholder consultation primarily occurs at two different levels: (1) at a so-called pre-implementation stage when development organisations and project teams consulted with and pilot the understandings and the translations of terms with local stakeholders and beneficiaries, with the assistance of available resources and tools, to get their feedback, and (2) more frequently, among co-workers, colleagues and/or with specialists and experts. While responses from interviews about the latter were more extensive, this research has found the former more ground-breaking and compelling given the urgency and realisation of the impacts of translation on development work in Vietnam.

It was interesting to learn that the solution of pre-implementation consultation was suggested mainly in the second phase of interviews, which happened approximately three months after the first and when participants had the opportunity for reflection (see Section 4.5.3). One participant explained why enabling shared learning at the beginning of a project and establishing it as a formal activity were important to avoid misunderstanding potentially caused by translated terminology from original English concept documents:

It is a step that is roughly called the explanation of terminology or translation before the project is implemented. Because usually the project concept is written in English in Hanoi, Saigon or any office, and then when it is approved and funding becomes available, it will be translated into Vietnamese for approval [...] When we have that concept document in English or the Vietnamese versions in our hand to go to work with local stakeholders or the field office, there should be that step, the explanation of project terminology and translation so that people really see the problem. (P4-Ph2, donor representative/development practitioner)

Not only for the purpose of consulting about terminology with stakeholders, this activity was important to spell out project evaluation and monitoring, for example, by defining indicators related to several problematic concepts such as *bình đẳng giới* [gender equality] or *có sự tham gia* [participatory]:

This step is actually not only related to the difficulties in terms of terminology, but it also involves understanding the work agenda and understanding the indicators. Sometimes an indicator is written in English, for the writer it is always easy to understand, but for the audience, even those very good at reading English, it can be misunderstood [...] If I talk about *bình đẳng giới* [gender equality], what do I really mean here? I talk about *có sự tham gia* [participatory], what do I mean... then I think it would be better to explain these things specifically. (P4-Ph2, donor representative/development practitioner)

In reality, even though this activity of terminology consultation may happen in various forms during project inception, it seems that it is never satisfactorily completed. It was not surprising that the participant gave the examples of *gender equality* and *participatory* because in many projects and for many donors operating in Vietnam, these two aspects (alongside human rights, environment and others) belong to the category of cross-cutting issues that need to be integrated and mainstreamed throughout the whole timeframe and stages of a development project (see Section 2.3.1). These topics often come out first and foremost when general consultation occurs at local levels. Actually, although it was not surprising to see the two examples given, the implication seemed striking if we relate it with consultation: local stakeholders will be given an opportunity to access the “true meanings” of the introduced knowledge (see also Section 7.3), then give feedback on translation and terminology as another cross-cutting issue.

[S]ometimes the local stakeholders don't read these documents [MOUs] carefully but still sign them because they'll get the money, having a project is having money. So the negotiation process, if any, is also very lightweight. So I think there should be activities such as conferences or consultation workshops before the parties sign so that everyone agrees on the understanding, language and content of the MOUs. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

The significance of this feedback activity was echoed by another participant. Here more specific recommendations were made. Accordingly, different translations of key terms which had already been used in project design documents (then to be used in the project) could be scored using survey tools. By documenting the results, the project or organisation could gradually measure the changes in local understandings. This process is explicitly recommended by a participant using the example of *gender responsive* and by surveying how their organisation's translations of the term were accepted by stakeholders as the first step of the process toward documentation:

For example, we can provide different translations for *gender responsive* and see how people understand the meaning and tell us and which translations they find easiest to understand [through surveys]. Then score the translations. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The benefits of this solution, as the participant explained further, were two-fold. Apart from being a reference terminology base for staff, the documented terms and concepts could also be incorporated or shaped into guidelines and policy on language and translation:

It should be kept accessible to all staff, for those who write documents or project concepts and proposals. It also will be helpful to field staff. The documented content can be systematically rearranged as guidelines, then training material for new staff. There are colleagues who come from other organisations to my organisation to work [Laughter], then should be aware of our organisation's policy on language use and translation. Or even if the organisation outsources translation, we should also share these materials as a reference base for them to know our preferred use of translated terminology so they can use in a consistent way, otherwise, I will have to spend time editing their translation. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

The essence of shared learning in this solution about pre-implementation consultation was most evident in the way it was useful not only for development organisations and projects to learn about the perceptions of local stakeholders of concepts and terminology being introduced but also for local stakeholders to share their feedback. In this way, the learning about translation and terminology handling practice could become a collaborative practice for these two groups. It also became clear through this solution that vernacular knowledge (through local feedback) was essential in this collaboration, and once local stakeholders' voices about translation and language issues were listened to, their ownership would be enhanced.

As for the consultation in the form of discussions among co-workers, colleagues and/with specialists and experts, it is worth restating the findings presented in Section 7.3 of this

chapter about how often development stakeholders in Vietnam and elsewhere discuss translation and terminology with each other. In general, development practitioners realise the need for these discussions as a shared practice, although they differ across organisations and individuals. Participants described that discussions took place most often when co-workers in a project or organisation needed to cross-check translated terms and the level of discussion was normally not in-depth to the extent of understanding and knowledge. However, when conditions and resources allowed, they saw the benefits of discussing terminological issues with professionals and experts, including translation and language professionals, then even formally disseminated the outcomes of the discussions with local stakeholders.

For new terms, we must first agree on the translations with a panel of experts, then officially have it in the media publications of our organisation, and we conduct communication with the stakeholders to make that knowledge come into life and make an impact. (P8-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In a nutshell, participants saw the solution of stakeholder consultation as an opportunity of shared learning for themselves and other stakeholders to co-construct the knowledge being transferred in development work. They acknowledged that the sharing of knowledge could happen at different levels, either among development stakeholders, between the development sector and other sectors, or between workers from the development profession and other professions.

I think in the early stages of the project, given the time, I'd make an opportunity where all stakeholders can co-construct or co-define the goals, concepts and terms used for the whole project life. From this, maybe the development sector shares the way they understand those, and the private or public sectors share the way they understand, and everyone develops a common understanding, at least within the timeframe or scope of the project. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

7.6.2 Who should translate in development work?

Generally there are two categories of actors who directly engage with translation in development work in Vietnam. The first category consists of trained and professional translators who have experience working in the aid and development sector. The second involves bi- and multilingual development professionals and practitioners who translate and interpret as part of their job descriptions but do not necessarily identify themselves, or are not officially labelled as translators and interpreters (see Section 2.3.1). In addition, a wide range of stakeholders indirectly participate in or benefit from the translation process in

development including academics, donor agencies, NGOs, bi- and multilateral organisations, social enterprises and entrepreneurs, private sector consultants, the public sector, local government officials, project field staff/field workers, the media, villagers, farmers, community members, the general public and others who are directly and indirectly beneficiaries of development, or even those excluded from development, bearing negative impacts or losing power and opportunities as a result of the development project. As seen from their demographic profiles (see Table 3 in Section 4.5.3.1), participants represented the mentioned categories to some extent. It is also worth stating that, at the time of this research, translation work in development has not been incorporated in any official framework or regulation because of the absence of a national association of translators and interpreters. In Section 7.2, it was pointed out that the need for translation is ad hoc and depends largely on the specific circumstances of development organisations and projects.

When asked who would translate better in development work in Vietnam, interview participants generally replied that there was really no one-size-fits-all formula. However, they did acknowledge that translation in development served the purpose of specialist communication because development brought in specialist and technical knowledge from various (sub)domains. For this reason, it was more common for participants to think that it would be better for bi- and multilingual development professionals and practitioners to translate and deal with terminology as specialists, because they engaged directly with the technical work on a daily basis and communicated with other stakeholders in Vietnamese language. In contrast, the handling of terminology by translators and interpreters in many cases did not satisfactorily meet accuracy requirements because they might not necessarily have the specialised knowledge of the various domains of development work, according to some participants.

These opinions prioritises and reaffirms the role of the bilingual development professional/practitioner as brokers and mediators who are also responsible for translation in development work (Méndez García and Pérez Cañado 2005; Bernacka 2012; Roth 2019; Heywood and Harding 2021). In this regard, the practice of translation has been broadened to include not only the language aspects but also relationship and trust building.

[I]t must be someone who understands the both sides and understands the field, then it should be the coordinator of a project or a programme. (P12-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Second, participants spoke about the importance of different contexts of translation, for example, to make a clear contrast between translation at policy-making levels versus translation at policy implementation levels such as in fieldwork or grassroots work. To this end, the bilingual specialists in development are still in a better position thanks to their technical expertise to translate at the policy-making level, while in other policy implementation-related circumstances, outsourcing professional translators with experience in the required domains might be a good option.

It really depends on the context. If you are in a large conference or forum just for the purpose of information dissemination, it is good to outsource translation professionals in the right areas. But for the goal of development and our development work, the work in practice must go into depth and usually involves collaborative efforts of various technical areas, using correct terms and writing, put the practice into policy then implement [...] If you intervene in the phase of policy-making, mainly through technical meetings, then it is not possible to use any translators, but it has to be those who work directly like you, like me. (P12-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Yet there were also diverse responses from participants which unfolded other complex and different views and essentially brought attention to aspects of self-learning and shared learning in translation. In this respect, a translation professional, even outsourced, may eventually learn from doing. By discussing with specialist stakeholders to update their knowledge on the job, they can perform development translation tasks well.

I think, most simply, it's a translator who has skills and a good attitude to always stay open to learning, then they will be most suitable for this task. (P13-Ph1, development practitioner/donor representative)

There was a contrast of competences expressed by participants in relation to knowledge acquisition that favoured shared learning between the two groups. What was observed by the following participant for example, was that professional translators would often work more skillfully with the audience by placing themselves in the position of non-specialist audience, and that was something development professionals should learn from:

[B]ecause for new fields they [professional translators] are also laypersons, if they understand then others will too. I think that is a benefit of shared learning, which means that each party can contribute with the strengths of their expertise. (P5-Ph2, development practitioner/researcher)

Although having various views about who should translate in development work, generally most participants thought collaborating with and learning from each other on the topic of translation was a sound and promising idea. The common perception is that, because new

knowledge and language in the development sector emerge constantly, shared learning offers an opportunity for development professionals/practitioners and translation professionals to discuss, identify and handle translation issues. Specifically, translators will learn specialised knowledge from development workers, and development workers will thereby become aware of the translation issues and the way the other party handles language. Development professionals can share with professional translators their experience of practising *nôm na* with local stakeholders, while the other side can give feedback on the use of terminology, for example, through standardisation:

[T]he two groups can also update each other with new knowledge and new terms that arise. In addition, the development people can also learn about the [standardisation] techniques, skills and tips to use when they engage in translation, such as how to use tools to help them use language and terminology better. (P9-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

For example, if there are conditions for the two to exchange, such as to discuss case-by-case the translation for problematic terms, the development professionals can explain “*nôm na*” their understanding of the terms to the translation professionals, and then the translators will make some recommendations from the language perspectives. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Both sides can also exchange tools such as documents and available glossaries of terms, and work together on a suitable platform, both online and offline, as recommended by one participant:

But this is the age of technology, I think technology should be used, then forums like Facebook groups or Zoom meetings will make this discussion easier. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

To restate the point raised at the beginning of this section, development practitioners considered that shared learning should be extended beyond the exchange between development and translation professionals. Ideally, they expected that shared learning as a solution should be given sufficient attention and involve all stakeholders in development work. However, they acknowledged that this might not be easy because of the short timeframe of many development projects. The following suggestion of a participant speaks for the need to have the participation of academics and researchers as important groups of stakeholders in development. They considered it an important link that might potentially be missed if there is a gap in learning and between the production and communication of knowledge in development:

I think we should also include another group in this shared learning in translation and development, that are the academics from the institutions who are teaching development or compiling and translating teaching materials about development. That way, a consensus on how development terms should be translated can be achieved among those who translate, those who use terminology in a community working context and those who write development textbooks for students. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In the next section, the final (sub)theme about problem-solving will be discussed with regard to aspects of the workflow of those who engage in translation in development work.

7.7 Improve the translation workflow through connected practices

Discussions of participants on problem-solving descriptively revolved around a (sub)theme about practices in translation that were interconnected, co-dependent and together evolved as an organic dynamism to assist participants with their translation workload. Being organic means these practices depend on specific contexts and needs for translation in participants' own internal organisations or projects and in development work in general. These practices would also be conducted at the workplace depending on the availability of resources and materials that might be part of an existing policy for translation and language as pointed out in Section 7.2. For the most part, these practices depend on specific responsibilities of the development practitioners, which would be more obvious in their workflows that often include translation-related and language-related tasks, rather than in their job descriptions.

For example, participants talked about their practice of reviewing and revising. This applied to both document translation—whether this task was done by the in-house translator and/or bilingual development workers themselves within an organisation or project or by outsourcing—and to interpreting at meetings, conferences and workshops.

[W]hen I send them [outsourced translations] to partners, they often complain that the translation is wrong, so I have to spend a lot of time reviewing again. (P5-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Interview data also demonstrated an interconnectedness of these reviewing and revising practices with other tasks. Below, a participant related their practice of intervening in outsourced interpreters' work during a conference to control quality, which was also part of the desired translation-related workload of a large number of parties involved such as bilingual project officers, coordinators, administrators, consultants, communication officers, assistants, facilitators, to name a few (see Section 2.3.1). More interestingly, while closely relating the practice to the different levels of competences of different parties, the participant

also linked the quality control less to accuracy of terms or information being translated than to aspects of trust and power. This highlights a role of the bilingual development worker in language mediation via translation which has rarely been addressed in the literature to date.

Listeners had no choice but to trust the translation. If you don't know the language, you'll have to listen with trust, right? The interpreters and translators controlled the atmosphere of meetings and workshops. They spoke and the other side listened, and no one knew if the translation was good or not. My project, but specifically the PO, in the middle, was responsible mainly for quality control. (P3-Ph1, development practitioner)

Participants also revealed that, sometimes in their organisations, reviewed (translated) documents became the materials being used in other necessary practices such as standardisation and training of new staff. While training in terminology use emerged as another practice that became intertwined with reviewing and standardisation, standardisation may be referred to as standardisation of both terminology and template documents, as mentioned by one NGO worker. Especially in their NGO, template documents were developed as useful tools to make the practice of reviewing less time-consuming. However, from interview data, this practice did not seem common in many organisations and projects.

For example, [standardising] contract forms [so that] sometimes the procurement department staff can completely fill in the information, send it back and we will review it. It will not take as much time as we have to translate the entire document sets from scratch. Then we also try to standardise by giving some training sessions on terminologies that are commonly used in project management or related to our projects. (P8-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Interrelated practices of translation also extend beyond reviewing, training and standardisation. To the majority of participants, overcoming the challenges of translation and terminology in development work also related to becoming more reflexive about the code of conduct and self-discipline of the practitioners who had the privilege of being bilingual and able to translate. Participants talked about how they adjusted their translation practices and related to different solutions they found useful to overcome the understanding and terminological barriers:

I think this is not a matter of learning by attending short training courses but actually self-discipline. They have to do their own research, they don't go easy on words, they have to set very clear goals, that what they write, what they show, the audience must understand. (P4-Ph2, donor representative/development practitioner)

Other participants agreed that reflexivity could effectively require the adjustment of their workflow to enable better communication, specifically in terms of adopting several

important practices. For example, Participant 4 emphasised the importance of doing whisper translation during meetings (see transcript lines 1533 – 1547, Appendix G), sending documents in advance, speaking slowly and using *nôm na* language for others to understand (see transcript lines 1233 – 1239, Appendix G). Especially, the study of local administrative procedures was also considered an essential practice to improve the workflow, as a local government official recommended:

[A]t the same time those who deal with terminology and translation must acquire the knowledge of state administration related to the laws, decrees and guidance documents from relevant ministries and sectors as well as other legal and administrative documents at the central level and local levels. I find that if we know about the state management of certain sectors and fields in which the development projects are underway, it's easier for us to communicate knowledge and terminology with the stakeholders. (P14-Ph1, local government representative)

To synthesise from the above narratives, a category of solutions were recommended by participants to improve the translation workflow to include:

- Do self-research on specialised (sub)domains of development knowledge and on local administrative procedures;
- Do whisper interpreting for those needed;
- Look up meanings of terms in dictionaries and on the Internet;
- Consult with specialists and local co-workers to cross-check;
- Speak slowly during interpreting tasks combined with the use of simple language;
- Send translated materials prior to meetings and training sessions.

It is worth noticing that the discussion of problem-solving by no means represents a complete set of tasks in a translation workflow in development work. The above-mentioned solutions are not necessarily adopted, and not all of them would be relevant to apply in all circumstances. As mentioned earlier, applying certain solutions would depend on the specific context, needs and available resources as well as whether they are realised in a translation and language policy. In a meaningful way, improving the translation workflow showed that participants as development actors in Vietnam managed within their capabilities and competences to handle translation and terminology with context-specific solutions. An improved and well-defined workflow based on these solutions can be integrated with key ingredients of potential language and translation-related policies as well as the terminology

management tools (see Section 7.2 and 7.3). Applying these solutions this way, therefore, indicates the inter-connection of these problem-solving categories.

7.8 The researcher's reflections

As a translator and interpreter in a development NGO and having engaged in several technical responsibilities throughout my years working as a development worker, I had some familiarity with a large number of solutions discussed in this chapter, and in most cases my experience has not been counter to participants' opinions. However, over the course of data interpretation, my experiences and existing views had led to certain biases. Specifically, when I started this research, by cultivating knowledge from TS on standardisation, I sometimes adopted a holistic view and most often considered this an optimal solution and best practice to unify terminology differences. Also, under the purposive sampling and leveraging of my personal network of contacts to recruit participants (see Section 4.5.3.1), I may have tended to approach participants who did not seem to have much differences in their backgrounds and experiences with myself about my research topic. Consequently, this could have led to confirmation biases (Tobin and Begley 2004) when I selected passages for coding in participant accounts or to display in support of certain arguments. To the best of my ability, I tried to control the biases in two major ways: engaging in reflexive practice and cultivating data triangulation. While being reflexive was more a methodological approach in a broad sense to guide the overall interpretation of data along the insider/outsider–practitioner/researcher continuum, triangulation was a specific methodological tool.

Along the insider/outsider continuum, I realised that my opinion on some of the issues in this chapter shifted over time. Specifically, over the course of interviews, I learnt that standardisation may not be the only option in development work for participants, and there were certain benefits when terms were not standardised, for example, to increase stakeholders' ownership (see Section 6.3.4), while alternative practices such as *nôm na* and borrowing could be applied (see Section 7.4.3). Being reflexive has made me become more inquisitive to the solutions recommended by participants and at the same time ensured that my view as a participant did not cause much misinterpretation of empirical findings.

7.9 Answers to SQ3 and SQ4

SQ3 and SQ4 asked for potential solutions to terminology and translation problems in development practice and about the relevance of local communities' vernacular knowledge

to development policy. Analysis of this case study's multiple datasets, resting predominantly on the voices of key development stakeholders in Vietnam, led to six main solutions that should be adopted in development practice in Vietnam. Relevant stakeholders should:

- i. Form and implement policy on translation and language;
- ii. Develop and make use of terminology management tools;
- iii. Consider intralingual practices of translation;
- iv. Consider the use of SL in the translation;
- v. Engage in shared learning;
- vi. Improve the translation workflow through connected practices.

These evidence-based solutions provided by 18 authoritative and relevant cases who deal with translation and terminology regularly and have responsibility for problem-solving in development in Vietnam (plus my own reflections as a 19th case) constitute a robust summary answer to SQ3.

To address vernacular knowledge specifically, two (sub)categories of problem-solving were discussed, namely *nôm na* and the choice of zero-translation. While *nôm na* came forth as an intralingual practice and solution of contextualising the use of terminology, zero-translation related to the use of the SL in the translation, or the practice of not translating several terms. These two (sub)themes are interconnected and also connected with other solutions proposed above and should not be seen in isolation. Participants' responses provided evidence that these two types of solution worked well in the development context of Vietnam and, along with analysis already discussed in previous chapters, could together explain the role of vernacular knowledge in understanding and translating concepts and terms in development policy. It is important to note, though, that this relevance is restricted to the scope of translation and terminology only—data in this case study did not consider a whole universe of vernacular knowledge. In summary, vernacular knowledge is relevant to development policy in a number of ways. Development policy in Vietnam should recognise that:

- i. There is a tension between a local knowledge system and an introduced knowledge system (such as that of development policy) which calls for mediation and the apparatus of translation as a meaning-making process (Marais 2014);

- ii. Vernacular knowledge has real-world impacts on policy-making and the implementation of policies at local levels, but also on practice;
- iii. Vernacular knowledge should be incorporated not only into development policies but also into translation and language policies;
- iv. Vernacular knowledge can be used by development stakeholders to deal with problematic and politically sensitive terms, and this use has surpassed the practice of interlingual translation;
- v. The use of vernacular knowledge is recommended by development stakeholders as a practice of (1) borrowing an existing term being used by local stakeholders, (2) consulting with local stakeholders about their understanding, then integrating the understanding into alternative translations, or (3) integrating local understandings of terms in the development of both translation policy and terminology management tools;
- vi. *Nôm na* has proven to be an effective intralingual solution to deal with terminology in development policy by using friendly terminology, non-specialised language and combining some possible [interlingual] translations with a certain level of explanation;
- vii. Zero-translation has proven to be an effective strategy of using SL and aspects of *nôm na* in the translation to deal with multi-dimensional, high-level concepts in development policy.

These seven points of relevance for vernacular knowledge in the context of development in Vietnam constitute a robust summary answer to SQ4.

7.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, a wide range of solutions to issues of terminology and translation were discussed, and the relevance of vernacular knowledge in development policy was clarified, notably through the adoption of the vernacular practice *nôm na* and zero-translation. The discussion and analysis answered the final two sub-questions of this study. While these solutions and relevance of vernacular knowledge were considered highly interconnected and used widely by key stakeholders, their scope of application was strongly encouraged in the formulation and implementation of translation and language policy by development organisations, in different programmes and projects.

While robust empirical data gathered using the lens of theories and concepts in TS, DS, and research methodology have been provided to answer the SQs of this thesis and describe the role(s) of translation and terminology in development practice in Vietnam, a fuller explanation of this role is still required. Theory can help to explain and account for in a more detailed and systematic way what has been observed in this relatively small case study of one development context. A theoretical explanation would also allow hypotheses about such role(s) to be developed that could be tested in other contexts in future research. To this end, the discussion in the next chapter, Chapter 8, analyses the role(s) of translation and terminology using a theoretical framework of Practice Theory.

Chapter 8 – The role(s) of translation and terminology in development practice in Vietnam through the lens of Practice Theory

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapters provided answers to the four sub-questions of this study. When combined, these provided an initial answer to the study's overall research question: *What role(s) do translation and terminology have in development practice and policy in Vietnam?* Specifically, based on thematic analysis of data observed in this ethnographically informed case study, development-related terminology and its translation in Vietnam are varied, not understood uniformly and act as a source of problems and challenges for key development stakeholders (see Section 5.5). They impact on development practice and policy in many ways, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively, and these impacts act to influence participation of local communities in complex ways (see Section 6.6). While there are problems and challenges related to terminology, there are many potential solutions, and terminology and translation can be an effective vehicle to address vernacular knowledge in development interventions in Vietnam (see Section 7.9).

These observations are intimately tied to the particular context of the 19 cases of this study (18 interview participants together with the researcher as a 19th case) involved in development in Vietnam. In this chapter, a practice-theoretical framework will be applied to account for and explain these observations in a more theoretical and context-independent way that could be transferred to other development contexts and stakeholders beyond these 19 cases and even beyond Vietnam and provide a further answer to the main RQ of this thesis that lies above specific data. While the ability to make transferable claims based on case study data is debated, some authors (e.g. Yin 2009) argue that it is reasonable to claim theoretical generalisation and use case study data to propose hypotheses to be tested or significant patterns to be explored in further studies. In addition, even with the somewhat small number of cases studied in this thesis, there is merit to scrutinise a small number of cases deeply enough, go beyond the specific-case data and develop a working hypothesis (Foster, Gomm, and Hammersley 2000). Overall, the chapters of the thesis so far explained *how* translation and terminology play a role in development practice and policy in Vietnam. This chapter expands on this to suggest theoretically *why* translation and terminology play a role in development practice and policy more generally.

Practice Theory (reviewed in detail in Section 3.4) was chosen as a suitable framework because of features of the case study data described in earlier chapters that pointed repeatedly to practice as an important factor. For example, practice, in the sense of “knowing-in-practice” (or “knowing” in short) or “know-how” about the practice of translation (Olohan 2020, 57), emerged vividly from participants’ descriptions of how they translated problematic terms such as *wellbeing*, *empowerment*, *social accountability* and others in Chapter 5. In addition, there was reference to translation practices as a means of trust building, participation and brokering (Section 6.2). Furthermore, collaborative practice and shared learning among translators, bilingual development practitioners and NGO workers were put forward as ways to handle translation and terminology (see Section 7.6). Moreover, multiple practices were comprehensively and profoundly suggested by participants as problem-solving measures such as the vernacular practice *nôm na* and other intralingual practices (Section 7.4). These observations seemed to link in complex ways with other work carried out by participants in their development experiences, while it also seemed like the phenomenon of development could be seen in the current study as constituted by a complexity of practices which seemed worth pursuing.

Section 8.2 will first characterise the set of concepts and assumptions from Practice Theory used in the framework and how they fit together. Then, Sub-sections 8.2.1 – 8.2.4 will use four key concepts—materials, competence, meanings and communities of practice—to explain the role of translation and terminology in development. Section 8.3 closes the chapter with a further summary answer to the main RQ in this thesis and presents a hypothesis statement to be tested in and guide future studies.

8.2 Using core concepts of Practice Theory to account for the empirics in this study

Any number of theories could have provided an appropriate and valuable framework to account for the role(s) of translation and terminology in development practice; nevertheless, Practice Theory seemed particularly relevant to account for the empirics in this current thesis. Overall, the framework of practice as socially recognisable entities in which multiple people can participate (Schatzki 1996; 2017) pointed to a number of concepts that could be helpful to deepen the preceding analyses. The four core concepts chosen for the framework consisted of the three-element model of practice comprising materials, competence and meanings described in Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012) and Olohan (2020), along with communities of practice (CoPs) described in Wenger (1998).

These core concepts and their place in the broader literature on Practice Theory were already reviewed in Section 3.4. This section and its sub-sections recount only the operational definitions of these concepts and discussion of how these concepts help explain a role for translation and terminology in development. The core operational definitions in the theoretical framework are as follows:

First, *materials* manifest possible objects, infrastructures, tools, hardwares and the body itself (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012) that can be involved in the translation process. Next, *competence* can relate to the multiple forms of know-how about the practice of translation (Olohan 2020). Then, *meaning* can be defined as the social and symbolic significance of participation at any one moment in translation practices (ibid.). Finally, a *CoP* is “a group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002, 4). A CoP shares in a “joint enterprise” through sustained interactions of “mutual engagement” and creates a “shared repertoire” of tools and resources (Wenger 1998). CoPs can be used to scope out possible dynamics of diverse groups’ collaborative engagement with practice (Cadwell, Federici, and O’Brien 2022) to address translation and terminological issues in development work through shared learning.

Now that the key concepts have been defined, they will be applied as the analytical framework to account for what has been observed in a number of analysed data points in previous chapters about the phenomena of translation and terminology and/in development.

8.2.1 Materials

So far and although not exhaustively, the translation practices described in this thesis of development stakeholders in Vietnam have encompassed certain categories of materials. For instance, materials could embody the examples of terms and concepts being communicated among development stakeholders in Vietnam when they engaged with translation as recorded in Chapter 5. Among these were the list of 44 terms and concepts emerged from the three data points of textual analysis, interviews and grey literature (see Table 4, Section 5.2) which included eight authoritative examples being evaluated in details, namely *wellbeing*, *resilience*, *empowerment*, *decent work*, *social accountability*, *civil society organisations*, *community-based tourism* and *career counselling*, alongside their multiple

Vietnamese equivalents being recorded in this study (see Chapter 5). The manifestation of these terms and concepts as key materials is important because they are regarded by interview participants as of problematic terms and concepts in development, which, as described in Chapter 5 and especially in Chapter 6, created manifold impacts on the specialised communication of development knowledge, hindered participation and entailed consequences to development practice and policy-making.

Then, with policy being accounted for as a material, a large component of empirics in this study revolved around the category of “policy” (see the coding tree in Appendix E) which was profoundly discussed in Chapter 6 and 7. To the contrary extent of embodying materials as problematic terms, these two types of policy-based materials are important because they are recommended as a crucial component of problem-solving by participants. Here, it is important to distinguish two types of policy: (1) development policy, first described in the context (see Section 2.2.2) and throughout the scoping of literatures (see Section 3.2), then related in the discussion of impacts of translation and terminology (see Section 6.4), and (2) the translation- and language-related policy being recommended by participants as a solution (see Section 7.2), together with what should be integrated into this type of policy to advance and put it into work as a solution such as terminology management tools (see Section 7.3). While the former type of policy can be regarded as the overarching materials being impacted by translation practices of development stakeholders, the latter stands for the instrumental materials more directly being used in the practices. Most obviously, the latter type of materials was depicted in Chapter 7 in the form of tools being used by development stakeholders which could be illustrated with examples of participants describing specific types of tools such as visual tools (using images and videos), translation guidelines and handbooks, glossaries and lexicons of specialised terms, lists of abbreviations and acronyms (see Section 7.3).

In short, explaining that the roles of translation and terminology in development are understood by stakeholders through certain key materials—such as lists or glossaries of fundamental or problematic terms and buzzwords, policy documents and infrastructure, and supporting tools, guidelines or handbooks—offers an important but only partial explanation. It is a relatively limited perspective and not the whole picture of why translation and terminology can be treated as key practices in development work. Possessing the materials of translation and terminology alone would be insufficient to practice translation or

terminology in development, and this study has shown that certain “know-how” is also required to explain the practice.

8.2.2 Competence

As underlined above, materials only provide us one part of the picture of translation-based and terminology-based practice being undertaken by development stakeholders. What participants in this study clearly showed was that development stakeholders also needed particular competences, and without an understanding of these competences, we cannot see fully why translation and terminology play the role they do. Particularly from previous analyses, competence may account for the solutions regarding translation and language policies (see Section 7.2), how development practitioners discussed terminology and translation with each other (see Section 7.3), the types of expertise of development professionals and translation professionals (see Section 7.6.2) as well as the engagement in the translation workflow of different stakeholders of a project (see Section 7.7).

Throughout data analysis, several examples of development stakeholders’ competence relating to different aspects of know-how in translation and terminology could be found. That development stakeholders felt the need for having translation and language policies formulated implied the dimension of competence being prioritised in how they could be a part in minimising the impacts of translation and terminology (see Section 7.2). Participants strongly suggested a requirement for competence in translation and terminology among development stakeholders to avoid the confusion of understanding of concepts and the coexistence of multiple equivalents that may undermine participation. The indicative examples of terms and concepts presented in Chapter 5 revealed major competence challenges encountered by participants in this study when they engaged with development buzzwords. Consequently, it was shown that competence in using terminology might entail a risk of both development professionals and local stakeholders being confused about the type of work that they do, as the (mis)translation of knowledge or its absence has blurred different development practices. Competence was also considered the main cause of development policy not being passed, as pointed out by a participant from the examples of translating *social protection* and the two derived concepts of *legal coverage* and *effective coverage* (see Section 6.3):

[T]he problem of [translating] *social protection* is also a very basic problem of being inaccurate in the field of *an sinh xã hội* that may result as the policy not being passed, for many years now. (P12-Ph1, development practitioner/researcher)

Another example could be seen from the discussion Section 6.2 about participants' borrowing of the local term *giám sát xã hội* to describe the concept of *social accountability* in the specific situation of attempting to avoid political sensitivity and people's being apprehensive about participation. With the currently practice-centred feature of development (see Section 2.2.2) necessitating translation which involves multiple actors or agents at many levels, participants shared the argument that participation might be hindered or promoted by their use of terminology.

Several observations highlighted above showed a deficiency in terms of competence when translating development terms. However, sometimes a deficiency in competence was understandable. For instance, data in the study showed that ILO only introduced concepts such as *legal coverage* and *effective coverage* into Vietnam in 2015. Therefore, development stakeholders might not have had time to become familiarised with these concepts and engage in the effective use or translation of their terms. From the same discussion in Chapter 6, participants also talked about the technical barrier to policy making and implementation as a consequence of different understandings of concepts (such as *inclusiveness*, *resilience* and *empowerment*) from the angle of confusion of understandings. In essence, the proposition made by participants seemed to be that competence should be paid attention to as connected elements when acknowledging that translation and terminology played a crucial role in the passing of development-related policy; i.e., without a broad competence regarding translation and terminology among stakeholders, policy may fail to be approved.

Specifically, what should this broad competence in translation and terminology among development stakeholders look like? First, analysis of the data in this study suggested an important competence requirement in terminology management tools at organisational levels or across different projects and programmes (see Section 7.3). Accordingly, also from data presented in Section 7.3, the main reasons for using such tools in learning and discussion activities were related to five categories of cross-referencing, standardisation, better communication, training and monitoring the shift of language and terminology use as well as of how development knowledge transforms over time. In addition to being adept at using terminology- and translation-related tools to share and discuss, stakeholders need to know about different types of expertise and specialised knowledge. Competence in development

practice requires both knowledge of the highly diverse working domains of development professionals and the domain-specific knowledge translation/language professionals (see Section 7.6.2). This two-sided competence—development expertise and translation/language expertise—could be facilitated as well by joint efforts in problem solving between stakeholders with different levels of competence in the respective domains. Finally, stakeholders suggested a competent stakeholder would be one who applies an effective translation workflow in their development work. Current workflows could be improved, and competence could be increased, by engaging in such practices as doing self-research, whisper interpreting, consultation with specialists and co-workers, speech moderation when doing interpreting, using *nôm na* and simple language or sharing translated materials to others before meetings and training sessions (see Section 7.7).

Even if a stakeholder has access to relevant materials and obtains the required competence, that still does not fully explain the practice of translation or terminology in development. Analysis of the participants' transcripts triangulated with textual and reflective data in this study showed that translation and terminology also held a particular social and symbolic significance for people practising development, and this significance is also an important part of the explanation for what was observed. This significance relates to meanings in the Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012) model of practice.

8.2.3 Meanings

Because certain translation- and terminology-related materials *could* be made available and shared by development stakeholders (see Sections 7.3 and 8.2.1) through effective application of their specialised competence (see Section 8.2.2) does not necessarily imply that these two elements *would* be used by the stakeholders concerned, even if they recognised that there were many problems with translation and terminology. There need to be *meanings*—social and symbolic significance—to motivate the use of translation- and terminology-related materials and the application of enhanced translation- and terminology-related competence.

All aspects of development work must lead to improved development outcomes for local communities. Translation and terminology as a means of communication and sharing of specialised development knowledge is no exception. At a high level, this could be seen as one of the main meanings driving a role for translation and terminology. Another view of a

social or symbolic significance could be the general practical urge of development stakeholders to (metaphorically) translate development knowledge into practice (Mosse 2004). Understanding meanings as such resonates with the general view of development as a meaning-making practice, discourse and, more broadly, a system of knowledge (Escobar 1995; Marais 2020) which was also identified as a key component of the problem space of this thesis. Specifically, this interpretation of meaning can be described with the example of how participants constantly made efforts to facilitate effective communication through their practices of translating terms to broaden the impact of development work. It is also suggested from the data in this study that meanings embody local stakeholders' use of translation, terminology, materials and competences to empower local people through vernacular knowledge. In other words, meanings for these stakeholders can be about empowering local communities because, for them, empowerment means meaningful development work. They are not doing translation and terminology for other purposes, such as academic research or education. They are doing translation and terminology to achieve better outcomes for local communities through their empowerment. Ironically, even *empowerment* itself is not a clear and understandable concept for all local communities, underlining that the appropriate translation of this one concept alone could be significant and lead to better outcomes. As Participant 1 suggested:

In fact, people may feel self-pity and frustrated and disempowered when they don't fully understand what I mean by "empowerment". (P1-Ph1, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Ultimately, the way development stakeholders used their materials and competences about translation and terminology to make a meaningful impact on development outcomes should be to enable greater ownership of local practices in development (see also Section 6.3.3). As pointed out in Sections 6.2 and 7.3, and especially emphasised in the discussions on the role of vernacular knowledge in Section 7.4 and on shared learning in Section 7.6, diverse understandings and diverse practice are not necessarily all negative, and a process of negotiation in meaning-making of concepts and terms will positively enable greater ownership (see also Section 6.3.4). Such significance was accentuated on different occasions in the data. For instance, special significance was evident when participants reflexively related the usefulness of terminology management tools to their own engagement in translation as a development broker or when they reflected on the importance of the vernacular practice *nôm na* in communicating specialised knowledge of development to improve participation as the enabler of development work:

So, if we have a tool, a specialised lexicon of terms [...] which also considers the understandings of the beneficiaries, who are often people with little or no knowledge about the development work or who have not yet understood what our activities are, it will make them understand more easily. Then they feel closer to the knowledge and activities about development, and so it brings in better and more effective communication. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Why is it called development work? Because I bring in new things to places where those concepts are not familiar. I think the most important thing is to make this knowledge more relatable and understandable to the participants so that they feel included to participate. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In sum, while competence can embody how stakeholders go about communicating development knowledge through their know-how in engaging with terms and concepts using certain materials such as glossaries or language policies, meanings imply how to work effectively with the knowledge to bring about policy and practice implications. In other words, the three elements of materials, competence and meanings (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012; Olohan 2020) can serve as a solid theoretical basis to explain *why* translation and terminology have or should have a role in development practice among stakeholders in Vietnam and in development contexts beyond more generally.

8.2.4 Communities of practice

Having explained why translation and terminology have or should have a role in development, the final theoretical proposition in this chapter is to explain a way in which the role could or should be implemented in policy and practice. It has been argued that the theoretically transferable roles of translation and terminology in development practice are that they incorporate essential materials and competences of translation and terminology into development work to meaningfully empower local communities and improve development outcomes (see Section 8.2.3). This section will argue that these meaningful roles can be carried out through the joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire (Wenger 1998) of a CoP or possibly CoPs of development stakeholders.

Specifically, joint enterprise can tell us how development stakeholders work together to solve translation and terminology issues towards the common goal of making development work meaningful. Mutual engagement describes how stakeholders can be bound together as a social entity to engage with translation and terminology. Finally, how they share different practices and resources such as knowledge, experiences and tools for problem-solving represents shared repertoires. Overall, this could be simplified as the application of shared

learning to implement a meaningful role for translation and terminology in development practice and policy. This proposal resonates well with the “next level” of problem solving for development stakeholders that was discussed in Chapter 7.

However, what could or should this shared learning look like and how, specifically, can it help development practitioners generate, manage, and engage with the materials and competence of translation and terminology in order to create meanings in development? The analysis of grey literature in this study indicated that CoPs of translation in development work are already emerging in reality in Vietnam. One example can be seen from an initiative called the Saigon Community of Interpreters & Translators (SGCI&T) which was created in 2021 by the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation (HPDF). As this initiative’s common objective is to promote the participation in and contribution to development and international integration of local and international development actors operating in the country, it explicitly represents the feature of joint enterprise. In SGCI&T, members could share learning with each other by mutually engaging in discussions on a regular basis regarding issues of translation and terminology they considered problematic through seminars and events for professional translators and interpreters, translation service providers and trainers as well as academics and other interested parties. As another example, the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organisations (VUFO), through its partnership with local NGOs, INGOs, donors, government agencies, mass organisations, professional associations, community-based organisations and the media, has been observed as a CoP model to facilitate shared learning in development work across a range of domains, including translation. Here, what is actually shared in the VUFO – NGO partnership is a resource centre established in 2015 and their wide range of interests, resources and knowledge embody shared repertoire to make highly prioritised fields in development more successful. A presentation of key characteristics of the two burgeoning CoPs has been discussed in more detail in the recent work of N. Nguyễn (2022) to feature a broader context of shared learning in translation in the whole development sector in Vietnam.

To the majority of interview participants in this study, the emergence of CoPs of translation in development work in Vietnam still seemed a new but effective way to enact the roles of translation and terminology. From the discussion about shared learning in Chapter 7, it was a positive signal that participants were aware of these emerging collaborative initiatives and realised the importance of expansion. However, participants also acknowledged that, among themselves, there were limited opportunities at the time of this research to contribute more

actively to some existing CoPs. For example, participants described how development stakeholders needed to know about the presence of different types of expertise including others' and their own (see Section 7.6.2), also explicitly from the VUFO – NGO Resource Centre mentioned above, so that they could collaborative competence to address development issues but not of their engagement with the topic of translation:

Discussions of development issues, yes, but of translation issues then no. In Hanoi, there are NGO working groups to discuss specific topics that our organisation's work is involved. These working groups are organised by the NGO Resource Centre, and they include on livelihoods, corporate engagement, climate change, gender, etc. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Currently, there are groups for those working in NGOs, NPOs and other networks... to exchange, share experiences and cooperate in learning, mostly it promotes self-study and throwing questions back and forth. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

According to participants, the key challenge for these initiatives not being active in discussing translation issues may lie in the fact that, within these entities, there was a lack of coordination and a sense of authority to drive the discussions where they need to be around the topic of translation and development. As much as this finding presents a gap in the practice of shared learning on a specific domain, it strengthens the current model of these CoPs where the element of authority, a form of competent material, was explicit to spark the discussion on particular topics of translation and terminology. Participants expressed below the importance of authority—a form of coordinating infrastructure which may imply some dimensions of materials and competence—in the search for shared understandings of concepts and terms for improved development work—a form of giving meanings to their effort:

Or if someone is willing to coordinate, all organisations working on *gender* can sit down and share their own definitions of a concept and term. (P1-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In fact, there must be a consensus on how to translate development terms, so it is necessary to have an authority or a forum for all stakeholders to discuss and contribute to these issues then thereby finding solutions. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

In the meantime, a number of suggestions were made to facilitate better shared learning and featured some relevance to establish future CoPs. First, building on existing online forums for general translation and terminological discussions, a similar platform could be developed to specialise on translation for the development sector:

[I] think it is possible to build forums or platforms. For example, I am a member of the ProZ group, a translation group, and when someone raises a problematic term to translate into Vietnamese they will ask questions and everyone will contribute. If there is a similar model for the development sector, then I think some of the development terminology will also be finetuned gradually from the contribution of many interested people. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

In the following quotation, the same participant talked about the non-academic applicability of seminars in enabling discussions on the translation profession and terminology. Here, some elements are worth noticing: the context of interaction should be an informal space and the nature of collaboration is expected to include all stakeholders in development.

[I]f these activities [seminars on the translation profession and terminology] can be done, it will be very good because it makes the activities not purely academic, and it's possible to call for the participation of others parties, such as businesses, development organisations and workers, embassies. When discussions are in an informal space, the parties will more effectively share about translation or terminology issues in development. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

Together with the vignettes of data presented in Section 7.6, the selected accounts of participants above on CoPs have explicitly emphasised the importance of not just joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire (Wenger 1998) but also context in the application of CoP perspectives.

8.3 The roles of translation and terminology in development practice explained from the perspective of Practice Theory

This section synthesises the discussion above to provide a summary answer to the main RQ of this thesis on the roles of translation and terminology in development practice and policy. In essence, translation and terminology in development allow stakeholders to achieve meaningful development outcomes through local empowerment and greater local ownership of development practices by employing their competence related to specialised knowledge, tool use and workflow and using certain materials such as glossaries or language policies to communicate development knowledge. Furthermore, these roles can be carried out effectively through shared learning in a CoP of development stakeholders and language professionals.

While it is obvious that possible roles of translation and terminology and/in development can be viewed from various perspectives, and this answer is only one of many possible

answers, it can also be summarised as a hypothesis about translation and/in development that can be tested in other contexts and guide future research.

Hypothesis: Development practitioners use the materials and competence of translation and terminology to achieve meaningful development outcomes through local empowerment via a mechanism of shared learning.

Once again, this hypothesis statement is provided within the context of the challenge of generalising from case study data (see Section 8.1). Nevertheless, to provide a final piece of autoethnographic reflection, I feel that the answer for Vietnam is significant, at least, and the hypothesis is worthy of testing elsewhere. From my current academic-practitioner standpoint, it was not surprising for me interview participants dedicatedly referred to major impacts of translation and terminology not only on their own development work but also on the participation of various groups of stakeholders and target beneficiaries in a wide range of sub-fields of development practice and at multiple levels of policy making. Issues of translation and terminology may cause huge consequences to development practice and policy in Vietnam. This intuition motivated my study. However, I now feel confident that I have demonstrated this from multiple empirical datasets, especially the voices of key development stakeholders in Vietnam, and with some theoretical support. I was struck by a quote from one of my interviews with a development professional-translator below, and I feel that it succinctly speaks to the role of translation and/in development in Vietnam. This participant spent several years translating policy and legal documents at the National Assembly in their work with international consulting partners to develop various legal frameworks to benefit the development of Vietnam:

[T]ranslation is very important in the development sector in Vietnam. For example, we were working with the high level of law-makers who worked with policies, and if the translation is inaccurate, the law is written incorrectly, the consequences are huge. (P3-Ph1, development practitioner)

The typical opinion above reflects at least the experience of the translator about their translation practice but also scopes out the importance of translation in an influential context as the core material of policy shaping and making with enduring impacts. To reiterate the local development-related context, in the present picture of international development support for Vietnam, the management and use of ODA, concessional loans and grants from foreign donors place a central focus on policy making. One of the current priorities for using non-refundable assistance is in supporting policy making, institutional development and reform. Vietnam has a history of reliable and long-term cooperation with international

organisations and donors to receive support in formulating effective policies and legal frameworks for its development processes (see Section 2.3.1). Within such a context, the opinion given above stands for the reason why the roles of translation and terminology are worth more attention and at a high level of policy-making. However, this significance also means that, at a more operational level, functional solutions to address translation and terminology issues in real-life contexts must be taken into consideration, such as the series of recommendations to key development stakeholders in Vietnam that this study attempts to make in the next and final chapter of conclusions.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter applied a practice-theoretical framework comprising four key constructs—materials, competence, meanings and CoPs—to account for and explain the empirical observations contained in previous chapters in a more theoretical and context-independent way. It did so to provide a theoretically transferable answer to the main RQ of this thesis on the roles of translation and terminology in development practice and policy. It also proposed a hypothesis about translation and/in development that can now be tested in other contexts and used to guide future research. Overall, while the chapters of the thesis up to now explained *how* translation and terminology play a role in development practice and policy in Vietnam, this chapter suggested theoretically *why* translation and terminology play a role in development practice and policy more generally. In essence, the hypothesis generated in this chapter is that development practitioners use the materials and competence of translation and terminology to achieve meaningful development outcomes through local empowerment via a mechanism of shared learning.

The next chapter, Chapter 9, is the final chapter of this thesis. It will present the conclusions of this study mainly through a series of recommendations to key development stakeholders in Vietnam.

Chapter 9 – Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

Since its outset, the aim of the thesis has been consistently to describe and explain the roles of translation and terminology in development practice and policy, which have only been acknowledged and discussed marginally until recently in Vietnam and similar Global South contexts. The motivation behind this aim came from my perspectives as a practitioner-academic. In fact, the driving force to conduct the research came from my personal concerns after many years of engagement with translation as a development worker as well as plentiful conversations, both formally and informally, with fellow workers about their struggles in using terminology to communicate development ideas among stakeholders. Not at all a controversial assumption, the dialogue process itself proved even more challenging in everyday practice because development work was too broad a field, and discussing terminology encountered many disciplinary barriers of specialised knowledge. When the study formally began in 2018, I was well aware of the shortage of scholarship on this topic in the Vietnam context. By scoping the literature and conducting preliminary theoretical groundwork, I learned that, since the 2000s, although various important studies about these subjects in TS and DS have been undertaken, many studies were generally investigating language and translation as a fundamental drive in development, and few were enquiries into development terminology translation in particular.

Focusing specifically on Vietnam, this study constitutes the first interdisciplinary attempt to deal with issues of translation and terminology in development, their impacts on practice and policy, and solutions to these issues. The study reunites a range of theoretical and methodological ideas under the methodology of an ethnographically informed case study. The data gathered, generated and analysed in the study centre on semi-structured interviews with 18 cases of development stakeholders in Vietnam. Thematic analysis of these interviews was triangulated with the results of textual analysis of a bilingual Vietnamese – English corpus of development texts, the results of a survey conducted during a feedback workshop with development stakeholders and policy champions from Vietnam and Ireland, and a study of relevant grey literature. A final dataset also triangulated in this study was a series of autoethnographic reflexive accounts, in which I as the researcher constituted a 19th case under investigation.

This chapter continues in Section 9.2 with an overview of the whole structure of the thesis, in which summary answers to the research questions posed in this study are presented. Section 9.3 presents a series of recommendations to key stakeholders in Vietnam based on these questions and answers. Section 9.4 argues for the contributions to knowledge of this academic work, while Section 9.5 outlines its limitations. The thesis closes in Section 9.6 with some suggestions for future work.

9.2 Chapter overview

This chapter overview is to inform the reader the key ideas at high and summarised levels as well as where to find the answer to every research question in the current thesis.

Chapter 1 provided an overview of problems of translation and terminology encountered in development work in Vietnam. Collectively, typical problems revolved around inconsistency in understanding development concepts and using development terminology, burdensome use of English in communicating development discourse and a lack of consideration about translation and terminology. Altogether, these problems entailed critical impacts on everyday development work. The key idea from this chapter was that, in parallel with describing the problems of translation and terminology in the development context of Vietnam, theoretical groundwork was needed as a basis for a systematic problem space of translation and/in development to be identified later on in the research process.

Chapter 2 presented the contextual specifics a reader needed to know to read the thesis. Its main points of discussion included an overview of theoretical paradigms of development, definitions of development policy and development practice, which illustrated an intertwined relationship between them, the context of development work and vernacular knowledge in development discourse in Vietnam, and underlying ideas about translation and terminology. By clarifying these contextual specifics, this chapter established the fundamental and interdisciplinary basis for the arguments that would follow in later chapters.

Chapter 3 synthesised diverse literature from TS and DS to derive the research questions to be answered in this study. This synthesis systematically suggested that there was a problem space of translation and/in development comprising five general domains of: (1) the figurative/metaphorical translation of development as discourse, a meaning-making practice and a system of knowledge, (2) the challenges of translating development-related terminology, (3) the changing role of English in development work, (4) the invisible role of

the bi- and multilingual development workers in translation and in language and cultural mediation, and (5) the lack and insufficiency of language-related and translation-related policies in development work. The thematic domains in the problem space guided the formulation of four sub-research questions leading to an answer to one main research question in this thesis in a linear order, as illustrated in Figure 8:

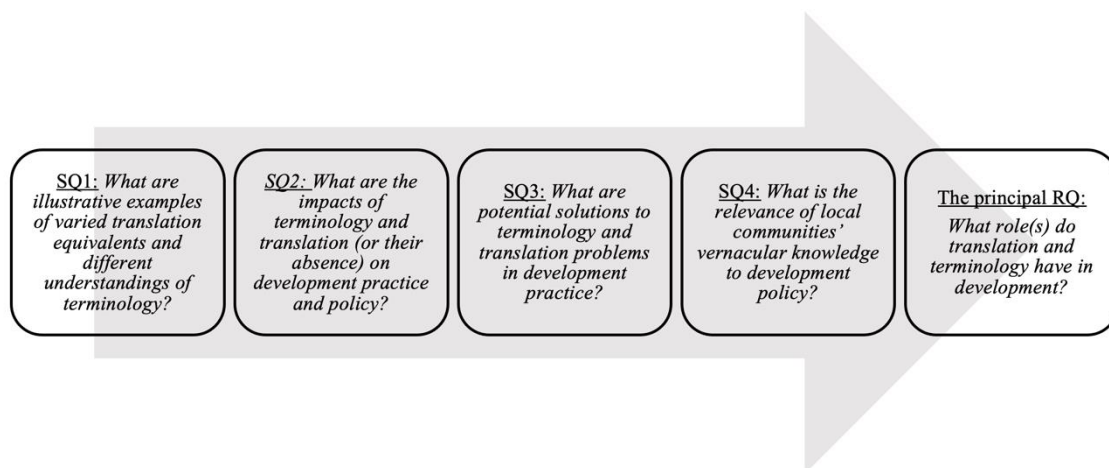


Figure 8. The process of answering research questions in this thesis

Chapter 4 demonstrated *how* the research questions were answered using an ethnographically informed case study approach. In particular, this thesis examined 19 individual cases (18 interview participants and the researcher as a 19th case) who represented key development stakeholders in Vietnam and worked in a variety of (sub)domains of development work and policy-making.

Empirical data were then gathered from (1) two phases of online interviews, (2) a bilingual parallel corpus from 20 pairs of development texts in English and Vietnamese, (3) a survey conducted during a feedback workshop for policy champions in Vietnam and Ireland, (4) a body of grey literature representing development-related materials, and lastly (5) my own reflexive accounts as a practitioner-researcher. These different data points were triangulated through a thematic analytical strategy, and were used to answer a different question in each chapter of the thesis from Chapter 5 to Chapter 8.

Chapter 5 provided the answer to SQ1: *What are illustrative examples of varied translation equivalents and different understandings of terminology?* Here, data from textual analysis was triangulated with other case study data to generate a list of 44 development-related concepts and terms that have a wide spectrum of use in development practice and policy in

Vietnam but that illustrated a variety of translations and understandings. Out of this list, eight specific examples, namely *wellbeing*, *resilience*, *empowerment*, *decent work*, *social accountability*, *civil society organisations*, *community-based tourism* and *career counselling*, were chosen for explicit examination. While the majority of these terms had varied or sometimes no direct equivalents in Vietnamese language, some equivalents were only used in a certain (sub)domain of development work, making it difficult to determine their appropriateness when used in other domains. Moreover, many participants considered the Vietnamese equivalents under discussion problematic, despite the fact that these were deemed “official” translations because of their frequent and seemingly endorsed use in the Vietnamese development discourse circulated by the government, large donors and NGOs in Vietnam. Analysis in this chapter spoke to the fact that development work in Vietnam is wide-ranging and multi-domain, and even within each of its (sub)domains, the accordance of English–Vietnamese term pairs has not yet been established. It also began to suggest a real-world influence on development work of terminology and its translation in Vietnam.

In **Chapter 6**, an answer was given to SQ2: *What are the impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy?* It systematised the real-world impacts on policy-making and the effectiveness of development initiatives in Vietnam of the specific examples of concepts and terms discussed in Chapter 5. The general view shared by most participants was that, although translation and terminology were important to development work, their impacts to practice and policy were often not adequately and systematically recognised, and created a burden to the participation of stakeholders in development work.

In terms of practice, under descriptive accounts of participants, terminology and translation was one of the factors that led to divergent development practice, created a gap of understanding of local stakeholders between introduced versus local practice and conjured political sensitivity. At the same time, terminology and translation might increase local ownership in development work and projects and contribute to the decolonisation of development practice.

In terms of policy, analysis in this chapter showed that the inaccurate use of terminology may lead to policy not being passed, mainly due to (1) the competency of stakeholders who engaged with translation in development, and (2) the lack of cross-institutional and collaboration to systematise the use of terminology. Moreover, the confusion of meanings

and of the use of terms may undermine the implementation of development policy, as a consequence of local stakeholders and policy champions not fully understanding new terms being introduced to the local policy-making process. In addition, the fact that several terms cannot be directly translated into local languages (for example, the vernacular of the Hmong ethnic group) may hinder participation of local stakeholders in policy-making. Furthermore, the presence of multiple translation equivalents of terms entailed the absence of several key development concepts in policy discourse and policy-making.

Chapter 7 functioned to answer the two remaining (sub)research questions, namely SQ3, *What are potential solutions to terminology and translation problems in development practice?*; and SQ4, *What is the relevance of local communities' vernacular knowledge to development policy?* Here, interview and survey data was triangulated with other case study data to bring in a general picture of problem-solving to issues of translation and terminology. The most noteworthy suggestions of participants included the introduction of a translation-related and language-related policy, using terminology management tools, performing intralingual and vernacular practices, improving translation workflow as well as engaging in shared learning.

With a particular focus on vernacular knowledge, the solutions suggested and used in development work by stakeholders included *nôm na* (the use of simple and non-specialised speech), zero-translation (the direct transfer of SL words into the TL), code-switching (the direct use of the English terms to communicate with Vietnamese stakeholders) and borrowing an existing Vietnamese term being used by local stakeholders.

Answers in the thesis up to this point combined to present an initial answer to the overall RQ of the study: *What role(s) do translation and terminology have in development practice and policy in Vietnam?* With a focus on empirical evidence, the chapters so far explained *how* translation and terminology played a role in development practice and policy in Vietnam.

Chapter 8 used concepts from Practice Theory to expand on this answer and suggest theoretically *why* translation and terminology played a role in development practice and policy more generally. The key argument of the chapter was that the materials and competence of translation and terminology are used by development practitioners to enable greater ownership of practices in development in Vietnam and ultimately achieve

meaningful development outcomes through local empowerment, especially through a use of shared learning within a community of practice.

Once all research questions were answered, this chapter, **Chapter 9**, closed the thesis by presenting its final recommendations, contributions, limitations and suggestions for future work.

The recommendations derived from this study follow in the next section.

9.3 Recommendations

The title chosen for this thesis described a strong intention to include recommendations that can enable the achievement of more effective development interventions in development practice and policy-making by various groups of development stakeholders in Vietnam. Essentially, these stakeholders are (1) development organisations, programmes and projects as well as (2) individuals who engage in translation and interpreting in their development work on a day-to-day basis. With policy being about problems and solutions (Béland, Howlett, and Mukherjee 2018), this section will first summarise in a highly simplified way the problems of translation and terminology that bring about real-world impacts to the work of these stakeholders in Vietnam across five main points from all the preceding chapters of this thesis. Then, based on these problems and through the interpretation of participants' voices, a number of recommendations for these two main audiences will be made, along with some suggestions for how these recommendations can be implemented by them.

9.3.1 Summary of the problems and solutions found in this thesis

The problems presented in this thesis were founded in the voices of development stakeholders in Vietnam as research participants. The problems can be summarised as follows:

- i. Obscurity in understandings of development concepts in the local context may impede the communication of concepts in development practice and policy.
- ii. Diverse understandings of development concepts by different development stakeholders may lead to a lack of a common frame of reference in the planning and delivery of development initiatives, in monitoring and evaluation and in setting policy priorities.

- iii. Because several development concepts have multiple, not agreed-upon and even no direct translation equivalents, they may create knowledge gaps in the planning and delivery of development interventions, leading to potential confusion, misunderstanding or even ineffective practice.
- iv. A development concept may be absent in policy-making and consequently in the development interventions to realise the policy if that concept is not translated into Vietnamese.
- v. Unbalanced power dynamics may be reinforced due to a lack of or limited access of local stakeholders to the translation of a development concept or the translated version of spoken or written information, all of which may hinder their participation in development practice and policy-making and diminish accountability.

These problems and impacts of translation and terminology form the context in which the recommendations are made to mitigate and solve them.

9.3.2 Short, medium and longer term recommendations

In this study, a wide range of practical recommendations have been made by participants, and interpreted and synthesised by me as the researcher (see Sections 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7). It must be noted that, for prioritising these recommendations over other competing development needs/priorities, it may be that the specific estimation of budget, human resources and required time for implementing these recommendations may not be possible at this stage. The main reason, as pointed out in this study, is that the translation and language needs of development organisations and projects in Vietnam remain ad hoc and dependent on specific project activities. Therefore, the resources for language-related and translation-related tasks are only allocated within the ready-for-use areas of internal resources (see Section 7.6). In fact, as several participants stated, some organisations and projects had not yet developed specific budget lines for language and translation during the project design phase (see Section 7.2). For this reason, in this thesis, the recommendations are progressive, and their implementation can be in a sequential manner to involve short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions. In particular, two sets of short-term recommendations are made, one for development organisations and one for individuals who translate and engage with terminology in development work. Medium-term and long-term recommendations are also proposed to key and high-level organisational and institutional development stakeholders.

9.3.2.1 Short term recommendations

Development organisations including donors and NGOs, programmes and projects **should:**

- Form and implement policy on translation and language with sufficient allocation of time, resources and funding. This study proposes that this type of policy can be developed by donors, then disseminated as guidelines and standard protocols on language use, translation, and terminology for development organisations and NGOs as recipients of their funds and grants, or development projects and programmes they fund. These guidelines can be viewed in line with and used by the mentioned stakeholders as part of the existing technical guidelines and regulations developed for use by donors such as those to oversee the use of funds, the use of invoices, the use of donors' names, logos and images as well as other frameworks for public engagement, governance, or in M&E, and so on. During the implementation phase, organisations, NGOs, programmes and projects can update and maintain the policy themselves according to the specialised (sub)domains of their development work or as required.
- Make sure the policy and guidelines are inclusive, i.e. they need to specify target implementers, users and beneficiaries, including outsourced translators.
- Include several ground rules for language use, translation and terminology which include but are not limited to:
 - A person-first principle
 - The use of translated proper names of people and places
 - The use of local versus introduced systems of measurements and numerals
 - List of abbreviations and acronyms
 - The use of British English versus American English
 - Definitions of development M&E terms
 - Consideration of political sensitivity or appropriateness
 - Specifications on the contexts of translation and interpreting. For example, there are contexts where it is necessary to use standardised or supposedly official terms used in government's or donors' documents. There are other contexts where the use of vernacular practices such as *nôm na* is generally preferred. In addition, there are contexts where terminology users need to be

more flexible to use a combination of standardised and official terminology with a level of explanation.

- Incorporate vernacular knowledge into the policy and guidelines on translation and language and also into the making and implementation of development policy.
- Make sure the policy and guidelines integrate capacity building on language, translation and terminology where translation or interpreting will be carried out by development workers.
- Provide basic and in-depth technical knowledge of the organisation's or project's areas of work where translation or interpreting will be carried out by outsourced translators or interpreters.
- Make sure the policy and guidelines are inclusive of or provide access to adequate training materials and tools to be used across different project cycles. Shareable and reusable tools may include but are not limited to:
 - Translation guidelines and handbooks
 - Glossaries and lexicons of specialised terms
 - List of abbreviations and acronyms
 - Visual materials
- Implement the policy and guidelines prior to or in parallel with the implementation of development projects and programmes.
- Customise the policy and guidelines with existing policies, guidelines and tools being used among development agencies, NGOs, across different programmes and projects and across different contexts to make them more consistent.
- Include in the policy and guidelines best practices of translation and for handling terminology (several of which are listed in the further recommendations below).

Individuals who translate and engage with terminology in development work, including representatives of donors, in-house and outsourced translators, development practitioners and professionals, staff of NGOs, academics, and so on, **should**:

- Participate in the development and implementation of policy and guidelines on translation and language.
- Participate in the development of terminology management tools and use them.
- Consider intralingual practices of translation such as standardisation, political sensitivity and *nôm na*.

- Consider the use of the source language in the translation, for example, by using code-switching and zero-translation.
- Improve the translation workflow by using several workflow-based practices such as self-research on specialised (sub)domains of development knowledge and on local administrative procedures, doing whisper interpreting for those needed during meetings and training sessions, cross-checking meanings of terms in dictionaries or by consulting with specialists and local co-workers, speaking slowly during interpreting tasks combined with the use of simple language, and sending translated materials prior to meetings and training sessions.

9.3.2.2 Medium term recommendations

Key and high-level organisational and institutional development stakeholders as well as individuals should:

- Coordinate so that translation-related and language-related policies and guidelines developed by different donors for use by different organisations, NGOs, programmes and projects can be made available to development stakeholders. It is important that stakeholders are aware of the existence of different policies and guidelines so that they can make use of the materials, tools, rules and best practices built within the policies and guidelines to ensure that understandings of concepts and use of translated terms are coherent between themselves.

9.3.2.3 Longer term recommendations

Development stakeholders including donors, the government, development organisations, NGOs, practitioners and academia **should:**

- Collaborate to develop practical tools that can assist language use, translation and terminology work in development. This should be done in recognition that translation and terminology are cross-cutting issues that can impact the technical, specialised aspects of development work as well as the success of development practice and policy-making.
- Customise these tools at organisational or individual levels depending on their specific (sub)domains of development work, once they have been systematically

adopted by a large population of organisations and projects in parallel with an increased awareness on translation and language issues.

Academics and researchers should:

- Collaborate to develop curricula and textbooks on development that are in Vietnamese, rather than in English or another lingua franca. This will develop local capacity to communicate about development and carry out development work in locally relevant languages. In addition, it will contribute to decolonising development discourse by reducing the predominance of English.

9.3.3 Suggestions for how recommendations could be achieved

In general, this study finds that a CoP is one possible way to implement the recommendations raised in this thesis. That shared learning has been recommended by participants in this study as a solution will bring about desirable benefits to development practice and policy. As the majority of participants ascertained, shared learning could be a good approach if a community was created with a membership widened to include development professionals, translators, academics and local stakeholders so that each party could contribute in the discussion with their own strengths of expertise and local perspectives. As all of the interviews conducted in this study were conducted online during the occurrence of COVID-19, it was also recommended that online platforms such as Facebook, forums or Zoom meetings would better enable participation in such a community. With the recognition of a number of CoPs emerging currently, it is hoped that their learning outcomes and existing tools and policies may positively leverage this ongoing process of shared learning and benefit participation.

To prepare for making impactful policy contributions, I have therefore put together a policy brief in draft (Appendix F) based on the key recommendations communicated in this section. Once further feedback on the thesis as a whole and on these recommendations in particular has been obtained, this policy brief can be updated, then translated into Vietnamese so that it becomes ready for sharing, first and foremost with Vietnamese development stakeholders, then later on with interested parties in and beyond the Vietnam context.

9.4 Contributions to knowledge of this thesis

Although this thesis does not attempt to contribute across all dimensions of knowledge equally strongly, it has made unique and valuable contributions and aimed to contribute to several major fields and contexts. This thesis has generated new knowledge to differing extents in the fields of empirics, knowledge of practice, theory, methodology and contribution to society. Each is described in detail below.

9.4.1 Empirical contributions

Empirical contributions in this thesis can be related to new data that has been generated. Specifically, this thesis has built three new sets of empirical data which can be used to enrich the general inquiry into translation and/in development and answer further research questions on the subject. First, a bilingual parallel corpus was created of development language in Vietnamese and English (see Table 1, Section 4.5.2.3 for a description of corpus profile in detail). Second, this research generated a set of anonymised and member-checked transcripts of interviews with representative groups of development stakeholders in Vietnam. It is important to note that participants were selected based on the identification of key development stakeholders in Vietnam (see Sections 2.3.1 and also 4.5.3.1) to represent (1) local and international development workers and professionals, (2) development agencies and policy-making institutions including donors, the government, NGOs, social enterprises, civil society, SDOs, and so on, (3) local stakeholders including local authorities and community members, and lastly, (4) academics. Third, this study recorded reflections about the topic of translation and/in development from a multi-faceted positionality coming from the development practitioner-researcher-participant role of the researcher. The ethical use of these empirical datasets by others in their own studies will be facilitated and a message to contact the researcher for use of the corpus, transcripts or reflections has been included in the appendices of this thesis (see Appendix G).

9.4.2 Contribution to knowledge of practice

The contribution to knowledge of practice of this thesis embodies the new understandings about how development work is done. This thesis has described and explained with empirical data and authoritative participants' voices challenges of translation and terminology in development, their implications on practice and policy, and real-life solutions. These can be seen in summary in the problems and recommendations of this chapter in Section 9.3.1 and

the policy brief in Appendix F. On how participating in this study has changed participants' perceptions on translation in development from a linguistic practice to the role of brokering different values systems in different development contexts, it will be useful to quote here a reflection from a participant who shared a similar work experience with the researcher:

I think this is a very good reflection, as I am a development practitioner and also a translator. So when you ask a question, I have to think about it, and I find that it is tremendously pointing to the way I think and not just the way I use language. For example, in the past, I thought simply that translation was just language processing, but now I see that translation means I'm navigating a value system between two different contexts, and the fact that I am using certain terms in certain contexts also greatly affects my practice. I think I learned a lot from the questions you asked because it made me reflect a lot. (P6-Ph2, NGO worker/researcher)

9.4.3 Theoretical contribution

As a broad statement and in a unique way, this thesis has developed a theoretical hypothesis and transferable knowledge about *how* and *why* terminology and translation play important roles in development work, and can be development work themselves. Such a proposition was built on several theoretical perspectives, but most specifically on an application of aspects of Practice Theory (Wenger 1998; Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002; Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012; Olohan 2020; Cadwell, Federici, and O'Brien 2022). This contribution to theory about development went beyond empirical and descriptive analyses of one specific context and produced a hypothesis that can now be tested in a theoretically transferable way in contexts outside of Vietnam. One other theoretical contribution of the thesis has been to respond to the call to create dialogue between TS and DS, the two disciplines that have not engaged so much with each other (Marais 2014; Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020). Therefore, it can be said that this thesis also contributes to interdisciplinarity. First, it supports the idea that there is an interdisciplinary problem space to be addressed in this research as identified by others. By focusing particularly on terminology and its importance in development, the current inquiry has distinguished itself from prior analyses which were about language and translation in the development and aid sector in general. Second, while existing practices about language, terminology, translation and discourse are often considered "invisible" in development (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Bernacka 2012; Delgado Luchner 2018; Roth 2019; Heywood and Harding 2021), this output is significant because it supports the "developmental" and socio-cultural role of TS (Munday 2001; Koskinen 2006; Savytska 2017). Third, going beyond the robust examination of development practice through translation and terminology, this thesis also showcases that

analytical perspectives in TS can be used to inquire into DS as interdisciplinarity (Kotzé and Kotzé 2007; Rassool, Heugh, and Mansoor 2007; Kalman 2009; Brett 2009; Moreno-Rivero 2018) and as meaning-making (Escobar 1985; Marais 2020).

9.4.4 Methodological contribution

The contributions of this study to methodology might not be as significant as in the fields of empirics, knowledge to practice and theory in the sense that the overall research design has not necessarily broken any new ground. To some extent, however, the incorporation of the autoethnographic element which came from my positionality and insider/outsider—practitioner/researcher reflexivity into the research design may offer some new paths to deepen and widen the scope of analysis with richer triangulated data. This has not been done intensively in similar inquiries of ethnography to study translation, such as recent works by Koskinen (2008), Risku (2014) or Tesseur (2014), by which the ethnographic orientation of this study was mainly inspired.

Another contributing factor to methodology of the research design is related to the use of textual analysis. Through engagement with colleagues in DS and dissemination of results in the course of this PhD, I have promoted textual analysis as a robust technique from TS that can help DS colleagues examine their terminology use.

9.4.5 Contribution to society and potential social impact

It is hoped that the thesis will create potential social impact by promoting more effective policy interventions in Vietnam through translation practices. To some extent, this contribution can only be judged at a later stage once the thesis is available for wider dissemination. However, at this initial stage, I received preliminary positive evaluations from research participants, exemplified by the following evaluation by an NGO worker of how they saw the real-world contributions of this research:

I think it takes people like you to raise the issues, that is, to systematise the issues and provide evidence that translation and terminology is a problem right now, then people will care about it to find a solution, otherwise it just goes on like this. There should be documented evidence that terms commonly used in development have different interpretations and translations, etc., and that these terms are being used in different meanings by influential parties, or that there is a need to showcase the terms that often have significant implications. I mean that it takes some authority to put out such messages in order to make an impact or change. If not, the development workers

still do it their way, the translators still translate and no one points out the problems they are having. (P2-Ph2, development practitioner/NGO worker)

Although the research is coming to an end, I continue to maintain the network and relationship with participants and to hear from and discuss the topic frequently with them, thanks to the contact channels that arose from the communication process for data collection. Through the two phases of interviews as well as continued exchange, both the participants and I have become more systematically informed about the impacts of translation and terminology on development practice and policy. It is hoped that the solutions recommended from this study will materialise and be implemented.

In a further element of potential social impact, this thesis contributes to the idea that translation helps empower the translator (Tymoczko 2007) by providing them with alternative problem-solving approaches of intralingual and intersemiotic translation, as opposed to the widely practised interlingual approaches. Their changing views and practices of translation may eventually contribute to enlarge the view of other development actors through shared learning, strengthen the ownership of local stakeholders and communities through championing the use of vernacular knowledge, facilitate the implementation of translation and language policies at more grassroots level, and thus empower them (Tesseur 2021).

To build on these social contributions, I plan to disseminate case studies and practical recommendations stemming from this thesis to the participants in this study and across the development sector. To this end, I will create policy briefs and executive summaries of the final, approved thesis in English and Vietnamese. In addition, I have already established a preliminary space to share elements of the study on social media using LinkedIn and Facebook.

9.5 Limitations of this thesis

The high-level ideas and recommendations in this thesis should always be evaluated in their context of limitations. Despite constant efforts made to ensure the research quality, several limitations and drawbacks were unavoidable. At the highest level, the first limitation to be noted relates to the modest scale of study which restricted itself to the context of Vietnam. The small size of data might also have some implications on the breadth and depth of analysis. In addition, the self-built corpus for textual analysis in this study remains small in

size which may represent subjectivity within text selection, albeit spanning across a diversity of areas of development work. While the case study approach proved highly suitable and strong to deal with the small number of cases as well as unstructured data, it might have yielded a narrow focus on data reporting. The small number of 19 cases, however, were representative of the main groups of development stakeholders in Vietnam.

Secondly, this thesis focused on English and Vietnamese language ability, popularly referred to as Kinh. This was because of the limited time, resources and expertise that I could devote to this study. I focused on a manageable scope that was in my area of expertise. However, as was reported in this study, an extra layer of translation is at times needed in the communication of development discourse to the ethnic minorities in Vietnam due the absence of such discourse in their understandings. For example, as emphasised in the participants' voice, the understanding of the Hmong communities about the concept *domestic violence* became misleading when it was translated from English into Kinh, then from Kinh into Hmong language, which led to hindered communication and the participation of these stakeholders in development work and policy-making about domestic violence (see Sections 6.4.4, 6.4.5 and 9.2). This fact indicates that, while the English – Kinh language pair was the focus of inquiry in this thesis, generally, there is much more to know about the ethnic minority dimension of translation and development work in Vietnam (Aus4Equality 2019).

Lastly, COVID-19 left some influence upon the research process, particularly the lack of fieldwork. Initially, on-site ethnography and fieldwork combined with textual analysis were chosen as a verifiably robust framework to study the sociological aspects of translation and terminology (Tesseur 2014; Mariani 2018). With an interdisciplinary focus, this thesis could have benefited from additional reflexive data and ethnographic dimensions to better understand the 18 cases in their own context through observation and on-site interactions. Without a period in the field because of the pandemic, the understanding of context may not have been as rich as it would have been possible with a purely ethnographic methodology. Nevertheless, this limitation was mitigated by the strong focus in the study on triangulation between multiple datasets and the ethnographically oriented case study design, which provided me with tools and techniques to navigate my complex positionality.

9.6 Suggestions for future work

This thesis has built a considerable amount of knowledge about the English – Vietnamese dynamics to reaffirm its indispensability as the overall linguistic capacity in development work in Vietnam. As discussed in Chapter 2, Vietnamese language ability (Kinh) has become central in enabling more inclusive participation of ethnic groups in development planning and the delivery of interventions (Aus4Equality 2019). Still we do not know that much about the dynamics between Kinh and the languages of these groups in similar contexts and fields of development work through the vehicle of translation. This can be viewed as a knowledge gap that needs future work. For example, it will be beneficial for researchers to partner with development stakeholders from large ethnic groups in Vietnam such as Khmer, Êđê, Jarai, Bahnar, Champa, Hmong, Thai, Sedang, Tày, to name a few (see Section 2.3.1), to understand how development-related ideas and terminology are being communicated through more than one layer of translations—typically from English into Vietnamese, then into these vernacular languages—as well as what implications on development practice and policy it might have.

One of the recommendations from development stakeholders involved in this thesis concerns the need for specialised tools, glossaries and lexicons for standardising the currently varied descriptions of development-related concepts and translation equivalents for key terms being used in contemporary development discourse in Vietnam. The pressing issue, as emphasised by research participants, for example, with SDGs-related concepts and, the language of cross-cutting issues as well as the language of development M&E, is that the descriptions and term uses are not properly shared and mainstreamed, not only between individual users but also in broader contexts such as at the organisational or project levels, or among different organisations and projects. This thesis has acknowledged the usefulness and high practicality of such a tool with evidence, and pointed out that the incorporation of such a tool into the language-related and translation-related policies of organisations and projects deserves better attention from individual and organisational stakeholders. However, the actual work of building such a term base was beyond the scope of this study. For this reason, solid future work can be devoted to the development of such term bases. To go about this, it is possible to begin with further empirical work on development terminology, for example, with expanded textual analysis using larger bilingual corpora and a range of advanced CAT features to handle ST and TT alignment to broaden the search for translation equivalents in a richer variety of (sub)domains of development texts then deepen the contextual

understanding of concepts. In longer terms, the data to build these toolkits can be gathered at multiple levels and from multiple stakeholder groups. For example, based on another finding of this thesis about the necessity of stakeholder consultation on translation and term use in development work as a typical form of shared learning (see Section 7.6.1), the collection of data may continue as a community-sourced project. In a practical manner, such a project to focus on the Vietnam context can benefit from and collaborate with similar research being carried out in other contexts, such as the “Community-Sourced Translation Glossary for International Development Work” project which is ongoing to create a two-way Chichewa-English glossary for the use of stakeholders in the Malawi development sector as an extension of “the Listening Zones of NGOs” project (Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020).

In responding to the necessity to unpack the obscurity of anglophone development discourse (Cornwall and Eade 2010; Footitt, Crack, and Tesseur 2020), most studies so far have largely proceeded from the perspectives of the bilingual development practitioners. We now need to approach these issues from alternative points of view in Vietnam and elsewhere. Studies from the perspectives of relevant government departments, local authorities and communities, translation organisations, to name a few, would be beneficial. In this regard, some concrete fieldwork-oriented research may be required to tell us more about how translation and terminology practices are experienced by these stakeholders in their particular professional spaces. For example, an embedded ethnographic study of one of the burgeoning CoPs could be valuable to further explain how they engage with translation and terminology as a collaborative practice and how they identify and deal with impacts of terminology and translation through shared learning. Another example of an embedded study may expand on the practice-theoretical perspectives, for example, to understand how different stakeholders in a different context, for example, a government organisation participating in development work, improve their translation and terminology workflow as interconnected practices using the ideas of constellation of practice (Olohan 2020) (see Section 3.4). Future work along this line of ethnography of new but related contexts of translation may also advance the understanding of practice by employing a variety of ethnographic methods such as detailed observation, interviews and textual study or a combination of these (see also Section 3.4).

Finally, this thesis proposed a theoretical hypothesis about the roles of translation and terminology and/in development that can now be tested in contexts beyond Vietnam. In

particular, tests of this hypothesis in other Global South contexts similar to the geo-political and social-cultural context of Vietnam could prove fruitful at first. Moreover, given the acknowledgment that development practice is contemporarily referred to as the delivery of measurable goals and outcomes to beneficiaries mostly in Global South contexts, further expansion of the research scale to the Global North contexts of development could also be useful. For example, it would be helpful to investigate how major donors and large development aid agencies prioritise the role and translation of vernacular knowledge in their shaping of translation-related and language-related policies—for the decolonisation of development.

On a personal note, over the past four years, I have worked as a PhD researcher to develop knowledge about the general topic of translation and/in development. Now, I aim to take this knowledge forward from an academic-practitioner standpoint. I hope to continue to partner with interested researchers, the NGO sector, policymakers and other stakeholders to undertake elements of this future work.

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Appendices

There are seven appendices to this thesis. Appendix A outlines the categories of interview topics and indicative questions in English and Vietnamese used in the two phases of interviews. Appendix B introduces a sample of an interview report which was sent to a participant after Phase One. Appendix C illustrates a part of the codebook extracted during the coding process and some coding rules which were used at that stage. Appendix D includes a survey questionnaire used in a feedback workshop specially designed for key development stakeholders and policy champions in Vietnam and Ireland. Appendix E presents the code tree as the final outcome of the coding process which was used for thematic analysis in this study. Appendix F provides a summary of key research outputs with a focus on practical recommendations to issues of translation and terminology which are ready to be shared with and used by development stakeholders in Vietnam in the form of recommendations or later on, as a bilingual policy brief. Lastly, Appendix G includes anonymised, edited and member-checked transcripts from the two phases of interviews which were already translated into English.

APPENDIX A: Categories of interview topics and indicative questions used in Phase-One and Phase-Two interviews

Category of interview topics and indicative questions – Phase One

Time: 60 minutes

Category 1: Experience of terminology in day-to-day development work

1. Could you please share with me your experience of terminology in your day-to-day work?

Category 2: Examples of different translations of terminology in day-to-day development work

2. Could you please share with me a story of different/problematic translations of terminology in a development project – if any?
3. In what ways did you know the translations are problematic?

Category 3: Views on local knowledge versus introduced knowledge in development work

4. Could you please share with me a story of how your co-workers deal with terminology in a development project?
5. Could you please share with me a story of how your co-workers deal with translation in a development project?

Category 4: Views on the role of terminology and translation in development work

6. How do you think the introduction of new terms and idea influence your work?
7. How do you understand the role of translation in development work?
8. How do you understand the role of terminology in development work?
9. How do you describe the policy of translation and language in the development project you are participating?
10. Who do you think would be most suitable to translate terminology and ideas in development work?

Category 5: Topics that also need to be covered

11. Are there anything particular topics of relevance in relation to translation and terminology in development work that you feel we should talk about? Such as?

Phỏng vấn mở - Đợt 1

Thời lượng: 60 phút

Chủ đề 1: Kinh nghiệm về việc sử dụng thuật ngữ hàng ngày trong công tác phát triển

1. Xin Anh/Chị vui lòng chia sẻ trải nghiệm của mình về việc sử dụng thuật ngữ hàng ngày trong công tác phát triển?

Chủ đề 2: Các thí dụ về những cách dịch thuật ngữ khác nhau trong công tác phát triển

2. Xin Anh/Chị vui lòng chia sẻ một câu chuyện về những cách dịch thuật ngữ khác nhau hoặc những cách dịch thuật ngữ mà Anh/Chị cảm thấy chưa phù hợp trong một dự án mà Anh/Chị tham gia, nếu có?
3. Làm thế nào Anh/Chị biết được những cách dịch thuật ngữ nói trên là chưa phù hợp?

Chủ đề 3: Quan điểm về kiến thức bản địa/địa phương so với kiến thức được truyền đạt từ bên ngoài trong công tác phát triển

4. Xin Anh/Chị vui lòng chia sẻ một câu chuyện về cách sử dụng thuật ngữ của các đồng nghiệp trong một dự án mà Anh/Chị tham gia?
5. Xin Anh/Chị vui lòng chia sẻ một câu chuyện có liên quan đến việc dịch (biên dịch hoặc phiên dịch) của các đồng nghiệp trong một dự án mà Anh/Chị tham gia?

Chủ đề 4: Quan điểm về vai trò của thuật ngữ và dịch thuật trong công tác phát triển

6. Xin Anh/Chị vui lòng cho biết ý kiến của mình về sự ảnh hưởng đến công việc của Anh/Chị do việc giới thiệu các thuật ngữ mới và các khái niệm mới (nếu có)?
7. Anh/Chị hiểu thế nào về vai trò của việc dịch (biên dịch và phiên dịch) trong công tác phát triển?
8. Anh/Chị hiểu thế nào về vai trò của thuật ngữ trong công tác phát triển?
9. Anh/Chị mô tả thế nào về chính sách/cơ chế về dịch và ngôn ngữ trong một dự án mà Anh/Chị tham gia?
10. Theo Anh/Chị, những ai là người phù hợp nhất để dịch các thuật ngữ và khái niệm trong công tác phát triển?

Chủ đề 5: Những nội dung có liên quan

11. Theo Anh/Chị, ngoài những chủ đề nói trên, còn những chủ đề nào có liên quan đến việc dịch và thuật ngữ trong công tác phát triển mà chúng ta cần phải thảo luận? Xin nêu rõ.

Category of interview topics and indicative questions – Phase Two

Time: 45 minutes

Category 1: Problem-solving

1. How would you think translation issues in development practice and policy should be dealt with among stakeholders?
2. How would you think problematic terminology in development should be handled? Do you think problematic terminology should not be translated?
3. What would you think would be useful tools and resources for development stakeholders (including development practitioners and translators/interpreters) to handle problematic terminology and translation issues?
4. Last time we met, you mentioned this terminology/translation-related problem. [State the problem]. Does it make a difference in your development work? If so, how? [If they don't engage with the question] I'm really interested in hearing more about the problem you mentioned last time and its real-world impacts.

Category 2: Shared Learning

5. What do you think about the importance of shared learning in dealing with translation issues in development practice and policy in Vietnam?

Category 3: General Reflections

6. Could you please share with me your general reflections on the topic of translation and terminology in development since we talked last time?
7. Based on the examples you shared last time about problematic terminology in development, would you like to expand on some examples you have found particularly and persistently problematic in your work?
8. Are there any other topics related to problem solving or shared learning that we haven't covered today that you think could be relevant?

Phỏng vấn mở - Đợt 2

Thời lượng: 45 phút

Chủ đề 1: “Giải quyết vấn đề”

1. Theo Anh/Chị, các vấn đề về dịch thuật trong công tác phát triển mà các bên tham gia đang gặp phải cần phải được xử lý như thế nào?
2. Theo Anh/Chị, các khó khăn về thuật ngữ trong công tác phát triển cần phải được xử lý như thế nào? Anh/Chị nghĩ chúng ta có nên giữ nguyên mà không cần phải dịch các thuật ngữ được xem là có vấn đề như đã thảo luận trong Đợt 1 hay không?
3. Theo Anh/Chị, các công cụ và nguồn tài liệu nào là hữu ích để các bên tham gia (trong đó có cả những người làm công tác phát triển chuyên nghiệp và biên/phiên dịch) sử dụng trong việc xử lý các thuật ngữ có vấn đề và các vấn đề về dịch thuật?
4. Dựa vào những câu chuyện về dịch thuật và thuật ngữ mà Anh/Chị đã chia sẻ trong đợt trao đổi trước, xin Anh/Chị vui lòng cho biết cụ thể hơn về các ảnh hưởng của dịch thuật và thuật ngữ lên công việc thường ngày của Anh/Chị?

Chủ đề 2: “Học hợp tác” (shared learning)

5. Xin Anh/Chị cho biết quan điểm của mình về tầm quan trọng của “học hợp tác” (shared learning) trong việc xử lý các vấn đề về dịch thuật trong công tác phát triển tại Việt Nam?

Chủ đề 3: “Hỏi tương lai”

6. Anh/Chị có hồi tưởng gì về các chủ đề được chúng ta trao đổi trong lần trước về dịch và thuật ngữ trong công tác phát triển tại Việt Nam?
7. Từ các câu chuyện về những thuật ngữ khó dịch đã được Anh/Chị chia sẻ lần trước, lần này Anh/Chị có muốn chia sẻ thêm về các trường hợp thuật ngữ đặc biệt khó hiểu và khó dịch trong công việc hàng ngày của mình hay không?
8. Còn nội dung nào về “giải quyết vấn đề” và “học hợp tác” có liên quan đến dịch thuật và phát triển mà Anh/Chị thấy cần phải được lưu ý nữa không?

APPENDIX B: Phase-One interview report sample

Đề tài: “Dịch thuật và phát triển: thúc đẩy các can thiệp hiệu quả hơn về chính sách tại Việt Nam”

Nghiên cứu viên: Nguyễn Hải Duy Nguyễn

Phân khoa Ngôn ngữ và Văn hóa học

Trường ĐH Tổng hợp Dublin

Glasnevin, Dublin 11, Ireland

Email: nguyen.nguyen4@mail.dcu.ie

BÁO CÁO TÓM TẮT

Buổi phỏng vấn lần 1

Mã số: P101

Ngày: 06/11/2020

Hình thức phỏng vấn: Zoom

Chủ đề: Kinh nghiệm về việc sử dụng thuật ngữ hàng ngày trong công tác phát triển

- Hiện chưa có các công cụ liệt kê thuật ngữ chuyên ngành (như từ điển chuyên ngành) cho những người làm công tác phát triển.
- Chương trình giảng dạy các kỹ năng: đặt hàng chuyên gia xây dựng, nguồn kiến thức mà chuyên gia sử dụng để đưa vào chương trình rất đa dạng và không rõ nguồn gốc.
- Về kiến thức của chuyên gia: nhờ công tác lâu năm trong một lĩnh vực nhất định nào đó.
- Các trở ngại chính mà các đối tác (tình nguyện viên) nước ngoài gặp phải khi sang công tác tại tổ chức: rào cản văn hóa (cultural barrier) và rào cản ngôn ngữ (language barrier)
- “Tam sao thất bản”, ví dụ: Community-based tourism: làm du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng và cách hiểu và áp dụng hiện nay về “du lịch cộng đồng”

Một số thí dụ về thuật ngữ khó dịch, khó hiểu, có những cách dịch khác nhau hoặc chưa dịch được:

- Women empowerment
- Development
- Gender equity
- Gender development
- Advocacy
- Participatory approach
- Stigma
- Wellbeing
- LGBT
- Trauma: sang chấn tâm lý vs. chấn thương tâm lý
- Mental health: Sức khỏe tinh thần vs. sức khỏe tâm thần
- Và ngôn ngữ được sử dụng trong các SDGs nói chung
- Với các thuật ngữ được dịch chưa phù hợp: để nguyên từ tiếng Anh
- Mô tả về [redacted]: có 2 chương trình là “[redacted]” và “[redacted]”

Chủ đề: Kiến thức bản địa/địa phương so với kiến thức được truyền đạt từ bên ngoài

- Một số nhà tài trợ chưa quan tâm đến việc liệu những khái niệm và nguyên tắc mà họ giới thiệu có hợp với Việt Nam hay không. Hầu hết những người làm NGO ở Việt Nam ưu tiên việc tìm được fund, cho nên rất nhiều NGO ở địa phương đã thay đổi hoàn toàn tầm nhìn, sứ mệnh, lĩnh vực hoạt động,... và không chia sẻ một giá trị cốt lõi hay nguyên tắc nào với nhà tài trợ mà họ thay đổi theo nguồn fund mà họ nhận được.
- Ví dụ về sự tương đồng giữa một kiến thức về phát triển được du nhập vào Việt Nam với kiến thức bản địa đã có sẵn: Self-help groups và mô hình “Hội phụ nữ”
- Ví dụ về thế mạnh của việc sử dụng ngôn ngữ nôm na trong công tác phát triển: [redacted]
- Việc không dùng thuật ngữ đúng và chuẩn, và có hướng dẫn, cộng với một số yếu tố văn hóa (chẳng hạn như sự tếu táo của người Việt và sự quen thuộc với ngôn ngữ nôm na) dẫn đến việc hiểu hoàn toàn khác những khái niệm được truyền đạt trong công tác phát triển và có ảnh hưởng rất lớn trong việc đem lại hiệu quả của sự phát triển.

Chủ đề: Vai trò của thuật ngữ và dịch thuật trong công tác phát triển

- Vai trò quan trọng và không thể thiếu của người làm công tác phát triển biết cả tiếng Việt lẫn tiếng Anh: các tổ chức yêu cầu về ngoại ngữ khi tuyển dụng
- Các tổ chức và dự án phát triển tại Việt Nam chưa có chính sách về ngôn ngữ, dịch và sử dụng thuật ngữ, kể cả [redacted] là một dự án rất lớn.
- Đã có bảng liệt kê các từ viết tắt, nhưng không có bảng thuật ngữ, từ điển thuật ngữ, hoặc là một quy định về việc sử dụng thuật ngữ tương đương Anh - Việt.
- Đa số những thực hành tốt về dịch và sử dụng thuật ngữ chủ yếu đến từ việc chia sẻ kinh nghiệm giữa những người đi làm phát triển

Đề nghị:

- Xây dựng một bộ thuật ngữ chuyên ngành về phát triển
- Đưa ra các đề xuất cho các tổ chức phát triển về chính sách dịch và sử dụng thuật ngữ trong công việc của mình

APPENDIX C: Example of a summarised codebook with coding rules

Name	Description	Files	References
Better-not-translated	Unit of meaning emerging from participants' responses. The participant provides examples of terms in English that are better not translated into Vietnamese in their opinions. These are a priori codes.	1	17
Code-switching	Unit of meaning emerging from participants' responses. The participant explicitly describes how code-switching occurs during the communication process in development work. These are a priori codes.	1	6
Development policy	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant describes how translation and terminology may have impacts on some development policies. These are a priori, descriptive and a posteriori codes.	1	22
Impacts	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant talks explicitly about the real-world impacts of translation and terminology in development work. These are a priori, descriptive and a posteriori codes.	1	78
Local practices	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant talks explicitly about their experience to deal with problems of translation and terminology in development work as local practices. These are a priori and a posteriori codes.	1	179
Nôm na	Unit of meaning emerging from participants' responses. The participant describes how "nôm na" becomes a practice to deal with terminology and introduced knowledge in development work. These are a priori codes.	1	73

Name	Description	Files	References
Potential solutions to translation problems	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant talks explicitly about potential solutions to problems of translation and terminology in development work. These are a priori, descriptive and a posteriori codes.	1	148
Problematic terminology	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant talks explicitly about terms that they find problematic in development work. These are a priori codes.	1	118
Roles in development practice	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant talks explicitly about the role of translation and terminology in development work. These are a priori, descriptive and a posteriori codes.	1	45
Shared learning	Unit of meaning emerging from participants' responses. The participant talks explicitly about shared learning as one potential solution to deal with issues of translation and terminology in development work. These are a priori codes.	1	46
Translation equivalents	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant provides examples of and describe different translation equivalents for the terms they encounter in development work. These are a priori codes.	1	142
Understandings of underlying concepts	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. Responses under this code relate to the understanding of development stakeholders of concepts that the terms are used to describe. These are a priori and a posteriori codes.	1	138
Vernacular knowledge	Unit of meaning from Research Questions. The participant talks explicitly about the relationship between vernacular knowledge and translation in development work. These are a priori and a posteriori codes.	1	26

APPENDIX D: Feedback workshop survey questionnaire

Survey: Impacts of translation and terminology in your context of development work

Tool: SurveyMonkey – Estimated time to complete: 5 minutes

Q1: How often do you knowingly use translated information in your development work?

- Always (taken here to mean every working day)
 Frequently Sometimes Seldom Never

Q2: How often do you translate or participate in the translation of terms in your development work?

- Always Frequently Sometimes Seldom Never

Q3: How often do you discuss the way development-related terms should be translated with others?

- Always Frequently Sometimes Seldom Never

Q4: How often do you see new concepts and terminology in development policy documents or verbal communication?

- Always Frequently Sometimes Seldom Never

Q5: How often do you have to deal with problematic terminology and translation in your work?

- Always Frequently Sometimes Seldom Never

Q6: Describe the policy governing translation and language in a development project that you are currently participating in.

- There is a language/translation policy for the project; it is effective.
 There is a language/translation policy for the project; it is ineffective.
 There is no language/translation policy for the project; translation and language are managed effectively.
 There is no language/translation policy for the project; translation and language are managed ineffectively.
 Other (please specify)

Q7: What are positive impacts of the translation of terms and concepts on development work, if any? (Type in your answer or put N/A if you have no opinion on this point)

- Type in here:

N/A

Q8: What are negative impacts of the translation of terms and concepts on development work, if any? (Type in your answer or put N/A if you have no opinion on this point)

- Type in here:

N/A

Q9: How important is the knowledge of local communities to the translation of development concepts and terminology?

- Extremely important Very important Somewhat important
 Not so important Not at all important

APPENDIX E: Final code tree used for thematic analysis

- 1. Varied translation equivalents and different understandings**
 - Wellbeing/well-being
 - Resilience
 - Empowerment
 - Decent work
 - Social accountability
 - Civil society organisations
 - Community-based tourism
 - Career counselling
 - Other terms
- 2. Impacts of terminology and translation (or their absence) on development practice and policy**
 - Impact on participation
 - Understanding
 - Trust and power
 - Impact on development practice
 - Diverse practice
 - Local versus introduced knowledge
 - Responding to political sensitivity
 - Potential benefits of translation and terminology
 - Decolonising development practice
 - Impact of on policy and policy-making
 - Policy disagreement
 - Policy disapproval
 - Ineffective policy implementation
 - Framing development policy for implementation among local communities and ethnic minorities
 - Absence of concepts in policy discourse and policy-making
- 3. Potential solutions to issues of terminology and translation in development practice**
 - Translation and language policy
 - Other translation practice-based solutions
 - Terminology management tools
 - Terminology standardisation
 - Code-switching and the advantage of using parentheses
 - Handling political sensitivity
 - Other workflow-based practices
 - The relevance of local/vernacular knowledge
 - *Nôm na*
 - Better-not-translated
 - Shared learning
 - Stakeholder consultation
 - Who should translate?
 - CoPs
- 4. Role of translation and terminology in development practice in Vietnam**

APPENDIX F: Policy briefs in English and Vietnamese

Policy Brief
TRANSLATION AND DEVELOPMENT TERMINOLOGY IN VIETNAM: KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS
Who is this aimed at?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This policy brief is aimed at development organisations at multiple levels including donors, NGOs, local government stakeholders, local communities, academia as well as individual translators, development professionals and workers. It addresses the significance of translation and terminology in making development interventions and policy more effective.• The document is made available in English and Vietnamese to benefit both English and Vietnamese stakeholders and other interested parties.
Context
Translated-related and language-related tasks, although being underlined as development work themselves to enable the empowerment of stakeholders through shared understandings and inclusive use of language, are often overlooked, undervalued, and under-resourced in many development organisations and programmes in Vietnam due to a shortage of effort to make adequate policies about translation and language. Key findings from the study entitled <i>Translation and/in Development: Promoting More Effective Policy Interventions in Vietnam</i> indicated that core concepts as specialised knowledge used in development are formulated predominantly in English, translated into Vietnamese language then possibly into the vernaculars of ethnic groups in Vietnam for implementation in the local contexts but with varied understandings, and there are different versions of translated terms to label them. Several of these concepts and terms are <i>wellbeing, resilience, empowerment, decent work, social accountability, civil society organisations, domestic violence and inclusive development</i> , to name only a few. Although this situation is often considered problematic in development work, there are possible solutions to these issues being adopted and recommended strongly by development stakeholders with important implications on development practice and policy.
Recommendations
In the short term, development organisations including donors and NGOs, programmes and projects should: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form, disseminate, implement and update policy on translation and language with sufficient allocation of time, resources and funding as an essential part of development policy which is inclusive of shareable and reusable tools such as translation guidelines and handbooks in development work, glossaries and lexicons of specialised terms, list of acronyms, and visual materials.• Make sure the policy and guidelines are inclusive, i.e. they need to specify target implementers, users and beneficiaries, including outsourced translators.• Include several ground rules for language use, translation and terminology which include but are not limited to person-first principle, the use of translated proper names of people and places, the use of local versus introduced systems of measurements and numerals, lists of abbreviations, the use of British English versus American English, definitions of development M&E terms, political sensitivity, specifications on the

contexts of translation and interpreting to adopt either standardisation or vernacular practices (such as *nôm na*), or both.

In the short term, individuals who translate and engage with terminology in development work including representatives of donors, in-house and outsourced translators, development practitioners and professionals, staff of NGOs, academics, and so on, should:

- Participate in the development and implement policy and guidelines on translation and language.
- Participate in the development of terminology management tools and use them.
- Consider intralingual practices of translation such as standardisation, political sensitivity and *nôm na*.
- Consider the use of the source language in the translation, for example, by using code-switching and zero-translation.
- Improve the translation workflow by using several workflow-based practices.

In the medium term, development organisations and individuals should coordinate so that translation-related and language-related policies and guidelines developed by different donors for use by different organisations, NGOs, programmes and projects, programmes can be made available to development stakeholders.

In the longer term:

- Development stakeholders including donors, the government, development organisations, NGOs, practitioners and academia need to collaborate to systematically develop practical tools that can assist language use, translation and terminology work in development.
- Academics and researchers should collaborate to develop curricula and textbooks on development that are Vietnamese, rather than in English or another lingua franca.

Implications on development practice and development policy

On the contrary to what is often assumed by donors and development organisations that there are clear distinctions in defining development initiatives, existing gaps in understanding development concepts and using terminology have evidently shown confusion about what is actually implemented at local levels and considered determinants to bring about divergent practice and political dislike of local stakeholders. These gaps challenge stakeholders' participation in the making and implementation of development policy in relation to disagreements, disapproval, ineffective implementation, framing and absence of concepts from discourse.

Specifically, conceptual and terminological barriers may bring about policy disagreements, as seen from how *inclusiveness* was perceived differently by various institutional stakeholders. These barriers, together with the political sensitivity embedded in several concepts may lead to the fact that certain policies cannot be approved, such as about *empowerment*, *social accountability*, *civil society organisations* or in the area of *social protection*. Policy implementation might also become problematic and not cost-effective if concepts and terms such as *legal coverage* and *effective coverage* are not understood and not translated consistently. The absence of several concepts and translations of terms including *domestic violence*, *empowerment* and *resilience* may entail their absence in the local political discourse and policy-making, with possible wider implications for development outcomes. The circulation of introduced concepts and their associated terms at local levels may influence the way policy was framed for ethnic minorities and local communities to ensure that they benefit from the policy.

Tóm tắt khuyến nghị chính sách DỊCH THUẬT VÀ THUẬT NGỮ NGÀNH PHÁT TRIỂN Ở VIỆT NAM: MỘT SỐ VẤN ĐỀ VÀ KHUYẾN NGHỊ CHO CÁC BÊN LIÊN QUAN

Bản tóm tắt khuyến nghị chính sách này hướng đến ai?

- Bản tóm tắt này hướng đến các bên liên quan ở nhiều cấp, bao gồm các tổ chức tài trợ, các tổ chức phi chính phủ, các cấp chính quyền, các cộng đồng ở địa phương, các nhà nghiên cứu và cá nhân làm công tác dịch thuật cũng như những người có chuyên môn làm việc trong ngành phát triển. Bản tóm tắt này trình bày tầm quan trọng của dịch thuật và thuật ngữ trong việc thực hiện hiệu quả hơn các can thiệp và chính sách về phát triển.
- Bản tóm tắt này được trình bày bằng tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh để phù hợp với mục đích sử dụng của các bên quan tâm.

Bối cảnh

Các phần việc có liên quan đến dịch thuật và ngôn ngữ được xem là một phần quan trọng của công tác phát triển và góp phần thúc đẩy sự tham gia của các bên liên quan thông qua việc chia sẻ kiến thức và sự bình đẳng trong sử dụng ngôn ngữ. Tuy vậy, các phần việc này thường không nhận được sự quan tâm đúng mức và không được phân bổ nguồn lực phù hợp tại nhiều tổ chức và chương trình phát triển ở Việt Nam do chưa có nỗ lực thích đáng của các bên để đưa ra những chính sách phù hợp về dịch thuật và ngôn ngữ. Những phát hiện chính từ công trình nghiên cứu **“Dịch thuật và/hoặc Phát triển: Thúc đẩy các can thiệp chính sách hiệu quả hơn ở Việt Nam”** chỉ ra rằng một số khái niệm cốt lõi thuộc kiến thức chuyên ngành phát triển đã và được hình thành và diễn đạt chủ yếu trong tiếng Anh, rồi mới được dịch sang tiếng Việt hoặc có thể sang ngôn ngữ của các nhóm dân tộc thiểu số ở Việt Nam để triển khai ở địa phương. Tuy nhiên, cách hiểu những khái niệm này của các bên còn khác nhau, được thể hiện thông qua việc sử dụng các thuật ngữ tiếng Việt khi chuyển dịch những khái niệm này, điển hình như các khái niệm và thuật ngữ tiếng Anh như *wellbeing, resilience, empowerment, decent work, social accountability, civil society organisations, domestic violence and inclusive development, v...v...* Nghiên cứu cũng cho thấy, tuy đã nhận diện hiện tượng này là một thách thức gây trở ngại trong công việc, các bên liên quan đang áp dụng cũng như đề xuất một cách mạnh mẽ một số giải pháp khả thi và có ý nghĩa quan trọng trong thực hành cũng như trong xây dựng và triển khai chính sách phát triển.

Các khuyến nghị về chính sách

Về ngắn hạn, các tổ chức phát triển, trong đó có các nhà tài trợ và các tổ chức phi chính phủ, các dự án và chương trình phát triển, nên:

- Xây dựng, phổ biến, thực hiện và cập nhật chính sách về dịch thuật và ngôn ngữ cho tổ chức của mình, phân bổ thời gian, nguồn lực và kinh phí một cách thích đáng và xem đây là một phần thiết yếu của chính sách phát triển nói chung, trong đó bao gồm các công cụ có thể chia sẻ và tái sử dụng, chẳng hạn như các tài liệu hướng dẫn và sổ tay về dịch thuật trong công việc phát triển, bảng từ vựng và thuật ngữ chuyên ngành, danh mục từ viết tắt cũng các tài liệu trực quan khác.
- Đảm bảo rằng các chính sách và hướng dẫn nói trên hướng đến tất cả các bên liên quan. Nói cách khác, cần nêu cụ thể các bên cần sử dụng, thực hiện cũng như các bên hưởng lợi, trong đó có đội ngũ biên phiên dịch thuê ngoài.
- Tích hợp một số nguyên tắc cơ bản về ngôn ngữ, dịch thuật và sử dụng thuật ngữ, bao gồm nhưng không giới hạn đối với nguyên tắc ưu tiên con người trước hết (person-first principle), quy tắc sử dụng tên riêng cho người và địa điểm đã được Việt hóa, quy đổi các hệ thống đo lường và chữ số quốc tế ra hệ thống của địa phương, sử dụng danh

mục từ viết tắt, quy định sử dụng tiếng Anh – Anh và tiếng Anh – Mỹ, định nghĩa và diễn giải cụ thể các thuật ngữ về Giám sát & Đánh giá trong phát triển, quy định về các trường hợp có thể dẫn đến nhạy cảm chính trị, nêu rõ bối cảnh của nội dung cần biên – phiên dịch để đưa ra quyết định về chuẩn hóa hoặc về việc áp dụng các thực hành giao tiếp của địa phương (ví dụ như giải thích nôm na), hoặc cả hai.

Về ngắn hạn, các cá nhân tham gia dịch thuật và sử dụng thuật ngữ trong công tác phát triển, bao gồm đại diện nhà tài trợ, đội ngũ biên – phiên dịch nội bộ hoặc thuê ngoài, những người có chuyên môn làm việc trong ngành phát triển, cán bộ và nhân viên các tổ chức phi chính phủ, giới học thuật, v...v..., nên:

- Tham gia vào việc xây dựng và thực hiện các chính sách và hướng dẫn về dịch thuật và ngôn ngữ đã đề cập ở trên.
- Tham gia vào việc xây dựng các công cụ quản lý thuật ngữ và áp dụng các công cụ này vào thực tiễn công việc.
- Cân nhắc sử dụng diễn dịch nội ngữ (intralingual translation), thí dụ như thông qua việc chuẩn hóa, diễn giải các trường hợp nhạy cảm chính trị cũng như giải thích nôm na.
- Cân nhắc sử dụng ngôn ngữ nguồn trong bản dịch, thí dụ như trong các tình huống cần chuyển đổi giữa các ngôn ngữ khi diễn đạt (code-switching) và không cần dịch (zero-translation).
- Cải thiện quy trình và các thực hành dịch thuật nói chung.

Về trung hạn, các tổ chức và cá nhân nên phối hợp để tập hợp các chính sách và hướng dẫn về dịch thuật và ngôn ngữ được các nhà tài trợ khác nhau xây dựng để sử dụng trong công việc phát triển, ở các tổ chức phi chính phủ và các chương trình và dự án cũng như chia sẻ cho các bên liên quan.

Về dài hạn:

- Các bên liên quan, bao gồm các nhà tài trợ, các cơ quan nhà nước, các tổ chức phát triển, các tổ chức phi chính phủ cũng như giới học thuật, cần hợp tác để xây dựng một cách có hệ thống các công cụ thiết thực để hỗ trợ việc dịch thuật, sử dụng ngôn ngữ và thuật ngữ trong lĩnh vực phát triển.
- Giới học thuật và các nhà nghiên cứu cần hợp tác để xây dựng chương trình đào tạo và các giáo trình ngành Phát triển bằng tiếng Việt thay vì bằng tiếng Anh hoặc các ngôn ngữ cầu nối (lingua franca) khác.

Ý nghĩa về thực hành và chính sách phát triển

Trái ngược với những gì các nhà tài trợ và các tổ chức phát triển thường cho rằng có sự phân biệt rõ ràng trong việc diễn giải các sáng kiến phát triển, những lỗ hổng hiện nay trong việc hiểu các khái niệm và sử dụng thuật ngữ trong lĩnh vực phát triển cho thấy một sự thiếu nhất quán trong thực hành phát triển ở cấp địa phương. Những lỗ hổng này còn cho thấy rằng, sự khác biệt trong thực hành phát triển ở cấp địa phương xuất phát từ việc các khái niệm này chưa được hiểu và diễn đạt một cách thống nhất, và điều này có thể dẫn đến một sự e ngại trong thực hành phát triển của các bên liên quan, vì sự diễn đạt không thống nhất có thể mang hàm ý chính trị không phù hợp. Những lỗ hổng này là thách thức đối với sự tham gia của các bên trong việc hoạch định và thực hiện chính sách phát triển, và có thể gây cản trở trong việc đồng thuận, tán thành về chính sách, thực hiện chính sách một cách hiệu quả hoặc gây bỏ sót trong diễn giải một số khái niệm cần thiết khi xây dựng chính sách.

Cụ thể, nghiên cứu đã chỉ ra rằng, các rào cản về khái niệm và thuật ngữ có thể dẫn đến những bất đồng về chính sách, điển hình như khái niệm *inclusiveness* hiện có những cách hiểu và diễn giải khác nhau từ các thể chế có liên quan. Những rào cản này, cùng với tính nhạy cảm chính

trị gắn liền với một số khái niệm, có thể đưa đến việc một số chính sách không thể được tán thành và thông qua trong thực tế, chẳng hạn như các chính sách về *empowerment*, *social accountability*, *civil society organisations*, hay là trong lĩnh vực *social protection*. Ngoài ra, một số thí dụ khác cũng cho thấy việc thực hiện chính sách có thể gặp cản trở và không hiệu quả về mặt chi phí, điển hình như trường hợp khái niệm và thuật ngữ *legal coverage* và *effective coverage* chưa được hiểu và dịch sang tiếng Việt một cách thống nhất. Trong một số trường hợp khác, điển hình như các thuật ngữ *domestic violence*, *empowerment* và *resilience*, việc thiếu sót trong diễn giải và dịch thuật ngữ có thể dẫn đến sự vắng mặt của các khái niệm này trong diễn ngôn chính trị và hoạch định chính sách ở địa phương, và rộng hơn, có thể đem lại các tác động khác về kết quả thực hiện dự án phát triển. Trên thực tế, cách thức hoạch định chính sách cho nhóm thiểu số và cộng đồng địa phương để đảm bảo rằng họ được hưởng lợi từ chính sách cũng bị ảnh hưởng từ việc lưu hành các khái niệm được du nhập từ bên ngoài và các thuật ngữ tiếng Việt dùng để diễn đạt chúng ở cấp địa phương.

APPENDIX G: Anonymised and member-checked interview transcripts

Anyone wishing to use the interview transcripts in this appendix or other data sets in this study should contact the researcher so that he can inquire of relevant participants about their ethical approval for further study.

Please contact the researcher at

nguyen.nguyen4@mail.dcu.ie

to make the necessary arrangements.

Thank you.

1 PHASE-ONE INTERVIEWS

2 (September – November 2020)

3 Interview with Participant 1 (P1-Ph1)

4 *Researcher: Could you please share your experience of terminology in your day-to-day*
5 *work?*

6 Participant: I find many terms difficult to translate into Vietnamese. Normally I just say the
7 term in English and I get used to it, then I don't translate it into Vietnamese. Actually among
8 the people I work with, within the same level as me, it is not much a problem because
9 everyone almost understands each other. But when it becomes a habit, for example I go to
10 the community and work with people in the field, or like recently I often make YouTube
11 videos, I'll keep saying the terms in English without translating. It has already become a
12 habit. I'd not think much about it myself but people'd comment that that was repugnant.
13 They'd commented that I was not maintaining the clarity of Vietnamese language. But in
14 fact, I say those in English because I couldn't find such Vietnamese words that have close-
15 enough meanings.

16 Now I see here in your Category 2, Examples of different translations of terminology, I'll
17 take "empowering women" in the area of gender development as an example of me not being
18 able to translate. "Trao quyền" is not the correct translation, and "trao quyền" itself has to
19 be explained again in Vietnamese, while "empower" is very clear in English. So I just let it
20 be used. With the English terms being used all the time, just yesterday, I was told by a friend
21 that she couldn't listen through my whole talk because I kept inserting my English words
22 which she couldn't understand. In fact, people may feel self-pity and frustrated and
23 disempowered when they don't fully understand what I mean by "empowerment". But then
24 if I'd use "trao quyền", I'd have to stop and explain again and again how it was the translation
25 of "empowerment" and how "trao quyền" might be implemented in one way or another, then
26 I'd lose my coherence. Quite problematic that way, when many translated terms can't convey
27 the exact meaning, including "development" itself.

28 *Do you know who first translated the terms, say in the area of gender development?*

29 I don't know who, but generally the translations are just passed on to one another. There is
30 no dictionaries for that specific language or even a term base for development workers in
31 Vietnam for us to correct ourselves. For example, when I translated a term wrongly at work,
32 the colleagues would provide a correct translation and help me clarify or understand it
33 myself.

34 So there is no specialised dictionary or term base. Say, I am studying psychology right now
35 and in this field, I don't know how to translate many terms into Vietnamese. Fortunately
36 there is this facilitator, a Vietnamese American, who sees the problems. As soon as he
37 returned to work in Vietnam, he became aware and assigned the class to build a dictionary
38 in the field to later make it available to future students or to disseminate the knowledge more
39 easily to the outside. That way we might claim the translation of terminology our own work.
40 In other fields I think that is what they do, but in development work it seems new or even
41 chaotic in Vietnam. I don't see people care about this. Mostly people translate themselves or
42 refer to the translations from some organisations then use them without any specialised
43 database for development terminology.

44 *Do you outsource to professional translators and interpreters for document translation or*
45 *work meetings?*

46 We translate ourselves. Our staff translates, DIY. Some projects may have a budget for
47 outsourcing, but mostly to professional translators who don't generally specialised in
48 development work. In some cases we translate ourselves then outsource the editing but our
49 organisation generally has foreign volunteers who are native speakers of English and they
50 help us with the editing tasks for Vietnamese – English translations. For English –
51 Vietnamese , that is DIY.

52 *Can I clarify? So these volunteers provide the knowledge in their work, then your staff*
53 *translates to facilitate the transfer of this knowledge to the community?*

54 Usually the knowledge we get is introduced, for sure. There are toolkits or for whatever
55 project you do, there is often a similar project in some countries. So we often have those
56 already in English. Then we translate the documents ourselves. Where there is a need for
57 translating into English the publications we develop in Vietnamese, the volunteers who are
58 native speakers will edit because they specialise in that area too. So we'd translate back and
59 forth based on experience without any specific guidance.

60 *Can we talk more of Category 2? Have you noticed a term with different translations?*

61 For sure, yes, gender development and gender equality for example. These are confusing, so
62 everyone doesn't know which one is which. So understanding and explaining these terms
63 are not thorough and consequently there is no distinction in the terms of work for these two
64 areas.

65 Or “advocacy”, which is often not translated. You'd say to people your work is in
66 “advocacy” and wouldn't bother to specify what you do. Then gender equity, gender
67 development... Well, in English, I see the difference. But in Vietnamese, they all are
68 translated as “phát triển giới” and people don't have a breakdown of what it is to develop, as
69 detailed as when we understand that term in English. Obviously we'd use the original term
70 in English correctly in a specific context, but in Vietnamese, we'd take a certain translation
71 and generalise it. Many times people do not distinguish between “gender equity”, “gender
72 development” and or women empowerment, and just like that, they use the Vietnamese
73 translation rashly while I see that these are clearly different concepts in English.

74 *When there is a must, what is the translation for “advocacy”?*

75 “Tác động chính sách” but this is loose in meaning. How to bring about the impact? Impact
76 at what levels? It is rather clear to say “advocacy” in English but in Vietnamese we'll need
77 to explain hugely afterwards.

78 *How often is this term used in the day-to-day work?*

79 Very often in the gender area. But I haven't noticed really in the Environment domain for a
80 long time. In the old days there were also translated terms with controversial meanings in
81 my office. The thing is hardly anyone, any professional translators or organisations who
82 really care to document these to develop a kind of internal database that could be as simple
83 as, “we really mean this when we use this term...”, but there isn't anything like that.
84 Everyone invents a new translation when they need to translate and nobody really cares.

85 It is also common after a while, new translations for the same concepts and terms come up
86 that we are not aware of, or when the organisation doesn't have a coherent policy from top
87 to bottom. For example, people will be introduced to the new knowledge when they
88 participate in training, but from then on there is no further oversight especially of those in
89 the field who pass on the knowledge at community development levels because they have
90 quite a unique and independent way compared to head-office people. Head-office people
91 would report in one way but field people would deliver differently and there is not much
92 mutual reflection. The common feeling is that problems of translation are complicated and
93 so maybe people try to avoid them. But now that I study psychological therapy, I look at this
94 issue very seriously. Like the field of development, there has been no methodical and formal
95 psychology education in Vietnam. For example, as I am now studying the American
96 curriculum, it is completely different from the programmes in Vietnam. My lecturer speaks
97 Vietnamese, so he looks at a translated term and says "that's not an accurate translation",
98 then immediately and clearly terminology translation becomes an issue and we become
99 aware that when the translation is wrong, it reduces the meaning. There are even extra cycles
100 of translation, for example, I translate this term from English into Vietnamese, then someone
101 else translates the Vietnamese back into English. That is like "hearing something through
102 the grapevine", "tam sao thất bản", as soon as the inaccurate meaning behind is passed on.
103 Well, it's true that I've only recently paid attention to this issue. Before it was careless the
104 way we used terminology, from copying other people, because there is no specific training
105 or guidance.

106 *Would this issue have some real impacts to your work?*

107 The impact, for example, is what I mentioned earlier about saying the term in English when
108 it is difficult to translate. This is quite common that development practitioners use original
109 terms in English when they speak to each other, then carry this habit into the field where
110 people are not familiar with. In fact, NGO and development people often bunch up in a group
111 and that is a friendly habit of speaking the same language. But if they go to the field and
112 want to broaden the impact, they'll see people's reactions. Those reactions show two things.
113 It shows that the potential impact of this NGO sector is very small because other people don't
114 understand what they are trying to say. Then NGO people have been in their "comfort zone"
115 for a long time, they use whatever is okay for their work. They don't see any problems so
116 they stay in their comfort zone and do not find a way to explain the knowledge more clearly
117 and specifically. So the impact are real but since we don't pay close attention, we don't notice
118 it.

119 *When you and your co-workers see a problematic term, how do you deal with it?*

120 We ignore it [*Laughter*]. We use the English. We do not translate into Vietnamese. Or, in
121 fact, in the field of development, we have not seen much harm because the population of
122 development people in Vietnam is not large. Or we translate ourselves. Say, in a project we
123 need to translate from English into Vietnamese when we work, then we the same people
124 need to write a report in English. So this is not much of hearsay because we intervene in the
125 whole process. But in a larger field such as psychology therapy, other people read our
126 documents, and then professional translators are hired, then it becomes "messy" the way we
127 deal with it.

128 But in development we never try. For example, at an international conference, I've never
129 tried using headphones to see how interpreters interpret [*Laughter*], so we wouldn't know if
130 the interpreting is correct. If the conference language is English, we listen to English but if

131 the language is Vietnamese then we use Vietnamese. But if we really try, we'll see the
132 problems.

133 *If you see a problematic translation in reports and at meetings or other training, would you*
134 *tell the translators?*

135 We argue all the time [*Laughter*]. For example, before in my organisation, they made a set
136 of documents that were translated from English into Vietnamese, and then they let a student
137 who returned after years of study abroad to edit and she ended up using the wrong
138 terminology. But that's because we rarely notice, right? If we notice, we will see many
139 mistakes.

140 But If the organisation has a certain policy, it will be easier. Since they didn't have a policy
141 here, so it's true that they didn't have a policy, but NGOs are... Actually I don't know what
142 it is like for INGOs, but local NGOs are usually small, so the bosses look at every inch of it,
143 everyone looks at each other, so there will be fewer mistakes. But if INGOs hire translators
144 from outside without a specialised tools to deal with translating their terminology, there will
145 be many problems.

146 *Can you tell me more about the structure of your current organisation, your NGO? For*
147 *example, you have international volunteers, local staff, then beneficiaries who are women,*
148 *etc. How does the system look like?*

149 We launch two programmes. We are a social enterprise to generate income. The first, {name
150 of organisation}, we recruit international volunteers to teach at English language centres and
151 nursery schools under our management or where we have shares. So we have managers of
152 those schools, staff, volunteers and students... as stakeholders. The second, "women
153 empowerment", we also have volunteers, psychology therapists and trainers to provide life
154 skills training, then also single moms and ethnic communities as beneficiaries. Trainers go
155 in between.

156 *Are these trainers your trained staff?*

157 We hire experts to train them.

158 *Do these experts or specialists develop their own training materials or they use materials*
159 *from somewhere else?*

160 We order them to produce the materials according to our requirements and guidance. They'll
161 get the knowledge from all different sources [*Laughter*]... their own, it's up to them where
162 they get the knowledge but they're ordered to produce what we need. In fact, the same goes
163 for other NGOs. There are experts in this field, in that field... If you work long enough, you
164 will become an expert. In the past, I provided training all over the country [*Laughter*]. I
165 gained knowledge, of course, from formal education and also from experience, and delivered
166 what I am ordered. And the training language is Vietnamese. I am now developing a
167 psychological counselling programme from an idea which started in 2017, then two years
168 for developing this curriculum in 2018 - 19, which is more than 2 years without success. The
169 problem is that in Vietnam, it is not possible to recruit Vietnamese therapists, because they
170 actually study Marxist-Leninist ideologies more than they study psychology. And they are
171 not able to provide the cure. Because I was a victim in the past, I went to a therapist and
172 ended up with more severe depression. That's why I don't trust therapists trained in Vietnam.

173 And those Vietnamese therapists who are trained overseas, their fees are very high. For
174 example, they might charge up to 150 USD/hour, I will not be able to cover the fees. Also
175 they have a lot of work to do and can not spend time with our programme. Only then do we
176 want to use foreigners. Foreigners are the opposite, in the West, that market is full and there's
177 not much work for them to do. And they really like coming over here. But the language
178 barriers, the cultural barriers... when knowledge is translated. I struggled for nearly 2 years,
179 and still couldn't build a programme. Generally hard work.

180 *How would you describe the way these experts and trainers use terminology?*

181 Generally people will try. It is very difficult for Vietnamese people, especially in academia,
182 to teach. It's often a bit funny that teaching adults, has to be fun. So most people try not to
183 use terms. For example, my area of expertise was previously in community tourism,
184 community-based tourism. If the translation is correct, it must be “phát triển du lịch dựa vào
185 cộng đồng”. Then a while after being introduced into Vietnam, it all changed. Now that I
186 think about it, I don't want to put my name next to the models I developed, because many
187 came in and they are not using the correct term anymore, they don't need to understand the
188 essence of it. They just think that community-based tourism means that the community, local
189 people or ethnic minorities do tourism, simple as that. As for all the essentials of an economic
190 model, they don't care. Of course, there are many reasons, such as the problem of translation,
191 people will not translate as "doing community-based tourism", but people will simply
192 translate as "community tourism", then that leads to the misunderstanding that traveling to
193 the community is called community tourism and community-based tourism, while it should
194 be a business based on the participation of the community and benefit them, and there must
195 be sharing among the people. The two expressions in English and in Vietnamese are very
196 different. The problems of distorted terminology when introduced into the local contexts are
197 many.

198 *I want to know also, have you seen a model that already exists in Vietnam but a similar*
199 *model is still introduced? I want to refer to the introduction of knowledge in the development*
200 *models you are promoting in your projects.*

201 You'll see examples of that in rural development. Usually it's “same same but different”,
202 and I see two completely different terms, but later on when delving deeper, I know that it is
203 "distorted". For example, the approach of “hội phụ nữ” is a kind of self-help groups about
204 community development. I will set up these self-help groups for women to help each other.
205 That's our model. But when I work with the State, a similar model with a different nature is
206 introduced where they will have government intervention. In general, the latter is not
207 intrinsically similar. There will be no self-help involved, no openly sharing involved, etc.,
208 just "showing off" for all to see that it's a group of women advancing together, but I don't
209 know where that'll advance [laughs], and I don't know what the helping should be about.
210 That kind of thing. But having such a group of women like that, they also take pictures and
211 make a name, they also have names and pictures, and members who join together, for
212 example for some activities. Those activities may be cooking, eating, karaoke, taking
213 pictures, then they go home. While for the self-help groups, its concept is very different.
214 Actually, it is not correct to blame it on using terms, but using the wrong term and not
215 translating the term properly have an impact. It can be said that it will greenwash the meaning
216 of that word. If you look deeply, it might be that.

217 *Do you have other stories to tell me?*

218 There was a project that I worked on before I founded the current organisation was {name
219 of organisation}, a programme to promote sustainable tourism development and tourism
220 with environmental and social responsibility. The term is very long, isn't it? After some time,
221 the older folks translated it as “Em Sẽ Rất Thích” [You’ll Love It], which stands for {name
222 of organisation}, for everyone to remember. Actually, at first, I found it offensive, but later
223 on I found it ok and I agreed. Besides, this is a way of development that I felt I needed to
224 give in because... At first I found it offensive, because this project required me to teach alone.
225 I'm an independent consultant and the curriculum was heavy, and I was a woman and a single
226 mom. So when I was introduced like that, my shadow, I felt an inferiority complex, I felt
227 like people were trying to talk about me or something... so at first I found it offensive. Then
228 I said to myself that I had nothing to feel offensive about, I can fit in with everyone, and I'm
229 ok with that term. But it is true that now looking back on the long-term benefit, using a
230 simple, lay term for people to remember a very long term phrase may take away the
231 impression of the impact or the significance of those projects.

232 *Any examples of the opposite? Were there times when using lay terms might bring about...*

233 People will remember for a long time, yes, but people will remember that person, that
234 organisation. Yes, actually it could be opposite. For example, people often call {name of
235 organisation} “Mai Chị Đến, Một Chị Đi” [The Sister Comes Tomorrow and Leaves The
236 Day After] [*Laughter*]. Then people will remember that it's an organisation of a lot of
237 women, and people come and go. In fact, the opposite is also true, say {name of
238 organisation}, a few weeks ago there was a friend who texted me on Zalo, asking “Did you
239 work for the Em Sẽ Rất Thích project?” [*Laughter*]. At first I couldn't recall what it was but
240 the person was serious, and I couldn't recall who that was either, but okay, I pretended I
241 remembered [*Laughter*]. But because the project was big, I couldn't remember everyone.
242 It's true that it makes people remember, and thanks to that term, people remember me, and
243 people understand the concept. Actually, people take one step further to associate, for
244 example “Mai Chị Đến, Một Chị Đi” with those women who work at {name of organisation}
245 in the area of marine conservation, and they come and go... One way to make people
246 remember. That's interesting.

247 But when it comes to a specific term, such as “community-based tourism” which is often
248 translated as “du lịch cộng đồng”, then in the community-based tourism model, the most
249 prominent product is the “homestay”, which is just a product of the community-based
250 tourism model, a type of business in this model. But then by gradually shortening it, now the
251 point of view is that “homestay” means community-based tourism. So there was this time
252 when I was sarcastic on Facebook that, this year my family is running a community-based
253 tourism model around the West Lake area in Hanoi, and I report how many rooms the
254 apartment has, what the target is, the quality, and what contribution I have made to the
255 society, etc. In short, ironic. Obviously a homestay cannot be a community model. But there
256 are certain people, even university professors, who have ignored the concept and accepted
257 that, as long as a homestay has brought input for people, it is called community tourism. I'm
258 a pretty rigid person in terms of principles, so I feel like that completely distorts a concept,
259 and it's quite dangerous. There are many concepts that have been distorted like that in
260 Vietnam.

261 *In your opinions, would there be terms that shouldn't be used in development work? Say, in*
262 *documents or at meetings.*

263 In the gender area, quite a few problematic ones but I just don't remember any right now...

264 *Problematic meaning they shouldn't be used?*

265 Not really. Their translations just don't convey the full meaning, and not to the level that
266 they shouldn't be used.

267 *Would some really problematic ones be at that level?*

268 Most of the time, we translate from English into Vietnamese and don't invent any new
269 concept. So it's not common to translate from Vietnamese into English. Those examples of
270 {name of organisation} and {name of organisation} are just for fun and will not be
271 documented in any way.

272 *Well, that might be a good example...*

273 Yes, an example. {Name of organisation} is quite a huge international term but translated
274 like that. In that project, many translations were not indecent but it's been a long time.
275 Everything was indecent.

276 No one was serious. I think people tried to maintain an easy-going attitude, even as if they
277 were not serious about the fact that they were getting grants and spending money. Actually
278 when I spend donors' money, I take it very seriously. When I set up my business and earn
279 and spend, it is easy-going... But I spend grant money very seriously. But everyone there
280 was not the funding managers, not negotiators, but just the executors. People might think,
281 oh, that is the money the Western donors give us and we spend, without seeing the
282 responsibilities to bring about certain benefit or certain spirit to the community. No one pays
283 attention to that.

284 *As for donors, when they give, they'd ask that their concepts, their operating principles, be
285 applied. Do you think the application of these concepts and principles can be fully
286 implemented in the Vietnamese contexts?*

287 Many times donors wouldn't care. They are in the development sector and they put
288 themselves in the position of developers, and they are going to enlighten others. As a
289 progressive class who raise awareness of others, they wouldn't care whether these concepts
290 and principles are suitable for Vietnam or not. Most NGO people in Vietnam run their NGOs
291 like a business, that is, as long as they have a fund. Many NGOs that completely change their
292 visions, missions, areas of work, etc... and do not share a core value or principle at all, and
293 they change according to the funding they receive. So it's quite tricky. For example, my
294 organisation supports women and in the last 4-5 years, the biggest fund-raising movement
295 in the gender area is LGBT. Obviously after that, donors will fund programmes to raise
296 awareness, change the culture and say that because Vietnamese culture is old-fashioned or
297 something like that, that movement has not gained support. In fact, they did not consider
298 cultural issues. For example, for me in recent years, I am a Protestant, I will refuse to receive
299 those funds. Well, when I deny, it means it's not my value, I just refuse to accept it, but I'm
300 not a person with ambitions to make a lot of money from those activities, nor do I wish to
301 become a celebrity in the fields of gender. I simply love to do what I do. In fact, I make
302 money from the business area and I want to become a business person, so I wouldn't pay a
303 lot of attention to the funding part. But for NGOs, almost everyone have to follow, and I
304 think people don't consider much about how it will affect their culture. For example, look
305 into the area of cultural preservation, there is no such thing as a strong representative NGO
306 in that field. Mainly if talking about cultural preservation, people refer to the preservation of

307 chèo, tuồng, or costumes, something rather tangible and not spiritual of that country, of the
308 people...

309 *Even whatever not concrete and tangible has to be concretised...*

310 Correct. People also concretised it into something, and they pack it into a package, and not...
311 For example, talking about something more ambiguous, say, the spirit of the Vietnamese
312 people - in the position of a grant recipient, people rarely dare to question back to the donor.
313 In general, if two sides feel they fit each other, they'll work together. If not, they won't.

314 *And not feeling dominated?*

315 Yes. So for example, in my organisation, there are times when... because we have many
316 international volunteers because our reputation is quite good, and Westerners often share
317 and recommend. Unlike Vietnamese people who less share opportunities and information.
318 Also Westerners empower each other more. These are very young people who come to
319 volunteer but actually enjoy even more as tourists. But when they go home and continue to
320 develop their careers in that field, their voices will become very important. When they
321 recommend someone else to me, I also benefit a lot from the donors. But talking to each
322 other, I also explain that, I have no issues about about donors, but personally, I don't support
323 it, so if you ask me to say this and that, I can't. After that, they don't contact again. Generally
324 when seeing it doesn't fit, they will stop without making any effort, attempt or adapting to
325 our culture or our beliefs.

326 *Are you talking about negotiation?*

327 Yes, but in this case the both sides don't negotiate [*Laughter*].

328 *May I ask, do you think there would be terms that cannot be translated from English into*
329 *Vietnamese?*

330 Actually we still translate. For example, "empowerment" or "advocacy", people still
331 translate. It's just that people are not satisfied with the translations but they still translate as
332 "trao quyền" or "tác động chính sách". So we have the Vietnamese versions but they're not
333 quite satisfying.

334 *Tough one?*

335 LGBT may be one.

336 *Maybe difficult to translate because it is an acronym, or because you can explain...*

337 Correct.

338 *So "power" as in "empowerment", how have you understand "power" in this example in*
339 *development work?*

340 Quyền năng [*Laughter*].

341 It's not actually "quyền năng". "Quyền năng" sounds grandiose. Or "empower" as "trao
342 quyền" sounds quite... but that is how people still understand that way and use the term in
343 Vietnamese.

344 *Talking about “quyền” in this example, is that mistaken with “right”?*

345 That is why it’s common to confuse “women rights” with “empowering”.

346 *How do you understand the role of translation and terminology in development work?*

347 Quite an important role. Someone working in both environments will see the issues, for
348 example, with not using correct and standard terminology, with proper guidance, plus the
349 easy-going attitude of the Vietnamese co-workers that may lead to completely different
350 understanding of concepts, then we will see that it has great impacts on the effectiveness of
351 development work.

352 *Next, how do you describe the policy of translation and language in the development project*
353 *you are participating or in your organisation?*

354 I haven’t seen a project that has a language policy. People almost overlook this one. Even
355 the {Name of organisation} which was a very large project, no one checked. They did have
356 a table to actually list all abbreviations and not terminology. That is, this abbreviation should
357 be used this way. There was not a glossary, a lexicon of terms, or a guidance on the use of
358 English and Vietnamese terms. None. They expect, for example, that I am an expert in that
359 field, that I have to come up with and correct my use of terms, phrases, or definitions, and
360 so on.

361 Those reports, you must be an expert in that field to understand terminology and have
362 appropriate interpretations. That is what is happening now. There is no specific guidance
363 yet.

364 It is true that studying and going deeply into it, we see some good things. In Vietnam, it is
365 often said that the theory is grey, but the tree of life is forever green, so Vietnamese people
366 just jump into practice, but rarely obey the rules and regulations. Then the theory must be
367 very clear, very standard, so that the practice is as standard as the theory. People correct
368 mistakes when they make mistakes, they fail and they redo, etc. No such interesting studies.
369 Later, you could make a library, a dictionary of development terminology for development
370 workers.

371 *Ah first, I’ll have to understand the problems. Recently I used a tool in translation, to extract*
372 *some development terms from English – Vietnamese texts and I gained some really*
373 *interesting evidence of terms with different translations. For example in English, we have*
374 *resilience, or wellbeing...*

375 Uh, we can’t translate “wellbeing”. That’s right. We don’t know how to translate that.

376 *But you see, they’re in the SDGs and MDGs.*

377 Everyone’s wellbeing... Right, wellbeing is mostly not translated, and we just use the
378 original term.

379 *And in psychology we have “wellbeing”.*

380 Correct, also a concept in psychology. In the field of marketing, people translate it as “thịnh
381 vượng” [prosperity], which is not very accurate, because it makes people associate with
382 material wealth, while “wellbeing” covers both material and spiritual aspects.

383 *In the SDGs, it seems to associate more directly with physical...*

384 Yes, as good health and wellbeing...

385 I said earlier that these past few years, I am trying to build a programme on psychological
386 support to empowering women, but in terms of people's mindsets. It's too difficult to use
387 international volunteers. But using Vietnamese people, in fact, few people who study up to
388 the doctorate level in the field of psychology therapy in Vietnam, only about ten or so people,
389 and they are all very successful and very capable people. They work in real clinics and not
390 at community levels. I also needed it myself, so I went to study psychology.

391 That is, in my study group, the brothers and sisters discussed some terms and how to translate
392 them. And everyone has the ambition to come up with a lexicon of psychological terms. That
393 is quite a special group because there are psychiatrists who prescribe drugs, and they want
394 to learn more about psychology so that they can combine the two. There are also university
395 instructors who teach psychology, but they had their formal education in Vietnam and had
396 no experience with how psychology is studied overseas, so they also enrolled. So everyone
397 has ambition. And we attempt first to come up with some forms of dictionaries or academic
398 materials about terms.

399 *Do you have your own translation for "wellbeing"?*

400 I even don't know how to translate. Common to just use the original. Ah, one example,
401 "trauma" in psychology. Currently in Vietnam it is being translated as "sang chấn", "sang
402 chấn tâm lý", but clearly the standard and suitable translation must be "chấn thương tâm lý".
403 "Sang chấn" is not clear and does not make people understand... like it's a lot lighter than
404 "chấn thương tâm lý". Recently, when I used "chấn thương tâm lý", everyone would argue
405 [Laughter]. Someone said "she doesn't know English".

406 *Argued already?*

407 There are those, including some psychiatrists, who say, "she doesn't seem to know English
408 so she translates "trauma" as "chấn thương"". Another word, "mental health", the standard
409 translation should be "sức khỏe tâm thần". But when Vietnamese people say "sức khỏe tâm
410 thần", people are terrified because it is too strong. So people translate it as "sức khỏe tinh
411 thần", which is not correct. We must use the correct term, "sức khỏe tâm thần", but when I
412 say it, people'd ask me why.

413 *That is, because of their feelings, they say the term is too strong?*

414 Correct. They still know the right term is "sức khỏe tâm thần" but it's too burdensome to use
415 it. Or they also find "chấn thương tâm lý" too strong, because their stigma in the
416 psychological field is too heavy, then it is reduced as "sang chấn tâm lý" which sounds very
417 nice but actually not correct in the aspect of Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary. The meaning is
418 incorrect that way. Just one example, but in general in the field of psychology there are
419 many.

420 *You can share these with me when you remember. But do you think, say "sức khỏe tâm thần",
421 if this term is used in a long enough time and by enough people, would it be more accepted?*

422 I do. For example, now, in the field of psychology, the stigma is very large. Ah, I don't know
423 how to translate "stigma" into Vietnamese [Laughter]. Discrimination? So people use

424 “stigma” and not a Vietnamese version. The stigma is huge, so for example, there are
425 beneficiaries in my programme, a group of single moms, most of them are traumatised
426 because of divorce, abandonment or being beaten, domestic violence, etc., everyone suffers
427 from this trauma. But if you advise them to see a therapist, they will not. For example, now
428 that the programme we are launching, that’s free to join. Then because I am studying
429 psychology therapy, and if I have the conditions, I wish to study to become a doctor. In
430 addition, there are short courses, there are other therapists who mentor for us because they
431 see how many years we have tried to build the programme has not been in shape, so they
432 really want to mentor so that I can become a person who can do the job. That's why we
433 launched a free psychological counselling programme for single moms, because in the
434 group, we always see people complaining, and I see the way people talk, I know that they
435 are traumatised, so their worldview is distorted. And I've been through it, so I understand
436 very well why they're like this. But when I suggested that there was a group of therapists
437 like this here, and you could learn about this... for free, they didn't join. Because they're
438 afraid that outsiders may know they're in this, they're seeing a therapist, which means they're
439 psychotic, they're crazy. That's why I recently started a YouTube channel, a blog, and I use
440 more simple images to make it easier for everyone to deal with these problems. But it will
441 probably take a few more years for the Vietnamese to look at it comfortably and accept that
442 it is “sức khỏe tâm thần”, and it is a matter of the mind, a problem that affects their lives,
443 and so on... it will take a few years to open up like the West.

444 *Thanks to interviews like this, I now know that there are many NGOs in Vietnam, at first just*
445 *a hypothesis, many projects as well as NGOs do not have policies on terminology and*
446 *translation.*

447 No, they don’t. Pretty much from one worker to another.

448 *Based on the existing bilingual human resource?*

449 Right. So NGOs now only recruit those who speak a foreign language. There was a time
450 when it made the profession look very "luxurious", because you got to work with Western
451 people, you knew foreign languages, and that created a kind of "power illusion" for a large
452 number of development workers. Also, such a field is called the "development field", so
453 people thought it's something great, something that could change your thinking...

454 *Are there particular topics of relevance in relation to translation and terminology in*
455 *development work that you feel we should talk about?*

456 At first people will query, why research this? But when it comes to details, they will find it
457 very interesting and important. If you can continue to build a set of terms, or at least make
458 recommendations for organisations to take a closer look at the policy of translation and using
459 terms, that would be great.

460 *I will try my best.*

461 Interview with Participant 2 (P2-Ph1)

462 *In what provinces do your organisation operate?*

463 Just the main locations. {Name of provinces}... and another project we don’t directly
464 implement in the Mekong Delta.

465 *What are the main areas of development?*

466 Mainly we work on livelihood development. The main activities are livelihood development,
467 climate change, governance - that is, social accountability, or social monitoring. But
468 recently, more focus has been placed on livelihood development and this is considered
469 central to protect, promote and integrate climate change and social monitoring into
470 livelihood development.

471 *How is the human resource?*

472 Staff of 10 in our Hanoi office, more or less.

473 *Most of these are bilingual?*

474 100% can speak English and Vietnamese.

475 *Do you have a full-time translator position?*

476 No. Just a concurrent responsibility. It's like you do it if that's related to your assignment.
477 There is no such position.

478 *I see. So the 10 staffers, excluding the management level of course, are all assigned when
479 needed to translate such as at meetings or document translation, or go to the locality to work
480 with the community?*

481 We all can translate. But if senior staff, such as managers, do not translate, they will let the
482 programme assistants, project assistants, communication officers or even interns to come
483 along to support and translate.

484 *Have any of these officers had previous experience in full-time translator or interpreter
485 positions?*

486 No. I'm not 100% sure either, but I think not as professional interpreters or translators in the
487 area of development work. Perhaps they translated documents or worked as tour-guides for
488 foreigners for example when they studied at university, not as professional translators and
489 in the field of development.

490 *How about you?*

491 Not my case either.

492 *But when you work, at the project office in Hanoi, in the field, or for documents, documents,
493 emails... you do translate?*

494 Very frequently. Well, when I was an intern, the first programme, the first activity was to
495 translate for international consultants in a {redacted} programme.

496 *Could you please share with me your experience of terminology in your day-to-day work?*

497 Actually, the amount of terminology in development work is huge. Development is
498 multidisciplinary, and in each discipline, the deeper you go, the more terms there are. Even
499 if I say I work in development, I only know the specific things I do. If I expand to learn about

500 other fields, I have to relearn the languages of those fields. I'd not say in development I know
501 all the different terms being used. There are terms, like, I just heard for the first time, but
502 just hearing the word, I wouldn't understand the meaning.

503 *So true.*

504 Yes, so it creates the difficulty that even in my area, there are familiar terms I use every day.
505 But when I talk to different people, I have to find a way to explain it so that they can
506 understand, because sometimes I am used to using that term to talk to local people, but they
507 don't understand anything. Or if I speak to the government people, they can understand it in
508 a different way.

509 So what I mean is that once I'm familiar with an area, I know the terminology in that area.
510 But those who are outside my "bubble", I can't assume that everyone knows.

511 *Could you please share with me a story of different/problematic translations of terminology*
512 *in a development project?*

513 Just recently there is the term "core poverty", which is translated as "nghèo lõi" in my
514 organisation but I am not sure. The term is in our strategy documents. It's basically "nghèo
515 lõi" or "nghèo" in a way.

516 Going to the field, the phrase "sustainable development" sounds very vague. It sounds very
517 good, but I worked with the community and talked about this, it was not specific about
518 anything. And there is also "inclusive development". Then difficult to translate? For example
519 "empowerment". I see in Vietnam at least there are 2 different translations. Some translate
520 it as "trao quyền", some translate as "tạo quyền". These two imply different meanings.

521 *I agree.*

522 In the organisation, some have disagreed with "tạo quyền" but my boss really likes this
523 translation, "tạo quyền".

524 *Do you know how "tạo quyền" as the translation for "empowerment" come into existence?*

525 I don't. Just that I translated "empowerment" as "trao quyền", then my boss crossed it out
526 and asked me to replace it with "tạo quyền", although I disagreed.

527 *In the projects you work with, do you have your own translations for development terms?*

528 Yes. Social accountability. Many organisations including the UN and UNICEF translate that
529 as "trách nhiệm giải trình". My organisation translates as "giám sát xã hội". This was totally
530 my boss' translation.

531 *Interesting. Do you have more examples of this? Does your boss translate more terms?*

532 I find it common that development organisations have their own translations for terminology.
533 For example, if we stumble across a term, after learning about it until we get bored but still
534 not sure, we'll have to translate it ourselves. Like when I translate the organisation's Vision
535 and Mission, "break the circle of poverty", breaking the stereotypes... through change-
536 makers for example. I see many translate "change-makers" as "người thúc đẩy" [motivator]
537 or "người tạo ra sự thay đổi". We also translate as "người tạo ra sự thay đổi" although many

538 other organisations translate as “người tiên phong” [pioneer] or “người thúc đẩy”
539 [motivator]. This is an example of a term having many different translations. Sometimes we
540 just go through how those terms are translated differently by others, but in my organisation,
541 we may have some personal preference, so we’d suggest a different one because we don’t
542 think those translations are good.

543 *Are there some tools your organisation develop to help with terminology?*

544 We agree on the terms among ourselves only.

545 *The terms you mentioned, social accountability, change-makers, core poverty or*
546 *empowerment... how often do they come up in your projects?*

547 Very frequently, can be everyday, because they are all specialised terms in the fields we are
548 working on, then they’ll have to go into proposals to submit to donors. When I explain my
549 project to the stakeholders, because it’s project terminology, I’ll need to say them. In practice
550 in the field, we say those words and write those words in reports... in general, the whole
551 project circle, they’re used all the time. Even related to the communication activities, that is
552 how the project is communicated to the outside.

553 *Those are communication activities when you develop publications or through training*
554 *activities?*

555 If communication is part of the project then it is communication through training. But this is
556 communication about your organisation to the public or to the network of development
557 organisations, maybe through social networks, Facebook, the organisation’s website, through
558 case stories, sometimes via interviews or the sharing of articles to the media or other parties
559 to publish. As for events, communication may also be networking, conferences about
560 development work, usually with organisations in Hanoi when we tell them what we do.

561 *Are the original published documents in Vietnamese or English?*

562 It depends on who the audience will be. If the audience are our Vietnamese stakeholders, the
563 texts will be in Vietnamese. To address some donors overseas, the source language is
564 English. That is the general matter of who the listeners and readers are.

565 *Do you develop bilingual training materials and publications too?*

566 Oh yes.

567 *Then who translate these?*

568 Not specifically who. When I was a programme assistant, I’d probably ask my interns to
569 translate first and then I would edit then ask the communication officer or the boss to review
570 and finalise it. That’s many layers of translation.

571 *Does that imply a protocol?*

572 There isn’t a written-down protocol although the same process would be followed in that
573 order. The job goes to someone, that person will think of a way to get it done. It is not
574 necessarily a protocol because it depends on how the person assigned with the job
575 implements it. The last person to finalise will be the boss, the director.

576 *Do I compare the language you use with those of other projects or the common language,*
577 *or with external publications?*

578 Yes. But I think this depends. When I find a term difficult to translate, I read to see how
579 others translate it then I may copy that.

580 Could you please share with me a story of different/problematic translations of terminology
581 in development work? And in what ways did you know the translations are problematic?

582 Let's go back to "trao quyền" and "tạo quyền", yes? I think I remember my lessons learnt,
583 because it concerns the issue of where "quyền" comes from and how to that can be changed.
584 If we assume here, "trao quyền" means that "quyền" is unchanged, that is, we simply take
585 from one person to give to another. A person will have to reduce their "quyền" and another
586 will increase theirs, and so-called "trao quyền". In short, that way "quyền" is not created
587 naturally and also not perishes, but it is rather transferred from one to another, it is "trao
588 "quyền". And it changes the so-called norm of that community. What is norm? Prejudices
589 or conventions of the community or of a family, or the institution, for example. And it will
590 involves also the fighting for it, because our taking from one to give to another might relate
591 to fighting. While "tạo quyền" implies something is generative, and a person doesn't need to
592 lose anything, and simply as that person who lacks. Let's assume also that a person is
593 lacking, then all of a sudden there is more "quyền" given to him or her, or by him or her
594 generates that for himself or herself. Roughly like that. Since I'm more inclined towards the
595 former, I'll translate it as "trao quyền. But when people use "tạo quyền", I think they are
596 not considering what I've been through, say some formal training or discussions about that
597 terminology to have that kind of thinking. Where someone just needs to consider between
598 "trao quyền" and "tạo quyền" just because "tạo quyền" sounds nicer or implies more actions,
599 they'll go with "tạo quyền". But to me it's not correct.

600 *Can you speak a bit more why you think "tạo quyền" is a problematic translation?*

601 As I said, it is related to an imbalance - the imbalance of "quyền" of different individuals in
602 an entity, a society, a community or a family. Among these individuals there is an imbalance
603 of "quyền lực", with some having a lot of "quyền" and forcing it on someone with less
604 "quyền" or less voice. Well, "trao quyền" here is about the action to challenge that norm, to
605 challenge what it is to make sure that those with more "quyền" understand that their balance
606 of "quyền" might be inadequate, and they must listen to voices or those who are
607 disadvantaged or more vulnerable. The weak must understand that they also have the
608 "quyền" to speak up, and they also have the "quyền" to intervene. This way the act of "trao
609 quyền" means that the disadvantaged must feel, first, that they must understand their rights,
610 and they understand how to claim or express that right. It implies a process to rebalance the
611 balance of "quyền" and not that the person with a lot of "quyền" can maintain the same
612 "quyền" and the person who lacks will gain more "quyền". It doesn't seem quite right. Where
613 do you get the "quyền" to give to the other person? If not from people with more "quyền" to
614 share to those with less.

615 *You're standing in the perspective of sharing and not creating new. I want to know more*
616 *because this is so interesting. You just used the "quyền lực", power. Have you ever thought*
617 *that "power" might have different translations? "Quyền lợi"? "Quyền lực"? Or "quyền",*
618 *like "rights"?*

619 I think power as “quyền lực” and rights can be synonymous. As for “quyền lợi”, it's actually
620 two words that go together, but to say that they are equated with each other, it doesn't seem
621 right to me. But to me power as “quyền lực” and rights can be equated in some cases.

622 *Are you aware of discussions on how “power” is translated?*

623 Not really. Actually now, discussing discourse is quite trendy. There is this scholar at the
624 {name of organisation} who is very well-known for her discussions on discourse in
625 development. I also went to listen, and felt it was very technical and also found it difficult to
626 understand. She is very popular and there are many programmes for students to discuss
627 general discourse, not the discourse in development but discourse in general. The word
628 “discourse” itself feels a bit ambiguous already [*Laughter*]. I mean, there are discussions
629 somewhere, but I haven't had access to them, or it's just not widespread, not that there are no
630 discussions.

631 *Your explanation on “empowerment” to me is extremely interesting but I want to know more*
632 *about the specific situation... For example, when people say “tạo quyền”, how do you react?*
633 *How did it happen when you realised people also said “tạo quyền” which was different from*
634 *“trao quyền”, your preferred translation for “empowerment”?*

635 That's when we wrote a project, and the call was related, let's say “trao quyền”, to women
636 empowerment. Actually, we didn't do anything about women empowerment. But in essence,
637 interventions we delivered was also much in the direction of women empowerment. So when
638 I had to translate - when I wrote in English, there was no problem - but when they asked the
639 project proposal be sent out in Vietnamese, I translated it into Vietnamese, I translated it as
640 “trao quyền” myself. Then the boss read it and asked to change it to “tạo quyền”. Sounding
641 better and the boss preferred “tạo quyền”. In the end “tạo quyền” was used but I just felt that
642 wasn't right and I complained in the group.

643 *Let me clarify, when your boss suggested “tạo quyền”, was it him who came up with this*
644 *translation after knowing about “trao quyền”, or did he see “tạo quyền” from other projects*
645 *and want to adopt this alternative translation?*

646 I actually think he finds that it sounds better. I think he is aware of both translations because
647 actually in other organisations' documents, “trao quyền” is used very often, although
648 several translate as “tạo quyền”. To me, it was more of his preference, but as boss, he was
649 definitely exposed to the both translations, “trao quyền” and “tạo quyền” and he just
650 preferred the latter. Maybe he has a different interpretation from mine, like “tạo quyền” is
651 more meaningful in a way that we come in and create more “quyền” for them and help them.
652 Just my own interpretation of how the boss may perceive but I am not sure. But I think it has
653 a sense of being more proactive.

654 *From then on, “tạo quyền” as the translation for “empowerment” comes up a lot in your*
655 *organisation?*

656 That particular project.

657 *For how long now?*

658 Since about the beginning of 2019.

659 *Have any other projects adopted this translation?*

660 No, only our project. As a new area, no issues raised.

661 *Then your project stakeholders adopted “tạo quyền”? Did it come into reports to the donor*
662 *and work with beneficiaries?*

663 That's right. The government and other local stakeholders too, because this project is part of
664 a so-called large women empowerment project, of which ours is a component. In addition,
665 there are other actors involved in the implementation of other parts, including a network of
666 organisations working together on different components of the large project. Yes, there is
667 that network, and that network will occasionally organise communication and promotion
668 activities. Maybe because I translated these into Vietnamese and it's part of our publication,
669 maybe the press or those interested in attending project events will also read it.

670 *There, I wanted to know more of the reach of that translation in that network.*

671 Yes.

672 *Do your co-workers ever discuss terminology? In informal and formal meetings, have you*
673 *ever analyse a concept or a term, or discuss how it should be translated?*

674 I think no one is 100% sure that they know all the words or are able to find the right
675 words when they translate. So at work, sometimes you need to seek help about terminology
676 translation. It's common, that kind of sharing.

677 *Do you think discussing translation has become a practice in your organisation?*

678 Asking each other how to translate a term is a practice, but if understood in the sense of
679 asking and discussing with each other about the translation process is not. We'd only ask
680 "what does this translate to?". As for why translate like that... between the two translations,
681 which is more meaningful... we don't discuss those.

682 *Is there a term being used in your project, at first it was not found in documents and at*
683 *meetings, but after a while it emerges and because of work progress, there is a need to*
684 *introduce new concepts and you'll need to find a way to translate the term?*

685 You mean a certain term that was not circulated within my organisation but became popular
686 over time and used more often?

687 Yes.

688 When we venture into a new field, that's what happens. For example, “social accountability”
689 as I told you, the translated term was created by our organisation. I think our organisation
690 was the first to come up with “giám sát xã hội” as the translation for that. The concept was
691 first introduced into Vietnam was UNICEF, and they translated it as “trách nhiệm giải trình”,
692 and then the World Bank also integrate that concept in to a bunch of guideline documents but
693 no one translated it as “giám sát xã hội”. But that is a problematic term when being translated
694 as “trách nhiệm giải trình” or “giám sát” or something else, because I know that it creates
695 problems when I work with local stakeholders especially the local government. Local people
696 will feel apprehensive. Translating as “giám sát”, “đánh giá”, “thanh tra” sounds... The
697 terminology of social accountability can easily make local governments uncomfortable
698 about our interventions, and they are afraid that we come in to “find worms in the leaves”

699 and try to uncover their mistakes. Just by listening to the language, they feel reluctant to
700 support.

701 *Now let's talk more about vernacular knowledge versus introduced knowledge. Here for*
702 *example, you and I probably agree that in the development sector, we see a lot of core values*
703 *or principles of organisations or donors from the outside that are introduced into a country*
704 *or local and community contexts. This way the support goes in line with the integration of*
705 *these values and principles into the implementation of development. That's what I mean by*
706 *introduced knowledge. But in local contexts, they may have their own ways... Do you think,*
707 *if social accountability was not introduced into local contexts, would they already have their*
708 *own similar norms or principles?*

709 Well, we're a development organisation and go to the field to do livelihood development...
710 again, "what plants to grow, what livestock to raise", what vocations to develop, we are
711 warmly welcomed. Because we do that without harm, bring in no harm and only do the good
712 for the people, and we bring in resources from outside to contribute to the locality, they are
713 very open and very willing to have projects like these, so there was no problem at all when
714 we propose that way to the locals. But if we say that we come in to "giám sát" [monitor] and
715 more, to "giám sát xã hội" [the society monitors]... sometimes I think because of the old
716 point of view, when that practice was not popular, it sounds very "counter-revolutionary".
717 Because people, especially the government, will not understand what the role and the
718 mandate will be, who has the authority to give permission and based on what... What they
719 are most afraid of is us trying to "find worms in the leaves" and point out their mistakes.
720 And as an international organisation, we might bring those mistakes to the world abroad.
721 Usually they will be most afraid of such things.

722 *Do you think if a "softer" interpretation or translation of the term would be more acceptable*
723 *at the local level?*

724 Yes. Actually "trách nhiệm giải trình" becoming "giám sát xã hội" is already an attempt to
725 soften it, because why use "giám sát xã hội"? Then there are two meanings. Firstly, we agree
726 with the fact that it is for the society to monitor, it is the responsibility of the society to
727 oversee policy-related matters, state duties, that's how we understand among us. But second,
728 because the phrase "giám sát xã hội" has been the mandate of the Fatherland Front. It is the
729 function of the Fatherland Front already recognised in legislative documents using those
730 phrases, and the Fatherland Front is currently the only party in Vietnam that has been
731 recognised in writing as having the function of "giám sát xã hội".

732 *So it is already the responsibility of the Fatherland Front as defined formally as a mandate*
733 *and not an introduced practice...*

734 True, but maybe their understanding is different. "Giám sát xã hội" undertaken by the
735 Fatherland Front is that the Fatherland Front is the party that practices and performs the task
736 of "giám sát xã hội" on behalf of the people, to oversee public authorities. But here we want
737 to use those terms and at the same time influence their way of doing things so that the
738 Fatherland Front may use our tools to facilitate so that it's really the people who monitor,
739 and their voice is raised through the Fatherland Front. Then it's much different. For example,
740 the Fatherland Front will sometimes have delegations to conduct thematic monitoring or
741 supervise this and that policy... they still do it, but here we want to educate, we use their
742 expressions, and hold on to their functions to make them feel familiar and feel that there is
743 nothing wrong with the law. So we want to educate so that the stakeholders understand that

744 the input of that monitoring comes from the people themselves. Implementation by the
745 people rather than by a representative party of the people.

746 *When your project team discussed social accountability, how did the local stakeholders react*
747 *if they found it was not relevant?*

748 I have not seen directly objection because of the relevance. But it also depends on the region.
749 There are areas like, when we work in the North, or in {redacted}, especially in {redacted},
750 where people favour such activities and to speak up and confront the government very
751 strongly. But there are areas like Soc Trang, for example, where our management board is
752 based, and the management staff are working in the government at the same time, so he
753 strongly didn't not support this activity. He was very reluctant and always had to consult his
754 superiors. Over there It's generally difficult to implement these monitoring activities.
755 Because the head of the management team on my side is quite shy, and when we need him,
756 he always seeks permission from his superiors.

757 But these work items can be quite sensitive, and when we work, we always have to stand in
758 front of local authorities and government to explain specifically what that word means, say
759 what are our objectives and approach, for them to understand. If it is me, I'll say that we
760 don't intend to "find worms in leaves" and just want to cooperate with the government,
761 because the government also has similar support activities, so now it's good to jointly make
762 those activities more effective, make it known to people so they can be supportive, and the
763 task can be substantive. We just want to include people's perspective so that the government
764 can also research or consider it as a kind of support input for their implementation. We will
765 say so. We never said, "here, this is wrong, this isn't right". It is as simple as bringing in the
766 people's opinions where the government also sees relevant so they can mutually agree. We
767 all have to explain in detail like that.

768 *A broker and negotiator you are there, not trying to impose on the stakeholders...*

769 Correct. Much explanation and we avoid stirring up and generally do what they see
770 necessary, and they feel it's right. For example, if we say that the Fatherland Front has
771 thematic monitoring, we will also relate to the themes they do.

772 *May I ask, when you go to the field, the person who directly communicates with local*
773 *stakeholders is a Vietnamese or an international colleague, and whether translation is*
774 *needed because sometimes the international colleague might be the speaker of the*
775 *organisation?*

776 Have. There was a phase earlier when there was an Australian volunteer who came to support
777 my organisations. She was in charge of this social accountability. She worked in that area so
778 she might have found it challenging, and we'd have someone translate for her.

779 *And you were the Vietnamese development practitioner who discussed and introduced the*
780 *practice of social accountability and empowerment... directly with the locality, between*
781 *Vietnamese people, right?*

782 Yes.

783 *Did you get reactions relating to the translation and content of those concepts and not*
784 *objections in terms of using the language?*

785 No, because I already foresaw those.

786 *Foresaw how?*

787 As I said, translating “social accountability”, I feel the translation of UNICEF or World
788 Bank is confusing and its usage entails the locals becoming apprehensive.

789 *So I want to ask, in your office, before fieldwork, do colleagues discuss with each other and
790 agree on translation, language and how explanation should be?*

791 For social accountability as a specific term, yes, because it's the word my boss uses. And I
792 think there is a requirement to have an agreed translation for it. That is, even not written
793 down, there is a requirement from top to bottom to use this term uniformly as “giám sát xã
794 hội”. In general, all the terms we use must be consistent. If you already translated as “tạo
795 quyền, from then on, you must understand “empowerment” as “tạo quyền”, for example.

796 *Was this brought up to agreement in a formal meeting of the project office?*

797 Mostly a tacit understanding. Or if someone doesn't translate correctly, they will be warned
798 or reminded verbally in a meeting for example. Not a mandatory thing to follow.

799 *Do you discuss translation often with co-workers?*

800 Because I translate a lot, so when the interns translate and use the wrong terms, I have to tell
801 them. When we interview an intern, for example, we'll give them a paragraph to translate,
802 and there will be terms they translated incorrectly.

803 *Such as?*

804 Sinh kế, livelihoods. Only those who are interested in development can translate this term.
805 In the field, sometimes people don't understand, and the popular alternative is “kế sinh
806 nhai”.

807 *What do you think, “sinh kế” and “kế sinh nhai”, which one came in first?*

808 I think “kế sinh nhai” must come in first as it sounds more familiar. “Sinh kế” sounds more
809 academic.

810 *“Sinh kế” might have been in the field for around 20 years, yes? I wonder if it is a short
811 version of “kế sinh nhai”.*

812 And in the field, you'll have to explain “sinh kế” to the community as “what you do to
813 generate income”, while they'll understand “kế sinh nhai” immediately.

814 *How about “bền vững”, because we often say “sinh kế bền vững” [sustainable livelihoods]?*

815 Can it be understood as "long-term"? Do something in long term, but that doesn't cover the
816 full meaning of "sustainable". But meeting with the locals, maybe we say "sustainable
817 development", doing something for sustainability, each person can understand differently.

818 I think normally sustainable development as we learned is a way for future generations to
819 still benefit from the resources, they still have access and are still able to use them and

820 benefit. Now, the next generation may not even be mentioned when working with the
821 community. Sustainable development can just be how you increase your income in the long
822 run, right? And it must cover the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental
823 aspects, the three pillars to ensure that future generations will still enjoy these benefits. But
824 I think it's true I understand it that way when I study or go to big forums to talk. When I go
825 to the locality to say how local people can develop sustainably, that means how they can still
826 make money from resources in the long run.

827 Another example is when we do community tourism. It is growing hugely, but we go to the
828 community and are proud that we are very pioneering in the development of community
829 tourism in Vietnam. But the term “du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng” in Vietnam itself, many
830 organisations do it, but they understand it differently. For example, we understand “du lịch
831 dựa vào cộng đồng” as the whole community participates in tourism, and the whole
832 community benefits from tourism, the important thing here is "the whole community" part.
833 Not all stakeholders understand this way. I don't say all, but some still use the term
834 "community tourism" and understand it in the sense that community tourism is a type of
835 homestay, that is to enjoy a stay at local people's homes. That is, guests come to stay with
836 local people, and experience with that household the local way, know what the locality is
837 like. They see it as community tourism and develop in that direction. There are people who
838 come and claim to be experts in community tourism, and for the whole locality, they only
839 pick one household to do homestay, in the manner that visitors arrive, they rest and they
840 experience with that household, and that is called community tourism. Those are two
841 completely different interpretations.

842 *What English term does your organisation use to refer to “du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng”?*

843 The original term is “community-based tourism”. When we go to the field and observe those
844 homestays claimed to be community-based tourism, we explain to local stakeholders that
845 "community-based tourism can be understood differently..."

846 *In the projects you are involved, are there terms you think shouldn't be used in publication,
847 texts, or even in verbal communication such as meetings and work discussions?*

848 Actually now we're working towards a new strategy. We suggest that the organisation adopt
849 a ‘customer’ mindset, to develop projects the way a product is developed, product-based.
850 Use business terms. Consider the beneficiary as a customer, call them customers. That is
851 how we're completely changing the organisation's vision. But we don't feel comfortable
852 writing it down for other parties either. That is, internally, we understand like that, but now
853 if we tell the donor that, we are considering the beneficiaries as customers or donors as
854 investors, or we now have to "create values"... [Laughter], it must be a new direction. But
855 meanwhile we don't have a concrete way to express these to the outside. Because we are
856 also a medium-sized organisation, we have difficulties with resources. Now there is a new
857 CEO in {name of country} and also in Vietnam, all think we have to change, and don't like
858 the fact that we finish the project for the sake of finishing, that is, only implementing a
859 project according to what we've committed to, and when the project finishes, no money is
860 left. Actually, also from CBT, community tourism, my organisation did it very successfully,
861 from small to bigger, then gradually growing. So now it's required that we regard everything
862 we do and every intervention as a product, that is, it will not finish within the project life-
863 cycle, but there must be elements for improving the quality, for growing and becoming more
864 responsive to market needs, etc. That means more use of business terminology in
865 development practice and a complete change of mindset. That is shifting the mindset of

866 development practitioners from an NGO to a 'customer' mindset. That is becoming
867 customer-oriented, how to make customers happy, how to make customers buy more of your
868 products. That's what we've been discussing a lot in the organisation and have decided to
869 change accordingly. But I think if I say those thoughts outside, all parties might be
870 uncomfortable with our term use, right?

871 *In both verbal and written communication, do you think it's not the time for this new*
872 *'customer' mindset to be discussed?*

873 I'm not sure, but we avoid it anyway. There is also a lot of internal controversy. In short,
874 who is the customer? Who is the target customer? In short, it must operate as a business
875 model... not an NGO.

876 *Do you always say 'beneficiary' ?*

877 Yes, beneficiary, now switching to customer. Project turns into product, beneficiary turns
878 into customer. So the project manager will become the product manager. Project officer will
879 become product officer. There will be "research and development" departments, R&D.

880 *May I ask why you think there should be such a change in the mindset? To unify and*
881 *synchronise with the development community in the world or is it a breakthrough of your*
882 *own organisation?*

883 Actually, I think here we're calling for a new trend. Nowadays NGOs, like {name of
884 organisation}, are not purely NGOs, but they are more like a business. I mean, I'm feeling
885 that more and more NGOs and the development sector are merging with the business sector,
886 adopting more and more concepts from business and even moving further. It's a generic
887 trend, not just our organisation alone, because in fact by doing so, we have had to study the
888 trend and see that it is trendy that way. For example, I talked about the project's call on
889 women's empowerment, the approach they use is called "market system development".
890 Sounds very business-oriented, right?

891 *Oh yes.*

892 For all development stakeholders, I think it's direction of movement, a generic move, a
893 general shift of adopting the business approach, because each day I see if we run it as a pure
894 non-profit organisation, we don't take into account the matters of profit, then we can't survive
895 for long (laughs). Also each day, more and more investors are coming in from the business
896 sector. Moreover, the donor will generally also ask for very business-oriented stuff, like what
897 the "value for money" is of a project and those similar to the concept of KPI of the project...
898 Those are totally the approach adopted from business.

899 This comes from many sides, I think, from donor needs, from ourselves. We also find that if
900 we keep a project-based way of delivery, it won't go anywhere, because the closing of the
901 project means the end. It's true that if we only have a few bucks, we have to invest in
902 something worthy that can add values. These concepts are all borrowed, and are very close
903 to business, do you agree? Now we only have a few coins, what will we do?

904 *So that's another new area of knowledge being applied in the development industry, a new*
905 *stream of concepts and terminology embedded into that.*

906 Yes. For example, now we have to apply this “thể điểm cân bằng”, but then this "balanced
907 scorecard" is completely a business approach that will also apply to NGOs, then value
908 governing, developing the market system of {name of organisation}... very much promote
909 this one. It's a whole new trend.

910 *I guess I don't have much time left. I want to ask a few final questions because it's getting
911 late for you. What terms do you think cannot be translated into Vietnamese right now?*

912 For example, the logframe. You have input, output, outcome, impact, goal... which gives a
913 headache if you translate. I think so. Input, “đầu vào”, output, “đầu ra”, but what is outcome?
914 I can't translate [laughs]. Outcome and output at times are both translated as “kết quả”
915 [result] - “kết quả đầu ra” and “kết quả”. Then how is the result different from the effect?
916 Outcome is most difficult to translate.

917 *Also at implementation level, the problem tree...*

918 And “theory of change”: “Lý thuyết về sự thay đổi”, is it true? Is it really a “lý thuyết”
919 [theory]?

920 *Any local concepts and terms that cannot be translated into English?*

921 There surely are but I don't remember just now.

922 *Let's save it for next time when you remember...*

923 Yeah. Maybe.

924 *How do you understand the role of terminology in development work? Can you say a bit
925 more about the impact of the introduction of concepts and terms to your work?*

926 Development work in Vietnam is both broad and new, and development professionals are
927 all practice-based and practical people. They have different backgrounds and were educated
928 in different disciplines, and then they work in development, and to date there has been no
929 academic institutions that provide development education. So actually, people import these
930 new knowledge as they work and interpret it the way they understand. And what is used
931 most frequently will become the equivalent translation of a term, and there is no consensus
932 on how to translate or understand a certain term, while there is quite an awful lot of
933 development terminology. When you do something new, there is automatically a bunch of
934 new terminology. So that lack of foundation also affects the general work.

935 Even with the idea of “có sự tham gia”, each stakeholder would apply differently. If we
936 understand the participatory approach, that is, even in project design, at all stages, the people,
937 community and all stakeholders must participate. Some stakeholders say they are applying
938 the participatory approach but I think they're just saying it for fun. It's an introduced idea
939 from the outside. And participation here means that people participate in the project
940 activities, which does not mean that they have input for the whole process from project
941 design to later stages. The level of participation only stops at participating in activities.

942 *How do you understand the role of translation in development work?*

943 I feel that development work in Vietnam implies external inputs, which are, all definitions,
944 concepts and approaches are brought in from the outside, possibly through donors and

945 international organisations or Vietnamese who are trained overseas. So translation is very
946 important but still a perplexity.

947 *You can relate to another question I'd like to ask about the policy for translation and*
948 *language in your organisation... Translation is a perplexity because of the lack of policy*
949 *and guidance?*

950 True. No policy [*Laughter*]. It's all borrowing from one another.

951 Then the positions of translators and interpreters in NGOs, we now see Vietnamese who can
952 speak English or can translate are prioritised in recruitment. But for example, there is no
953 budget or mechanism for translation. I have never met an organisation or project that has
954 their own budget to recruit full-time translators. Maybe the big ones do, but considering the
955 size of my organisation, we probably don't. Then there's a need to compile a glossary for
956 each area of development work, and maybe translation manuals also.

957 *Now the last one. Who do you think would be most suitable to translate terminology and*
958 *ideas in development work?*

959 I think the most suitable one must know some foundation of development theory. They must
960 understand the developmental system of the theory. I think, even simply someone with a
961 development background wouldn't be able to do it. If you work in development and
962 conveniently using whatever translated terminology, then that convenience doesn't mean
963 accuracy, metaphorically. But if the professional translators who do not have a background
964 in development, their translation will not be accurate also. As for those who only work in
965 the sector, they use whatever terms they feel are the most convenient, most euphonical and
966 most comfortable to say... then the case is many wouldn't understand the true meaning
967 behind. So I think someone with an academic background in development will be more
968 reasonable.

969 I think it's related to both development theory and linguistics, it's not purely one or the other,
970 but you still have to understand both to find the right way. Again, you also have to understand
971 the context, like when talking about social accountability, you have to understand the context
972 too. There are always some side effects to some words in use.

973 *Very true.*

974 Interview with Participant 3 (P3-Ph1)

975 *Could you please share with me your experience of terminology in your day-to-day work?*

976 Yeah. Every day when I worked on that project, because of communication between the two
977 sides, I was the focal point between the two parties, connecting the National Assembly and
978 the Canadian partner. The documents were translated back and forth, mainly information
979 about seminars, study tours... Texts and documents were sent out to outsourced translators.
980 In daily work, there were also specialised terms, but not too in depth because these were
981 mainly not specialised documents and rather administration-related documents, for example,
982 about the work history and positions of this or that person and where they worked. Our
983 committees have specialised terms, for example, when I worked with the Judiciary
984 Committee, there were many technical words. When our partner placed an order with us,
985 they wanted us to find experts in this or that field, then we must deal with terminology in

986 that field. That's how I used the terminology in my development work and projects,
987 especially those projects we jointly implemented with {name of Western country}.

988 *What was the main area of that project?*

989 There were 3 partners: the Judiciary Committee, the Law Committee and the Social Affairs
990 Committee, doing 3 components at the same time, 3 different areas... For social issues,
991 gender equality was the main area of implementation. My project provided support to the
992 development of the Law on Gender Equality.

993 *You said the project outsourced translators to translate documents?*

994 Yeah. As project officers, we didn't translate because of the huge translation workload.
995 Usually when there were conferences, if the translation volume was high, we outsourced it
996 all to them. Then we just dealt with the daily stuff and not the specialised stuff. But in the
997 process of daily communication between the two parties, it is still necessary to have the
998 expertise, because we recruited experts for our partner. They ordered, 'we want help in this
999 and that field...' In the gender field, I need to understand terminology to work with the
1000 {name of Western country} partner, reaching out to professors, ministers, deputy ministers
1001 in that area for example, or the management people of NGOs in {name of Western country}.
1002 It was a must to find skilled experts in the fields ordered by the Vietnamese partner. Just like
1003 that. When they sent documents to our projects or when there was a conference document,
1004 we didn't translate but outsourced the whole thing.

1005 *Can you say a bit more about this outsourcing process?*

1006 We looked at their CVs, what they translated, whether they were knowledgeable in that field
1007 or not. In general, we only picked the outstanding translators and interpreters. The rate was
1008 very high, sometimes 500 - 700 USD/day, all the superstars in Hanoi and Vietnam at that
1009 time, and we'd have them along for work travels. Those were super talented and we'd call
1010 them every time. When they were not available because they were often booked, then we
1011 had to go to the second, third options... but usually only booked the best. There were about
1012 2-3 people who were super, but because they were super, they were highly demanded. If
1013 they already were pre-booked on the same schedule with our seminars and study tours
1014 abroad, we had to go to the second and third options. But they had a lot of experience
1015 translating at international and domestic conferences and projects... so the rate was very high.
1016 And we believed that they were very good, because of good feedback from our experts. I
1017 still have the contacts of some now. They must be nearly 50 now. Those excellent ones,
1018 when I was working for that project, they were already older than me.

1019 *Now more specifically, in the project there was communication back and forth between
1020 Canadian partners and Vietnamese partners, were there terms that were difficult to
1021 translate, or have already translated but seemed problematic?*

1022 It's been a while and I don't remember examples well. But the legal terminology was the
1023 most difficult for at that time. There were many things that I did not understand much or
1024 fully understand. In addition to judicial knowledge, there were terms about professional
1025 positions, specialties... professors in this field, forensic science, autopsies... difficult.
1026 Sometimes translating about the project meetings alone made my ears ringing. But going to
1027 workshops or study tours, we didn't have to translate. I only translated within the scope of
1028 her project. Only when a partner or expert came, I'd translate and that was already

1029 challenging. In short, legal terminology was the most difficult. As for gender and other social
1030 areas, it seemed more moderate.

1031 *When you joined the project, there were already those who dealt with the terminology?*

1032 That's right. The project life was 15 years, and I joined in its Phase 3, the last 5 years. It
1033 started in 1997. There was already a foundation, but even there was a foundation, I still had
1034 to learn. Those who worked before me left the project. Those who worked from the
1035 beginning would know more about terminology than me and those in the project office. I
1036 was not in the PO, I was a project assistant so I had to learn more. They'd been there ten
1037 years, so they knew better.

1038 *Do you remember any specific cases of terminology you had to deal with because when you*
1039 *joined no one had actually translated?*

1040 Yes, but I don't remember because it's not the area I work now. I am not using any
1041 terminology in the area of justice now.

1042 *In your current area, education, what kind of knowledge do you need to refer to in English*
1043 *and other languages, and you have to translate into Vietnamese for teachers when training*
1044 *or translate to make textbooks and to develop the curriculum?*

1045 In education, there is nothing new to me. In general, no problem.

1046 *In other areas of development you involved, did you think of translating development*
1047 *concepts into Vietnamese?*

1048 I used existing translations. But there are terms that cannot be translated into Vietnamese.
1049 For example, in Vietnam nowadays, people would write "wellbeing" and open parentheses
1050 to add the explanation or a loose translation and still can't find a word to replace "wellbeing".
1051 Such example, they'd keep the original.

1052 When I worked on domestic violence, there was this term, "perpetrator". In Vietnam, people
1053 don't touch much on "perpetrator" and more on the victims. I was very interested in doing
1054 research on "the perpetrator", from the perspective of making impacts on the perpetrators of
1055 domestic violence to change them. In Vietnam today, the focus is on helping women victims.
1056 I would love to bring that project back to Vietnam, but because of some conditions, I now
1057 work in education. In Vietnam, there is not much research on men as perpetrators, because
1058 of beliefs, culture, and other factors and so on, so they don't look much at the role of men in
1059 this regard but only on women. This term in Vietnam does not exist in my opinion, and I
1060 hope I can "bring it home", but people have not "touched" this matter very much.

1061 *When you outsourced translators and interpreters, do you ever find them having problems*
1062 *with terminology, and have they ever discussed with the project management team or the*
1063 *implementation team about these issues?*

1064 No. They were outstanding and knew the terms very well, better than I do. And they were
1065 professionals with lots of experience and knowledge, and they had also translated for the
1066 project for a long time. So both sides were satisfied. The National Assembly was satisfied
1067 and international experts were, too. They translated very very well. That was why the rate
1068 was very high. Worth every penny. When you outsource a translator at low rates and if they

1069 fail, it is worse than paying a high rates for someone who does a good job and the message
1070 is delivered correctly.

1071 *Very true.*

1072 So in the end, you still have to pay a lot to have a translator who translates accurately.
1073 Otherwise that's harmful to the project. What I was most impressed with was their very high
1074 rates [*Laughter*], highest in the market. But very rest assured, no need to worry about
1075 anything. They translated both Vietnamese – English and English – Vietnamese .

1076 *More in which way, do you remember?*

1077 Equal. Because my project helped a lot with writing legal documents. The National
1078 Assembly makes many laws and documents. So they translated drafts, decrees, circulars,
1079 guidelines... into English for the partner to comment on. And when the partner organised
1080 seminars, they translates from English into Vietnamese.

1081 *Does the National Assembly's law-making committee develop many draft laws in English for*
1082 *international expert partners to provide feedback?*

1083 The law-makers drafted laws in Vietnamese, and our project helped them produce the
1084 English versions to get feedback from the experts.

1085 *What would you say about the role of translation in this process?*

1086 ery important. Ideally, the two partners would exchange without translation, but Vietnam
1087 hasn't reached that stage yet, so translation is still indispensable. Success or failure depends
1088 on translation, to put it bluntly.

1089 *Are there any examples of translation failures?*

1090 Once at a conference, a lady from the Project Office observed a mistake in translation, and
1091 in the afternoon she went on the microphone and said, sorry, this should be translated as this
1092 and that... I remember that. But it's very rare, only once or twice. Maybe the translation was
1093 not clear. But in general, there was nothing wrong. Our project team would listen and if there
1094 were any problems, we'd correct formally at the conference when the translation was done.

1095 During such sessions, our PO team would have to sit and observe. And actually translated
1096 hand-outs were sent in advance, all slides were translated, several hundred slides. When
1097 experts came, they made slides very carefully. But when they spoke, there were still contexts
1098 that we were not familiar with and this led to the audience not being able to grasp the ideas.
1099 The PO team listened with the project director, and if there was a problem, they'd clarify, or
1100 if the translation was not close or incorrect, they'd have to correct. The PO and the {name
1101 of Western country} project manager would come up to apologise and correct, for example.
1102 The director may not understand Vietnamese, but after hearing the feedback from the PO,
1103 he'd correct. Actually, we were the project staff so we'd know if the translation was wrong,
1104 but the listeners wouldn't. Listeners had no choice but to trust the translation. If you don't
1105 know the language, you'll have to listen with trust, right? The interpreters and translators
1106 controlled the atmosphere of meetings and workshops. They spoke and the other side
1107 listened, and no one knew if the translation was not or good. My project, but specifically the
1108 PO, in the middle, was the responsible mainly for quality control. That was a conference in
1109 {redacted}, as I remember it, the {name of programme}.

1110 *When you joined, the project's document system was already in place, right? Are there many*
1111 *bilingual policy papers available?*

1112 Many available, because I joined in Phase 3 after the project had been implemented for 12
1113 years.

1114 Actually the intervention level of the project was on policy and legal documents, so it was a
1115 high level, and we didn't have to go to the field or work with the community. The committees
1116 sent documents and texts to the locality for their feedback, then they organised consultation
1117 conferences, but participation was not compulsory for us. The gathering of local feedback
1118 and local consultation was done by the National Assembly committees, they'd report to the
1119 international experts.

1120 *How do you understand the role of translation in development work in Vietnam?*

1121 Translation is very important in development work, until Vietnam has caught up with other
1122 countries. Currently, projects still need translators, and translation determines the success or
1123 failure of any activity, from writing to using terminology in certain domains. Actually, most
1124 translator understand meanings, but not all can give a free translation or use the correct
1125 terminology to convince the listeners. So a large part of a translator's capacity is the
1126 knowledge of terminology in the areas they translate. But the areas are countless, so not
1127 every translator would know enough areas to translate satisfactorily. So translation is very
1128 important in the development sector in Vietnam. For example, we were working with the
1129 high level of law makers who worked with policies, and if the translation is inaccurate, the
1130 law is written incorrectly, the consequences are huge.

1131 *How do you understand the role of terminology in development work in Vietnam?*

1132 An important role. If the translator knows the terminology, they can convey the message
1133 directly to the target stakeholders. If the translation doesn't cut to the chase, the audience
1134 will still understand, but maybe they also understand that the translator doesn't know that
1135 area well enough, and may have doubts about the translation. As for the meaning and key
1136 points, they still understand.

1137 *Do you have any story to tell me about how translators deal with terminology in development*
1138 *work?*

1139 Often at small-scale meetings, or group discussions, it is necessary to explain and explain
1140 more. At the level of workshops or study tours, such way of explanation is not necessary.
1141 But that's also the translator's technique. When there are no translation equivalents, you'll
1142 have to explain to people, "yeah, that's what it means", "I don't know this term, but the
1143 general idea is like this...". That is a must, rather than just saying "I don't know this term".
1144 It is better to beat around the bush so that they get the idea, than to interrupt the transferring
1145 of information and say nothing. And then you can ask professionals to give you advice on
1146 the terminology in such areas, and remember it so that the next time you see it, you won't
1147 have to ask again.

1148 *or newly introduced terms, say, by donors or international development organisations, how*
1149 *can we deal with them?*

1150 I think sometimes the concept is not new, but because there is no equivalent in the
1151 Vietnamese language, but that word has existed in their language for, like in English, too

1152 long. It's just that in our language there are no equivalents, no compounds of 2 or 3 words,
1153 that convey the same meaning.

1154 So we'd first look it up in the dictionary, on the internet. Second, we'd ask an expert in that
1155 field. and third, ask the Vietnamese co-workers to see if there are any words with the same
1156 meaning. I'd describe to the expert that, there is such a concept and term, I've asked people
1157 and it was explained like this... do we have an equivalent in Vietnamese language? Then
1158 they'd suggest several options and I'd pick one that best and closely conveys the most
1159 meaning as defined by the other party. I thought I'd have to do that, but I still had to put the
1160 original term there, and I wouldn't dare to leave it out. That is, I'd put it in parentheses, and
1161 this is very common and will be for a long time, because when there is no equivalent, you
1162 can only put it in the parentheses so that anyone who knows a foreign language will
1163 understand very well. As for finding an equivalent that can convince the Vietnamese
1164 stakeholders and for all who know English to regard it as the standard equivalent, it's a long
1165 way to get there. We're still at the stage of considering which translation is most suitable.

1166 *What is your opinion on the policies of translation and terminology of development*
1167 *organisations and NGOs in Vietnam?*

1168 No such policies. When hiring for a position, the requirements are very general. The common
1169 practice is that they'd ask the candidate to translate one or two technical documents being
1170 used in that project. If you pass the test, you're hired and become the only resource for
1171 translation. Previously, I worked with 3 projects, a {name of Western country} project on
1172 water supply, an EU project on policy-making, and {name of programme}. When they
1173 recruited, they also asked me to translate and I did ok so they recruited. When I joined, I had
1174 a desk at the head office, as with {name of programme}, or in the {name of organisation}. I
1175 thought I was the only one in charge of language there. However, in the projects, there were
1176 people who returned from studying abroad, and they knew the technical terms even better
1177 than me. But they may not have the language skills to fully read and understand a text. So
1178 there wasn't a policy or guidance on language, because I was the only person who could be
1179 trusted with the language. When they read an incorrect translation, they'd point it out to me
1180 and I'd correct. At that time, working in {name of province}, there were many difficult terms
1181 in water supply, but it's been so long now that I don't remember any examples to share with
1182 you.

1183 But in those projects, they didn't recruit bilingual staff, only purely specialised staff. These
1184 specialists may know English but their English was not good enough to speak fluently,
1185 maybe at 5-7/10. An interpreter would be needed, always. So at that time, I worked as an
1186 interpreter to only translate at the communication level, but if it was at a technical level like
1187 workshops or study tours, it was mandatory to outsource professional translators as
1188 mentioned above. If a meeting has a size of about ten or twenty people, I'd translate, but if
1189 there were hundreds of people like in a workshop, I didn't have to. Where there was the
1190 participation of provincial partners or experts, I didn't have to either. I was in charge of
1191 communication support, so I translated for meetings where the two parties met to discuss
1192 their needs, with 20 or 30 people. Every project I worked with had a budget dedicated to
1193 outsource translation. As far as I know, every project is like that.

1194 *Such meetings of 20-30 people, what would be the difficulties with translation?*

1195 Because of the large number of opinions, it was inevitable that they might raise new ideas,
1196 new needs, or introduce new terms that I did not know. But since meetings at this scale in

1197 the project were usually informal and unofficial, I was only required to convey the messages
1198 and ideas so that the parties understood each other. Then I went online to check later. In
1199 general, if there was a mistake, it was not fatal. If the two sides didn't understand each other,
1200 I'd use the technique of explaining as mentioned earlier.

1201 Our meetings were almost free of arguments, only stating needs. For example, what the
1202 National Assembly needed, what we wanted to do, where we wanted to go, what to research,
1203 what to consult with the people and leaders of the provinces... And we wanted to bring
1204 experts in to help with this or that. In general, the two parties would try to understand each
1205 other's needs and help each other. When they encountered new terms, that is, in new areas
1206 that they knew they were unfamiliar with, they would speak very slowly, using simple words,
1207 or they'd send documents in advance.

1208 *Who do you think would be most suitable to translate terminology and ideas in development*
1209 *work?*

1210 Those who translate in development work are not only and completely responsible for
1211 translation but they also act as broker, making the two sides understand each other and not
1212 conflict, making both sides feel satisfied after the meeting. They have to translate but also
1213 make both parties feel comfortable. The level of involvement and engagement depends on
1214 how knowledgeable they are in that area. However, they themselves must have a desire for
1215 success to make both sides feel that translation is useful, necessary and effective. Otherwise,
1216 it is the translator who fails, because he cannot bridge the two sides.

1217 I think with new terms, it must be those who specialise in that area to come up with the
1218 equivalent terms in Vietnamese, that way it will be more accurate. Translators and
1219 interpreters, if not professional, can only pass on the meaning, but I don't think they know
1220 the standard terminology because they may not necessarily have the specialty. For example
1221 in my project, the experts of the National Assembly committees would introduce new terms
1222 in Vietnamese. They know more than translators in general. But they are only good at that
1223 knowledge and terminology and do not have the foreign language capacity to successfully
1224 translate an information exchange like at a conversation or a conference. So they still needed
1225 a translator. Particularly in terms of specialised knowledge and terminology, they were
1226 better, for example, at the level of policy-making, there were still people who received short-
1227 term or long-term training abroad, sometimes at the director level or higher. People who
1228 were born in the 1970s for example, many can read and understand specialised documents
1229 and understand terminology. But it is different going into grassroots work, at local levels
1230 where many local specialists who don't speak English and they will not come up with
1231 technical terminology. It's different there. So professional translators don't know all areas
1232 and they should get the help of specialised stakeholders.

1233 Interview with Participant 4 (P4-Ph1)

1234 *Could you describe your development work in Vietnam and also experience with terminology*
1235 *in your day-to-day work...*

1236 My experience in development work is extensive, but I will talk more directly about the
1237 translation-related work. Because I work for an international organisation, all the original
1238 documents are in English, and then they have to be translated into Vietnamese for two
1239 purposes. First, to get it moving in the approval process for documents and procedures,
1240 which actually we never have too much time for. The whole process, time is usually very

1241 short, from one week to a month to complete this and that procedures. So normally the
1242 documents are translated, sent to the donor or to the Vietnamese regulatory agency, etc...
1243 and these documents are often not talked about by many people. Second, translation from
1244 English into Vietnamese, which is more valuable and meaningful for the implementation of
1245 the project. It's the translation of specific parts of proposals, plans, letters, ordinary
1246 documents... that covers the entire implementation. For this task, very specific goals have to
1247 be set, that the recipients must understand, and Vietnamese people whose English is not good
1248 at reading must understand so they can discuss, give feedback for the project to be more
1249 implementable, and so on. So this task I'll be focusing more on and providing more support
1250 to it. To be honest, many times when we are very busy, and an original proposal in English
1251 has been approved, now we have to translate to send to the People's Committee and send to
1252 this or that ministry... then we outsource, then after that just review it very quickly. I'll then
1253 only correct problematic words and not ask for the translation to be too elegant or too
1254 adapted, or that readers have to understand 100% - then no. As for the parts I need to edit
1255 carefully later, for example, the logframe, activities, indicators, and so on... the letters... then
1256 all that I have to, if need to, translate carefully. Or if someone else translates, I need to pay
1257 attention to the translation. Or all of our field trips, when needed, I'll myself provide the
1258 interpreting, otherwise I'll also sit and listen, that's the important thing.

1259 So I differentiate two such types of translation. When translating, to be honest, in our work,
1260 we don't prioritise elegance as a high standard, because being elegant requires time and
1261 thinking... like literary translation works or something else. As for translation in our case,
1262 there are two criteria, the first is accuracy, the second is correctness. For me as someone in
1263 the sector for a long time, about 15 years of experience, for me what is correct... correctness
1264 and accuracy are not always the same.

1265 Now I will talk a little bit about accuracy. Firstly, when I ask for an accurate translation, I
1266 have to ask first, is Vietnamese language accurate? Are there standards by which people
1267 follow? In many cases, there is no, or not yet, or there are different standards, there are
1268 standards that I do not agree with. It is not easy to require the translation to follow a standard,
1269 because in many cases there is no standard. And if not, will a project or organisation have
1270 the capacity, time, and mandate to create the standards? Well, in most cases, no. They have
1271 5 years, they are always in a hurry, they just need to make their employees understand and
1272 able to work, and don't have time to create standards and especially share them with other
1273 organisations, or at the national level, or provincial level... then that is beyond the
1274 capabilities and concerns of most organisations. For example, proper names. Proper names
1275 can be the name of countries, we already have those, or names of organisations here and
1276 there. But the names of cities, tools, species of plants... there are countless names that don't
1277 follow standards. Well, sometimes there are those who like to "find quarrel in a straw", then
1278 I'll say honestly, all translations are not accurate. Any translation can be improved, any
1279 translation has mistakes to point out... But there are also those don't like to follow standards.
1280 Of course, there are also translations that are too ridiculous, too non-standard, needless to
1281 say. But when standards are needed, it's a bit funny because there is no standard. It is the
1282 case that, maybe with more use, it'll become some recognised standards that are used by
1283 everyone, but a complete set of standards for a language is not always available. That's my
1284 idea on standards.

1285 So if you talk about the criterion of "correctness", it is not always the standard. When you
1286 say a correct translation is a good translation, what you put first is a translation that is easy
1287 to understand. Because in my experience there are translations and sentences that are
1288 accurate but very difficult to understand. I'll give two examples. The term "integrity", if

1289 taking the standards set by the press, the media, on TV, etc... for example, throughout the
1290 recent US election, it is used a lot, they translate as “tinh toàn vẹn”. But "integrity" is in a
1291 lot of cases inappropriate, not even correct. Sometimes it's about morality, sometimes it's
1292 about their decency. Another term, fallacy. Those people who pat themselves on the chest to
1293 tell they translate correctly always translate it as “ngụy biện”. But “ngụy biện” is also not
1294 correct, because in Vietnamese it implies that this person knows and intentionally makes
1295 others think wrong, but fallacy is not necessarily so. Fallacy means sometimes the person
1296 who thinks are not even aware that they're wrong. So the accuracy isn't always correct and
1297 isn't always easy to understand. I'm telling the truth, in the past I only understood “ngụy
1298 biện” vaguely. If we say "the integrity of a post-harvest system for safe vegetables", we
1299 might just not understand what it means. For example, if you say "the integrity of a post-
1300 harvest system for clean vegetables", I don't understand what it is. So those things are
1301 accurate but not understandable. And for me, if it is not understandable, it is also not correct.

1302 So in many cases, I accept the “nôm na” way of translation. I accept that a word could be
1303 translated into a sentence, and a sentence can become many sentences, so that users can
1304 understand, because in my work, it is most important that those performing the project and
1305 the beneficiaries understand. The more accurate the better, the more correct the better. If
1306 other people don't accept it as correct but I know that in the context of my project, it is
1307 definitely true, I still translate that way. So that's my point of view.

1308 *Can you give me some examples, in Vietnamese, whether there are proper names, or*
1309 *scientific names, of plants and animals that are used in projects, and sometimes are not quite*
1310 *easy to translate, or that there might be different translations?*

1311 For example, proper names of cities. At first I also tried to Vietnamise them, for example,
1312 Ôtx-trây-li-a, Niu Di-lân... but I can't do so for all. Or worms for example. At the embassy,
1313 we have colleagues who often have to translate these. Sometimes there are types of worms,
1314 when looking online, there are four or five sources that are reliable sources, there are about
1315 two or three different translations. Sometimes it's safe to choose the one that's used the most,
1316 and then put in parentheses the English name next to it, so that our users know that we've
1317 already translated, but in case they don't trust, they can always check again with the English
1318 available. Those examples abound. For example, several days before, there was this species
1319 of “fall armyworm”, translated a few ways immediately. Sometimes “sâu chiến binh”,
1320 sometimes “sâu keo”, “sâu xanh” and everything... many names. So it's a bit difficult to get
1321 it right. That day, we didn't have time to consult with a local expert, so we had to search
1322 online, and found that “sâu keo mùa thu” was used the most. But that is not an example of
1323 careful translation or thorough translation. It only show that these are problematic for
1324 translators. The standard name is in many cases not available.

1325 In the old days when I just graduated, the first project I worked with was a project on
1326 "training teachers to teach children with intellectual disability". It was the first master's
1327 program in special education for children with intellectual disability, and about 70-80% of
1328 those terms in Vietnamese did not exist. For example, there was this term "absence", “vắng
1329 mặt”, so children with intellectual disability have episodes of absence, that is, when they
1330 lose all perception and consciousness, they cannot hear or see anything. But at that time, in
1331 the Vietnamese language, that term was not available. Maybe it was not yet a field of study,
1332 maybe in lay people's terms, each family had a different way to call it. Some said the child
1333 fainted, some said he's sleep-deprived, some say he's stupefied, and so on. But in the end
1334 that programme, also the first official programme, before I joined, a few translators already
1335 translated it as “con vắng ý thức” [absence of consciousness] [Laughter], still trying to use

1336 the word "absence". Then after using it a lot, it became a term that everyone in the field
1337 understood, but is it actually Vietnamese? So if you say it, few people understand. And in
1338 that field, we have a lot of terms like that. Because it was about 20 years ago. Sometimes
1339 there was a teacher at Foreign Trade University who taught us that sometimes translating is
1340 naming. That is, if you are the first translator, you have to give it a name, and if you are
1341 lucky, you are a good person, you are careful and conscientious, you'll give a good name
1342 which is easy to use in many cases. And if you're careless and you don't have a lot of time,
1343 you'll give nonsensical names. And sometimes because you're the first, it's still used later
1344 and it turns into an irrelevant term but still used. Terms such as ADHD, attention-
1345 deficit/hyperactivity disorder, all the disease names... there used to be a lot of controversy.
1346 And later on, the first and most used documents will become the standard, but there is not a
1347 board that comes up and says, we accept this term, accept that term...

1348 *You have summarised, as I understand, the standardised terminology depends on whether it*
1349 *is used long enough and by the majority?*

1350 Even standardising has many interpretations. The first is that a standard is given and you
1351 have to follow. Not saying whether you agree or not, but you must obey. That's what
1352 happened, there are terms that if I was the first to translate, I wouldn't translate like that, but
1353 since it has become a so-called standard term now, I have to follow. The second is when you
1354 talk more about its content, ie you adapt it into something easy to use and suitable for
1355 Vietnamese, etc. So it depends on how I understand standards. And you must also say that
1356 when you are the user and you point out the non-standard errors, or a bad translation given
1357 by the translator or by those who need to translate, it is very easy. But translating itself is not
1358 easy because Vietnamese and English are two different languages. For example, now I look
1359 at French and English. The two languages are not the same but are quite parallel. For
1360 example, if you have "integrity", then in French it may be "intégrité". So whenever English
1361 uses this word, French also uses this word, not 100% but 90%. But in Vietnamese, with
1362 "integrity", you can think of 4-5 different equivalents that will be suitable for 4-5 different
1363 contexts. So English and Vietnamese are very different and not parallel, so it is difficult to
1364 use one term in many different contexts.

1365 That leads to, not a weakness, but a second characteristic of Vietnamese language that I feel.
1366 That is, Vietnamese is a language that is not too academic, but depends very much on the
1367 context of use. If we Vietnamese say so, it might seem that we don't respect our language,
1368 but really if we look at the studies, the philosophies, the works... there are not that many
1369 available in the Vietnamese language. Of course, the majority of smallish Asian countries
1370 have suffered the same fate. But when we use it, we will find that Vietnamese is not an easy
1371 language for academic use and it depends a lot on the context. There are terms that are only
1372 used in one context, but in another context, if you use the same terms, it sounds funny, so
1373 we have to use another. Vietnamese is too contextual, while English is sometimes more
1374 academic and independent from context. Same term, just use it and it stays the same. In
1375 Vietnamese sometimes it has to be twisted a bit to be smoothly heard. That's also a difficulty.
1376 So it's easy to point out mistakes, but it's not easy to translate. And whoever translates, others
1377 can continue to point out mistakes or improve the translation.

1378 *Do you think such a characteristic of Vietnamese language is because most of the knowledge*
1379 *we come into contact comes from the West?*

1380 I think that's one of the reasons, but it doesn't have to be, and it is not totally on the West.
1381 There are things from the Vietnamese culture that are very "nôm na" [lay] expressions. Look

1382 at culture and ethnicity, we will understand why. For example, my family can be called an
1383 educated family, but both of my grandmothers couldn't read or write. All are word of mouth.
1384 And that's a very high percentage, and I can blame it on history, maybe at war, for the
1385 difficulties... for not having long periods, fifty, sixty years of peace, to invest in culture,
1386 develop universities and large libraries to record history, to analyse and compare... We didn't
1387 have that opportunity, so our local knowledge was much spread by word of mouth. Look at
1388 our ethnic groups for example, most have lost their written scripts and everything became
1389 oral, so the literature is very much an oral literature, and especially in contexts that are not
1390 highly academic, not produced in schools or a research institute environment. But in our
1391 situations, our wet rice civilisation also has its strengths and significance, for example in
1392 literature and in poetry. But when we study and work, it will be difficult, because I often say
1393 "our Vietnamese language is very *nôm na*", and sometimes we just have to be "*nôm na*" to
1394 make it easier to understand. If we try to be academic and standardise everything, and sooner
1395 or later we have to, but we'll find that our history of development created some difficulties
1396 to our language. I don't think there's a problem that can't be handled completely, but since it
1397 can be handled very simply, we've had to handle it in a more complicated manner and
1398 changed a lot. As for the introduced knowledge, it just stays that way.

1399 Going back to development work, you may also notice that before development work entered
1400 Vietnam and started to become popular, a bunch of new terms were also introduced that were
1401 not there in the past, and very few could understand. What for example? "*Tính tham gia*"
1402 [participation], "*có sự tham gia*" [participatory], "*kỳ vọng*" [expectation], "*chỉ số*"
1403 [indicator], "*dễ tổn thương*" [vulnerability]... [*Laughter*]. Were those terms even available
1404 in the past?

1405 *True. Even "development" seems to have a new meaning...*

1406 And when I go the mountainous areas, I also see that the ethnic brothers and sisters who
1407 speak another language also have the same problem when they translate into the ethnic
1408 language and they they have to use some Kinh language, for example, for "*cán bộ*" [officer],
1409 "*phát triển*" [development], "*dự án*" [project]. This happens and is hard to avoid. But to be
1410 honest, we don't even need to... it's a global problem. When I was learning French, I realised
1411 one thing, and this was both in development and in normal language, that is, the French
1412 language of about 25 years ago was very different from French today. French nowadays has
1413 lots of English words, and it feels free to use words like "designer"... they use a lot and no
1414 issues. So the fact that we are influenced by other languages is also something that happens
1415 easily, and especially when Vietnamese is a language that is not too complete to express
1416 knowledge or describe modern world events. So the introduction of new terms, the use the
1417 original English terms or the use of a rather rudimentary Vietnamese translation... are all
1418 easy to happen, it's not surprising at all.

1419 *And how does it impact your development work?*

1420 Actually there are some impacts. I think the most important thing to me however I want to
1421 translate, explain or use in English or Vietnamese, in the end I have to help the user
1422 understand its essence. So that's the challenge. In the case the people around me can also use
1423 English, it is very simple. That is also the reason why some people prefer to mix and English
1424 and Vietnamese simultaneously. Sometimes it's not because they like to show off or
1425 something, but sometimes it's true that sometimes it is lengthy to explain in Vietnamese the
1426 meaning of the original English terms. An example, the word "confirm", why is it used so
1427 much? Because saying, "*tao phải gọi lại mày để khẳng định lại cuộc hẹn đấy*" is...

1428 [Laughter]. That's an example. But for those who don't speak English, my point is, whatever
1429 we do, we help them understand the essence of the problem, because in the end, new ideas
1430 come in, new approach introduced, specialised terms included... all looks complicated, but
1431 when we really analyse it, it's nothing too complicated. Its essence is something everyone
1432 can understand. For example, when you look at the logframe, first it is usually the goal,
1433 objectives, expected outcomes, expected outputs... right? How do I translate these? Some
1434 translate “mục tiêu, mục đích, kết quả mong đợi, đầu ra mong đợi”... Honestly, if I didn't
1435 do this job and read those things, I wouldn't understand what's going on, which is higher,
1436 which is lower. In English, it is very clear because everyone sees the hierarchy of “goal -
1437 objectives - outcomes - outputs” clearly from top to bottom, but it is very difficult in
1438 Vietnamese.

1439 Then when these are translated in official documents to send to ministries and agencies... I
1440 wouldn't care about other people's translations. When I work with the community, I always
1441 use the simplest word and that's “mục tiêu chung, mục tiêu dài hạn, mục tiêu trung hạn, mục
1442 tiêu ngắn hạn” [common goal, long-term goal, medium-term goal, short-term goal]... so I
1443 keep using one same word. Because in the end it's all the same. Or “có tính tham gia”, “có
1444 sự tham gia” are concepts people come across only when they read about "a participatory
1445 meeting" and sometimes they don't understand what it is. But if I explain, who doesn't
1446 understand? A meeting where everyone has an opinion, everyone is free to voice their
1447 opinion. It could also be because my projects are mostly community development projects
1448 in agriculture for example, so it is not something too sublime and unreachable, nor are they
1449 projects on improving the competitiveness of the Vietnamese banking system, etc. So in the
1450 end the concepts and the foundation are quite simple, and I think that development workers
1451 who are professional and with a good heart need to help those who, either working with you
1452 as co-workers or or the beneficiaries, deal with these problematic terms to really access the
1453 meaning which in most cases is quite simple and straightforward. And if I am in the field
1454 and use those terms, and I see that people don't understand, that's not okay. In many cases
1455 people don't understand and don't dare say they don't understand, then about a few years
1456 later, people still don't understand and still use those terms completely wrong. For example
1457 in the old days... this is just a funny example, but in the past when I worked in {name of
1458 province}, there was a driver who worked for us and he kept seeing the word NGO a lot, and
1459 he didn't understand what it is, he said it was “NGÔ”. [CORN] He said “these are NGÔ
1460 people”, and he worked for years and kept using that word. Then I just think he read it wrong,
1461 I never minded. But later it turned out that he was asking “How come I see that you guys
1462 don't grow any CORN but are still called NGÔ?” [Laughter]. Then I see that people
1463 misunderstood for a long time, but people do not dare to share with me. Imagine if I went to
1464 remote provinces to work with local officials and I kept throwing this or that term, and they
1465 didn't fully understand, or could vaguely understand, say 20% or 30% of it. In some cases,
1466 gradually they get it right, but there are cases where they keep misunderstanding or don't
1467 understand it enough. That is a major impact. That's why I said at first that I sometimes
1468 accepted the “nôm na” translation, which might be considered non-standard but
1469 understandable, then that is my first goal.

1470 *How do you compare that approach to the approach of others in current Vietnamese*
1471 *development projects?*

1472 The “nôm na” way of translation I just said...

1473 ... with other translations in other projects where people may not focus on efficiency, but
1474 require the use of terms to be consistent, for example, in formal documents or at meetings
1475 and in communication with beneficiaries and other stakeholders?

1476 Generally speaking, when I talk to a person, I am an ordinary person, I always need to
1477 observe and see if they understand. And if they don't understand and find it difficult, then I
1478 have to explain, simple as that. If I like to use the standard term, you have to explain it clearly
1479 for them to understand. And if after explaining, the term has become a simple word that all
1480 stakeholders can use, then ok, use it. For example, is the term “chi số” [indicator] correct?
1481 Maybe the first time I said they didn't understand. But then I explained that this indicator
1482 was just a number I chose to measure my results, and so on... and if they understood, I would
1483 use it later. But after I explain and they still don't understand, I shouldn't use it either.
1484 Actually when we say doing development work, there are many ways to do development
1485 work. I started in the NGO sector and my first projects was in {name of province}, working
1486 with the brothers and sisters in the project who were 100% Nung and Tay ethnic, all of whom
1487 are {redacted}, {redacted}, and so on... and from the very beginning a very specific task to
1488 me, which even before it was related to work, involved the communication between ordinary
1489 people when I told them I had to speak very clearly, very carefully so that they could
1490 understand. Because their Vietnamese was also not 100%, so that's where my starting point
1491 was, I was an NGO person, I worked very close to the community, that's my instinct. And I
1492 think that people who work like me, started like me, they all have that instinct more or less.

1493 But there is another type of development work, for example people who work for donors,
1494 for international organisations, for example {name of organisation}, for {redacted}, for
1495 donors... they can consider them to be doing development work, but maybe they visit the
1496 project three or four times a year, and when they visit, it means they meet the Provincial
1497 People's Committee, and maybe they don't implement the project. They don't even read the
1498 project documents in Vietnamese. They only use English, so asking that they have an instinct
1499 to simplify and “nôm na hóa” things like that is a bit difficult. Because it's not a regular
1500 problem in their work. There, I don't have any comment, but my problem is that for each
1501 context, in the end it is that all those involved and those who need to understand, do they
1502 really? If in my meeting, everyone understands English, and I like to spit English out, I don't
1503 care, I can say whatever you want, right? But obviously in that meeting, there were about 10
1504 people in the province, and they didn't understand, if I was an ordinary person, I would sit
1505 behind and whisper in their ears so they could understand. Then it's a simple one, to make
1506 everyone understand and participate and respond. And there's no other way which is...

1507 *Optimal?*

1508 Besides the things that are totally wrong, there is nothing that is superior. It would have to
1509 be fit for its purpose.

1510 *Yes. I am curious about the way you translate the “logframe” depending on each work*
1511 *context?*

1512 It does not have a correct translation for all cases. Because I worked with all levels. If I had
1513 to translate a summary to share with other organisations, you would use standard terms. If I
1514 translate it for a sharing session with the project staff so that they really understand that
1515 logframe for them to make it work, it's a different story. It's not about translating anymore,
1516 it's about explaining. And if I go to the community, and happen to be talking about part of
1517 that logframe, I use a different language. Actually, it depends on the purpose. I am pretty

1518 flexible about it. I have to understand what I'm doing. So there is no one way that I always
1519 use for every situation.

1520 *Then the term can appear in many different contexts, many different circumstances. In your*
1521 *opinion, what may be the difficulties when in policy documents, official documents, you*
1522 *translate one way and in other situations, you translate it differently? I mean when those*
1523 *translations have been documented.*

1524 I think not. I think those in the middle who work with both superiors and subordinates have
1525 some flexibility. Everyone is like that, and so is in every field. There are terms of the law
1526 that no one understands, right? Lawyers must explain to their clients. There are terms used
1527 by doctors, and doctors have to explain to their patients, it's normal. If in the right context, I
1528 use simple language for people to understand and introduce them to standard terms so that
1529 they know both. For example, "this is from this indicator, do you understand what the
1530 indicator is?" And then, if they get used to it, we can continue to use that term. And if I go
1531 to do monitoring, or I observe someone's translation and see that the person translates
1532 documents very well, but when he uses the translation to directly work with people and he
1533 is flexible and makes it "nôm na", I like it very much and I admire him very much. No
1534 problem. The problem of the logframe is not what it is called at each level, but rather the
1535 direction, how to deliver it bottom up? As long as people understand that logic, and that logic
1536 ends up being a very simple logic: If you do A, it leads to B, and doing B together with C, it
1537 will hopefully lead to D, for example. That logic is understood by everyone, that's what we
1538 set as our goal. If at the end of a meeting with the community, you use standard language or
1539 a simple language that people understand, then it is a successful meeting.

1540 *Yes, oh this perspective is new to me.*

1541 If you go to work, you feel the same, right?

1542 *Yes, sometimes I have experiences like that, but I can't express it like you.*

1543 Because I always see myself as a development worker and not a professional translator.
1544 Translating and rendering are just a tool to me, so maybe for you who study language or
1545 translation... in that direction, it's more of a purpose, but to me it's more of tools. So when I
1546 speak to you from that angle. But if I were a linguist, I would say it differently. And I just
1547 see it as a tool, and in the end people have to understand, I must do that. I am more open in
1548 making the language of development more "nôm na".

1549 *Do you have any stories about a practice already existing in the local contexts but then again*
1550 *another similar practice is introduced from the outside with a different name...*

1551 How they name meetings or groups is a story of "hundred flowers". Each project has a
1552 different name for groups of beneficiaries. But in fact, all the meetings so far, like people
1553 always have, group meetings, team meetings... those are not complicated. However, in
1554 project documents, each project has a different way of naming. In one place it's called a
1555 "nhóm đồng sở thích", "nhóm đồng quyền lợi" [common interest group, common benefit
1556 group], etc. Regarding the "common interest group", for example, we had these women
1557 associations that raised chickens, for example, or a club of pig breeders, now we say "nhóm
1558 đồng sở thích" which sounds really superior, but it is actually just a translation of "common
1559 interest group".

1560 As I told you, in development work, except for some specific projects, when it comes to
1561 community projects, most of the good approaches are fundamental ideas, etc. They are all
1562 very basic things, but sometimes are expressed in big words. I have a slightly different
1563 example, but related to English and Vietnamese, where things had to be converted to become
1564 relevant. In the past, when we did a project on children with intellectual disability, we had
1565 to translate a lot of scales of disorders, such as the scale of autism. It was the first time that
1566 the scale was translated into Vietnamese, for example, measuring a child's behaviors,
1567 matching the percentage with the type of disorders. When I translated that, there were many
1568 local language expressions or cultural aspects that had to be taken into account. Because
1569 when it comes to measuring, that is, observing social behaviours and skills, for example,
1570 when children... in the original context it could be whether "using a knife or fork", or the
1571 greeting when they enter a person's home, however, when we translated it into Vietnamese,
1572 we couldn't translate that way, because these things were not customary in Vietnam, for
1573 example, using knives and forks, and we had to adapt to "using bowls, spoons and
1574 chopsticks". Whether they know how to cut bread, spread butter, we had to change to
1575 something else in Vietnamese. House-entering skills, for example, you have to take off your
1576 shoes, etc., but there were things we had to find something parallel in Vietnam. There were
1577 some that were completely newly invented. For example, Westerners, about measuring
1578 social skills and social behaviours of children and adults, they never ask them to greet the
1579 elderly, but in Vietnamese culture, such a thing is a must. So we had to change. For example,
1580 entering the house, we had to add in "taking off shoes". It's a very specific one, because
1581 when I read your question the other day, there was a question about local knowledge or
1582 practice. Well, just now is my most specific example. We had to adapt a lot from the original
1583 scales when translating into Vietnamese. I think that's an example.

1584 *Very good example.*

1585 Quite a few examples, say in medical areas which also cover social and psychosocial
1586 aspects....

1587 Actually for us, when we do development work, we understand everything in English.
1588 Because all the documents are in English, and we discuss in English. Translation into
1589 Vietnamese is for sharing with our stakeholders and beneficiaries. That's why it's so
1590 important for them to understand, but normally we don't translate into Vietnamese for
1591 ourselves because all the documents are in English, so we don't have that need.

1592 There's one more thing I need to share with you. This is related to English. And it's a very
1593 good thing about English that I don't see in many other languages . That is, the PC, its
1594 political correctness, which is very interesting. The Americans are at the forefront of this.
1595 I'm not talking about changing their way of thinking and acting. I'm just talking about the
1596 language which they actually standardise. And if we want to standardise, then this may be a
1597 second direction of standardisation. That is, for expression in English with gender elements
1598 for example, they avoid using "chairwoman", "chairman" but they use "chairperson", which
1599 is very gender-neutral. Well, that's something that when I first started, I worked for American
1600 organisations in the past, they were very strict. Verbal or written translation, even when I'm
1601 sitting with a woman for example, I use language the same way. Another example is the
1602 principle when describing a person. This I learned when I worked on projects about children
1603 with intellectual disability. When describing a person, the word "person" will always come
1604 first, and then the adjectives that describe them. That is, they have to be human first, before
1605 describing them as having difficulty with hearing, being deaf, hyperactive... It is the "person-
1606 first principle", for example "he is a person with intellectual disabilities" rather than "he is

1607 an intellectually disabled person". The noun "person", "child", for example in "he's a child
1608 with hearing impairment" must always come first. I think it's very interesting, but when I
1609 translate it into Vietnamese... [Laughter], I can't, because in Vietnamese, the position of
1610 nouns with adjective flexibility is not like that. Well, that's another example of Vietnamese
1611 and English not being parallel. But that also reminds me of the direction of de-
1612 standardisation in translation, which not only is about standardising the meaning of a term
1613 but also standardising the social perspective and insight. And this is very important in
1614 development work, because we have flexibility. Now even development workers who have
1615 worked for years, the more years of experience they have, the more likely they are to pat
1616 their chest and use sloppy words.

1617 For example, they go to work with the ethnic communities and use words like “người Mèo”
1618 to refer to the Hmong people. Then instead of using standard words like “người khiếm thị”
1619 [people with vision impairment], they say “người mù” [the blind]. But actually that word is
1620 neither not good nor correct. Why? Because “mù” is total blindness, while “khiếm thị” can
1621 be at many levels. There are some children who can still see the light dimly... Of course, the
1622 concept of "legally blind" in English is about 1/10 vision after using glasses, but it's not
1623 blind. Sometimes because these development worker colleagues have done this a lot, so they
1624 become close to a brother from a society of people with sight loss, so they see a group of
1625 blind people and they'll say “oh this blind guy, that blind guy”, or they might think “oh it's
1626 okay to being blind”. Then that is something to be careful about, because I see it very often,
1627 especially when we work with groups with more social problems, such as drug addicts,
1628 prostitutes, HIV/AIDS groups, teenagers who have had abortions... how to say it, what nouns
1629 to call them... There was a time in Hanoi that I don't recall much, but there was a big
1630 controversy about the projects helping prostitutes when there were people who came down
1631 to the meeting and said "we're so glad we had the prostitute sisters with us today" [Laughter].
1632 Finally, it seemed to end up with using the word "sex workers". Those are examples of the
1633 standards I found interesting. I think it's the “nôm na” language style, but it shows that
1634 Vietnamese language can also be “nôm na” and very emotional at the same time, and it
1635 always has to be hierarchical. Some can be "slapping each other in the face", but some can
1636 be using softer language. That's something we should consider in the context of Vietnam. I
1637 learned this when I worked with some American officials and when they translated from
1638 English into Vietnamese, they were very strict. Later when I worked with others, such as
1639 {name of country}, there was almost no such thing. Even {name of country}, {name of
1640 country}. But the {name of country} alone is very strong with that.

1641 *What a great example...*

1642 Also I don't know what "political correctness" translates into Vietnamese. “Tránh các nhạy
1643 cảm về chính trị và xã hội” [Avoid political and social sensitivities]? I don't know, but it's
1644 something you can think about.

1645 *Is it common that this criterion included in the donor's practice? Political correctness...*

1646 Depends. Some organisations have them, but none of them have it as a complete practice.
1647 Political correctness is a concept that can be applied to all sorts of different fields. Even
1648 saying fat people, thin people... there is another way to say it to be more polite. But when it
1649 comes to development work, it is even more necessary. Some people also sometimes
1650 complain that these development people are too complicated, whatever they say, they feel
1651 that they can offend others... Yes, sometimes it goes a bit too far. But if I look it up... I think
1652 if you look up political correctness principles in development or translation for example, and

1653 go into each field, there will be different things. For example gender, it can be different.
 1654 Some terms we won't be able to translate into Vietnamese, but we can maybe create our own
 1655 standards.

1656 *So I want to ask if you have more examples of problematic terminology in your day-to-day*
 1657 *work...*

1658 Wellbeing and resilience are difficult cases, yes?

1659 *Yes, difficult...*

1660 Actually, like I said, there won't be a standard translation. For example, when I say
 1661 resilience of a community, and during storms and floods... do they usually translate it as “khả
 1662 năng chống chịu” [ability to endure]?

1663 *Yes. And also "adaptability"...*

1664 Economic resilience... But these words are just...

1665 *Relative?*

1666 It's relative, but translate it that way, it sounds kind of plain, so when you hear it Vietnamese,
 1667 you know the English right away, so it's only relative understanding. But resilience, in the
 1668 most “nôm na” way, can be understood as the ability to recover, the ability after being lost,
 1669 after being hurt, after losing their home in floods... they can recover, they can return to the
 1670 previous state, then it is resilience. If I need to explain resilience to the community, I would
 1671 explain it like that. And in a text where explanation is not needed, how should I translate?
 1672 “Tính chống chịu, khả năng chống chịu” [resistance]?

1673 *“Phục hồi” [recovery]?*

1674 Actually I prefer “phục hồi”.

1675 *Then you put the original term in parentheses?*

1676 Not necessarily. If necessary, to say the truth, there were times when I translated texts that I
 1677 knew no one would read, and I would translate them all in one go. In fact, I am a very
 1678 practical person, if I know it is important, I will not hesitate to put in the effort. Once at the
 1679 Embassy, there was a sister named Nga Bui, who specialised in translation at the Embassy.
 1680 Many times when we translated important documents, we had to look at each word, there
 1681 were words that have to be considered for 15 minutes, and each had to google indepently.
 1682 But sometimes for unimportant tasks, we didn't invest that much time. If it's related to
 1683 disasters, it's related to “khả năng phục hồi”. But resilience in some projects involving
 1684 psychology is different. It is the strength with which one can calm down psychologically and
 1685 mentally, then it is different.

1686 Well-being is also difficult (laughs).

1687 *Wellbeing is a goal among the SDGs... and there's no way we can avoid translating it into*
 1688 *Vietnamese...*

1689 Those things I don't worry about, because there are always standard documents. But SDGs
1690 are not just a statement, they must always be accompanied by a certain explanation. The
1691 meanings will also be described more clearly...

1692 *Have you observed the opposite cases where you can't find an equivalent in English to*
1693 *translate a Vietnamese term?*

1694 There are a lot, but I can't think of it right now.

1695 *Specifically in the development sector...*

1696 Actually, from Vietnamese into English, concepts are not that terrible, but the difficulty is
1697 about our administrative hierarchy of departments, branches, systems, organisations...
1698 sometimes there are professional translators translating directly at once and foreigners don't
1699 understand. From the simple things, for example, they don't understand our system, from
1700 commune to district to province... Each country has its own system, right? Sometimes I say
1701 district, commune, province... But in that axis, they don't understand what level district is at.
1702 Sometimes they understand that the district is at a high level, because in some countries the
1703 district is like a province. This is an example that when I translate, I always have to see
1704 whether the other side understands. Or for example, now when I say the word "ministry", I
1705 call it "bộ", then "sở", then "phòng"... they might not understand that system too, especially
1706 with "sở" and "phòng". So professional translators might do one-shot translations, but those
1707 who are more considerate and wish to make Westerners understand, they'll explain more,
1708 and tell them about the order, they will understand right away. Institutions like the
1709 "Fatherland Front" must be explained. And these and those "tổng cục"... are also confusing.
1710 Institutions like the "Supreme People's Court"... Many are not easy to understand.

1711 That's why we at the Embassy often have to explain to our Western friends the context so
1712 that they can understand, from something as simple as how this Vietnamese name is
1713 pronounced, to what this position means or how it is equivalent to other systems. We know
1714 that when we go and translate, they also nod but don't understand where the problem lies.
1715 For example, "the Department of Agriculture just reported to the PPC and the Ministry of
1716 Agriculture"... they don't understand. since they don't understand what the provincial
1717 people's committee is, or which one is bigger, the ministry of agriculture or the department
1718 of agriculture. These things I thought were simple, but when I translated, sometimes they
1719 didn't understand, and even without daring to ask. Not to mention that many think they are
1720 too skilled to use acronyms like MARD, DARD...

1721 *I also made that mistake a lot.*

1722 Now if they talk about their system in one shot, we'll give up. Not to mention in our country
1723 the system is more complicated.

1724 *I have a few more questions. For example, what do you think would be some useful solutions*
1725 *to translation and terminology issues in development work?*

1726 I am thinking of a glossary of specialised terminology. If we ask for standard translations, it
1727 will be very difficult, but I think it is a good tool for two purposes. First it makes it easier
1728 for users, second, it is a good move towards bringing different translators, different
1729 translations from different projects closer. It is unknown if that tool can help with
1730 standardising, but it is also a space for gathering specialised vocabulary. For example, a

1731 person who is new to these fields can see and decide on a number of terms to memorise. If
1732 we compare several different projects who all have the tool, we can see different translations,
1733 which translation is better or worse... I think if donors always demand doing that, it will be
1734 good so that, because there is no standardised terminology, it will bring different translations
1735 closer.

1736 Because talking about translation in development work is too vast. But for example those
1737 tools I really don't need to think of, because there are organisations who have already done
1738 it. The main thing is whether we use it or not, or whether we apply it to some extent, or
1739 whether it is standardised. For example, the table of acronyms. It's a necessity but many don't
1740 do. But sometimes when I'm reading about the somewhat specialised projects, it sometimes
1741 takes time to find acronyms like that. Therefore, it is necessary to group these words into a
1742 table at the beginning, or as a rule, write them in full first, and then abbreviate them. Or the
1743 explanations, in cases where translation in projects can be difficult to understand, because
1744 the terms are introduced, and involve systems and culture, etc., then use more footnotes. I
1745 think these are extremely helpful in explaining in more detail. Because at higher levels I can
1746 use standard terms, but at lower levels, I can be more "nôm na". And this is my experience
1747 with translation.

1748 Another tool that can be great in development work, not translation but support for
1749 translation, that is using images. You already know this, right? For technical fields, worms,
1750 plants, diseases, etc., it is very good to use a combination of equivalent translations and
1751 images.

1752 *This reminds me of a recent example of AFD and Youth Union launching a contest to*
1753 *translate resilience into Vietnamese and infographics, pictures can be used to illustrate. I*
1754 *see people have thought about using images to translate concepts...*

1755 If they want to use pictures to explain the concept of resilience, it is political, and the contest
1756 is more about creativity than real contribution to development work [*Laughter*]. I think apart
1757 from some practical value, the contest also had some fun value.

1758 But you can talk about glossary tools for identifying pests. One side in Vietnamese, one side
1759 in English and pictures, too accurate, right? Adding images will be many times more
1760 accurate and easy to use. Or varieties of vegetables and plant diseases... you should use more
1761 pictures because it will help with visualisation.

1762 *Let me ask you one last question. Do you have any examples of terms that you think should*
1763 *not be included in development documents or policy documents at the moment in Vietnam?*

1764 I don't think there's any term that's more difficult to translate than to leave it as is. I think if
1765 we are Vietnamese, we have the right not to know foreign languages. And if I'm a person
1766 who comes to do a development project, I have an obligation to somehow explain it to
1767 people. If you can't use a word, use a sentence.

1768 If you like to leave it as is, it's ok, but because everyone may allow for each other. In my
1769 opinion, translating an English word into Vietnamese, it will 100% become Vietnamese
1770 because I don't want to use English. Such is my view. And the Vietnamese language, even
1771 if it's not very academic, it's "nôm na", it depends on the context... then I think that if we try
1772 and be careful, we can still translate everything. Of course, there is room for explanation and
1773 to ensure the understanding of users to be safe, we can add in the original English words.

1774 And when it comes to the concepts that should not be used and included, I think more about
1775 the second way of standardising that I told you. That is, the things that can cause views about
1776 disdain, contempt or can offend others... then those are the ones I think should be avoided.
1777 As for technical terms, try to translate. And whoever has the money to do a project, create a
1778 dictionary of 1,000 most commonly used words in agriculture, or a certain field... pay a
1779 consultant for about six months, they will be able to translate everything. For example they
1780 might even suggest 4 different translations - to use in different contexts. I think it's not that
1781 difficult, it's just that no one has the time, pressure and money to do it, but it's possible to do
1782 it. What I want not to have are the ones with the above properties.

1783 For example, "drug addict", "drug addict", or "drug user", "prostitute" or "sexual service",
1784 "providing sex services",... there are a lot of equivalents to use. Actually, when in Vietnam,
1785 the development people sometimes put themselves in a superior position, not only
1786 Vietnamese colleagues but also Western colleagues. From going to a village, a province,
1787 from the way you stand, from the sitting position to the way you talk and use the language...
1788 the community may not like it, but they have to bear it. That's something we have to be very
1789 careful about. Now that Vietnam is also developing, the disparity between development
1790 workers and beneficiaries is also getting smaller and smaller. In addition to the traditional
1791 projects that go down to help, I'll go in the direction of other areas of social life and culture,
1792 etc.

1793 *Thank you. See you next time.*

1794 Interview with Participant 5 (P5-Ph1)

1795 *Can you please share with me the translation-related part of your day-to-day development*
1796 *work?*

1797 I don't directly translate and only write documents, develop project concept notes and terms
1798 of reference. But there are many situations where translation is involved. My organisation
1799 often outsources translation to external translators, and the team don't translate directly.
1800 There are many cases we need to hire translators, we receive translated documents and I
1801 have to ask my colleagues to review, and when I send them to partners, they often complain
1802 that the translation is wrong, so I have to spend a lot of time reviewing again.

1803 When we do development work in Vietnam, we also don't have much experience in
1804 translation, because we only work with Vietnamese people. So when I write, they ask to
1805 write in Vietnamese first. There are also a few times when we have to translate, but not a lot.
1806 But there are also many difficulties in translating development terminology, such as
1807 community-based tourism. But I know someone has translated this term before, and people
1808 still translate it as "du lịch cộng đồng", or "du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng". There are many
1809 terms that are difficult to translate, but when I first started working, experienced co-workers
1810 would help. "Use this word in this case, use that word in that case"... Usually in an
1811 organisation, they use certain terms over and over, certain translation equivalents, to avoid
1812 confusion later.

1813 *How do local or community partners understand "du lịch cộng đồng" or "du lịch dựa vào*
1814 *cộng đồng"? Is it different from the framework that your organisation and your project*
1815 *propose?*

1816 Actually, I think their understanding is pretty close, because I think that model, historically
1817 it has certain similarities with some of the concepts we already have, like cooperatives... the
1818 kind of everyone working together, making decisions together, and benefiting together. I see
1819 people have no problem understanding the concept. Everyone understands the approach as
1820 "all people discuss and decide". This team cooks while the other cleans the room, another
1821 provides the guiding... In general, everyone understands quite clearly. But later when there
1822 are some private models, that is, only one household runs it, and they only do homestay or
1823 bed&breakfast, but they also call it "community tourism" [*Laughter*]. That is the only case
1824 where I see community -based tourism not being used adequately as its original concept.

1825 That time we worked with {redacted} village and {redacted} village in {name of province},
1826 in both models it was really community participation. But people outside that community,
1827 or from other areas, they just heard the term and they misunderstood that, as far as a tourism
1828 business is run by local people, it is called community tourism [*Laughter*]. So they thought
1829 they'd bring in a few neighbors to cook, or do this and that... to claim that they were also
1830 doing community tourism.

1831 *Do you know who first translated the term "community-based tourism" into Vietnamese?*

1832 I don't know, because in 2015 when I joined, everyone had already done community-based
1833 tourism for a while, so I don't know who was the first to translate the term.

1834 *What do you think about that translation?*

1835 I never thought that the translation was problematic. I think it's ok to use, because it implies
1836 the community work and the sense of public in the Vietnamese language. The implication
1837 of that term is about, still tourism brings benefit to the community and that benefit is
1838 inclusive of many stakeholders in the community.

1839 *In the field of community-based tourism, do you see any problematic terms that are difficult
1840 to translate, understand or have many different translations?*

1841 I still remember "participatory", because it lies in the first step when making a plan, there is
1842 always a so-called "participatory workshop", ie. all local stakeholders participate. And there,
1843 one more term, "stakeholder"... What is the Vietnamese translation, "các bên hữu quan" [all
1844 concerned parties]?

1845 *Also, "các bên tham gia" [all participating parties]?*

1846 There, "stakeholders" is also used a lot and I don't know how to translate. "Các bên tham
1847 gia", "các bên liên quan", "các bên hữu quan"... Then "visitor management", "quản lý du
1848 khách"? [*Laughter*]. That is a catchword being used a lot in tourism planning. I have to
1849 remember more, because lately I've been working a lot with the private sector, not with the
1850 community.

1851 But I still talk a lot with people about community-based tourism. But what people debate the
1852 most in this field is not about terminology but mainly about concepts, ie. whether this
1853 concept really works or not. I feel it's almost like our former "cooperative" model, where
1854 everyone was the owner, everyone participated, everyone worked and received the benefit.
1855 I find this concept too idealistic. And in order to operate a tourism business - that is, to do
1856 marketing, accounting... whether people in a village can do such things or still need support
1857 from an outside enterprise and hold responsible for commercial operations? And then they

1858 become a shareholder or a stakeholder in a large apparatus but they are not completely the
1859 owner of that model.

1860 *So when you explain the model of community-based tourism to local stakeholders, do you*
1861 *explain in the direction of the cooperative model? Do I relate to the term “cooperative”?*

1862 Here they understand a little differently. That is, when talking about community tourism,
1863 they immediately think of homestay [*Laughter*]. Usually, they will develop a tourist
1864 destination in a certain community, then mainly they set up a common village fund which is
1865 called a community fund. When visitors come to that village, they have to buy a ticket, and
1866 that money will be put into the community fund to be used for common purposes of the
1867 community such as building roads, building cultural houses, etc. In the community. Anyone
1868 can do whatever they want. They can do homestay and put in lots of effort but it is not as
1869 highly organised as some other community models in other sectors. Usually in Vietnam,
1870 organisation and specialisation are very important. The village headman has a say, and will
1871 say "this household does this, this household does that...", and so on. The main problem is
1872 still efficiency, because sometimes there are no guests, and because there are no guests, no
1873 one will notice for a long time, so every time a few guests come, no one has the key to open
1874 the door or no one has cleaned the room beforehand [*Laughter*].

1875 One of the two villages where I worked before, {redacted}, is located right near {redacted},
1876 and after the model was developed, it is good enough for only a percentage of tourists from
1877 {redacted} to visit the village. When there are guests, the community will have the
1878 opportunity to practice and improve their expertise.

1879 *Outside of the area we just talked about, are there other concepts and terms used every day*
1880 *in your work that you find problematic?*

1881 In our work component, we work with 4 different sectors: tourism, coffee, handicrafts and
1882 vegetable/organic agriculture. There are many terms I always ponder on and still don't know
1883 how to translate into Vietnamese. For example, “regenerative tourism”. In theory, we work
1884 on sustainable tourism, but sustainable tourism is very broad and covering many different
1885 social and environmental aspects. Particularly, our work now focuses on the environment
1886 aspects, and there is a term we use a lot which is "resource efficiency". How does this
1887 translate into Vietnamese? It can be understood as the use of materials such as electricity,
1888 water, and garbage. Then it relates to waste management, then energy and water efficiency.
1889 There are a bunch of those terms that I want to translate into Vietnamese but it's very
1890 difficult, but I find that if I can translate them, it's very useful in the context of Vietnam.
1891 People will roughly translate it in a “nôm na” way as, how to save electricity and water, and
1892 there is not a complete equivalent for “resource efficiency”. I have to explain that concept.
1893 And as soon as we present in English, we have to explain, “we work on resource efficiency,
1894 and it means... energy and water conservation, waste minimisation...”, just like that.

1895 Regarding the sustainable certification for coffee, there are some terms that I find difficult
1896 to translate, because some people complain that it is not correct.

1897 *When you get these complaints, do you discuss them informally or formally in meetings?*

1898 No, because they don't see it as a big problem. I have a feeling that my colleagues don't really
1899 understand the nature of these terms to be able to judge the right or wrong of a translation,
1900 or to explain to local partners that the true meanings are.

1901 Personally, I also have discussions with colleagues but not often, and mainly with foreign
1902 colleagues. Since very few people are curious about these matters, they are not interested.
1903 Even my boss sometimes argues that we should use this word and not that word, for example.
1904 But the boss is {from an European country} and not a native speaker, so their understanding
1905 is also different, or they understand the word in the {name of an European country} sense.
1906 Since that is a {name of an European country} organisation, many documents must be
1907 written in {name of an European country} , or on the website the main language is {name of
1908 an European country} . The English website is simple and not as detailed as the {name of an
1909 European country} one, and they even keep a lot of {name of an European country} in the
1910 English website. So I think it's the phenomenon of untranslatability. For example, the
1911 organisation's full name is very long but an abbreviation is always used. I once asked "what
1912 does this name translate into English?", they said it was difficult to translate, so they left it
1913 untranslated. Since documents have to be translated into 3 languages, I am sure there will be
1914 many misunderstandings or language problems.

1915 *Do you have any stories about concepts already existing in local knowledge but similar*
1916 *knowledge is introduced from the outside through new expressions and terms?*

1917 I only have one example that I think is relevant to your question. The term “phát triển bền
1918 vững”, “sustainable development” is used a lot, and development organisations like the UN
1919 or other large organisations have been promoting this concept and term for years. Local
1920 people also like it, and they use it a lot, sometimes a bit excessively and unreasonably, or in
1921 cases where they don't really understand the meaning of sustainable development. Now this
1922 term comes up a lot in documents, and I have a personal feeling that they “are learning how”
1923 to talk to development practitioners and project co-workers... so they must use such words.
1924 But it's really possible that they don't understand the essence completely. There is another
1925 term that organisations often use recently is "inclusive growth", what is the Vietnamese
1926 translation? [Laughter]. But even among people who do development work and use English,
1927 when it comes to sustainable development, they often only refer to environmental issues, for
1928 example, so they give rise to similar terms. New concepts such as "green tourism" to refer
1929 to sustainable tourism, for example.

1930 As I see it in development studies and academia, there is always new knowledge and
1931 terminology emerging. But I don't think in the localities that I work with they can catch up
1932 at such a rate of production of new knowledge and terms. Often when a new term is
1933 introduced, for example “regenerative tourism”, it is not quite the same as sustainable
1934 tourism, since we are not only talking about sustaining but moving towards regeneration, but
1935 certainly the term, when introduced to the local contexts, people will say "that's the same as
1936 sustainable tourism". People immediately relate to existing knowledge and terms. Generally
1937 in documents and at meetings, these terms emerge a lot as a buzzword, but for its real
1938 meaning, I don't think the stakeholders fully understand.

1939 *You do think often about the interpretation or translation of the SDGs?*

1940 In the field of tourism and the projects I am working with, we also focus on SDG No. 12,
1941 "sustainable consumption and production". Obviously, if I translate this as “sản xuất và tiêu
1942 dùng bền vững” in Vietnamese, then I'm thinking about physical goods, right? But it can
1943 include many things. As in tourism, there is also sustainable consumption and production,
1944 like when we talk about production in the service industry, sustainable production and
1945 service. If we talk about "sustainable consumption and production of coffee", it's very
1946 obvious, ok, growing coffee in an organic way, then middlemen and consumers must be

1947 aware of this and that... So I think the ideas and terminology of these SDGs is difficult to
1948 translate into Vietnamese, especially if it is associated with a service industry such as
1949 tourism. "Sustainable consumption and production in tourism", the translation is difficult to
1950 understand.

1951 *In a way that it refers to intangible products and not intangible products?*

1952 Yes, the products from service are intangible. But when we translate sustainable
1953 consumption and production into Vietnamese, what it suggests to the audience is that we are
1954 talking about a tangible product, not an intangible product. Then people ask again, "what is
1955 the difference between Sustainable consumption and production and sustainable value
1956 chain... and sustainable tourism?" [Laughter].

1957 *The key is in "sustainable", right?*

1958 I think so too. I don't understand why they came up with that term for the SDGs. I think it's
1959 because they want it to be inclusive. But it is difficult to apply to different sectors. Because
1960 in practice, when going to work and every time this SDG is mentioned, people wonder, why
1961 not use sustainable value chain or sustainable tourism, but sustainable consumption and
1962 production? I will answer, because that is an SDG [Laughter], and that phrase has to be put
1963 in use because the project received funding to implement that SDG. So in all documents, the
1964 term is used and even its acronym, SCP. There was a very funny case, while doing a mid-
1965 term review or random evaluation for a project, someone came to evaluate my project, they
1966 read the document and asked us about a bunch of terminology and abbreviations... It's not
1967 the project that came up with these acronyms ourselves, but everyone who works on this
1968 SDG 12 knows what SCP is. SDG 12 focuses heavily on the environment, for example
1969 when we talk about the rather large environmental footprint of garment factories, or the
1970 problems of child labour or bad human resource practice, or the reduction of plastic waste,
1971 or the regular use and maintenance of air conditioners, traffic and transportation... about
1972 carbon emission.

1973 *What is your view on the role of terminology and translation in your day-to-day development*
1974 *work?*

1975 I think it's a problem, because maybe the development workers and those who get the
1976 development support don't have the same understanding of the terms. And often the terms
1977 are highly academic, but sometimes I go to the field to work with people with no formal
1978 education, it's very difficult. And in some cases when I produce documents like manuals for
1979 farmers, handicrafters, motels and small businesses, or local small-scale tourism
1980 businesses... then the one who translates may not know who the users of these documents
1981 are. Because our project does not translate ourselves but we outsource, it is common for
1982 translators to not know who the users are. Regarding the content, there are new concepts that
1983 the stakeholders have never known of, so I think it is difficult to understand.

1984 *How do the stakeholders often accept these publications?*

1985 I think there's a good chance they'll leave it aside. To solve this problem, people can suggest
1986 that the documents are shortened, or mainly using pictures and illustrations instead of lots of
1987 words. But there are different assumptions, such as the assumption that people don't like to
1988 read so they don't read, but I think many times it's because they don't understand or find it

- 1989 difficult to understand the knowledge. But no one has yet made the assumption that the
1990 documents are too hard to understand, so no one reads them.
- 1991 *Do your team ever evaluate how difficult these translations are for community stakeholders*
1992 *to understand?*
- 1993 Never. If you give me the translation, I can say there is no problem. But it's very difficult to
1994 put yourself in a farmer's shoes to say "this is confusing or incomprehensible".
- 1995 *Have you ever shared project and policy documents just for the purpose of knowing reading*
1996 *comprehension?*
- 1997 Never. I think it should be done like that, but projects are usually short-term, with many
1998 different activities. Many times the indicator of a project is just the production and
1999 publication of this one document, and there is no target that this document be read by this
2000 many people and understood by this many people. The project usually just stops at meeting
2001 the criteria like "develop a manual on... organic farming", then tick the box and then it's done
2002 [*Laughter*]. No one ever wonders if this document is really useful and the target audience
2003 will read it or not. I don't think people have ever had the time and resources to identify and
2004 solve this problem.
- 2005 *In your opinion, who might be best in a project or in development work in general to*
2006 *translate the development terms? Professional translators or bilingual development*
2007 *practitioners?*
- 2008 I don't know if a bilingual practitioner should translate or edit the translation, but maybe
2009 editing is better. Since translation takes a lot of time, those who have expertise in translation
2010 and experience translating in many different fields will translate better. And then we will be
2011 the one to edit that translation. And it should be edited.
- 2012 *A collaboration?*
- 2013 I think that's the best approach.
- 2014 *Have you ever participated in creating a translation for a certain term before?*
- 2015 I haven't had a chance to do that.
- 2016 *If it was possible to suggest that some fancy terms or buzzwords that should not be used in*
2017 *development work, what would they be?*
- 2018 Inclusive growth, and sustainable livelihoods. Because those I work with in those fields
2019 really rely on natural resources like forests, or farmers... so I don't think they understand
2020 these terms very well. These terms don't make sense to them. Sustainable tourism has been
2021 used too widely, and since many parties and businesses use it, it may not be a problem. Or
2022 maybe it is problematic because everyone uses it but not many can understand what it is
2023 exactly.
- 2024 *Thank you very much.*
- 2025 Interview with Participant 6 (P6-Ph1)

2026 *Let's start. Could you please share your experience with translation in your day-to-day*
2027 *development work in Vietnam?*

2028 I think I will situate it in the context of my previous work. In Vietnam there were 2 phases.
2029 The first was when I worked with loan projects, mainly from the Asian Development Bank
2030 and the World Bank. And there was a short phase when I worked for a Belgian technical
2031 cooperation agency. My role in these projects was a full-time interpreter and translator to
2032 deliver both document translation and interpreting. Mainly my daily job was translating
2033 correspondence between the donor and the Project Management Board and the governing
2034 body that was the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam. In addition, I also
2035 interpreted at meetings between departments, usually between the PMU, the Ministry of
2036 Education and Training, the State Bank of Vietnam, the Ministry of Finance... Those were
2037 parties that performed inter-agency functions in terms of management. In addition, I also
2038 provided verbal interpreting and document translation in training sessions run by
2039 international experts and officials in the Vietnamese government. Such training sessions
2040 could be at the local level, for example in the province, or field visits to schools and one-on-
2041 one sessions with local schools. That was the first stage when I worked as a project
2042 management staff and translator. Later, for the next 4 years, I worked in an NGO, and my
2043 main job was related to programme management, but in programme management, I also had
2044 to translate, because it's a {name of an European country} organisation. The tasks included
2045 specialised work, both related to meeting partners and communication. For example, the
2046 programme documents were all in English because the management was all foreigners. But
2047 when we worked with Vietnamese partners, we had to translate the programme documents
2048 into Vietnamese for them. Also with the media, I sometimes provided press releases and
2049 information related to the issues we were working on. Specifically, we worked on domestic
2050 violence and human trafficking, so there were information and terms that we had to introduce
2051 at that time to the public. An example was modern slavery. So basically that's what I did.

2052 *Two different experiences, but these translation-tasks had already been in your terms of*
2053 *reference, yes?*

2054 In principle yes, as in the contract there was a description, but not so mechanically.
2055 Regarding translation-related work, it depends on each project. If there is a project, the donor
2056 will require having TORs first. Some projects hire translators first, then build TORs to
2057 legalise recruitment. The scope of translation in general only accounts for about 40% of the
2058 work, the rest is more related to bidding, monitoring contract disbursements and supporting
2059 other teams with project management. So I think about translation TORs, there are but not
2060 all projects have them, and when they do, the actual work is also very different.

2061 *Besides translation-related tasks, like you said 40%, are there other tasks related to*
2062 *language? For example, language training, English training for project office staff?*

2063 Yes, and these are self-initiated. I'll add a little more, that I realise that the way development
2064 projects work is very different from that of NGOs. That is, in the development projects that
2065 I worked with, there will be a separate translation department, and we will be the focal point
2066 to handle all information in and out related to translation. And when I work in NGOs, all the
2067 programme staff can speak English, so my role is not that of a gatekeeper. I'll just be a
2068 language user at work like an ordinary staffer. But in the projects, I see all the incoming and
2069 outgoing information, all the meetings where there are international guests and all the
2070 training sessions that need translation. And even if the boss is an English speaker, others
2071 don't speak English. I think diplomatically, people don't use English in this situation, so I

2072 find it inconvenient that, for example, we have to do everything, because it's the principle
2073 when we are in the translation department we have to do all of that. But the workload is
2074 sometimes heavy. And secondly, I think there are things that, for speed of work, I can
2075 standardise. For example, contract forms, sometimes the procurement department staff can
2076 completely fill in the information, send it back and we will review it. It will not take as much
2077 time as we have to translate the entire document sets from scratch. Then we also try to
2078 standardise by giving some training sessions on terminologies that are commonly used in
2079 project management or related to our projects. We did train the staff in the office, but it didn't
2080 work after that. I think because people focus on their specialty and think that in some way
2081 the mandate of the translator is to ensure the translation, so they don't care about sharing
2082 tasks.

2083 *How many people are there in the translation department?*

2084 Usually there are three to four people, of which three are permanent, and one is a part-time
2085 translator. For example, when there is too much work, you will have to contract a part-time
2086 translator to help.

2087 *Can you share with me your experience with terminology in your day-to-day development
2088 work?*

2089 I think basically, because the environment we work in is actually a project environment, for
2090 example, if I go to government sub-ministries and departments, just the use of English
2091 language will be much more limited, so frequently people don't approach language the way
2092 we do in development work. In general, then the work will require me translating and
2093 explaining, sometimes they will have objections, for example, when we do training for
2094 institutes, we are very scared. Since there will be leading professors or researchers in the
2095 institutes, I think they may not be good at language, but professionally, they are all
2096 professionals. So for them, the fact that they sit in meetings or conferences without having a
2097 translator who is highly skilled, we encounter many situations where delegates will stand up
2098 and "attack" translators about inaccurate translation [*Laughter*]. Those are the times when
2099 we feel anxious, because power dynamics is very clear that we are translators, we are just
2100 speakers, and there is no defense, but on the contrary people have expectations that you have
2101 to be highly qualified and specialised as a translator. Then with the sub-ministries,
2102 government departments and institutes, I think they will be more limited in terms of
2103 language, but because their expertise is better, so when I work with them, I find it much
2104 more challenging. As for people who work in project management, most will understand the
2105 terminology we use, so sometimes they will support us. For example, there were terms that
2106 we did not know completely when we were new, or for example, with standardised terms in
2107 the project management. For example, I remember this word "mission", usually I understood
2108 it as "sứ mệnh", but actually in the context of project management, this word could be often
2109 translated as "phái đoàn" [delegation]. When I translated it as "sứ mệnh", the office co-
2110 workers said it usually translated as "delegation", so I corrected it myself. So I see in PMU,
2111 people will understand more and expose more to the language of project management. As
2112 for fieldwork, it's another power dynamic, because people there hardly know English, and
2113 they don't approach it... usually they just go to a workshop or a meeting, they'll be exposed
2114 to it. For example, at the district level, the stakeholders never have access to what we do, so
2115 they will respect us more, and sometimes they see the translator as a person with power
2116 because they do not speak English, and they cannot communicate with experts without a
2117 translator. So I find that when I go to the field, my positionality improves, sometimes even
2118 when I go to local meetings, it's my responsibility, but sometimes local partners also give

2119 envelopes to the translator who helped them with communication. And sometimes they also
2120 tell us that, for example, today we want to translate this more clearly so that the consultant
2121 can evaluate it, and maybe approve the grant to do it. Then I almost play the role of mediator
2122 between those who have power in decision making with beneficiaries.

2123 *You just mentioned power. Can you share some of your stories or experiences about power*
2124 *when you translate and interpret at meetings?*

2125 I think there are two types of situations. First, at a meeting there might be the donor or
2126 consultants, and usually people just raise terminologies that are unfamiliar to them, then they
2127 move on. I think this situation is also easy because sometimes with a meeting, everyone just
2128 needs to handle that as the nature of a meeting, so people don't pay too much attention to
2129 having to argue about correct terms. At meetings, the agenda is set, so there is not much
2130 room for flexibility, so everyone understands to just get it right then it will move on. If
2131 meeting with ministries, departments, agencies, institutes, they basically understand how
2132 translators work, so they don't care much, and sometimes they still understand English.
2133 Sometimes they are lazy and need a translator. So I don't think this is a big deal. However, I
2134 think a smaller problem may happen when I do training, because training is usually on
2135 specialised subjects. And the training agenda is sometimes long, sometimes a whole week.
2136 In that 1 week, for example, when experts train for departments, ministries, departments,
2137 agencies, institutes... then there will be more opportunities, room and space for them to
2138 contact you. In particular, I think when conducting workshops with specialised organisations
2139 - who are, still working as a state management agency but still working in a specialty, such
2140 as institutes, then there may be a situation where the Vietnamese "gurus", professors and
2141 PhDs, for example, may sometimes stand up and "steal the micro" and explain that "the
2142 meaning of this term is not that... and that translation is wrong...".

2143 In terms of handling, sometimes as an interpreter, when I meet with the local community, I
2144 am very confident with my work, because I know that I am the only person who acts as the
2145 bridge between English speakers and the locals. But when I work with institutes for example,
2146 I know that they are professionals and sometimes they also use English, but maybe just the
2147 writing and not so well with the speaking, so professionally I think I am no match to them.
2148 So that puts me in a slightly more disadvantaged position. In addition, I think because in
2149 terms of titles, they are experts and researchers, so their voices have more weight than mine,
2150 and in some ways, they often see the interpreter as a speaker, not a speaker. I have to be a
2151 professional, then I think that also makes me more discredited. For me as a male, it may be
2152 better, but for female translators and interpreters, it may be different. In my team, there are
2153 usually two females, one male, and the females would encounter more problems. When their
2154 performance is affected for example, I see that the gender dynamics also play a role, they'd
2155 feel more pressure. As for me, maybe I didn't do well but I rarely see people give direct
2156 feedback. Females are often talked about more.

2157 *This perspective is new and really interesting. Now could you share with me stories of*
2158 *problematic translations of terms in your day-to-day work?*

2159 One good thing about my time at the PMU is that the language was totally specialised,
2160 because I entered PMU when they finished setting up the project, they had been working on
2161 the project for 5-6 years already. So I think everything has been standardised for the most
2162 part, so I don't see much of a problem, unless it's in depth. For example, all the three projects
2163 I worked with were about education, there would be international experts invited to provide
2164 training in specific areas, such as building a school management system, but only to

2165 principals and school leaders. When doing this in the field, for example, on teaching
2166 methods, we worked with teachers. Then the situation was more likely to happen when
2167 experts trained provincial department-level officials on education management or trained
2168 teachers on teaching methods, for example. Now sometimes it happened that the terms they
2169 used were in a very different educational context from Vietnam. One term that led to a lot of
2170 contradictions, for example, was "counselling". In essence, what it means is career
2171 counselling or vocational counselling, vocational orientation... and in Vietnam, the term that
2172 most people use is “tư vấn hướng nghiệp”, and I think this translation is not debated by
2173 anyone. But because I studied social work, and I use “counselling” as “tham vấn” rather than
2174 “tư vấn”, it's different from "consulting" for example.

2175 When I was preparing for a workshop, people had to make banners and backdrops, so there
2176 was this workshop on "career orientation and counselling", and the translation team
2177 originally translated as “hướng nghiệp và tư vấn nghề nghiệp”. That time when I joined, I
2178 saw that this term did not mean “tư vấn” but “tham vấn”. Then I talked to the international
2179 consultant about my understanding of the term, that it is not “tham vấn” and not “tư vấn”,
2180 and asked if I should check the organisers because they had already printed it. Then he said,
2181 “just say it because I don't want this matter to be misunderstood”. But I think this was a
2182 mistake because when I brought this up, people said that it had always been used that way
2183 and nothing needed to be changed. Nor did people view “tư vấn” and “tham vấn” differently
2184 from the professional perspective of those working in the PMU. Especially when everything
2185 had been printed, people didn't want to change it anymore. Later, it was a bit of a problem
2186 that the consultant believed me but there was also an impression with the PMU that people
2187 didn't take the term positively.

2188 *“Tư vấn hướng nghiệp” and “hướng nghiệp và tư vấn nghề nghiệp”, do you think these*
2189 *have been translation equivalents in Vietnamese for the original term “counselling”? Would*
2190 *it be possible that these wordings were actually coined in Vietnamese previously to go with*
2191 *the practice of “counselling” in the project?*

2192 I think even for the area of counselling in Vietnam, if it's a practice, it's still very new.
2193 Usually I understand counselling programmes on the radio or late-night stories... Usually
2194 people will ask questions and then the consultant answers, and the expert has the power, they
2195 have the right to speak and their voice matters more than the questioner. But with
2196 counselling, it is completely different, because counselling is a technique of asking questions
2197 and mainly it focuses on questioning techniques to elicit problems. As for making decisions
2198 and conclusions, it is from the counterpart's side. I think the positions are very different.
2199 When we say “tư vấn hướng nghiệp”, usually what we mean is a career guidance officer tells
2200 students or listeners what one needs to do, while “tham vấn nghề nghiệp” just consists of
2201 providing information and then the tools to inform the other person about decent options,
2202 and then making decisions. The nature is very different, but when translating it as “tư vấn
2203 hướng nghiệp”, it feels better to listen to, and it seems to be used more often in the vocational
2204 school system, vocational colleges, vocational high schools... So if you add in a new term
2205 like “tham vấn nghề nghiệp”, it sounds very unfamiliar to them, and that's not their way of
2206 doing things. Their way of doing things is simply orienting students on what to do, and does
2207 not include using the tools to find out what you fit into and then relying on that assessment
2208 tool to offer career options. I think maybe it's not completely wrong, but it's a practice in
2209 reality and in the context of vocational training in Vietnam. As for the counselling technique,
2210 according to {name of an European country} standards, it is very new and different from the
2211 current practice in Vietnam.

2212 I didn't find out who was the first to translate counselling as “tư vấn hướng nghiệp”, but
2213 when I went to the local community to talk to vocational schools, I found that was the popular
2214 term. And when we go to observe, it is true that they give real advice, that is, they sit and
2215 tell the students how many careers there are, and they consider it their job. As for the origin
2216 of the term “tư vấn hướng nghiệp”, I don't know, but I think it accurately reflects what people
2217 are doing as “tư vấn”, not “tham vấn”.

2218 *However, in the specific project, do you see translating counselling as “tư vấn hướng*
2219 *nghiệp” is problematic?*

2220 I think yes, because actually “tham vấn” and “tư vấn” are different in approach. But in that
2221 context, maybe after we trained them, the transition from the way they were doing, “tư vấn”
2222 to the way they needed to do, “tham vấn” happened, so they understood that "the difference
2223 is there, and I need to change the use of terminology". But before they were trained, I didn't
2224 see them understand. So it was reasonable for them not to accept it.

2225 *Do you have other examples of problematic translations?*

2226 Regarding gender-based violence, we work with ethnic minorities in Vietnam, especially the
2227 Hmong ethnic group. I've seen a big problem. Translating terminology from English into
2228 Vietnamese is already a problem, but translating from Kinh to Hmong is another problem.
2229 For example, I use the term "domestic violence", in Hmong they do not have an equivalent
2230 for that because they do not have a concept called "domestic violence". When translating,
2231 they must use the equivalent “chồng đánh vợ” [husband beats wife]. But I find that
2232 translation problematic and completely misleading, because when talking about violence,
2233 for example, there are five categories of violence: social, physical, sexual, economic, and
2234 psychological violence. But saying that "husband beats wife" is domestic violence according
2235 to the translation of the Hmong people, then all four remaining factors are discarded to only
2236 focus on physical violence, which then other acts of violence in terms of social, economic,
2237 sexual or psychological control... will be excluded. Then we had to work with the local
2238 women's union a lot, through a lot of training, to tell them that "this is a framework of
2239 domestic violence, and its meaning covers all 5 forms and not just one. See if you can
2240 translate it into an equivalent?". After that, a solution didn't come out, and the problem was
2241 still pending until this point, with no explanation.

2242 And this is a story that I heard, not my direct experience. I have a friend who works in
2243 sustainable development, afforestation and projects related to sustainable livelihood
2244 development. The friend went to provide training to a community group on greening bare
2245 hills and afforestation and initiatives of forest livelihoods. The friend also told the
2246 community why they have to do those, because of climate change for example. Then I heard
2247 my friend say that the local reaction was that, the people said, so far the practice had been
2248 the same, but now when you came, it turned out to be related to climate change which was
2249 something we've never heard of.

2250 In fact, when working with the Hmong people, I found it impossible to translate the term
2251 “domestic violence”, up to the time we did our project. When I explained to people, I had to
2252 explain the remaining 4 categories that are excluded from the terminology equivalent they
2253 used. If it was just one word, it didn't have the right meaning, it was not what we thought it
2254 was [Laughter].

2255 One more example that I have recently encountered. I'm working as a consultant for {name of an organisation}. Then we did a research project on the illegal migration of Vietnamese
2256 communities to the {name of a Western country}. After the {redacted} deaths in {name of
2257 a Western country}, the Ministry of Home Affairs provided a budget, and I was the one who
2258 directly wrote their qualitative research component, then gathered information through
2259 interviews and I also was the author of the final report. When I wrote, the terminology was
2260 also very confusing, because in {name of an organisation}, their boss is half Vietnamese, so
2261 for them, they needed to approve the reports of both sides. And secondly, World Vision also
2262 wanted to consult with local authorities, because they worked with localities where many
2263 people migrated to the {name of a Western country}, so they wanted to have a local voice
2264 to validate our findings. When I wrote my first draft report, I used the term "precarity" which
2265 was "internalised", or "normalised", so I used the equivalent "nội hóa", like, internalising
2266 the risk factors in their decision-making process. I thought that was the correct translation in
2267 the way I understood it in English, especially in our development team, words like "nội hóa",
2268 "lê hóa" are words we use quite often. When I sent that report to {name of organisation},
2269 they didn't say anything. But in a consultation workshop, I didn't have the opportunity to
2270 present but asked a colleague to present on behalf, and the immediate local feedback was
2271 that, "We have never heard or understood the word "nội hóa", so now we ask the project to
2272 replace it with another term". That is a recent example where I've seen the word "nội hóa"
2273 being used a lot in both academia and a small group of development practitioners, and with
2274 a lot of focus on discourse analysis. But for the local stakeholders, this is a very academic,
2275 very strange term... And they asked me to use a different term, so later on I replaced it with
2276 "bình thường hóa" or something, one that was hardly accurate in meaning but easier for
2277 people to relate, then they provided no further feedback afterwards.
2278

2279 I think it was their understanding and they felt okay, so I let it go. But in terms of meaning,
2280 I didn't know if they questioned or not, because it was clear to me that "bình thường hóa"
2281 and "nội hóa" are different in specialised meaning [*Laughter*].

2282 *Was that your own decision?*

2283 No. I think this is a very political issue, because {name of organisation} also doesn't want to
2284 embarrass the local community. Because if the locals lost face, especially the provinces with
2285 a large number of illegal migrants going to the {name of a Western country}, they would not
2286 allow {name of organisation} to work and intervene in the community. So it was imperative
2287 that they made the community and local government feel safe, and secondly increased the
2288 participation. Therefore, it is a principle of practice that the local community provides
2289 feedback and {name of organisation} takes in. And it's related to terminology so they asked
2290 the consultant to fix it, so I was fine. I was the service provider, and they were the one paying,
2291 so I had to satisfy their request [*Laughter*].

2292 *This example is great. And I'd love to hear more examples like that.*

2293 I'll add a little more about when I did my research with the Hmong community in {name of
2294 province}. For me it was an experience I will never forget. Because I also worked with
2295 minorities before, I went to areas where there were many NGOs, for example. People still
2296 speak "tiếng phổ thông" [Kinh language]. But in {name of province} and {name of
2297 province}, for example, they absolutely do not speak Kinh language. They speak the
2298 Southwestern Mandarin, that is, their language and the language spoken in the {name of a
2299 Chinese region} are the same. But they don't speak our Kinh language. They also do say
2300 "tiếng Kinh" [Kinh language] but call it "tiếng phổ thông" [popular language] instead. I think

2301 a part of my vocabulary has changed because for them they say “tiếng phổ thông” and not
2302 “tiếng Kinh”. When I asked them if they spoke Kinh, it seemed like they weren't happy. Or
2303 they do not say “người dân địa phương” [local people] but call them “đồng bào”
2304 [compatriots, fellow countrymen]. Another way I had to change my terminology. Or when I
2305 talked to them, it was true that there were words that I presupposed they existed in languages,
2306 like the word “biên giới” [border] for example. Because this project focused on cross-border
2307 issues, so we had to identify where the borders were. When I asked them where the borders
2308 were, so when I went to {name of province}, I needed an extra interpreter because I couldn't
2309 speak the local language and they couldn't speak “tiếng phổ thông”, so I had to use an
2310 interpreter, and was considered a foreigner in the context of Vietnamese research because I
2311 did not speak the local language. When I worked, I assumed that they understood the word
2312 "border", and also that they were able to tell the borders here and there, but then I returned
2313 to Hanoi and asked a Hmong friend to transcribe the interviews in Hmong for me, then I
2314 asked another group to transcribe in Vietnamese, and I compared these two versions only to
2315 realise that when I went through an interpreter, all colloquial expressions were almost
2316 filtered. It was just something that was very focused on information, for example, it's almost
2317 like when you and I are talking to each other now, the codes already show up, but there
2318 wasn't anything rooted for coding from the bottom up. When I compared the two versions, I
2319 realised that, if I didn't understand the language and didn't have the insight of someone who
2320 understood the local language, then the terminology I used was completely wrong. For
2321 example, about the word "border"... after I tried to transcribe the first few sentences, I
2322 discovered that the word "border" did not exist for the Hmong people. For them, there is
2323 only the concept of "this side and that side". When they want to say "border", they simply
2324 use for all situations, such as "my house - your house", "my field - your field", "this side -
2325 that side". By default they understand and use that term for a larger context than the nation
2326 state. I only had to change the questions later, and I couldn't ask the original, simply because
2327 it wasn't the local way of understanding.

2328 Another time in a focus group, I asked about how macro changes could make up micro
2329 changes, I asked "what has changed in the last 5 years?". The answers were very scattered
2330 and I did not understand why, until I returned to Hanoi and sat with a group of Hmong friends
2331 who studied at the {name of university} to validate with them why the answers didn't give
2332 me what I wanted. They said, for the Hmong, there was no concept of change. For them it is
2333 very specific, for example this tree is still green today, tomorrow it will die, the fact that they
2334 describe the present state and the past will represent a change, and for them there is no such
2335 concept like ours to talk about change, ie something gradually changing. Then I changed the
2336 question later because I could no longer do that. Then I asked, for example, “what roads
2337 were built 3 years ago, and recently what roads have been built?”. When it was specified, I
2338 could find information. So I just shared a bit more about the angle of me working as a
2339 researcher with the local community. I found the language problem, so “tiếng phổ thông”
2340 and the ethnic minority languages are very disparate. If I hadn't finetune my questions, I
2341 wouldn't have found the data I needed.

2342 *In your opinion, can examples like these be considered untranslatable cases?*

2343 I will talk from an academic point of view rather than a practical one. I think in practice, I
2344 have to deliver the agenda that I am assigned to. But if it's about academics, I think it actually
2345 tells me very well what I'm imposing is being clashed with local ideology or local practice
2346 or something like that, I don't know what to call it. But its interpretation is very indigenous
2347 for example, then what we are doing is terminologically problematic. But terminology is
2348 only one thing, because I understand behind the terms, it's the value-laden things. And what

2349 I'm injecting a community with or framing their social reality into something that I theorise
2350 into "domestic violence", it can create new conflicts. For example, I thought about the
2351 gender-violence intervention of my group with ethnic minorities. I think when I do
2352 development work, for NGOs, for example, we are always influenced strongly by feminist
2353 theory, and the way we look at it was always about having to counter male power. But there
2354 are things that when we go deeper into the anthropological perspective, for example, it
2355 explains more about the fact that there are mechanisms in the community that we should
2356 consider and look at from a certain angle. For example, when a woman of Hmong ethnic
2357 groups sits next to her husband when her husband is drunk, maybe they sit from dawn until
2358 dusk until the husband is sober, the husband will get on the horse and the wife will go home
2359 with him. Or they may walk, but if the husband is drunk, he often sleeps on the side of the
2360 road until he wakes up and the couple go home. I think that from a certain perspective, I also
2361 see that it has an element of gender violence, because it is a social control, which means that
2362 "my mobility was constrained because I was not allowed freedom of movement", for
2363 example. In fact, if I looked at them from their perspective, I saw that in that area where I
2364 worked, violence occurred very often in terms of the husband yelling or doing this and that,
2365 but the wife did not react. And maybe they perform a very submissive role, it neutralises the
2366 violence, it is the factor that interrupts the tension and the male coercion. That made me
2367 think a lot too when I went up there and realised that if I kept looking at it from a gender
2368 perspective, and I kept framing everything as violence, for example, it was not fair. Because
2369 for them, the micro-process in terms of reasoning and dissolving violence is very effective,
2370 and because it is effective, it exists. Maybe I'm proposing a framework, and when I use new
2371 terms like "empowerment", "women's rights", "gender inequality"... in the long run it's
2372 going to create new cracks in the way they see it. So I think potentially it may also increase
2373 violence and it is not certain that we have solved the problem of gender violence.

2374 *When we intend to change the plan, in the policy documents that we originally developed,*
2375 *or in the intervention we originally planned to deliver, should terminology be changed too?*

2376 I really think it needs to change a lot. If the language problem is raised, the way we explain,
2377 even the way we frame policy, will have to be different. For example, if I thought about
2378 domestic violence, if there were more local insights or evidence about whether the languages
2379 or ideologies being introduced into the community would increase the risk of violence or
2380 make the woman more unsafe, then it clearly answers the question of whether my
2381 interventions in awareness raising, communication, public education... should be in the
2382 direction we intended to do. I think it will change very fundamentally.

2383 *Can you relate this change to the recent example of gender-based violence?*

2384 This may be hypothetical, but when development practitioners talk about domestic violence,
2385 and use their term "five categories of violence" against indigenous people for example, the
2386 people will think violence is just about beatings. But maybe I'm biased [*Laughter*], but
2387 usually in domestic violence workshops, only women attend and not men. Then women will
2388 get the opportunity to understand about violence through indications such as when her
2389 husband scolds her, her husband uses money to control her, her husband does not let her go
2390 out to socialise, her husband asks for sex without her consent. I mean... it's all violence.
2391 When I got home, I thought of course they understood that now that they're empowered,
2392 they've got a new language about "what you did to me is violence" and they put that into
2393 their life context, then it may trigger the male coercion. We actually encountered this when
2394 we worked on domestic violence interventions in {name of province}. Women experiencing
2395 domestic violence often went to the shelters, where we would provide psychosocial recovery

2396 service. After studying for a while, some days they also studied the domestic violence law,
2397 the domestic violence prevention law, the gender equality law, about being self-worth, self-
2398 esteem, confidence, etc, then they felt very confident and felt empowered. I think the effect
2399 here was very clear about changing the way they saw themselves, about their voices, and
2400 whether they could feel they had gained back the sense of control. But when returning home,
2401 the violence increased. Then the problem lies in the fact that they go home to tell the husband
2402 that “you beat me so you have violated this and that provisions in the domestic violence
2403 prevention law”, or “the gender equality law does not allow you to do this and that to me”.
2404 The husband never went to school, so he still beats his wife as usual and more... And then in
2405 many cases I found that the violence factor was even stronger when the women were
2406 empowered, meaning having their awareness raised, then at home that was translated into
2407 more violence. So I think it's not true for all cases, but I think that if taking into account even
2408 a handful of examples, it also suggests whether or not my approach should change. It may
2409 not be that I don't do it anymore, but I will have to do it with men as well. If I only work
2410 with women and not men, despite this and that law, it could be counterproductive.

2411 *That reminds me of the way we translate the second person pronouns in English into*
2412 *Vietnamese in the field, for example, saying “anh, chị, các bạn, cô, chú, bác, and so on” and*
2413 *hoping to be more inclusive. And sometimes, if we're not careful, the way we address*
2414 *ourselves can be offensive.*

2415 I think what you just mentioned is very relevant to the practitioner. I think when in practice,
2416 whatever we preach, they encounter every day. And indeed if their voices or experiences and
2417 insights are recognised, it will fundamentally change a lot of the way we are doing, including
2418 aspects of communication, awareness raising and how to frame policy so that negative
2419 factors can be mitigated in the community.

2420 *Can we now go to the next category about views of introduced knowledge versus vernacular*
2421 *knowledge? Can you tell me any stories of understanding and translating concepts being*
2422 *introduced into development work in Vietnam?*

2423 One example that I find difficult both to translate and to understand because it is highly
2424 diverse, “wellbeing”. There's also another term that, especially in the social work sector
2425 which we have to deal with but the understanding is disparate, that is “mindfulness”. These
2426 are terms that I see different development workers understand from different perspectives,
2427 so they will explain differently because there is no uniform translation.

2428 *If given the choice, how would you translate wellbeing?*

2429 *[Laughter]* I don't dare to translate, I still can't.

2430 *Mindfulness too?*

2431 Recently, I am leaning towards, and convinced by the direction of translating “mindfulness”
2432 into “chánh “niệm. “Chánh niệm” is a Buddhist term in Buddhist teachings. Perhaps
2433 “mindfulness” is just an anglicisation or westernisation of the term “chánh niệm” into a
2434 modern term, and it is modernised through such translations into English. I see people
2435 explaining to me about “chánh niệm” and I find it correct, and I accept that understanding
2436 and I use it too. But with “wellbeing”, I find it still very challenging for me, although
2437 “wellbeing” is a term I use often, but if I want to translate it into Vietnamese, I am still not
2438 convinced by a translation that makes me feel comfortable and confident to use.

2439 *I myself don't dare translate that term too [Laughter].*

2440 *[Laughter]*

2441 *Or sometimes I translate and depending on the context, I put the original in parentheses. Do*
2442 *you do this too?*

2443 I do it often too, for example when I write a report and I know my audience is very diverse.
2444 Especially during the time I did the report for {name of organisation}, it was very clear,
2445 because I was addressing a group of practitioners, policy people, people working at
2446 embassies, and local people. With the locals, now I also feel that, in addition to the fact that
2447 I translate the language to ensure the accuracy of terms, it is also related to the fact that I
2448 have to filter the terms that carry sensitive meanings, for example “democracy” or
2449 “democratisation”. Those are the words I think, when used, may be for the purpose of
2450 increasing the participation of people, but in the context of Vietnamese politics, I think terms
2451 related to human rights, democratisation or “endogenous democracy” for example, can
2452 trigger a lot of reactions from local authorities. Since I am also someone who writes, I
2453 automatically filter words that I know will make the locality feel uncomfortable. As for the
2454 terms that I think the meaning may be broad or difficult, we also do as you said, put them in
2455 brackets, Vietnamese and English, so that everyone can understand.

2456 *I am now also curious about how sometimes “softening” becomes the way we handle and*
2457 *translate terminology. For example, you just mentioned democracy, how can it be filtered,*
2458 *and if not, can we soften it, or explain in more detail?*

2459 Actually, we do use the term “grassroots democracy”, but I think it is the only word in terms
2460 of democracy that is officially accepted in the discourse. I think what is related to
2461 “democracy” often is associated with an outside idea and is more destructive than
2462 constructive. So often in the last case, we also have to use words like “tăng khả năng tham
2463 gia, sự tham gia của người dân” [increasing participation, participation of the people], and
2464 not “dân chủ hóa quá trình tiếp cận với thông tin” [democratising the process of accessing
2465 information], for example.

2466 *Yeah, in the “increasing engagement” direction.*

2467 Yes.

2468 *I see a tension there.*

2469 *[Laughter].*

2470 One more word that I forgot *[Laughter]*, that is “resilience”. I should have put it on the list
2471 of terms that I dare not translate.

2472 *Do you follow the competition of AFD in collaboration with the Youth Union to call for*
2473 *young people to translate “resilience” using language and visuals?*

2474 No. Since you mentioned it, I find that I almost forgot that I started my research with
2475 “resilience”. When I started, my theory was about slow-onset and very gradual changes
2476 which are not easy to observe. For example, cultural changes are silent but when it happens,
2477 it’s very fundamental. At that time, I started to analyse the resilience factor, it was first the
2478 “response-ability”, the shock caused by people’s responses to something when it bounces

2479 back. In essence, the term came from resilience in materials from the 50s-60s, the study of
2480 material durability. When it bounces back to its original state, it is considered resilient
2481 material. But then it turns into the second form, the second level which is “adaptability”,
2482 when it doesn't keep the same form. But in ecology for example, when an ecosystem is
2483 destroyed, and a new ecosystem develops and it may not be quite the original but still
2484 achieves a state called equilibrium, which is considered adaptability. Now, I've changed the
2485 topic a bit, but in a way, I still understand that it may cover all 3 levels, namely adaptability,
2486 response-ability and transformability. So the third, it transforms into a different form and it
2487 may not retain the old properties, but we can see “resilience” as a state of being rather than
2488 an angle. That is, if a system, an individual or a community is resilient, they are able to
2489 demonstrate this correctus, and that does not stop at a point called resilient state, but simply
2490 a way of being. In English, I find that the understanding of “resilience” is not unified, so the
2491 translation of “resilience” into Vietnamese is also not unified. In fact, when I used
2492 “resilience” in a conference, I translated it as “kiên cường”, but in a way it also means more
2493 about my ability to withstand stress than the factors such as the ability to completely
2494 transform or being in a different form. And that does not mean it is not resilient, because
2495 when I say “kiên cường”, I am resisting shocks. But the fact that it transforms, for example,
2496 the typology may be completely different, but it still has the properties of transformability.
2497 It's a word that I don't think I can translate [*Laughter*].

2498 *What is your view on the role of terminology and translation in development work?*

2499 About the role of translation, I think it's very important in the context where I still see an
2500 incompatibility between languages, even if the English language has become an
2501 indispensable part. That is, many people in the development sector use English at varying
2502 degrees, and people still understand. But I think the role of the translation is still irreplaceable
2503 at this time, partly and practically when we do development work, we are working with a
2504 very large group of stakeholders and perhaps at local levels. people don't use that language.
2505 And partly in a diplomatic position, for example when working with large state agencies
2506 such as the Central Women's Union, or the Youth Union... I still think they will not accept
2507 the option of using English language as the language of work. I think that language
2508 translation and interpreting will still play an important role in development. About 2-3 years
2509 ago, when I saw that Vietnam had initiated the discussion on whether English should become
2510 the second language, they did not pass that bill. But politically, I still think English is still
2511 both a challenge, because obviously there will still be inconsistencies in understanding
2512 between the two languages, and an opportunity, because the translators still be able to find
2513 work [*Laughter*].

2514 *and another question, what do you think about the policies and practice of translation and*
2515 *language in the projects and organisations that you work with?*

2516 I think the policies and practice of translation will be important from the perspective that it
2517 is not only in terms of logistics, linguistics, i.e. there are terms that have multiple meanings
2518 or are difficult to translate. Then standardising a language is a way of unifying understanding
2519 within a narrow discipline. In addition, besides ensuring accuracy, the ability to localise the
2520 English language when it enters the practical context of Vietnam or other countries in general
2521 will not counteract the power, but to a certain extent it will have the ability and opportunity
2522 to bring local or indigenous knowledge into interaction with grand ideologies. And partly,
2523 maybe it won't make any change to power, but it will make it more balanced from a practical
2524 perspective. For example, when I talk about domestic violence, I think it gives me an
2525 opportunity to discuss, that when the connotation of the English term is very broad, when

2526 translating into a practical context, should I use that same word or not, or should I use
2527 different phrases to capture...

2528 *Such as explaining and paraphrasing instead of giving an equivalent phrase?*

2529 Yes.

2530 *So who do you think would be most suitable to translate a new term?*

2531 I think ideally that'd be someone in a hybrid position, ie a development professional but also
2532 a translation specialist to be able to maintain a balance. This is also a common practice in
2533 large corporations, when there is a product that needs to be localised, they bring in a group
2534 of experts who both have translators and experts in that field so that they can localise all
2535 layers of meaning to ensure that it fits the overall framework and the local context. In the
2536 organisation, ideally it should be done that way.

2537 *In Vietnam today, do you know about organisations that currently have such roles?*

2538 I don't think it's really a role in an organisation specialising in localisation, but I think at
2539 translation companies, especially those that have very close relationships with large
2540 development organisations such as UN, WB, ADB and so on, and their role may be as big
2541 as I can't imagine. Since they fathom translation and the transfer of meanings from English
2542 to Vietnamese, I think if they understand well and have experience, they will deliver the best
2543 outcomes. But otherwise it is difficult to question when those layers of meaning or
2544 vocabulary are endorsed by donors for example, then local stakeholders or other groups will
2545 simply follow, and it is very difficult to have the opportunity to challenge that power. In
2546 addition, I see in development organisations or in projects, the existence of a translation
2547 section is still very common because they are in fact still the coordinator between
2548 consultants, experts and project management. But the influence of this group in my opinion
2549 is not great. For example, in my experience, the pure role of a translator doesn't hold any
2550 power, but those who work as translators and at the same time a project manager or a
2551 communication officer for example, their power will be different.

2552 *Apart from what we've discussed today, are there any particular topics in relation to*
2553 *translation and terminology in development work that you feel we should also talk about?*

2554 There was one that we discussed earlier about the role of gender, how it interacts with
2555 translation, and what the outcome may be. I think maybe that's a factor to consider. Second,
2556 LGBTQ for example, is a collective identity, I don't think everyone has come to an
2557 agreement on how to use the terminology of LGBTQ groups. So gender diversity and
2558 identity issues will also create different understandings, and due to different understandings,
2559 how will that play a role in translating from English to Vietnamese, and will the translation
2560 be universally adopted by these groups?

2561 In addition, in a way, different age groups may also have a certain role. For example, with
2562 problems of the so-called traditional way of development work we're doing, such as
2563 infrastructure development, then the people working in the sector are usually quite senior,
2564 but I think the young ones don't have lots of space in it. But for example, areas such as youth
2565 participation, or those related to youth activities and social networks, I think there is a new
2566 layer of meaning that may not completely fit with that being used by traditional development
2567 workers. These new layers of meaning will form, and somewhere along the line, a certain

2568 space, if we look at development as mainstream organisations. But there may also be
2569 grassroots groups, civil society groups... the meaning they use will be slightly different. I
2570 think it is intriguing to compare how the status of development organisations will affect their
2571 choice of language and their use of their internal language policies.

2572 *With this, do you suggest that we look into the ethnicity profiles of other stakeholders*
2573 *involved in the translation process?*

2574 Maybe ethnicity, and also maybe when we compare the language policies of major
2575 development agencies with more grassroots organisations or maybe groups that are not
2576 mainstream at all, for example Facebook groups with big influence. For example, groups
2577 working with the environmental movements, transparency, etc., then I think they also
2578 translate a lot of foreign ideas so they also create their own layer of meaning that may not
2579 be entirely consistent with that of mainstream development organisations because of
2580 different agendas, or it may be that they suffer from different policy constraints. Maybe this
2581 also clarifies the role of translation and terminology... Well, then I think about the gender or
2582 identity of each group then somehow play a role in how they choose the language. That's
2583 just me questioning.

2584 *Before we finish, I have another one. What terms do you think I should not be included in*
2585 *policy documents or verbal communication of development work?*

2586 I think if it's formal, i.e. official activities, then the words are filtered. There's no chance for
2587 it to appear without censorship [*Laughter*]. But the space is larger perhaps, for example with
2588 independent groups when they have independent blogs for and forums, for example, those
2589 working in citizen participation, {name of programme} for example, or groups consisting of
2590 leaders... in general a civil society group whose influence might be significant. For example
2591 those on the BODs of large NGOs, embassies, etc., their balance of power may have large
2592 counterbalance. For them, talking about democracy and sensitive topics, for example, is part
2593 of the agenda and they can't avoid that, because they exist to have such discussions, so I
2594 think that's also an interesting case to study. As for filtering or not having the terms included,
2595 then I think in the mainstream, of course they won't be included. Only in a space that is a bit
2596 peripheral, or with someone on the periphery of censorship, for example, the terms will still
2597 exist.

2598 *Are you a member of any groups that discuss these topics?*

2599 [*Laughter*] I don't, but I have friends who work on human rights and democratisation. I know
2600 but I don't participate. I think participating may entail career risks [*Laughter*].

2601 I never liked being a scholar. I think I'm still a practitioner, so it's still important for me to
2602 ground with social reality because there are very interesting things to tackle. I have the
2603 advantage of understanding somewhat about how academics generate knowledge. On the
2604 contrary, I find it very exclusive, say, because I don't have discussions that can link
2605 practitioners and academics, I can still extract from practice and then theorise, but if I don't
2606 have any channel to feedback with the practice community, that is a limit. I think what you
2607 do will be very helpful for development.

2608 *Community of practice is great, I am also learning about it. For example, I have become*
2609 *aware of the initiative of the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation, the*
2610 *HPDF, on translation and development. So I see this as an opportunity to identify those who*

2611 *have to perform translation in their daily work but do not necessarily call themselves*
2612 *translators in development work.*

2613 I think that's because I work and have the experience of practice. If I don't have the
2614 opportunity to talk to you, I will never talk about these things with anyone else, because it is
2615 also a topic that, for translators when they work, they all understand the principles, expertise,
2616 and ethical aspects... they can handle them, but asking if their practice can contribute to
2617 development or not is another matter. Because to some extent I still feel that translation is
2618 undervalued, and whoever having to translate in development work is still a spokesperson
2619 and not a professional voice. Actually I think the role of translators will be enhanced when
2620 we talk about, for example, how terms and ideologies are translated in the Vietnamese
2621 context, and then spread out in policy for example... this all goes through translation, but is
2622 this role recognised?

2623 *I hope you can join me in Phase 2. Thank you!*

2624 Interview with Participant 7 (P7-Ph1)

2625 *Can you share with me some stories of terminology that you think is problematic in*
2626 *development work?*

2627 Doing translation, I also encountered many problems. I think the root of this problem comes
2628 from the fact that the nature of language is to reflect thoughts, to express people's thinking
2629 and reasoning. Then countries and people are different due to their geographical
2630 circumstances, origins, their lives, ways of thinking, which are obviously reflected in
2631 language. And once reflected in language in such a way, there are specific features expressed
2632 in their language, and it comes from their own needs: to find a linguistic shell for particular
2633 concepts which are specific to their country, to their people in their situation. Then of course
2634 there will be problems in some other languages or even in all languages. There will be no
2635 expressions good enough for a concept, especially in the field we are working which is
2636 related to social work, technology and development. For example, when we talk about
2637 biology, we see the concept of "endemic", "đặc hữu", that is, species found only in a certain
2638 country. Our country Vietnam stretches across many parallels, and so biodiversity has also
2639 contributed to that, such as the saola. The saola is an animal that cannot be translated as
2640 hươu, nai, deer, hoẵng... all these are not it. It is an expression and evidence of the
2641 "untranslatability" phenomenon or the inability to find equivalents when we translate from
2642 one language to another. For some languages, loan translation is applicable, then this loan is
2643 quite easy and convenient when in the case... We know that when comparing, there must
2644 always be a basis to make a comparison. We can compare saola with hươu or nai, but it's
2645 very difficult to compare saola with fish, or compare saola with monster because these are
2646 not equivalent concepts. That is one cause.

2647 The second is terminology. Besides natural phenomena, and then in the living world, there
2648 are concepts that did not emerge from the beginning when mankind was born, then English
2649 was born, but in the process of development, those languages also enrich themselves, those
2650 languages also enrich their own vocabulary by adding new concepts that arise later. For
2651 example, the concept of "inclusive growth", maybe "growth" already exists, "inclusive"
2652 already exists, but the pairing itself to form the idiom-like phrase "inclusive growth" is like
2653 cement, sticking together like that, then it only came later on, right? Or "sustainable
2654 development", as we know, was proposed by Brundtland, somewhere in the early 1980s or
2655 something, like 1983, if I'm wrong, please correct me. Then in the case of "sustainable

2656 development”, we can simply translate into Vietnamese as “phát triển bền vững” by simply
2657 mechanically combining the two elements “phát triển” and “bền vững” which is exactly the
2658 same as the original in English. But in other cases it can be controversial, such as “inclusive
2659 growth”, because it is so difficult. “Inclusive” is “bao gồm”, then putting those two words
2660 together, “phát triển bao gồm”, sounding very wrong to the ears.

2661 Then there is another arising problem here, that is, in translation in general and the translation
2662 of terms in particular, there are 3 old Han expressions raised by the old scholars, Tín-Đạt-
2663 Nhã [Faithfulness - Accuracy - Good Form], then it is clear that when we translate, we know
2664 that the purpose is to help people understand each other. But in order to understand each
2665 other, you have to understand correctly, which means that such communication must be
2666 accurate, which is most important. No matter how good you are, if you translate incorrectly,
2667 it’s not good and even more dangerous than when you translate correctly but simply, but it
2668 doesn't sound good. Therefore, Tín first, then Đạt, and then Nhã. What is Nhã? Nha is good,
2669 beautiful, ear-pleasing... then it is also very necessary, but not essential. But life is also a
2670 process of movement, we know nothing is perfect, but we need to always aim for perfection
2671 and try our best. Maybe we are not able to do it, but we can go to social networks and ask
2672 our friends, "how does this word translate?".

2673 Like “inclusive growth” as I notice when I handle similar concepts, it's not the general
2674 concept of development or growth, but in a specific area of finance. When I encountered the
2675 concept of “financial inclusion”, “sự bao gồm về mặt tài chính”, this is a really difficult case.
2676 People in Vietnam in the first days translated it as “phát triển toàn diện” [comprehensive
2677 development], and maybe they were satisfied with that. It sounds very good. But I myself
2678 want to achieve Tín firsthand, so faithfulness first. So now analysing it, what does “toàn
2679 diện” mean? We all know “toàn diện” means all aspects. Then “tài chính toàn diện” is not
2680 accurate against the connotation of the original English. Then what is the connotation in the
2681 original English? It’s being inclusive and to include everyone in the financial matters. It is
2682 similar to “inclusive growth”, which ensures that everyone is included in it, in the growth
2683 process and the development process so that no one is left behind. Everyone benefits from
2684 the process of growth and from development. Here I don’t have the honour of being the one,
2685 but I see that the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences has a way to translate it as “tăng
2686 trưởng bao trùm”. In fact, I also know that when giving such a translation, many people will
2687 find it unsatisfactory, really it's not good, it's not too good, but it's still more accurate than
2688 the other equivalent, “tăng trưởng toàn diện”. Because “tăng trưởng toàn diện” and “phát
2689 triển toàn diện” are inaccurate equivalents, a mistranslation. It does not reflect the original
2690 meaning but directs people to a wrong understanding, ie growth in all respects. What does
2691 growth in all respects mean? Economically, socially, and so on, and not growth in which
2692 everyone benefits, not growth that brings wealth and then money in the end goes to the
2693 pockets of certain elites, certain corrupt interest groups, but not the entire population,
2694 including those who still suffer from poverty and those who are marginalised, being on the
2695 sidelines of that growth and development process.

2696 Going back to financial inclusion, that's why I am not satisfied with the equivalent “tài chính
2697 toàn diện”. “Tài chính toàn diện” doesn't really mean anything, it makes no sense, and it
2698 leads to an incorrect understanding. That's why I translate it as “tài chính phổ cập”, “phổ
2699 cập tài chính”. Why? Because I think among the two-syllable words in Vietnamese language,
2700 “phổ cập” would be the closest. Of course, if we want to translate accurately and fully, we
2701 will translate it in an explanatory way and it will become a long phrase, not a pair of two
2702 words, each with 2 syllables like that. But this way it is close, “tài chính phổ cập” and “phổ
2703 cập tài chính”, quite close to the meaning of the original phrase. It also ensures Nhã, that is,

2704 it consists of two words, each with 2 syllables, “phổ cập” and “tài chính”. Actually, I like
2705 this translation better, but in the end I did think of one thing that translation must also ensure
2706 popularity. Well, as before people chose equivalents “tăng trưởng bao trùm” and “phát triển
2707 bao trùm” for " inclusive growth", then we just use those.

2708 The next is "wellbeing", which is also a very interesting word. As you know, the popular
2709 translation equivalent is “phúc lợi” but it is problematic. That is, when comparing the
2710 meanings of a word in one language with a word that is thought to correspond in another
2711 language, the difference here is that both words have the same "n" meaning, but in the
2712 context we need to translate, the word of the source language no longer has the “n” meaning
2713 but an "m" meaning. For example, "wellbeing" really means "welfare", and welfare in
2714 Vietnamese means “phúc lợi”. But even if "wellbeing" means "welfare", it is not the same
2715 as the word “phúc lợi” in Vietnamese. When we talk about social welfare, the Vietnamese
2716 equivalent is “phúc lợi xã hội” when we provide support to help all sections of society
2717 benefit, such as with social security, public works, public benefits... then it's really “phúc lợi
2718 xã hội”. Here, "wellbeing" is referred to in the UN SDGs and that is where the complexity
2719 lies. It is difficult in that many people also understand that "wellbeing" is not “phúc lợi”,
2720 although in English it has a meaning of "welfare", but it is not “phúc lợi” as understood the
2721 meaning of “phúc lợi” in Vietnamese. Then they have to avoid that, and they see in its
2722 multiple meanings, there is an element of “khỏe mạnh” [being healthy], so they translate it
2723 as “khỏe mạnh”. In other contexts it may be fine, but unfortunately in the SDGs it comes
2724 along with the word "health" which causes a problem. That is why those who translate
2725 “wellbeing” and do not use “sức khỏe” have to translate it as “phúc lợi” but that turns out to
2726 be incorrect.

2727 Going back to translation or whatever we do, we have to have a methodology. Everything
2728 must go with the right methodology, the right way to get satisfying results. If the path is
2729 wrong, the destination will definitely be wrong. I'm not smart, I'm standing on the shoulders
2730 of giants, so I look up the word "wellbeing" on the internet and in robust dictionaries, and I
2731 see, here it doesn't just include "health”, “sức khỏe”. Certainly in this case it is not "welfare”,
2732 “phúc lợi”, but it is welfare in a different sense. What is welfare? It is what people passively
2733 enjoy, brought about by the government, the state, and the establishment. "Wellbeing" here
2734 is different in that, it is the feeling that the subject feels. Not that anyone gave me this road
2735 so I could go to work, not that someone built a communal cultural centre, no. This is the
2736 feeling of joy when I see a man build me a cultural centre so that I come to read books every
2737 day and my road to work is better and not as messy as before but paved with asphalt. Well,
2738 that's what “wellbeing” is, the subject's perception. Then I'd find out what it is in
2739 Vietnamese. It's not “sức khỏe” but higher than that. It's not just health, say you can do 50
2740 push-ups a minute or run without panting at all. It is in the mind, the peace of mind, the
2741 peaceful and relaxing mind. In the Vietnamese language recently, “an yên” has become
2742 popular. There are also some people who are strict and say, “What is the point of making up
2743 this word? An and Yên are the same”. I think it's acceptable. Or another word that I think is
2744 also appropriate, “an nhiên” which is used by many. But in this case, “an nhiên” is not
2745 suitable because in translation and language, the elements of expression and emotions have
2746 to be taken into accounts, for example, we can't say a sentence, "the little bird has passed
2747 away”. This is not my example but an example in a 6th grade Vietnamese textbook that I
2748 learned from the old days, a very interesting example that we must use the right word.

2749 Returning to “an nhiên”, it doesn't carry a political sense, so it will not be suitable to translate
2750 the SDGs. So I decided to go with the options of “thư thái”, “bình an”. I think the advantage
2751 of these is that they can achieve Tin and Đạt, that is, they correctly express the meaning of

2752 the original. “Bình an” and “thư thái” conveys the thought and feeling of the subject, our
2753 own, not the “phúc lợi” which is given to us from the welfare we receive, From the welfare
2754 we receive, we feel peaceful and relaxed. Here it is not only the material aspect but also
2755 about “sức khỏe”, like "health". So I think “bình an, thư thái” is appropriate. Of course it's
2756 not a gem, because it has the disadvantage that, with "wellbeing" in English, I had to use two
2757 Vietnamese words “bình an, thư thái” to translate.

2758 Another case of problematic terminology in development is the concept in the labour
2759 industry, "decent work". This is a concept coined by ILO, and translated by the Vietnamese
2760 as “việc làm bền vững”. We see that “bền vững” and "decent" are two completely different
2761 concepts. It is because of such a translation, when I translated at a conference, because that
2762 was simultaneous interpreting, I couldn't explain to the audience, because they were wearing
2763 headphones, it was also difficult to explain to them. A representative of {name of a
2764 provincial department} stood up to talk about “việc làm bền vững” in his locality, which he
2765 understood and gave examples to demonstrate his understanding of the issue. What is “bền
2766 vững”? That it does not change, it is always stable, people do not change jobs, etc. But
2767 "decent work" doesn't have the same meaning. As we can refer to the definition given by
2768 ILO for “decent work” we will see that it is completely different, and has nothing to do with
2769 stable, non-precarious work, “you sit there and feel satisfied because there is no fear of
2770 unemployment”. That's not it, even though it's true. “Việc làm bền vững” in Vietnamese
2771 must be like that to be understood as “bền vững” [sustainable]. So what is “decent work”?
2772 These are worthy jobs, to say in a “nôm na” way. For this reason, I decided not to translate
2773 "decent work" as “việc làm bền vững” but “việc làm thỏa đáng” [worthy work]. Actually,
2774 “việc làm xứng đáng” [deserving work] is close, but “xứng đáng” in Vietnamese does not
2775 go with nouns such as “việc làm”.

2776 hen "resilience", which is also a very very beautiful word in English and has also been
2777 translated widely. “Resilience” is mentioned again and again in the development sector and
2778 particularly related to climate change. Like I said earlier about not being completely satisfied
2779 using more than one Vietnamese word when translating an English term, this is a similar
2780 situation. But that's not painful at all, because as I said at the outset, there can always be a
2781 conceptual difference. In English, for example, when translating into other languages, if we
2782 don't do loan translation, we have to be able to translate explanatorily and so we will have
2783 to see an increased number of syllables. For example, we take the example of
2784 "accountability", “trách nhiệm giải trình”, there we had to use two Vietnamese words to
2785 translate an English word. This is normal. “Resilience” has been translated very well into
2786 Vietnamese as “khả năng chống chịu”, so one has to use two Vietnamese words again. But
2787 I find it not very good, not very beautiful and not very complete, so I also want to add in one
2788 more thing, “khả năng chống chịu bền bỉ”, through which it shows endurance and resistance
2789 of people, and also of constructions for example, against the destruction of nature, natural
2790 disasters, storms and floods. That is, it is not only about such works, but also the personality.
2791 That's why I decided, when I have to translate “resilience”, I'll translate it as “khả năng
2792 chống chịu bền bỉ” to make it stronger.

2793 So those were a few stories I wanted to share with you.

2794 *Can you clarify the process of getting a difficult term translated?*

2795 He asked me this, I was also a bit embarrassed because like I said it, it was too simple, it
2796 was nothing terrible. The simple process is this, encountering a word, a term that needs to
2797 be translated that Vietnamese does not have, or has already but we are not satisfied, we still

2798 have to start by finding out if the connotation, the meaning is the same. What is the meaning
2799 of that concept, that word, that thing or phenomenon in the source language? When we
2800 understand it, we will find its solution in the target language, which is our language. There
2801 are many words I don't know, but I still don't know how to come up with a plan. Then we
2802 will participate in the forums, will post on the forums to ask, and maybe you guys on there
2803 will come up with better solutions.

2804 *In addition to Tín-Đạt-Nhã that you just mentioned, do you see any other criteria that need*
2805 *to be met when translating development terms in Vietnam?*

2806 Tough one. The difficulty is that there cannot be a specific translation equivalent that is
2807 correct and for all cases. Because there are some cases of terminology in the development
2808 industry where the terms convey "political" meanings. But recently, there is a criterion that
2809 people often raise, "political correctness", which we roughly see as the need to understand
2810 and communicate information in a politically correct manner. That is, it must be appropriate
2811 to the situation. In some cases it is political, but in other cases it is not. We have to make
2812 sure that our use of terms and expressions is right for the situation. This is also very evident
2813 even in English, with the old phrase we used to say, "the disabled", now it has become
2814 "people with disabilities", PWD, not “người tàn tật” but “người khuyết tật”, not "deaf
2815 people" or "blind people" but “những người khiếm thị” [vision impaired], “những người
2816 khiếm thính” [hearing impaired]. Here, when I do development work, I see people don't use
2817 words like "prostitute" but rather say CSW, "sex workers" or "commercial sex workers". In
2818 case when we go to a seminar, we will show respect to them by not using the words “mại
2819 dâm”, “bán dâm”. , "prostitution". And in their direct presence, it was even more awkward.
2820 It's not about linguistics anymore, it's not about translation anymore, it's about respect,
2821 conduct, honor. Then maybe we don't mention their profession at all. This, in my opinion, is
2822 not a language problem anymore. We can say, "We are very fortunate to have the presence
2823 of the stakeholders, those who are also working, people who are also active in this field...
2824 for them to share with us their perspectives, from their own experiences...". I think these are
2825 people that everyone knows who, everyone knows what they do. I think instead of trying to
2826 find an expression which sounds like translation from English to Vietnamese, here we are
2827 invisibly translating from Vietnamese to Vietnamese. Instead of trying to do so, in this case
2828 we don't translate anymore, don't translate from Vietnamese to Vietnamese anymore, but
2829 they refer to a different angle, another aspect. I think in this case it should be.

2830 *Can you share with me some examples of original terms in Vietnamese that are difficult to*
2831 *translate into English?*

2832 From the opposite angle, many people mistranslate “xã hội hóa” as "socialisation” because
2833 they do not understand that it is necessary to understand the meaning of that word in its
2834 languages. "Socialise" has nothing to do with “xã hội hóa” in Vietnamese. "Socialise" is to
2835 enjoy, mix and exchange socially... but the concept of "socialising” in sociological terms is
2836 completely different from the concept of “xã hội hóa” in Vietnamese. In English, there is no
2837 word that corresponds to the Vietnamese concept of “xã hội hóa”, so we have to translate
2838 and explain. Like when we translate "accountable" into Vietnamese, we have to translate in
2839 a lengthy, explanatory way, for example. I then explain “xã hội hóa” as mobilising the
2840 resources of the social classes, mobilising the resources non-public social sectors. Such is
2841 the meaning of Vietnam's “xã hội hóa”. Instead of the state, public sector, public resources...
2842 investing in the construction of roads, electricity, roads, schools, stations... it calls for the
2843 participation of the private sector. It's not "I socialise with him" as I go have a few drinks
2844 with him. So the translation is completely wrong. Or "sao la", or "Xiao Kang society", or

2845 “Juche” of {name of country}. These are endemic of peoples that are not English native
2846 speakers. Of course they will be imported, such as to the Oxford dictionary, of course. The
2847 thing is that whether have seen the demand and deservation to include the Vietnamese term
2848 “xã hội hóa”, but they certainly will not accept "socialise" because "socialise" is not “xã hội
2849 hóa”.

2850 *Are there anything particular topics of relevance in relation to translation and terminology*
2851 *in development work that you feel we should talk about?*

2852 I can't think of anything else for the time being.

2853 *Thank you.*

2854 Interview with Participant 8 (P8-Ph1)

2855 *Can you briefly tell me about your development work in Vietnam so far?*

2856 I have done development work in Vietnam for over 10 years so far. When I first started
2857 working in development, I worked for a French NGO in the field of agriculture, poverty
2858 alleviation through rural development in the Northern mountainous areas. In 2007 - 2008,
2859 through the implementation of poverty reduction policy, Programme 135, Vietnam was still
2860 a low-income country, one of the poor countries, so it received a lot of ODA and international
2861 aid. And especially in the field of poverty alleviation in slower-developing areas such as
2862 rural and mountainous areas, at that time I worked for a French NGO on poverty alleviation
2863 through livestock and agriculture development. In 2007 when Vietnam joined the WTO, it
2864 had to sign a series of commitments to change policies and laws according to a 5-year
2865 roadmap, from 2007 to 2012, so I moved from this NGO to another organisation where the
2866 institution was a bit different, a steering committee office, roughly understood as the project
2867 management board that received ODA, but not through NGOs, but through the Vietnamese
2868 government, which was specific at that time through the Ministry of Industry and Trade and
2869 the Government Office. In this office, there were a number of contract workers paid by the
2870 donor including me and some officials seconded from the government. At that time, in the
2871 office of the steering committee, there were representatives of the MOIT, the Government
2872 Office, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance, i.e. 4 officers seconded to
2873 be programme officers. Thus, in this steering committee office, there were two types of staff:
2874 contract officers like me, and programme officers to jointly implement this project from
2875 2009 to the end of 2014. The project could have been extended but for certain reasons the it
2876 stopped at that time, but the Australian government continued to fund this effort but through
2877 another ministry, the MPI rather than the MOIT, and thus the steering committee office was
2878 dissolved.

2879 After the dissolution, I moved to work for a donor, {name of organisation}. At the time the
2880 institution completely changed, meaning there was almost no such thing as a "from
2881 government to government" project, but it is all through a contractor, and this contractor can
2882 be domestic or international NGOs or companies. When {name of organisation} launched a
2883 bid package, these contractors would have to bid and if they won, they would execute
2884 projects. I also worked as a consultant for a number of projects. After I finished working at
2885 {name of organisation}, I went overseas to study and returned. I am now working for a
2886 Vietnamese NGO called {name of organisation}. The fundraising mechanism of this
2887 organisation is similar to that of a contractor as mentioned above, and now my organisation
2888 is also raising funds through foundations or through governments. Basically, when the units

2889 invite bids, we will prepare a project proposal to submit to donors like the EU, USAID or
2890 other NGOs such as {name of organisation} or {name of organisation}, or UN. We also
2891 carry out {redacted} projects with some enterprises and corporations such as {name of
2892 organisation}, {name of organisation}, {name of organisation}, 3{name of organisation}
2893 and soon with {name of organisation}. Third, we raise funds from individuals and
2894 communities, for example, to register birth certificates for children in {name of province}.
2895 That is the development job I am currently doing. In summary, for more than 10 years I have
2896 been involved in development work, I have experienced various types of activities and
2897 institutions in managing development projects.

2898 *The experience is so rich, so I'm surprised why you don't see yourself as a development*
2899 *practitioner or a development professional...*

2900 Actually, in my CV, I still put it down as a development specialist. But it is true that in
2901 reality, my role is like a development practitioner. If I use the title of development worker, I
2902 actually don't work in grassroots too much, except for the first two years, my experience is
2903 with target beneficiaries, such as farming households in the mountains. The other, the
2904 programme with the WTO on perfecting the legal system, I often worked with ministries. So
2905 if understood a development worker as someone who works with the community, then I am
2906 a "young bamboo shoot" in the development community. Even now at {name of
2907 organisation}, I mostly work on advocacy and capacity building for other organisations
2908 similar to my own rather than grassroots.

2909 *After understanding your experience and role in development work in Vietnam, can you now*
2910 *tell me about your experience with translation and terminology?*

2911 To make it easier, I will speak from two angles, firstly about my observation in this sector
2912 about translation, second, I can share from the perspective that I am a person who, although
2913 not a professional translator, has to translate and interpret in my work.

2914 In this development sector, translation must take place from English into Vietnamese and
2915 vice versa in the following contexts. In the organisation or agency that is carrying out
2916 development activities and projects, there will be both English speakers and Vietnamese
2917 speakers - of course, there will be fewer English users than those who use Vietnamese, but
2918 mostly we work with Vietnamese users who do not speak English. So there needs to be the
2919 step of translation to make sure that everyone understands the issues in a particular field of
2920 work. As I observed, five or seven years ago, almost in state agencies, there were very few
2921 government officials who could use English but most development projects at the time were
2922 brought over by foreign partners who also brought in many international experts. Therefore,
2923 Vietnamese partners and international experts would have to communicate a lot, while the
2924 Vietnamese almost did not use English and foreigners almost did not know Vietnamese.
2925 There must always be a translator in those working sessions. It was a matter of working
2926 communication, which had not been mentioned before. So always, a project was developed
2927 in the direction of: senior leaders of the two countries met as diplomacy exchange, the host
2928 country partners discussed difficulties with the other sides in the areas of development and
2929 proposed to receive support. When such high-level political and diplomatic meetings took
2930 place, then there would be packages of development aid.

2931 These aid packages would also be built based on project proposals, which we often called
2932 project documents or programme documents, as they were called at the time. The project
2933 and programme documents themselves were written in Vietnamese, translated into English

2934 and sent to partners to let them know about the areas being prioritised and in need of support
2935 by the Vietnamese side. The foreign partners then contracted experts to develop documents
2936 in English to realise the projects, setting goals, objectives, expected outcomes, corresponding
2937 activities and measurement methods and so on. This document would then be returned to the
2938 Vietnamese, and must be translated into Vietnamese for presentation to the parties. At the
2939 beginning of project design, translation between English and Vietnamese was very frequent
2940 and extremely necessary. In the process of implementation, the meeting between experts and
2941 stakeholders always required interpreting, because otherwise, Vietnamese partners would
2942 certainly not understand because very few people knew the language.

2943 But recently, the number of officers at all levels who know English has actually increased,
2944 in both quantity and quality. However, when working with Vietnamese partners, Vietnamese
2945 is still the main working language, in terms of approving official documents or exchanging
2946 correspondence. And especially at Vietnamese state agencies, documents are still developed
2947 and submitted based on the original Vietnamese versions, so even though the officers
2948 handling these documents can speak English, they also have to request to send these
2949 documents in Vietnamese or have them ready in bilingual versions to submit to the
2950 leadership. Translation doesn't happen as often as before, but anyway Vietnamese is still the
2951 main language, so when working with INGOs or foreign partners, it is still necessary to use
2952 both Vietnamese and English. This requires a large amount of information to be translated
2953 into Vietnamese. And in international organisations with a large number of staff, both
2954 Vietnamese and international staff, English is the main language, so in all forms of written
2955 communication and maybe even speaking, they will all use English.

2956 But the officials in such an environment, when they communicate with Vietnamese partners,
2957 of course they use Vietnamese, so they become the people in the middle, imperceptibly. For
2958 example, when I worked for {name of organisation}, I was a person in the middle, that was,
2959 I had to convey my agency's opinions, feedback and correspondence with partners in
2960 Vietnamese language. Sometimes the partner's feedback could be in English or Vietnamese,
2961 then I would have to summarise and re-interpret the responses in English for my English-
2962 speaking co-workers. I want to say that, in the current development context of Vietnam,
2963 translation still happens regularly, although there may be officials who know both languages,
2964 but in the official working procedures, especially with communication in writing and even
2965 emails, English will be used a lot.

2966 So firstly, I have to translate a lot, at meetings, even though I am not a professional
2967 interpreter. I have translated for senior officials, ambassadors, deputy ministers and
2968 ministers. I used to translate for foreign managers, like my bosses, when they worked with
2969 Vietnamese partners, that is, at meetings with multiple parties and not one-on-one. I have
2970 many experiences with translation in different contexts.

2971 But at higher levels such as the diplomatic context, translation is very different, for example,
2972 diplomacy exchange between senior {name of organisation} officials and ministers and
2973 deputy ministers. So then I translated what they said, and often the Vietnamese side had their
2974 own interpreter too. I was from {name of organisation}, so I translated from English into
2975 Vietnamese for {name of organisation}, and everything that happened in the meeting was a
2976 bit protocol, very formal and solemn, so in this context I would translate word-for-word to
2977 make sure that I accurately reflected 100% of what was said. But because I was not exactly
2978 a professional translator and wouldn't know much about the discussion, but because I was
2979 an officer at the organisation who worked in that field, and because my work in practice...
2980 sometimes I also saw feedback from partners, I also wanted to consult my boss, but because

2981 I was in that chair, I wouldn't be able to do that. This limited my consultation with the boss.
2982 If at that time I was in the role of an officer and really wanted to consult and talk to my boss
2983 about the issues that arose at the meetings, I couldn't do it. It's high-level translation, so my
2984 main observation is that, having sat in that chair, I needed to translate and translate 100%,
2985 even literally, I had to say "yes, it's literally this" and I must translate correctly word-by-
2986 word the word he used, which was very practical to avoid crisis.

2987 As for development work, the context of translation could be at a meeting with only one
2988 foreigner and most of the remaining participants are Vietnamese, and the discussion is more
2989 direct. Since communication is related to the work in progress, and it's not the context of a
2990 meeting where simultaneous translation is required, the nature of translation is very different.
2991 This is translation in a meeting in which I am also a participant and at the same time I have
2992 to take on the additional task of translation. Because these are meetings to discuss
2993 development work, if the foreigner speaks, I will translate and during the translation, the
2994 Vietnamese participants will be silent. Then it's not too difficult, and secondly, although I
2995 still translate truthfully, in that meeting I am also a specialist working in that field, so I will
2996 have more explanations, " what he means is this...". And I always have to add "ok, actually
2997 I...", which means I've already translated everything he said, but I have added this comment...
2998 Well, that means I added my own idea but I always tell the speaker that I have added my
2999 idea... Then that's translation from English into Vietnamese. As for when people speak
3000 Vietnamese, I will almost do simultaneous translation, because translating for one person
3001 will not be difficult at all but when 2 or 3 people speak at the same time because of the nature
3002 of these discussions, then I will have to summarise, "Mr. A says this, Mrs. B says that...",
3003 and I will translate right away and not wait for them to finish speaking. If one participant
3004 speaks, I will translate very carefully, but there are situations where people are still arguing,
3005 I can only summarise the key ideas... And usually before the foreigner responds, I will say
3006 to everyone, "Yes, I have summarised all of your ideas for Mr. Foreigner, and now the boss
3007 will speak". And while the boss speaks, if anything is missed, I can remind him or I can
3008 directly add in. So my role in this situation is not limited to translating and interpreting, but
3009 I am an information bridge, a facilitator in the meeting.

3010 About written translation, I have translated and also reviewed the translations of others.
3011 There are two issues I have seen. If the translation is from English into Vietnamese, I always
3012 ask what the purpose of this translation is. Because then the users of the translation will be
3013 Vietnamese people, or in other words, the information is communicated in Vietnamese and
3014 translated from the English version, so it is necessary to ensure that the users understand the
3015 information correctly what is written in the original English. So there are two problems. With
3016 professional translators and their translation is already too good, I have nothing to complain
3017 about but rather learn from it. There are translators, although not incompetent ones, do the
3018 job in the direction of characterise 100% of the words and terms... Here I want to talk more
3019 about terminology.

3020 *There, yes. Please share your experience with terminology in development work...*

3021 There are terms in the originals that we couldn't find equivalents in Vietnamese, or were
3022 later translated by other development workers through a process of derivation such as "trao
3023 quyền", "trách nhiệm giải trình"... so at the time, I saw my Vietnamese colleagues used a
3024 lot. But there were cases that, if "trao quyền" was used in documents for submission for
3025 project approval, then the project may not be approved. What is "trao quyền"? Some
3026 provincial stakeholders wouldn't like this translation and they rejected the project, especially
3027 they didn't like when it said "trao quyền cho thanh niên trong phát triển kinh tế - xã hội"

3028 [empowering youth in socio-economic development] for example, and the project would
3029 certainly not be approved. But maybe if it could be as promoting youth participation, then it
3030 would approved, because people understood “trao quyền” in the way of giving rights to
3031 someone to do something inappropriate. But if that could be changed to “thúc đẩy sự tham
3032 gia của thanh niên” [promoting youth participation] for example, then it got approved.

3033 I mean, when translating terms, people sometimes apply the phrase structure from the
3034 English language to the Vietnamese language, and stakeholders who are good at the
3035 Vietnamese language often do not accept this. My organisation has just translated the
3036 handbook for the civil society on ensuring children's rights in business principles, in English
3037 it is "child rights in business principles", “quyền trẻ em trong nguyên tắc kinh doanh”, so
3038 these are extremely popular terms in the world. They already have developed many many
3039 manuals and books on the subject and even legal mechanisms. But in Vietnam, this is new.
3040 Now if you keep translating it as “quyền của trẻ em trong nguyên tắc kinh doanh”, for
3041 example, people will feel very vague. It's word-by-word translation, but if you don't explain,
3042 Vietnamese people will not accept this concept. Moreover, we are the trainers and providing
3043 training to the civil society organisations and organising business forums to discuss this
3044 issue, then sometimes we have to say, this principle not only ensures children's rights, but
3045 it actually guarantees many other rights. In short, I can translate it like that, but I have to
3046 explain it specifically in the context.

3047 Also, in terms of grammar and writing styles, in English it is very common to use passive
3048 sentences and pseudo-subject, pseudopassive, while in Vietnamese it is often to see many
3049 translators leave it as is, “”Tôi quá bận để làm cái này cái kia” [I'm too busy to do this and
3050 that] while the natural expression in Vietnamese is not like that. That's not a Vietnamese
3051 sentence, do you see it? We have to say, “Tôi bận lắm nên chưa làm được” [I'm so busy that
3052 I can't do it], or “Tôi không làm được bởi vì tôi bận” [I can't do it because I'm busy],
3053 something like that. Imagine, if a whole page of translation, such a style of expression is
3054 used, then clearly the translator has been influenced by the English style of writing. When I
3055 edit these translations myself, I feel very uncomfortable, not to mention the people working
3056 in the state agencies whose Vietnamese are very “pure” and they will be very annoyed by
3057 such sentences and expressions, and they say "this text reads a lot like a translation, and not
3058 a writing". So when translating English – Vietnamese , I feel that I should follow the
3059 Vietnamese style in a way that the meaning does not change, and I cannot keep the style of
3060 writing of the original. And vice versa, too, from Vietnamese into English, many people
3061 translate word-by-word. Sometimes I think we should try to keep the original meaning but
3062 make sure the style and word usage are acceptable to the users of the translated texts. I have
3063 a feeling that few people pay attention to this nowadays, because most of them are in
3064 development work, many people are not professional translators but they have to take on
3065 daily translation work, and of course there will be many writing problems as above. Simply
3066 with an invitation letter, then surely the way the invitation letter is written must be in the
3067 Vietnamese style. For example, in English, people simply use "Dear Sir/Madam..." or "I
3068 hope this letter finds you well"... as a greeting, but in Vietnamese, it cannot be used like that.
3069 The Vietnamese greeting may be “Tôi xin gửi tới ông A một lời chào trân trọng” [I would
3070 like to extend a respectful greeting to Mr. A], for example. In short, when translating
3071 documents, I think we have to keep the meaning of the original texts but at the same time
3072 ensure the style of writing and the language used. Many tell me they can't understand the
3073 Vietnamese translations, so sometimes they have to go back to the English version to
3074 understand it completely. Currently in the development sector in Vietnam, this practice is
3075 very common.

3076 *Could you share with me more about terms that might be problematic in your work?*

3077 These are things that I don't know how to deal with. I see that up to this point there are still
3078 terms that I don't know how to translate into Vietnamese or to have an agreeable standard,
3079 and most of which have different translations in many different contexts. Personally as a
3080 development specialist, I think language is a means, and I can use it flexibly to achieve
3081 effective communication so that all parties are "on the same ground", that is, everyone must
3082 agree to stand on a common ground to understand a certain term and there is no need to insist
3083 that a term be translated as such. Some who translate always have one way of translating a
3084 term, but I think language has to go through a process of development and derivation, so the
3085 task of looking up the original meaning as well as studying the concept is really important,
3086 but the task of translation must be flexible. Even linguistically, I accept that "empowerment"
3087 is translated as "trao quyền" and not "thúc đẩy sự tham gia", which means that young people
3088 must have the right to do this, that... But obviously in Vietnam, you will never be able to
3089 explain this concept, or able to say that, here, you are "trao quyền" for them to speak... What
3090 is "quyền"? That is, they get to speak up about the issue, get involved and monitor an issue.
3091 But in Vietnam's political system at the present time, they will not accept the expression
3092 "trao quyền", because "trao quyền" can be understood as "do whatever you like". That is
3093 their interpretation, and they may get it wrong. But they still create conditions to promote
3094 participation so that young people have forums to have their voices heard, and participate in
3095 the process of contributing ideas to meetings, for example. In this case, I agree with the
3096 option that, when writing to the government stakeholders, it's possible to use "promoting
3097 participation", but when writing to the other side, like in reports for example, I still use
3098 "empowerment". Because at the end of the day, development work is about seeing if you
3099 will ultimately achieve your goals and not judging whether "trao quyền" or "thúc đẩy sự
3100 tham gia" is more correct. So I think, whether "trao quyền" happens more or less, "thúc đẩy
3101 sự tham gia" is "trao quyền". If we want to measure that, "to what extent youth is
3102 empowered", then we can say that, to some extent, young people are involved in the
3103 development of a 5-year or 10-year socio-economic development plan or strategy of their
3104 locality, and they have forums and organisations, and so on, or the voice, how much of their
3105 opinion is recorded and measured, so they are empowered. But in Vietnam, nowadays the
3106 term "trao quyền" is never used that way, especially when it is understood in such a sensitive
3107 manner.

3108 I still think "empowerment" should be used in official documents in Vietnamese, but I
3109 haven't seen it yet. It only shows up in project documents, in project activities, for example
3110 "empowering women", "empowering youth" and these are what the project tries to do, but
3111 the term has not been in Vietnamese policy documents.

3112 Another example is "resilience". Honestly, sometimes I don't even know how to translate it.
3113 For example, increase the resilience of... a local community... in a landslide. Resilience is
3114 "khả năng chống chịu" [resistance], right? That's how I understand it. But "khả năng chống
3115 chịu" is a very unconventional term in Vietnam. Maybe only in the context of fighting, we
3116 refer to the ability of a person to resist or endure violence, for example, but it is not
3117 appropriate to describe a local community. And sometimes it's not really "ứng phó"
3118 [response], but I still have to translate it as "ứng phó", for example, "to respond at a certain
3119 level". Are there any other ways to translate it?

3120 *When I did a textual analysis, I found several alternative equivalents: "ứng phó", "chống*
3121 *chịu", "phục hồi" ... Here let me show you on the screen.*

3122 I am also someone who likes to play with languages. We also use “resilience” in the area of
3123 gender violence or domestic violence, sometimes it has to be translated to fit in those
3124 contexts to be understood by stakeholders in Vietnam. The problem I'm facing now is that
3125 with some terms, like “resilience”, I won't be able to use a single and succinct enough word
3126 to describe the full meaning at a relative level. Then personally, I will overcome this problem
3127 by using more than one Vietnamese words to translate a term in English for example. Yes, I
3128 think “resilience” will have to cover “*ứng phó*”, “*chống chịu*” and “*phục hồi*”. I understand
3129 “resilience”, in a “*nôm na*” way as “you hit me but I don't fall, or I fall lightly and then get
3130 up”, or “being beaten back and forth but I'm still standing there, just a little scratched”, right?
3131 If I am scratched a little, my resilience is good, but if I am wounded severely, my resilience
3132 is weak. Similarly, when translating from Vietnamese into English, if we have the word “*ứng*
3133 *phó*”, will we translate it into “resilience” or not? So I think I should look at it from both
3134 sides.

3135 *Can you tell me, in your opinion, what terms in development shouldn't be translated?*

3136 I'm sure people still translate them into Vietnamese. The “logframe” translates as “*khung*
3137 *logic*”, but in this case “logic” is an extraneous word that is not translated into Vietnamese,
3138 but can be Vietnamised in spelling as “*lô-gic*”. “Outcomes” and “outputs” have been used
3139 for many years, so it can be said that development stakeholders are familiar with these, and
3140 these can be translated into “*mục tiêu dài hạn*” [long-term goals] and “*mục tiêu ngắn hạn*
3141 [short-term goals]. Above the outcome it's the “impact”, everyone already knows. But
3142 actually “*tác động*” still sounds very English, even though it is a Vietnamese word. So
3143 translate them that way, and if we need the folks to understand, we have to explain more. In
3144 Vietnam's official documents, it is certain that “*tác động*” is not mentioned, “*mục tiêu ngắn*
3145 *hạn*” and “*mục tiêu dài hạn*” .

3146 *Are there any other topics related to translation and terminology that you think we should*
3147 *talk about?*

3148 What I see as important is answering the question “So what?”, i.e. the issues we just
3149 discussed, in the end what are they for? So what implication does these issues have on the
3150 development environment in Vietnam? First, it is key to get development workers and even
3151 decision makers in the development sector see the importance of translation. How can each
3152 stakeholder in the development environment be approached? It is necessary also to find out
3153 the impact of translation and how it can contribute to development, especially in the context
3154 that the role of English in development work in Vietnam is still very significant.

3155 *Thank you. I really also hope we can cover these topics when we meet next.*

3156 Interview with Participant 9 (P9-Ph1)

3157 Can you describe to me your experience in development work in Vietnam so far?

3158 I major in human resource management, but currently in the field of development, I
3159 specialise in career coaching for high school students, university students and labourers. I
3160 also study counselling to work with {name of organisation} to conduct life coaching for
3161 adults. I had a two-year experience with the NGO sector, managed the {redacted}
3162 Scholarship Fund, then I worked as a professional volunteer for {name of organisation}
3163 some time. During my time as a pro bono volunteer for this network, I helped them set up
3164 the organisation's procedure system and recruit personnel, and then coached two leaders in

3165 the organisation. After that, I founded an organisation to provide training in psychology
3166 therapy and conduct activities related to psychological counselling. I used to operate a
3167 psychology training course which was going for nearly 1 year for a group of 20-30 people.
3168 Before I went to study abroad, I worked as a career counselor for a short period. Currently I
3169 am working as a part-time lecturer for {name of university} to teach Emotional Education.
3170 I am also a freelance lecturer to teach “Giao tiếp thấu cảm” [Compassionate
3171 Communication].

3172 *Can you share with me your experience with translation in your work?*

3173 {Name of organisation} was a club affiliated with {name of organisation}. They support
3174 many unlicensed organisations, including Life Psychology. During this time, I participated
3175 in a programme called “Hạt nhân thay đổi”, “Impact Accelerator”, and had the chance to
3176 attend courses related to development and leadership for NGOs. Then we developed our own
3177 publications from our own translation to provide training for others later on.

3178 So I mostly translate books and other materials for self study. For some programmes, there
3179 are lecturers from overseas, so I listen to my colleagues’ translation and I am also asked to
3180 translate. I have the observation that when listening live to colleagues, I feel that the
3181 translation is very easy and sometimes see them translate technical terms incorrectly, but
3182 when I translate, it is very different because I myself can’t translate that well. In these
3183 programmes, sometimes they outsource translation to professionals but they also ask
3184 Vietnamese lecturers and volunteers who are capable of translating.

3185 *Can you share with me a story about difficult or problematic translations of terminology in
3186 your area of work?*

3187 For example, I am not satisfied with how the term "empathy" is translated. I discuss with
3188 severals and they say until now, the equivalent of “thấu cảm” being used to translate
3189 "empathy" never exists in the Vietnamese language and has not been used by professionals,
3190 so for a while, I switched to use “đồng cảm” as the equivalent. But it is also interesting that
3191 we have been in contact with “thấu cảm” for many years in psychology but we have not
3192 heard any feedback about its use from experts until the {redacted} case when experts spoke
3193 out. Then I thought, to be safe, I’d use “đồng cảm”. But after I returned from my study
3194 overseas a while, she pondered over and over the idea that there was no such thing as “thấu
3195 cảm”, but then found that the opinion came from people who had no experience of “thấu
3196 cảm”, it’s not that “thấu cảm” cannot happen. So this opinion does not reflect the essence of
3197 the concept and term. In addition, the fact that I switched to using “đồng cảm” was because
3198 I was afraid and feeling unconfident because there were people who did not fully understand
3199 the topic. Finally, after thinking for a while, I decided to change all the ways back to using
3200 “thấu cảm” from “đồng cảm”. It is clear that I now see even among professionals and in this
3201 training area, only people with specialised training in psychology would use the term “thấu
3202 cảm”, while other groups use “đồng cảm” more often. From a psychological perspective,
3203 people see that these two concepts are very different, and it leads to the fact that when we
3204 teach, there are learners who’d ask which equivalent is better to use, so we have to explain
3205 in detail. This is to me “you ring your own bell”, and this is my most profound experience
3206 with the translation of terms.

3207 *Do you know who was the first to translate empathy into “thấu cảm”?*

3208 In a book by {redacted}, the definition of “thấu cảm” was given a long time ago. I also see
3209 this equivalent for “empathy” in the materials on psychology and pedagogy being translated
3210 from foreign languages.

3211 *How often do you see the use of “thấu cảm” in Vietnamese texts and in verbal*
3212 *communication?*

3213 For people in the psychology area I work with, it’s very frequent that this equivalent is used,
3214 because “thấu cảm” is one of the core skills of the counselor. Therefore, when using it, those
3215 in the field know it, and they also distinguish between “thấu cảm” and “đồng cảm”. For
3216 example, they may define “thấu cảm” as “I know very well what the other person has been
3217 through, but that doesn't mean that when the other person hurts, it hurts me too. Because if
3218 people hurt and I hurt too, that's “đồng cảm”. But if someone is in pain and I feel sorry for
3219 them, that is “thông cảm””. There are very clear distinctions in this area, and so were in the
3220 earlier books. Later in the subject of Emotional Education, there were many trainers whose
3221 background was not psychology, and I found that they used the word “đồng cảm” quite a
3222 lot. I think the two equivalents “đồng cảm” and “thông cảm” do not fully convey the meaning
3223 of "empathy", and the currently preferred equivalent in this sector is “thấu cảm”.

3224 *So how does the use of the two other equivalents, “đồng cảm” and “thông cảm” affect your*
3225 *daily work?*

3226 People also don't use “thông cảm”, sympathy, so much because there will be a difference in
3227 roles. When a person uses “đồng cảm” when they talk to me, I must ask them what they
3228 mean by it. Because as I said, we make a clear distinction between these two concepts. The
3229 important thing is that we try to ask people to explain their experiences so that we can orient
3230 them to practice properly.

3231 When I translate for the therapy practitioners, if they use “empathy”, I will translate it as
3232 “thấu cảm”. Usually, I will note down and explain to learners that when they read the
3233 materials, they might see the two terms “thấu cảm” and “đồng cảm” to refer to the same
3234 concept, but in the context of this training, I prefer to use “thấu cảm” and then I'd explain
3235 why.

3236 In our training programmes on leadership and daily communication, it is also necessary to
3237 develop empathy skills. Not only do I coach others, but when I teach “how to listen” skills,
3238 or profound listening, then the skills of “empathic listening” is needed. One of the obstacles
3239 in listening is that listeners are afraid to listen to difficult feelings, because then they may
3240 feel the need to offer help, good deeds and comfort... but it's harder because they might feel
3241 as stuck as the speaker. So the trainers need to explain to practitioners that “thấu cảm”
3242 doesn’t mean that you must feel the same as the other side, so that they have the right
3243 understanding and hope in the practice.

3244 *How do you see the role translation in your work?*

3245 It's very important. Currently, I am teaching a subject called "Compassionate
3246 communication", “giao tiếp trắc ẩn”. This subject actually is also called “non-violence
3247 communication”. Others in Vietnam call this “trung giao bất bạo động” or “giao tiếp phi
3248 bạo lực” but I call it “giao tiếp trắc ẩn”. Outsiders may question these two names and think
3249 that these are two different subjects, so I will also have to explain as mentioned above. But
3250 I find it difficult to transfer the knowledge originally from English to Vietnamese, so not

3251 really translate, i.e. how to not lose the original meaning but still show its features using the
3252 Vietnamese language and not the English. This is a challenge, for example someone saying.,
3253 I feel upset because my need for listening is not met". Usually, if translated normally, the
3254 translated sentence will not be the natural speaking style of Vietnamese people, but it has
3255 the nuances of blame. Usually in Vietnamese we just say “tôi thấy thất vọng vì không được
3256 lắng nghe, hoặc cần được lắng nghe nhiều hơn” [I feel disappointed because I am not being
3257 heard, or need to be heard more]. To this day, I still struggle with this problem. So there are
3258 translated books that I have to read over and over again because I can't swallow the style.

3259 *Can you relate this example to what can be called introduced knowledge?*

3260 This is a book that I am managing to have the copyright to translate, “Communication
3261 fundamentals”. Even though I'll need to translate the title into Vietnamese, I have not thought
3262 of it. There are examples in this book, like the language of the wolf, the “habitual language”,
3263 or the language of the giraffe, the “natural language”. I don't know if Vietnamese people can
3264 understand if these are translated into Vietnamese.

3265 *So, can you imagine how you'd handle difficult-to-translate terminology?*

3266 I must first understand the meaning of the term, and try to find a rough translation. If the
3267 term comes in a sentence that needs to be translated into Vietnamese, think about how the
3268 Vietnamese readers would place the term in an entire sentence. I will have to ask other people
3269 to learn from them the natural expressions in Vietnamese, I can ask a few to get a few options
3270 then from which I'll choose the most appropriate. I can also mix between two or three
3271 options.

3272 *When you come across a term that you find difficult to translate and have to consult others,
3273 who do you usually consult? Do you and these people often discuss translation and
3274 terminology?*

3275 Not very often, but I often discuss first with people who have a good level of English. Once
3276 I saw a psychology term in Vietnamese, “cấm chốt tâm lý” and did not know what the term
3277 in English was. So roughly it describes a traumatised or difficult child at a certain age, the
3278 child's mental process just stops there, even though their physiological age continues, but
3279 the mental age stops there. When that child grows up physiologically, they still have a mental
3280 difficulty that a person at that age should have already resolved, so this problem is called a
3281 “”cấm chốt tâm lý”. And I thought it takes an English – Vietnamese dictionary of specialised
3282 language in psychology to find this term, but I had never seen such a dictionary before. So I
3283 had to ask other specialists, but first I had to find out some initial information about the
3284 meaning of that term.

3285 *Are there currently any discussion groups or online forums that discuss these issues?*

3286 I haven't seen any, or maybe there is one that I don't know about. Usually, co-workers or
3287 colleagues within a specialised area would talk to each other. Because I am not a mainstream
3288 psychologist, because I did not graduate from a psychology school and don't have a formal
3289 degree, I don't have the opportunity to participate in a formal community. So in short, I'd
3290 discuss these issues with my own network and circles of professionals and practitioners.

3291 *Just to relate it to the topic of introduced knowledge, because you mentioned this example,*
3292 *“cảm chót tâm lý”, do you think this is an example of introduced knowledge or local*
3293 *knowledge? Have you found the equivalent term in English?*

3294 In essence, psychology is an introduced discipline into Vietnam contexts. And most
3295 specialised materials are translated from English, I don't know who translated, but maybe
3296 the first who translated terminology into Vietnamese, they referred to sources in English,
3297 French and even Chinese, and maybe the Sino – Vietnamese vocabulary. There is a feature,
3298 I don't not see psychology terms being used in everyday life, but only specifically in the
3299 industry, there are interpretations in the industry. Psychology concepts and knowledge must
3300 originate from a theory of psychological development, and accompanying theory are the
3301 terms to describe these concepts, so they must have the nature of specialised terminology.
3302 Maybe “cảm chót tâm lý” comes from some Freudian knowledge, but I am not sure.

3303 About local knowledge, I have an example but I have no evidence for it, but there is
3304 something similar to what our ancestors used to explain. In compassionate communication,
3305 it is said, behind an action of a person is a certain need to motivate it. Well, like our ancestors
3306 explained, ‘that guy stole because he was hungry’. But our ancestors did not formalise that
3307 as a knowledge to record in books. But whatever is already universal in the books, it is also
3308 difficult to distinguish whether it is Western or not Western. It may be Western because
3309 Western scholars write it down, systematise, theorise and give it a name. For example, “man
3310 is innately good”. So many times when I go to practice or work, I don't see these things as
3311 new knowledge.

3312 *In your area of work, do you think certain terms shouldn't be translated and it's better to*
3313 *keep the originals, “to be safe” as you said before?*

3314 My point is that if I don't know how to translate, I will try to explain the implications of that
3315 concept and term, and put the original term in parentheses for users to research, check and
3316 elaborate on. If we don't include it completely in the knowledge, the knowledge is no longer
3317 objective. For me, even if it is deemed to be the correct translation, the original terms should
3318 still be placed in parentheses for further research purposes. For me as a development
3319 practitioner, this is an important approach because it brings in transparency, objectivity and
3320 learning.

3321 *When you teach, do you develop your own or use your colleagues' materials?*

3322 Mostly I build my own materials, but I can also use a few slides of colleagues provided that
3323 I have a very good understanding of their content, and must know the sources they cite.

3324 In case there is a term already translated by others and I'd translate the same, in the textbooks
3325 I still put the original in parentheses. For example, “lắng nghe thấu cảm”, I still put "empathic
3326 listening" in parentheses. And I tell trainees that what being put in parentheses is for them
3327 to research and read more, because in the classroom context, it is not possible to explain
3328 everything, so learners already have the keywords that are the original terms there for further
3329 research.

3330 *Have you ever thought about gathering these English – Vietnamese keywords and making*
3331 *that a tool, a separate slide in the lecture, or a separate glossary in the textbooks you*
3332 *develop?*

3333 This hasn't been done for my trainees yet, but in a group with colleagues, within a circle,
3334 yes. There is such a tool to list out the corresponding English – Vietnamese terms and
3335 references.

3336 *Can you show me a page or a screenshot of this tool?*

3337 Here, it's on the computer, so I'll open it for you.

3338 *So I can imagine you and your colleagues discussing and agreeing on how to understand
3339 and translate terms?*

3340 Yes.

3341 *Here it is, a workbook.*

3342 For example, this term, from what documents is it mentioned, by whom, and our own
3343 definition.

3344 *How many terms have your group listed?*

3345 Not many yet.

3346 For example, here “wellbeing” has several translations. Some translate it as “triển nở”, some
3347 like Thich Nhat Hanh, as “an lạc” or “khỏe mạnh”, and so on. So we the 4-5 trainers are
3348 responsible for updating the fanpage or website, if we use different equivalents, it'll be very
3349 inconsistent.

3350 Here, what should “mind” translate as? “Eureka moment”? “Aha moment”... *[Laughter]*.
3351 Being in this list means the terms have no agreed translation. Should “self-compassion”
3352 translate as "tự trắc ẩn" or "trắc ẩn tự thân"? And “self-kindness”.

3353 Then “resilience”. “Sự phục hồi”, correct? “Khả năng phục hồi”? But others translate it
3354 differently too, although from the same specialty area. “Khả năng phục hồi” seems like the
3355 common one, when I studied in 2009, it was illustrated as the image of a spring, rebound,
3356 and elastic. The ability to return to the original state.

3357 If it's “thích ứng”, it's already transformed. “Phục hồi” implies that you have been hurt, but
3358 you returned to the previous state, in the psychological context.

3359 *What problems does this inconsistency lead to?*

3360 It's like having a house with several children, but each of them speaks a language. Then
3361 people will look and say "why is this house so inconsistent? Today you use this term,
3362 tomorrow another. Who do I trust?". But I have not seen people complain that way on our
3363 fanpage. But within the group, if we read each other's works, we'll find that the
3364 understandings and translations are very different. For example, you will see on the screen
3365 here, the term "acceptance", and here they explain it as “chủ động, bao dung trải nghiệm
3366 đang diễn ra ở đây và bây giờ một cách không phát xét” [being active and tolerate the
3367 experience going on here and now, in a non-judgmental way], while “acceptance” can also
3368 simply be “chấp nhận”, yes? But it's necessary to interpret “acceptance” in different contexts
3369 too, so that it means something in the subject of Compassionate Communication.

- 3370 *I also want to know, in this glossary tool of yours, who will use it after it is completed?*
- 3371 Currently only for internal use. Because in the writing of each person, they use different
3372 terms and it causes confusion, disjoints and inconsistency. That's why we're all thinking of
3373 using the same translated terms and came up with this. Everyone thought it was necessary.
- 3374 *Have you and your colleagues ever translated a completely new term in English that never*
3375 *has a Vietnamese equivalent?*
- 3376 Not yet.
- 3377 *But there might be times like that, yes?*
- 3378 Yeah. There are times when we don't even translate. For example, "mindfulness", in some
3379 documents it translates as “sự chú tâm” or “chánh niệm”. When deployed, some people were
3380 afraid that using “chánh niệm”, it would sound too Buddhist and the acceptance would not
3381 be good, so they later suggested to translate it as “sự chú tâm” [attention] or “sự tỉnh thức”
3382 [awakening]. But from our perspectives, these translations do not fully explain the meaning
3383 of mindfulness, nor have we found the closest and most correct equivalent. Everyone can
3384 use whatever they want, but I decided to leave it as is and not translate. But if the listeners
3385 have absolutely no English, I will use the equivalent “sự chú tâm” as the most common one.
3386 If that seems like a group of devout Buddhists, “chánh niệm” might be used. For university
3387 students, I'll leave it as it is because they will be able to look it up.
- 3388 “Wellbeing” is one of these, too. Even if I use “an lạc”, I don't feel it means enough.
3389 “Wellbeing” is broader than happiness, that is people must be healthy both physically and
3390 mentally and that's “wellbeing”. If translated as “khỏe” as being physically healthy, it is not
3391 correct. So it must cover both physical and mental health, plus overall social life, to call it
3392 “wellbeing”. My teacher who had a PhD in psychology from the {name of Western country}
3393 translates as “triển nở” and this also sounds reasonable.
- 3394 *Who do you think would be in the best position to translate terms and concepts in*
3395 *development work?*
- 3396 I think this is a co-creation process. The first to translate may be professionals themselves
3397 may not have experience in communication with language when they work in the
3398 community, because in the community, there may also be something in the local vocabulary
3399 to describe the same concept. It is important that when we communicate, the local people
3400 must fully get the information, digest it and then respond to see if their opinion matches or
3401 fits with the original meaning of a concept or term in the local context.
- 3402 **Interview with Participant 10 (P10-Ph1)**
- 3403 *Please describe your experience of translation and terminology in your daily development*
3404 *work.*
- 3405 On a daily basis I mainly translate documents including press releases, reports such as post-
3406 project follow-up reports or financial reports, Facebook posts. In general, I translate what is
3407 assigned by the superior. In my organisation, there is also another staffer, who translates at
3408 the same level, the boss's assistant, but she does not major in translation, and mainly she
3409 performs short translations. Then the translations will be reviewed by two senior officers
3410 who have in-depth knowledge on both language and development.

- 3411 I have never performed any translation and interpreting in the field or at formal meetings.
3412 And these days due to Covid-19, everyone meets via Zoom live in English. At the meeting
3413 there will usually be the management level and our project international counterparts. I only
3414 participate to take notes and make minutes in English, kind of summarising the meeting
3415 highlights.
- 3416 *Can you be more specific about the performance of “short translations” you mentioned?*
- 3417 There are documents prepared by our superiors and these must be sent to the partners at short
3418 notice, then she is assigned to translate these in a very short time. And these texts are also
3419 very short.
- 3420 *Have you encountered problematic terminology and terminology with different translations*
3421 *often?*
- 3422 These days, I often see the term "decent work". I actually understand "decent" in its usual
3423 sense as "good", but my senior colleagues translate it as “công việc bền vững” [sustainable
3424 work], “công việc ổn định” [stable work], so I see that these may be “overly” translated to
3425 compare with the original in English.
- 3426 *Those two equivalents your organisation is using, “công việc bền vững” and “công việc ổn*
3427 *định”, are they also used by other organisations and projects?*
- 3428 I think other projects also use the same, as I have read from their materials and documents.
3429 Recently, my project held a seminar on "decent work" with other stakeholders, and they all
3430 used such translations. And I don't know who was the first to translate it like that. I also see
3431 these two translations very often recently, especially in training workshops on promoting
3432 children's rights in business principles, i.e. in two specific areas of "children's rights" and
3433 "business".
- 3434 *Do you think these two equivalents have become official on project documents?*
- 3435 They are used in documents but I don't think they are official yet. We also outsource
3436 translation to professionals, there are sets of documents and I see that the professionals adopt
3437 these equivalents. However, these sets of documents may have not been reviewed, approved
3438 and published, so in short, they are used internally and as training materials.
- 3439 I also see the feedback of the stakeholders that this term, “decent work”, is also very difficult
3440 to understand and difficult to explain in English and Vietnamese, so it's likely that people
3441 still use the original English term. During the workshops I see everyone understands because
3442 perhaps because of their vast knowledge of the area.
- 3443 *Which stakeholders are participating in the implementation of "decent work" related*
3444 *activities in your project?*
- 3445 Civil society organisations and often project managers participate in in-depth and internal
3446 training sessions on the topic.
- 3447 In my opinion, this term should be explained in the direction of it being a normal job that
3448 generates a stable income, being done on a day-to-day basis and for a long time.
- 3449 *How do you see “công việc bền vững” and “công việc ổn định” impact your work?*

3450 For the project, I don't think it has any negative or harmful impact at all. I think we'll need
3451 more time to "soften" the translation a bit and let people get used to the understanding and
3452 the term.

3453 *Do you often discuss translation and terminology with your project co-workers?*

3454 We don't discuss these topics. Usually, we reuse existing translations, unless there is a big
3455 problem with the translations. If we are convinced and the senior colleagues give us
3456 appropriate examples or explanations, we will use it. I talk to others about translation
3457 sometimes but mainly about making expressions more natural when translating from English
3458 to Vietnamese. For example, before a presentation, we had an activity that is understood in
3459 a "nôm na" way as a "warm-up", so I translated it as "warm up" but my boss replaced it with
3460 another word which I don't remember, and explained that the word "warm up" had a meaning
3461 that didn't fit in that context. I have voiced my opinion but my superiors did not accept it so
3462 I ended up using their way.

3463 *It's normal to obey and agree with the superior's opinions, yes?*

3464 Yes. Our colleagues mainly talk about the work and not translation issues. Often when
3465 people encounter difficult-to-translate terms, they leave it untranslated, or leave the original
3466 term as it is, then use a temporary equivalent or just provide the explanation in Vietnamese.
3467 But I think the phenomenon of adding English to Vietnamese in verbal communication is
3468 normal and understandable. I watched an English language teaching programme about this,
3469 and I agree that such inclusion will make it easier for people who come across a difficult
3470 word because they can remember it by making it easier to relate to the context in which the
3471 word is used. In terms of learning English, this is very effective. But in normal
3472 communication, I find it annoying, but sometimes I still have to add English to the
3473 Vietnamese because I can't think of a good translation right away or I am not sure about my
3474 translation. In text translation, I often provide a certain translation for a problematic term,
3475 then add the original English term in parentheses.

3476 Actually development is a new area for me. I'm more familiar with technology, because I've
3477 been translating newspaper articles about this area for a long time. I don't know if it's related
3478 to your research topic or not. But really from the very beginning when I translated English
3479 articles, I realised that Vietnamese has not caught up with other languages, especially
3480 English. I think because the West has achieved a lot in science and technology, and it is
3481 understandable that they come up with new inventions, new products and new knowledge,
3482 but Vietnam has not caught up. Sometimes I have a headache when I encounter knowledge
3483 described in English but in Vietnamese we have not yet equivalence to describe. For
3484 example, I don't know how to translate the term "computation", and I don't know who to ask.
3485 Computing, algorithms... and many more terms. Algorithm, I am reusing everyone's
3486 equivalent, "thuật toán" but in some cases I find it is possible to replace the word with just
3487 "công nghệ" [technology] to make the expression smoother, because this term is very often
3488 used in a very general way anyway in the topics of AI, machine learning or face recognition,
3489 etc. "Thuật toán" in Vietnamese sounds very abstract and directly related to mathematics. In
3490 Vietnamese articles translated from English or even in internal documents about technology,
3491 the phrase "train AI algorithms" becomes "đào tạo và huấn luyện các thuật toán". Honestly
3492 as a Vietnamese, I find this translation very difficult to understand, but everyone still uses
3493 it, including myself. If I can think of a temporary correct translation, I'm not confident to use
3494 and still have to put the original term next to it, but in Vietnamese publications, sometimes
3495 the authors or the translators don't do that. In addition, in the technology company that I

3496 worked for, the brothers and sisters also advised me to stay the same and not translate
3497 difficult terms.

3498 *Do you participate in forums or groups that discuss translation and terminology?*

3499 I am a member of an English translation and interpreting group, which is now renamed as
3500 Reflective English on Facebook. In the past, I also followed many groups but the quality was
3501 not good so recently I am only active in that one group. I also participated in discussions at
3502 the university, where academics shared their experiences in translation. I also often find
3503 recordings or videos of simultaneous translation practice and learn from them. There is so
3504 much to learn. Usually, I find being a translator and interpreter requires a lot of hard work
3505 and effort to study non-stop.

3506 *Next time if you have other stories about translation and examples of terminology in*
3507 *development work, be sure to share them with me. Thank you and see you next time!*

3508 Interview with Participant 11 (P11-Ph1)

3509 *Can you describe your working experience in the development sector in Vietnam?*

3510 Before mentioning translation in a work context, I would like to share a little about my
3511 personal motivation to work with languages, specifically English, which later led to
3512 translation, because the journey before was part of my decision to become a translator later,
3513 and it was my first job after graduating from college, it was also the decision that I chose
3514 English as my major and knowledge base at university.

3515 When I was 12 years old, I was exposed to English for the first time, at that time when I still
3516 lived in the village. One day, a neighbour friend who went to study in the city of {name of
3517 city} returned and they spoke English. They were only a year older than me. The first time
3518 I heard a language that I was not familiar with, I was really curious. First, it's different.
3519 Curiosity has always been very important to me, as it will be. Everything I do is motivated
3520 and begins with curiosity. Second, I was often fascinated by sounds because sounds have a
3521 very unique beauty to me. In English, for example, when I first heard the word "teacher" or
3522 "blueberries", I was very attracted by the crisp sound of a language that I did not know
3523 before. Also, when I heard English, I saw the emotions when the language was spoken, that
3524 is, emotions were expressed in language, body gestures as well as the stresses in a sentence.
3525 That was why when I was 12 years old, I decided to ask my parents to let me study in {name
3526 of city} because I wanted to learn a new language which I later found out was English. My
3527 journey from a little girl in the village to the city to study because of something attractive
3528 led to my later journey from which I chose English as my foundation subject. That passion
3529 continued to lead me to choose to become a translator in a development organisation, and I
3530 applied to that organisation. So what led me to my passion started with a different cause,
3531 which was not technical and it didn't start with how I found a job attractive from the outside,
3532 but it started from an inner motivation.

3533 I officially became a translator in development work in 2005, but before that I was an
3534 unofficial interpreter for many foreign experts in {name of city}. At that time, I was a
3535 student, but I was also trusted and often translated in non-work contexts such as when they
3536 went out to learn about local culture, they often asked me to translate. So before that, I had
3537 a little experience, and it was this experience with informal translation that gave me the
3538 ability and cultural acumen, and the know-how to develop an expression in Vietnamese and

3539 English. After 2005, I had a five-year experience with translation in the areas of work. First
3540 it was the construction of bridges and roads including the National Highway 1A project from
3541 the South to the North which I participated in the role of translator for the chief engineer of
3542 the central package, from {name of city} to {name of provinces}, and the second, ADB and
3543 WB projects of on livelihood improvement. The third project I worked as both a translator
3544 and project officer was on landmine clearance, so I translated for the chief technical advisor,
3545 then I was in charge of the sub-fields of supporting landmine victims, mine risk education
3546 and supporting victims of Agent Orange exposure. Now I look back at my experience in
3547 translation, I see that my experience is still very much about dealing with the consequences
3548 of the war in those 5 years.

3549 After 2010, I continued to work but as a project manager and project officer, then as a human
3550 resource manager, but also in organisations working on humanitarian demining and dealing
3551 with war consequences. In 2015, I moved to a new organisation. At that time, I approached
3552 something else that was not really translation, but about language and knowledge in work,
3553 in work environment and communication in the two fields of education and organic
3554 agriculture. If we talk about the role of official translator and interpreter, it is actually only
3555 5 years, but the contact to translation at different angles and levels, I think, is about 15 years.

3556 *Thank you for that. Then after 2010, your role as a translator was more focused on*
3557 *development...*

3558 In development work, when I play the role of translator - interpreter, my job is obviously
3559 almost to serve the needs of written communication as well as direct verbal communication
3560 in all situations of an organisation, so it is almost a full service to support communication
3561 channels and relationships, let's just call it communication and maintain relationships
3562 simultaneously, because in an international organisation, the work of colleagues and
3563 personnel, in order to make the information flow smoothly, must be through translation or
3564 interpreting. That is the bridge to build a relationship or break the relationship, the role of
3565 the translator is decisive. However, moving from being a translator and interpreter to other
3566 positions, I have one observation that is, usually in an organisation, even if there are
3567 professional translators, but if the job falls into the field of one's expertise, that person will
3568 play a key role in communication via the English language. For example, when I am in
3569 charge of education, in all meetings related to this field, I am in charge of translation, from
3570 training to translating materials and policy documents of the organisation. I feel there is a
3571 next level of translation and interpreting, that is, you are in charge of a business that is both
3572 conceptual, knowledge, and practical because you have the experience, you have done it
3573 before, and also it may become part of your organisation's guidelines or policy documents.
3574 It guides the implementation of the project. I see at this point that the role of the translator is
3575 almost blurred, and it seems that it is no longer as important and decisive as it was in the
3576 beginning, but it is complementary.

3577 *Great experience, and I feel like I have had a similar journey. Can you describe the policies*
3578 *on translation and language in the organisations or projects you've worked with, if any?*

3579 In the organisations I work for, including the long-standing and reputable international
3580 organisations in Vietnam, almost all of them do not have policies or any principles to
3581 standardise translation and interpreting practice. It's more momentary and depending on
3582 specific needs. Usually, they look at the internal resources of the organisation to arrange
3583 resources for translation and interpreting. For example, if you have a staff member who can
3584 speak English, then it is not necessary to have a separate in-house translator. Basically,

3585 Vietnamese officers do two jobs but are paid one salary [*Laughter*]. We are in charge of a
3586 specialised area of work but at the same time all the bosses who go to dinner, we have to
3587 translate, even though we can be in charge of gender or educational science. When the boss
3588 goes to lunch or the managers socialise as part of the organisation's communication, we also
3589 translate to support that. I see that this partly creates pressure for people doing development
3590 work. However, besides that pressure, I also see an opportunity. Because to me, even if I
3591 have a background in language and translation, I still find that at school, it's only the
3592 knowledge that is provided, but when I do specific jobs, translation or doing specialised
3593 work where communication in English is required, it is an opportunity for career
3594 development, professional learning development, that is, learning by doing, because I have
3595 to do it in the context of reality. Second, we are learning by context. For example, if I work
3596 with farmers, or train farmers on emotional education, I will translate "compassion" as "lòng
3597 thương người". But when I talk to a teacher, I can say "lòng trắc ẩn", and when I talk to
3598 some audience who have a background in meditation practice, I use the term "lòng từ bi". It
3599 is in learning by doing and learning through contexts, practicing through contexts that it
3600 deepens one's understanding of the language, and at the same time it cultivates flexibility in
3601 translation which is related to to cultural factors or local contextual factors and target
3602 audience to help us do our work better and also improve our satisfaction because of the
3603 meaning of the work. So I find that the challenge itself brings many opportunities, and
3604 another opportunity from the fact that I work but have to communicate in another language,
3605 for me the biggest gain is that it builds cross-cultural sensitivity. For example, in Vietnamese
3606 I often express long and illogical expressions, but when I use a foreign language to work for
3607 a long time, it helps me speak clearly and coherently, and I have a poise in expressing my
3608 needs as well as in communication, because I learn to use body language or learn to make
3609 eye contact for example... These things also strengthen my confidence which I myself did
3610 not build in my mother tongue from a young age. I think cultural sensitivity is very important,
3611 sometimes even more important than the language we speak to people who don't understand
3612 our language, because it can be felt.

3613 *Can you share with me some stories of how issues of translation are dealt with in your*
3614 *development work?*

3615 There have been many difficult situations [*Laughter*]. Usually when I decide to comment
3616 or intervene in necessary cases, I usually have a few principles. First, I will see how my
3617 position is, my relationship in terms of position in the whole. Secondly, in situations where
3618 the translation is incorrect, for example translating from A to B or A to A' for example, or
3619 not translating, or the translator is biased or misses the important points, for example, before
3620 deciding to speak up, I will see if the lack of information or misinformation affects the
3621 entirety of the meeting, then I can politely ask for permission, saying, "I see this translation,
3622 in this context, it also means this...", that's all. I'm actually very careful in commenting on
3623 translation, especially in government-related meetings and in formal contexts. Because
3624 usually if the translator is brought in by the government, for example, to a meeting with a
3625 chairperson whose secretary translates, or their foreign affairs officer translates, then almost
3626 99% of the time it is very necessary. If necessary, I will comment after the meeting is over.

3627 As for translation between colleagues, I will definitely be more open and assertive. In an
3628 organisation with people who were originally translators and interpreters and later moved on
3629 to other positions, they basically have firstly the advantage and trust, and secondly better
3630 work performance that is a "two-in-one" role. And they have trust because they speak two
3631 languages. But at the same time, I also think about the weakness relating to the correlation
3632 of power balance between me and other colleagues. So sometimes that colleague may be

3633 many times better in expertise and experience, but maybe they have limited language skills,
3634 while I used to be a translator then took another position related to the specialty, but as I did
3635 not have the adequate ethics and standards to guide me, then that will lead to abusing,
3636 manipulation or biases because I know the language. This leads to a vulnerability which
3637 makes the correlation of power and relationship in favor of myself, so it serves oneself but
3638 often harms others. Then that's the minus point of people who have that extra ability.

3639 *Are you talking about the translator being a whistleblower?*

3640 I think my corrections or responses are mostly informal. I've never acted as a whistleblower,
3641 and even in communication contexts where there is a cultural mismatch, I would carefully
3642 consider whether I should be in a language-use whistleblower role. That means I will try to
3643 give feedback but the role of whistleblower for me is a bit heavy.

3644 *What about with document translation?*

3645 What I just shared is related mostly to verbal translation, interpreting that is, direct
3646 translation for meetings, conferences or training. As for document translation, for me it has
3647 different levels. The first level is translation in the form of information translation, i.e. text
3648 translation. For example, in the office, there are things related to activities and I think there
3649 is no need to be too careful with language, because the main thing is still the activities. As
3650 for the language, I can adapt a bit, adjust it a little in the office or in the field... It's very
3651 flexible. I think if I am too strict with words, I use my head too much, sometimes it's bad,
3652 it's too much friction, and my work may be only 1% affected by translation but it affects up
3653 to 5% by relationship, because of the attitude toward language. But for me, I should avoid
3654 being too black and white about language.

3655 The second level of translation is when we talk about manuals, handbooks, textbooks or
3656 publications and policy documents and we must be thorough and professional in terms of
3657 language, information flow and accuracy. Usually I'm interested in giving feedback or co-
3658 constructing the quality of this kind of translation. For me, the most important thing is that
3659 when I translate from English into Vietnamese, the readers will be Vietnamese, then I have
3660 to Vietnamise and domesticate the wording so that the semantics are still guaranteed but the
3661 reading must flow well and ear-pleasing. It is important to be ear-pleasing, and it is part of
3662 the contemporary language we are exposed to every day in newspapers, on television, in
3663 mainstream contexts. When I translate from Vietnamese into English, I will have to research
3664 very carefully the technical or specialised documents and the use terms, styles and
3665 expressions in the Western political or cultural contexts so that I can use their way of
3666 expression and writing style to adapt it appropriately to my context. That means I dive in
3667 and submerge myself in the culture to see what people are saying, how the press and media
3668 are saying, then I have to express it accordingly, and for me that is to show respect to the
3669 person with whom we come into contact through the text. This is no longer translation but
3670 an expression of respect for those who come into contact with me through the creation of
3671 wording to which I participate and contribute.

3672 *Are you referring to the criteria of cultural correctness and political correctness in*
3673 *translation? In your opinion, are these two so-called criteria, if existing, well maintained in*
3674 *the projects you are working with?*

3675 Although not included in any guidelines, these two criteria are the implicit and default
3676 agreement that must be guaranteed in all documents about communication. First, because all

3677 such texts are mainstream, they must deliver the appropriateness to the current social and
3678 political context and the audience. Secondly, culture is between people to people, which is
3679 very basic between people to people, then we cannot come to others and have no connection
3680 if we do not touch the cultural aspect of communication. And culture in my understanding,
3681 in writing or translation, is to have emotions, because otherwise it will become Google
3682 Translator. For example, a translation sent to me by a person, I read it without any connection
3683 from beginning to end, and many times when I finish the reading, I feel exhausted or I only
3684 remember exactly one or two pieces of information. But there is also another person's
3685 translation that I finish reading and the more I read it, the more I realise that I could put my
3686 feet in the water, that is, more and more I join in the flow of that translator even though they
3687 were not the writers. But it was them who put their heart and emotions into the translation,
3688 and they made it very fluid and connected. I think translation is so important, because a
3689 translator is someone who can do a lot of things. In turn, it affirms that the ethics that
3690 translators pursue in life is very important, that is, the values of honesty, correctness or
3691 objectivity...

3692 *So do you think other stakeholders in a development project such as farmers or local*
3693 *partners and state partners, for example, pay attention to the cultural and emotional values*
3694 *that are included in the translation?*

3695 I don't know what other translators feel, but mostly from my experience, there is something
3696 quite interesting. That is, usually, my translation is always something that gains the
3697 sympathy of others. That is, many times I have not intentionally built a relationship through
3698 my translation, but if I stay focused and have feelings, this will serve as the foundation and
3699 soften my language. I believe that the audience have a sense, a feeling, and when reading,
3700 they feel, sometimes they have not met the translator but they already have a certain degree
3701 of sympathy, then I find my translation a stepping stone for me to move towards building a
3702 positive relationship, not just to help convey information as an assignment of work. It's a lot
3703 of things, it's very versatile in that context. The fact that you are a good translator is also an
3704 opportunity, that is, you deliver a translation that has a quality. For example, I remember
3705 that all the jobs that I got were never through interviews, there was no job I applied for and
3706 I had to go through an interview, but mostly people know me and I get recommended because
3707 of the quality of my work as well as my translation.

3708 *Just like when working with farmers, they commented "o ni, chú ni dịch như ri là dễ hiểu*
3709 *nè..."*

3710 That's right, because I speak their local dialect correctly, I'll preserve the meaning and also
3711 their language. For example, going back to work with farmers, I have to say "mô, tê, rãng,
3712 rũa" and I must have a sense of humour, using all the everyday languages they speak to each
3713 other. Working in schools with teachers is different, and going to meetings with government
3714 departments is also different. I think translation in development work is very resourceful in
3715 the way that it helps me become more open, and I have a better ability to observe more in
3716 different contexts, that is an advantage and a benefit to those who translate while and the
3717 others in other roles may not get the same opportunity in development work.

3718 *Assuming a situation where a translator works with an expert and a community, the expert*
3719 *at the podium gives a very precise, specific, and very technical amount of information. If the*
3720 *translator wants to express it in a way that is ear-pleasing and to the hearts so that farmers*
3721 *can understand, so you're suggesting that translators can make jokes or add in local*
3722 *elements, humorous elements and emotions... Would the expert find that the translator is*

3723 *improvising too much and it causes a lack of time in the session? For example, they say a*
3724 *sentence that is translated into 5 or 6 sentences. Have you been in situations like this, and*
3725 *have you ever received feedback from experts that the translation takes too long?*

3726 Surely those who have just come in with little experience will encounter the same situation
3727 as I did when I first did the job, unintentionally. Of course, international colleagues and
3728 experts give feedback. But later when I have more experience, I will ask questions. First, for
3729 example in a workshop or a meeting, who is the ultimate beneficiary? Second, how does the
3730 most important message reach that group? The question about the beneficiary will determine
3731 the appropriate language for the whole beneficiary group to understand, because the ultimate
3732 goal is for them to understand so that they can apply at work. In addition, there will be a
3733 slight adjustment and deviation from the original information given to me by the expert, so
3734 it is necessary to have an open discussion from the beginning that there will be such
3735 situations when I translate, and this is related to culture, that is, from a language that is
3736 spoken indirectly through another language that is spoken directly, so the local culture must
3737 be respected. For example in our culture, it is advised not to speak too rudely or too bluntly.
3738 Then I think in these situations, it is crucial to have mutual understanding, discussion and
3739 agreement right from the beginning. And I'd say to the experts that sometimes I will need to
3740 say longer sentences than their original, and I will notice them before I translate. At that
3741 point, I say, "Sorry, but this sentence will be indirect and a bit longer in Vietnamese, so you
3742 will see that my translation is longer than what you just said", for example. There is also the
3743 opposite case where I will speak Vietnamese more concisely. The key here is communication
3744 transparency. So for me when translating and interpreting, the preparation is very important,
3745 ie. read the documents in advance, discuss with the experts in advance how they want to
3746 convey information or what they need to emphasize, what their ultimate objective would be,
3747 so that even if I make mistakes during my performance, I still try to stick to the goals they
3748 set and the most important parts of the message they want to communicate with the local
3749 people.

3750 *For you personally, is it a code of practice for translators in development work?*

3751 I observe that most of my colleagues who translate and who are good at what they do that I
3752 learn a lot from, they have the same practice. This means for them, the preparation step is
3753 very important as it is for me. And like I said, it's not purely a technical thing, it is not just
3754 to finish the job but rather it is an attitude. It is a work responsibility that when I work, if I
3755 see that something needs to be done and needs to be prepared, I do it and I prepare. I think
3756 in the end the most important thing is work ethics.

3757 I think ethics in terms of values and attitudes is universal. It is the backbone of any job in
3758 any field. Also, I personally see a translator having the role of cultural ambassador. In
3759 addition to the fact that own communities lack opportunities to access information, perhaps
3760 being exposed to things related to the world or participating in an activity with foreigners'
3761 presence, there will be differences in terms of communication civility, for example. Then
3762 the role of the translator is to build the capacity of the community so that they can build more
3763 civilised practices which are still suitable for the locality. For example, when someone
3764 speaks, don't interrupt... as simple as that. These are very essential and important as one of
3765 attitudes towards culture or as civilised behaviours. Or with foreigners, maybe the translator
3766 can act as a whistleblower, because we feel that we have national pride when working as a
3767 translator. So for the foreigners who we feel that they tend to be biased, when it comes to
3768 local people or local culture, then, somehow, I will find a way to justify, for example, to
3769 explain or have a very frank discussion with them because I think that will create a

3770 foundation later on to build for myself the bravery to interact with other contexts without
3771 feeling pressured. In a way, being silent means we are complicit [*Laughter*].

3772 *Can you share some specific stories about this from your experience?*

3773 I have an example here which points to the role of the translator as the whistleblower. In the
3774 2000s, most international experts came to Vietnam because the embargo was lifted in 1995,
3775 but around the year 2000 did tourists come to Vietnam. At that time, it was too primitive, so
3776 tourists' understanding was limited due to the lack of information. So when they came, I felt
3777 that they brought a lot of prejudice and presumption, especially the international experts,
3778 once there was a certain expert who concluded that Vietnamese people were lazy at work.
3779 The context of this judgment was in Hue, so he said, "the Vietnamese staff in my office are
3780 very lazy", and that was in the manner that they work slowly or they take naps, for example,
3781 or not being on time. Being late is a pain in the ass, our biggest problem is being late. But I
3782 kept thinking about the comment that Vietnamese employees were lazy, and then I also had
3783 a frank talk with him, that "being slow is not necessarily lazy, but maybe they don't work as
3784 much and as productively as you do. Also, you also need to see the context here, how the
3785 cultural rhythm of life is around here... Our pace of life is like that, Hue people cannot be
3786 compared with Saigon or Hanoi people, because we grow up that way and live in a miniature
3787 society which has operated like that, and that is the natural rhythm of the Hue people. In
3788 their work they may slow down and do less, but have you ever noticed the depth or attention
3789 they put into their work? Or how they take care of you compared to an employee in Hanoi -
3790 do they care about you more?". So there are many aspects beyond work performance, but
3791 here they only look at work performance and give a one-sided judgment. This is something
3792 very culturally contextual and very momentary. Because the industry was not yet developed
3793 at that time, we all worked as farmers and basically still lived in harmony with nature. It's a
3794 story about coming across biases or preassumptions about something that I think is very
3795 fundamental in shaping one's view of a country or region. So for me I'm sure I'll find a way
3796 to exchange ideas and get both sides to mutually understand. The important thing is to help
3797 them understand correctly, and there is no winning or losing here. But I speak on behalf of
3798 my community, and if I don't speak, that wrong perception will go with them for a long time,
3799 and it will be more difficult to help them correct.

3800 *How about being a whistleblower against knowledge that might cause misunderstandings*
3801 *or negative feelings for the audience?*

3802 I have never experienced a situation when the information and knowledge are conflicted
3803 with the audience's views. Most information sharing is fairly accurate or neutral.
3804 Fortunately, I have not encountered this issue, but most problems would only fall into cases
3805 related to attitudes or perceptions. I handle these cases pretty well, and I'm very clear and
3806 firm about it. I think we have an advantage when working with foreigners, that is we can
3807 have frank and constructive dialogues in any field. What matters is whether your intention
3808 is to build a relationship or to break it.

3809 *Can we talk about your terminology now?*

3810 Yes, but I'll have to go soon. Can we discuss problematic terminology next time?

3811 *I agree.*

3812 *But for now, can you briefly share with me how you and your co-workers deal with*
3813 *terminology in a development project?*

3814 For me translating terms often requires technical knowledge and requires that the translation
3815 becomes universal. That is, when we speak, even though we are using specialised terms, the
3816 terms must be familiar to the ears of the stakeholders which means they have been used
3817 somewhere in mainstream communication. For me, when I encounter a difficult term and I
3818 don't know how or where I can find an equivalent, I will go in the direction "from self to
3819 others". That is, I proactively seek knowledge in all possible channels and then consult
3820 colleagues. So the channels can be glossaries of major development organisations such as
3821 UNDP, UN, UNICEF, Red Cross... overseas or in Vietnam. I will read all the development
3822 glossaries or maybe from other glossaries that have terminology of related fields such as
3823 climate change, education and HIV, for example. I will read these terms to see how they are
3824 used in a certain context or whether they have been used or not. And I have to consider
3825 whether that usage makes sense in terms of meanings or feelings. Second, I will refer to the
3826 documents of fellow organisations that I have access to. I ask colleagues and search, and if
3827 those could solve my problem, that's fine. If the term is very technical and it is very
3828 contextual, then I have to talk to a lot of people, cross-check with at least 3 different sources.
3829 And even if it doesn't come to term, I'll see how the explanation of that term resonates with
3830 my own understanding. Because only I know which equivalent I need to formulate most for
3831 my work, while the other equivalents will be references in the end. After getting all the
3832 necessary information, I will formulate the equivalent that best suits me. The questioning
3833 and cross-checking can also be done internally with co-workers or externally with colleagues
3834 or other organisations.

3835 *I think we'll leave it here. Thank you and see you next time!*

3836 Interview with Participant 12 (P12-Ph1)

3837 *Could you tell me your experience in development work in Vietnam?*

3838 Since 2005 when I was a final year student of {name of university}, I have worked for
3839 development projects and international organisations. In total, I work for five ministries and
3840 four international organisations. First, at the {name of ministry}, my role was as an English
3841 teacher, and I taught the teachers of the concrete specialty divisions from {name of city} to
3842 study concrete engineering in {name of a Western country}. Then at the Ministry of Culture,
3843 I worked in the Sub-Ministry of General Cultural Affairs, and here I provided translation for
3844 an exhibition of several hundred images of President Ho Chi Minh and the Ho Chi Minh
3845 Trail. After that, I officially worked for a project of the {name of ministry} until 2010.
3846 Between 2005 and 2010, I worked on two main projects. One was the project of Capacity
3847 Building and Developing Medium-Term Education Plans at the provincial and city levels in
3848 Vietnam which was funded by {name of a Western country}. There, I worked as an
3849 accountant cum interpreter. The second was the national target programme on Education
3850 providing funding for the {name of programme} for the period of 2005 - 2010 from {name
3851 of organisation} targeted budget which was a trust fund of 7 countries through the World
3852 Bank for the {name of ministry}. In this programme I work as a coordinator, and the
3853 experience in translation I never forget was from this period [*Laughter*].

3854 Particularly in the field of education, there were already too many problems, be it education
3855 finance, professionalism and textbooks - I'll give you some examples of educational
3856 terminology later. Education was just one of the fields. In 2010, I moved to the {name of

3857 ministry} and worked there for 9 years. There I researched issues of human resource
3858 management and the salary - bonus system. Since 2018, I have worked for international
3859 organisations, including the ILO, in the field of social security, then the WB.

3860 *Can you share your experience of terminology in development work?*

3861 How about education first? There are such terms like... first, the ones being used in Vietnam,
3862 “tỷ lệ tuyển sinh”, “tỷ lệ lên lớp”, “tỷ lệ đúp lớp”. These are very simple, but most translators
3863 in other fields cannot translate. You know these terms, don't you?

3864 *I am not sure either [Laughter].*

3865 So, "enrolment" is “tỷ lệ tuyển sinh”, but in Vietnam, at the levels of primary school,
3866 secondary school and high school, the common term is “tỷ lệ nhập học”, while at the higher
3867 education level or university level, it is “tỷ lệ tuyển sinh”. “Tỷ lệ lên lớp" is "promotion",
3868 but others still translate it as “thăng “tiến, which doesn't make sense in this context. “Tỷ lệ
3869 đúp lớp” consists of 2 words, but some translators outsourced by the Ministry and also by
3870 WB often confuse “đúp lớp, "repetition" with “bỏ học”, "drop out". That is, they confuse
3871 "drop-out rate" and "repetition rate".

3872 The first meetings on these topics, most interpreters make these mistakes. In document
3873 translation, they don't seem to confuse "drop-out" much but often between "repetition" and
3874 "promotion" because they don't understand. There is also a related issue, as in the question
3875 you asked me about how do you know that it is right or wrong...

3876 *How do you know that a translated term is problematic?*

3877 So now I will give an example from my experience. It was during the mid-term review of
3878 the {name of programme}, funded by the {name of ministry} through the WB trust funds of
3879 7 countries, at that time I had just graduated from university, I translated and because I was
3880 too new, I wasn't confident with my vocabulary. Then there were the terms "effectiveness"
3881 and “efficiency" in economics. Actually in the development field, it's a triangle of "3 E's"
3882 like this. There was this project officer of the foundation called {redacted}. At the time, I
3883 translated "effectiveness" as “hiệu lực” and “hiệu suất” and she stood up at the table and
3884 objected very strongly against me, saying that was wrong and the term should be translated
3885 as “hiệu quả”. I just said no, efficiency is different from effectiveness, because their formulas
3886 are different. However, in that work atmosphere, I could not say much, while the director of
3887 the sub-ministry of finance and also seniors in higher education finance were present. He
3888 didn't say anything because he didn't understand the difference. So that day when the
3889 international partner spoke, I continued to translate "effectiveness" as “hiệu suất”, but in the
3890 area of governance, I translated it as “hiệu lực”, as in, for example whether a law takes effect
3891 in practice or just on paper. Then the other woman stood up, slapped the table and told me
3892 to stop so she could take over the translation. Out of courtesy, I stopped to let her translate.
3893 But in 2008, I went to study for my masters in {name of a Western country} thanks to a
3894 {name of a Western country} government scholarship, only then did I learn about "3 E's
3895 model” and prove myself right. So within the 3 years, at least no one clarified the confusion
3896 between "effectiveness" and "efficiency", leading to the persistent problem of ambiguous
3897 understanding about what was written by the programme on finance for higher education in
3898 those years, and that was all because of the confusion about these two concepts. If we could
3899 trace back the documents and proceedings exchanged between the donors or partner
3900 countries and the {name of ministry}, we'd see the ambiguity in those. And you probably

3901 understand that “efficiency” also takes into account that, “not only can I do this, but I can do
3902 it in the least amount of time and with the least amount of resources”. While “effectiveness”
3903 means “I can do this no matter how much money and time it takes”. That's an example about
3904 the negotiation in financing for education negotiation. It took 3 years, and there was no one
3905 at the sub-ministry to guide me, but I only realised it myself when I was in graduate school.

3906 *Do you then discuss your findings and understanding with your colleagues?*

3907 At the time of 2010, I no longer had the opportunity because this project ended, and I myself
3908 moved to the {name of programme}, and the {name of programme} had ended, findings
3909 already printed into books. Then recently, I brought some delegations from Sydney
3910 University to visit, and I translated within the framework of their cooperation with {name of
3911 a government organisation}, I mentioned this during the breaktime, but then everyone
3912 already understood. That was, 5 years later, the problem was solved because it was related
3913 to money and resources.

3914 *Can you share with me other examples of problematic terminology?*

3915 During my time working at {name of university}, that is, just recently, in 2020, the process
3916 of digitisation has brought in new content to the teaching and learning process. For example,
3917 the STEM lessons. Actually, now in the suburban areas of {name of city}, I use the words
3918 “STEM lessons” and “STEM lectures”, then no officials understand what it is. I can't explain
3919 to everyone word-for-word about STEM, which is science, technology, etc.. The Agency of
3920 Teachers itself also feels very confused. They and Vietnam in general tend to understand
3921 that, you just need to use Powerpoint, then you have a STEM lesson already. That is really
3922 not true. But there is still no dictionary to provide them with these updates or a scientific
3923 research work that is updated and recognised enough for everyone to see clearly what a
3924 STEM lesson is. Also there are a series of new terms in the context of imported technology,
3925 such as Fintech, IOT, big data, AI ... people do not well understand these in the field of
3926 education in particular and in the general field. All the terminology in the so-called
3927 Technology 4.0 is rushing into Vietnam since this time of covid, someone needs to stand out
3928 to list and have them documented. But it is impossible to understand STEM lesson as using
3929 powerpoint.

3930 Another example here. During the {name of summit} which took place on {redacted}, due
3931 to lack of understanding [*Laughter*], the organisers mistranslated the title of the director of
3932 the Department of Social Assistance [Cục Bảo trợ xã hội], DSA, of the Ministry of Labour,
3933 Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA). I'll send you the photo on Zalo so you can see right
3934 away that it's wrong. So this stems from the lack of understanding of terminology in the field
3935 of social protection. "Social protection" is a phrase that is understood differently by Vietnam
3936 and other countries. And in Vietnam, the protection, the policy of people with meritorious
3937 services, for war invalids and martyrs, Vietnamese heroic mothers, children, people with
3938 disabilities, and even civilians who pay for insurance, and so on... the combination of all
3939 these categories makes up "social protection", or “an sinh xã hội”. Regarding “an sinh xã
3940 hội”, I will have a lot of stories to talk about because it is related to the ILO. But today I only
3941 talk about an example of translating the director's title into “Vụ trưởng Vụ An sinh xã hội”
3942 which never existed. They translated that as “Director General of Social Protection
3943 Department of MOLISA”, which was at the same time mistaken for a department that never
3944 existed, while the mentioned director is only the director of Department of Social Assistance.
3945 In this case, it's the department which uses the state budget to cover almost 100% for those
3946 who cannot afford insurance. One is that I have money to pay, and enjoy the same service

3947 as in the United States or in Ireland where you are. The other case is that people contributed
3948 to the country, now they are not qualified to work but they still get the insurance because
3949 when they don't pay, the state pays for it. That is an example of completely misunderstanding
3950 the essence that led to an inaccurate interpretation by the translator, and the consequence
3951 would be the both sides, Vietnam and other countries, not understanding each other, and it
3952 will not be possible for discussions on the areas of policy, development and social protection
3953 to come to an end. That is a clear example I saw in the {name of summit}.

3954 *Can you tell me more of the impact of this mistranslation?*

3955 At that time, it was an international expert's speech, so they just translated it. Some have a
3956 habit of listening to something wrongly said, but they still say, "oh that's just an issue with
3957 translation", and they automatically correct their thinking because they are educated, so they
3958 are very qualified listeners. But then in the field, someone else would take the floor to
3959 criticise. I think this should be well noted or seriously documented, maybe in a manual.
3960 You'll understand right away if I talk about the field of medicine because that'll be a
3961 fundamental problem. But the problem of "social protection" is also a very basic problem of
3962 being inaccurate in the field of "an sinh xã hội" that may result as the policy not being passed,
3963 for many years now. For the whole year this year, the ILO lobbied the Vietnamese
3964 government; they haven't been able to launch any projects, because it is using a few
3965 translators who are not specialised in the laws and also do not have a background in "an sinh
3966 xã hội". Also, since no one can verify, when our senior officials listen to problematic
3967 translations, if that is not ear-pleasing, or if it's inaccurate, they just let it go without making
3968 any effort to "reverse check" to see if the translation is accurate or not. So the impact on
3969 policy is relatively serious.

3970 There is another impact on social security which is very prevalent in Vietnam now. For
3971 example, when people say "abuse", they automatically think of "quấy rối tình dục" [sexual
3972 harassment]. But "abuse" is not always sexual harassment, and in the social insurance field
3973 it means "lạm dụng", which is essentially the misuse of insurance. For example, I know that
3974 I am about to get married but I do not tell the insurance company that I am buying a maternity
3975 insurance package, then a few months after I give birth, I will be covered. Either a person
3976 buys a lump sum package, or a lump sum benefit package, they pretend to visit their children
3977 in a certain province and buy insurance in that province, they benefit from it and then go
3978 back to their home province to benefit for a few more times. That's insurance abuse, not
3979 sexual harassment. Here "protection" should be translate as "bảo vệ", "bảo trợ", "bảo đảm",
3980 and it is also "an sinh".

3981 *In your opinion, what might be the reason for the failure to implement the strategy and policy*
3982 *on social protection here? Is it because the Vietnamese side does not understand the concept*
3983 *introduced from the outside, or do the two sides have their own understandings of the*
3984 *concept of social protection?*

3985 I think the problem lies in both the reasons you mentioned and it's more about the latter. That
3986 is, in everyone's thinking, there are prejudices formed by the living environment, just like
3987 each country has its own way of developing certain sectors. For example, once there was a
3988 Việt kiều [overseas Vietnamese] who translated for a delegation of the {name of ministry}
3989 to the {name of a Western country}. This mission was about job positions. In Vietnam, only
3990 just recently have we had JD and other kinds, but before there was no such thing as "job
3991 position", it was a matter of career. So when the Deputy Minister of {name of ministry} said
3992 roughly that, in the {name of a Western country}, what experience do you have in developing

3993 different categories of job positions for employees of different sectors, or in universities and
3994 public education? The Việt kiều was a connoisseur in languages, but he didn't know anything
3995 about the so-called job categories, that is, he had no knowledge in this area so he couldn't
3996 translate the terms "occupational position" and "job position". He asked the {name of a
3997 ministry of a Western country} partners, and was told that, "we have a total of several
3998 hundred employees in our {name of a ministry of a Western country}. So this response
3999 totally had nothing to do and was not the answer to the question raised, What experience do
4000 you have in developing different categories for job positions... This is to say that, the
4001 difference between the two, such as a lecturer and a student, if the students do not know,
4002 they will ask immediately, but for politicians, policymakers, when they hear it, they think
4003 that the message implies a difference in politics or culture or society. They immediately
4004 assume that something is different while in essence there was no difference. Then this led to
4005 a series of overseas missions by Vietnamese ministries and sectors becoming holidays
4006 overseas, so people were joking, but it means that the experience gained was not very
4007 applicable. I have summarised a number of reports from several delegations of the {name of
4008 ministry} during the 9 years I worked, and I have found out that most of the team leaders
4009 reported that the overseas experience was excellent, however it was way too abstract for
4010 Vietnam. In fact, for example, if we consider that was 80% abstract, in reality the actual gap
4011 was only about 20-30%, while the remaining 50-60% was due to the failure to understand
4012 each other. If you want to learn more about this example, you need to conduct a survey and
4013 send it to the officials from the ministerial departments to get this data.

4014 *And since it is related to understanding, I think a list of concepts that need clarification as*
4015 *a basis for getting opinions in order to do the research as you say, so although it is also*
4016 *related to translation, I think it's a story of the future...*

4017 I have a different approach, that is not to see who is right and who is wrong. Now, if we rush
4018 to fight each other like on facebook or social networks, like translators expose the faults of
4019 other translators, it's not going anywhere. The important thing is that you need a manual or
4020 something similar in hand and already recognised and evaluated by a committee, then they
4021 will immediately stop fighting and look at your work. So I think it's better if your target
4022 audience are international organisations rather than government agencies.

4023 *In your opinion, are there terms that have already been translated but should not appear in*
4024 *policy documents in Vietnam?*

4025 Actually, once the policy has been made, the concept has already been localised, so it is
4026 submitted to ministries and agencies for policy-making. Therefore, it cannot be said that
4027 there is a certain category that is too foreign to Vietnam, but it can be that the localisation of
4028 a term does not represent the original meaning, that is, it is too far from the original meaning.
4029 For example, in the field of "an sinh xã hội", currently in our society, and specifically in
4030 Resolution No. 28 of the Party, we are aiming to increase the coverage of social insurance.
4031 About terminology, we have here the term "diện bao phủ", and the equivalent term is
4032 "coverage". But many translate it wrongly, even at WB and ILO, and also on documents.
4033 "Coverage" is "diện bao phủ", say we have a million people, 800 people of these have
4034 insurance, and it means that 800 people are covered in case of sickness, unemployment,
4035 accidents, etc., they are protected.

4036 However, there are examples of problematic terminology in a 2015 ILO document sent to
4037 the Vietnamese government, a form of technical notes. It was not public, though not
4038 confidential, but was not made public because it was only sent to selected functional

4039 ministries and sectors. The examples are about the terms "legal coverage" and "effective
4040 coverage". In Vietnam at that time, the experts in the ministerial departments, in the
4041 governing MOLISA, maybe because they didn't understand or didn't read carefully, they
4042 were subjective. They removed all the words "legal" and "effective" and left only the words
4043 that in Vietnam at that time were being used, which was "coverage", "diện bao phủ". This
4044 led to the fact that from 2015 to 2016, the policy implementation was problematic, and even
4045 people protested in some southern provinces. This was related to a one-off insurance
4046 payment package. In terms of the content, there were many problems, but the main problem
4047 was that, about "coverage", the Western advisors did not advise us that "coverage" meant a
4048 general coverage, but they said "legal coverage" ie. what percentage of the population buying
4049 and being covered by this insurance. "Legal" means on the legal paper, that is, a law is issued
4050 to say that the target this year must reach 50% in terms of coverage, by 2025 it will be 25-
4051 85%, for example, then the figures of 50% or 85% demonstrates the "legal coverage". But
4052 in practice, it was "effective coverage", that is, cases of evasion will be excluded so that only
4053 good compliance cases remain. "Effective" here means "hiệu lực", so once again it's about
4054 my "3Es" area. "Effective coverage" means that people comply, they pay social insurance
4055 and there are no cases of evasion or fraud. No more spending is needed to handle cases of
4056 evasion or fraud, or having to pay compensation and uncollectible amounts because of bad
4057 debts. From abroad, the ILO advised us in its 2015 document very clearly about "legal
4058 coverage" and "effective coverage" as "diện bao phủ về mặt chính sách" và "diện bao phủ
4059 về mặt thực tiễn". These two figures are completely different, and usually "legal coverage"
4060 is higher than "effective coverage". But this was not reflected in the law. If we open the 2014
4061 Law on Social Insurance, it's not there, but the upcoming Law, 2024, because it is clear in
4062 terms of costs, assessment of exterior funding for social insurance, there is a separation
4063 between "legal coverage" with "effective coverage". This one is relatively technical, but it
4064 greatly affects the amount of money and the number of people. There was even a
4065 demonstration.

4066 *In this new law, how do people translate "legal coverage" and "effective coverage"?*

4067 Since the new law has not been enacted, I cannot say. This is related to the course of
4068 International Laws of the Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and related to
4069 the issue of International Conventions. When localising an international convention that has
4070 been ratified, we will not use the original terminology. Some experts from MOLISA may
4071 already have the equivalents, but no matter what they are, it must show the correct content.
4072 I think this might be interesting for your further research and by 2024, you can compare the
4073 2014 law and the 2024 law and you will see.

4074 *That is, when we localise a concept of law from the West, if we are confused, we can ignore*
4075 *it and not translate it...*

4076 We never translate. It's not translated because of the subjective opinion of those who process
4077 documents. First, because they're not capable enough to understand. But usually if I don't
4078 understand enough, then if I am a responsible public servant and I don't understand, I will
4079 ask Mr. {redacted}, and if you don't give me the answer, I will ask your professors and
4080 others, but I won't stay silent to let go. But it must also be said that the amount of work our
4081 civil servants do in each field is way too much compared to the salary they get. The
4082 remaining problem is really inter-related to many other problems, and human resources must
4083 be trained. Your research has purposes, first it can point out gaps, second, I think you have
4084 to go a little further, ie how to close those gaps, then we'll see it in the direction that, yes,
4085 such an academic gap is related to such policy-making practice, it is related to human

4086 resource and capacity building in the ministries and sectors, and then this training is related
4087 to the training of high-quality human resources for Vietnam, and the issue of integration...
4088 that's how it is.

4089 *Great suggestions, although I need to work on the data first, and I have not yet reached the*
4090 *stage of making suggestions and problem solving, but I really appreciate that what you said*
4091 *is really going in line with what this research is about. Now as time is running out, I would*
4092 *like to ask, who do you think would be the most suitable person to translate terms and*
4093 *concepts in development work in Vietnam?*

4094 This is a very good and important question, but it is necessary to give an identification of
4095 organisations, say, international organisations, diplomatic missions and consular missions of
4096 countries in Vietnam, then Vietnamese officials would be the best to translate in their field
4097 in this context of bilateral relations between the two countries, that is, the officer in charge
4098 of that field. For the so-called state agencies, Vietnamese officials and civil servants. But in
4099 my view, translation is not only translation in the field of development, translation is not
4100 only translation but also a bridge, it even helps to promote cooperation and facilitation
4101 leading to the signing of documents between the two parties, and it's not just language
4102 translation. So the person who can undertake the facilitation between the two sides so that
4103 they understand each other, know when to stop to explain, and know when to let go because
4104 the two sides already understand each other, it must be someone who understands the both
4105 sides and understands the field, then it should be the coordinator of a project or a programme.
4106 The leader sometimes doesn't know as well as those who engage directly with the specialised
4107 development work. I'd say in a temporary way that between the Vietnamese ministries,
4108 government and universities, and bilateral or multilateral cooperation projects with foreign
4109 countries, the person in the middle, the coordinator, will be best to translate because they
4110 understand.

4111 *Either as a broker, and not just a language broker, to act as a bridge...*

4112 Yes, more of a broker, I've learned a new word from you.

4113 *So it depends much on the context and particular areas of development works, yes?*

4114 It really depends on the context. If you are in a large conference or forum just for the purpose
4115 of information dissemination, it is good to outsource translation professionals in the right
4116 areas. But for the goal of development and our development work, the work in practice must
4117 go into depth and usually involves collaborative efforts of various technical areas, using
4118 correct terms and writing put the practice into policy then implement. But international
4119 support for Vietnam nowadays focuses mainly on policy-making, and they do not support
4120 much in terms of policy implementation, except for obvious issues such as gender violence
4121 or human trafficking. So again we have to see clearly what development work is... If you
4122 intervene in the phase of policy-making, mainly through technical meetings, then it is not
4123 possible to use any translators, but it has to be those who work directly like you, like me...
4124 Because we are involved directly in the doing, we understand.

4125 *Thank you so much and see you next time.*

4126 Interview with Participant 13 (P13-Ph1)

4127 *Could you describe your experience in development work and translation?*

4128 Actually, now I work in trade, and the current job is not directly related to development and
4129 aid, but it involves asking partners to work with us on general agreements. For example, the
4130 WTO stipulates that we will cooperate in the field of veterinary medicine, all parties need to
4131 cooperate with each other. This work is difficult and challenging because at least in Vietnam,
4132 when you go to your partner and ask for collaboration in problem solving like this and not
4133 offering financial support or ODA but only helping hands, sometimes the parties do not meet
4134 half way. I'm sorry for mixing English and Vietnamese, I'll have to express it better in
4135 Vietnamese...

4136 *No problem at all.*

4137 The work is in the field of agriculture and related to animal and plant quarantine, SPS
4138 veterinary. Trade cooperation between Vietnam and {a Western country} has a lot to do with
4139 this segment, focusing on high-risk products such as butter, milk, meat and fish, and fresh
4140 fruit. My job is to go to meetings, and my boss doesn't speak Vietnamese, so I always have
4141 to start with translating for my boss a lot, and for small and big missions, I translate for all
4142 of them. At first, there was not much confidence. I was confident that I could facilitate but
4143 not about knowledge in SPS to translate at first. But at work, I keep learning bit by bit then
4144 and naturally to a point, I felt like I started to possess the knowledge and the terminology in
4145 that area. Understanding the work and projects we're involved in also naturally leads to a
4146 certain point where we feel more comfortable. I told my boss and reviewed that, the first
4147 year I also tried very hard, and she acknowledged my efforts, especially in the role of
4148 coordinator and fixer between Vietnam and {a Western country}. In the second year, I
4149 confidently told her in my review that I was very proud because at least I started to see
4150 myself contributing to the work, adding value and having confidence, and so it reflects in
4151 confidently going out, confidently expressing to partners and confidently supporting the
4152 work that {a Western country} is representing in Vietnam. She completely agreed and found
4153 it very interesting that my review was very reflective. It is true that I feel the same way
4154 because I am a person that if not confident, I can never do it, but I am not a "fake it until you
4155 make it" person. If I don't know how to do it, I'll be confused, I'll have to ask {redacted},
4156 and ask this or that person, but I can't "fake it".

4157 My job is going to meetings so there are many interesting things. As for translation, it's not
4158 just about language but also involving heavily the task of keeping the power balance between
4159 different stakeholders, but I think there is a unique experience for us because there are only
4160 two people in our team. My boss at work has a pretty big diplomatic title, so when she walks
4161 into a meeting, she already has a certain power.

4162 *Interesting. I want to know more of power. So that was the boss's positionality...*

4163 Right. Imagine that she is a very strong woman, a boss for many years, and a foreigner.
4164 There are many ways that she is very different from Vietnamese people. Even in
4165 communication, at first I felt that there were things that did not match. Over time, I see her
4166 starting to "soften" to act accordingly to Vietnamese cultural norms more and more, but at
4167 first when she came, for example, at a meeting, she "shot out" topics and topics, problems
4168 and problems... and she talked very fast, she didn't care but just finished what she wanted
4169 to say. She didn't think that, with so much technical content, so many topics... one would
4170 need a tact to know what should be said first and what should be said later, what should
4171 come with power and what not. So at the time she didn't think about it and she just thought,
4172 I represent {a Western country} and I have this much to talk about, and I'll start talking.
4173 Then for both sides that's what it was, that my boss as a foreigner when she first came to

4174 Vietnam, she started with such meetings, but later she changed when she had to go to so
4175 many meetings. Then she must be more selective and rely on the other party's approach, for
4176 example, on how people received us and how people presented their work so that she too
4177 had to choose what she presented. That's one thing that I understand, she also observed, and
4178 saw that the Vietnamese partners had different ways of reception than she imagined... then
4179 she had to monitor and have to respond accordingly to Vietnamese culture to adjust a bit.

4180 *Was there also a reverse process with the partners?*

4181 Because as the host, the partners will never depend on the other side in the way that, “because
4182 she is a strong person, so we have to please her”. In the context of our work, the Vietnamese
4183 partners are what they always are. And we always respect them, we have to follow their
4184 approach and never ask them to change. This boss has a lot of respect for others. However
4185 they are, she never asks them to change for us, except when it's related to internationally
4186 regulated SPS technical issues that require Vietnam to change, then she always talks about
4187 it but never interferes with the other party's personality or leadership because she always
4188 understands that she is a guest, not a host. That's the first one.

4189 The second is about my point of view as the one to support her. Well, I saw at the beginning,
4190 when she didn't know how to respond to the Vietnamese culture, she didn't know when to
4191 be soft and hard... she was bold and even she'd show her displeasure with the progress not
4192 being met by partners and how they didn't cooperate well enough. She was annoyed and
4193 always had a way to express her frustration in English. I myself was in the middle, so I had
4194 to do what was needed to keep the harmony. What I found difficult at first was how to
4195 translate their frustration. The way I chose, I actually softened their frustration by using
4196 softer language but speaking to them in a strong voice. In those moments I thought that my
4197 boss's frustration was already shown on her face, her facial expression, her body language.
4198 The fact that I softened the language, and I had to be mindful to remain very serious and
4199 sharp when I said those softened words and the body language of hers staying strong... it
4200 was enough to make people understand. One more thing is that, the way I translate is
4201 completely dependent on how I sense the attitude or reactions of the other side. So as
4202 Vietnamese people, it's always easier to see that. For example, I understand that Vietnamese
4203 people never like being criticised, then I can always measure how much they receive the
4204 information so that I can follow. I almost never change what she says while I translate, but I
4205 often have to rely on other factors in case I want to express the anger or annoyance of the
4206 English speaker because I also want to make it work for me. So I make it work for me by
4207 having her trust but at the same time making the Vietnamese partners understand that this
4208 person is also Vietnamese and she is still in the middle, or at least she never depends on the
4209 other side... I think you see it, that there are people who want to emphasise that, not because
4210 I work for {a Western country}, I'll have to do this and that, and I have to do it for {a Western
4211 country}... so in such cases, the ingenuity of the person in the middle is very important
4212 because you have to build relationships later. The sense of middle person is very important
4213 to me. And that you can only have it when you have experience, but there are others who are
4214 inexperienced when they begin, it's not the job but the few number of years of experience,
4215 then their way of expression is different. That is very important, at least in the working
4216 environment of Vietnam which is very contextual and influenced by cultural factors.

4217 In short, with the role and power of the person in the middle, you have to make sure that you
4218 can communicate the meaning in situations where you have to "soften" the expression but
4219 still have to make your speech politically correct. It's completely what I realise by myself,
4220 that in such a situation, that way of expression works well. And another important thing is

4221 that, in fact, I understand that our Vietnamese partners also fully understand how they are
4222 and where they are, the problem is whether they want to do it or not, so when they listen to
4223 the other side, even in English, they can already guess what the other side is saying. Because
4224 it's not that people don't know they haven't done well, it's because they have other issues to
4225 prioritise.

4226 Also, there are situations of meetings when the Vietnamese partner might argue fiercely
4227 about something, but then they go back to have their internal meetings, or after a while they
4228 find it right that they shouldn't argue further, and again, they have to listen to the other side
4229 to make it work. That means it takes a while. It is true that in the development sector this is
4230 more obvious. But in the framework of the work I am doing, the correlation of power is
4231 equal. There is no donor or beneficiaries, but the two parties are equal as partners. So
4232 sometimes the hierarchy in my current work context is a bit different from development. I
4233 have to make it clear because in our work, it is a balance in terms of hierarchy. Of course,
4234 they have their boss and I have my boss, but the relationship between the two is very much
4235 between partners, counterparts, not givers and receivers.

4236 *Does the partner send an equivalent person to translate like you, or do you translate for both*
4237 *parties alone?*

4238 I alone translate for both sides, because in fact, the partners are mainly in the field of
4239 agriculture. To be honest, the agencies are a bit lazy nowadays. For example, in the
4240 diplomatic sector, they always have to ensure that what they say reflects correctly in terms
4241 of wordings and meanings, so they always make sure they have their own interpreter. In our
4242 sector, mainly with technical issues, they often ask me to translate for them.

4243 *How about tasks of writing reports and document translation?*

4244 My boss has a very clear rule that in any meeting that I have to translate, I don't have to write
4245 notes. As for the meetings when English is the working language, I will take notes in bullet
4246 points when I come back. Mostly in meetings where I have to translate for both sides, it is
4247 the boss who has to write the notes, because I have to speak very quickly and can't remember
4248 everything at short notice.

4249 *Who translates the correspondence between the two parties, summaries and periodical*
4250 *reports and what needs to be concluded in writing?*

4251 I translate the correspondence, and we outsource professionals to translate technical
4252 documents and other documents. Because my work is very busy, it revolves around many
4253 partners, not just one, so it must be based on the order of priority. I see a very good
4254 relationship between my boss and her staff when she understands my work very well and
4255 she says that she does not want me to waste time translating technical documents when I can
4256 outsource, but they won't be able to help me build relationships with partners. So that's a
4257 very interesting view of hers. I feel it absolutely fine that in this process of supporting others,
4258 they also support and appreciate my work, and this makes it more convenient for my work.

4259 *Strong team...*

4260 Strong team but we're about to part ways, she has 4 months left before her term expires.

4261 *Can you share your experience of terminology in your work?*

4262 Like I told you, our job is mainly about promoting collaboration with partners and not really
4263 about bringing in this amount of money and they can spend on whatever they want as long
4264 as they achieve their goals. We have a unit in charge of international cooperation of the host
4265 country, and to whom I have to report on the tasks that need to or will be done during the
4266 year with the Ministry, so it's always having to go through this responsible agency as a focal
4267 point. The director of that agency, when he first got promoted, I heard that he was the type
4268 who cared about "mutual interest" and achieving a "win-win situation". The way he
4269 communicated or received recommendations or shared knowledge, whenever we finished
4270 speaking, he then talked about his proposal. He knew too well that this country came to
4271 Vietnam to do this, of course what they did would reflect their own interests, and he'd always
4272 know how to go in the direction that, "Okay, this is the job, and I appreciate your opinion,
4273 but we in Vietnam are in need of this, and we urge you to support us in other areas". The
4274 way he always steered the story, and he always used the language like, "how can we do it to
4275 reach consensus on some mutual interest". In addition, he never said the word win-win, but
4276 the way he expressed it and the way he called for investment or called for support... I found
4277 it to be a standard expression of him calling for a win-win situation. Very interesting that
4278 when we first met him, I didn't know the phrase "win-win situation" was attached to him
4279 *[Laughter]*. He sat talking in Vietnamese for a very long time and I translated for my boss.
4280 So you also know for sure that verbal expressions in our Vietnamese language is at times
4281 very lengthy, and very comprehensive. So when it was the wrapping-up moment, I told my
4282 boss, "it's like a win-win situation, if you know what I mean". So she made a note of it. Only
4283 after that did I meet his former colleagues or former employees, I asked about him, because
4284 in our profession sometimes we have to get to know people a little bit more so we can advise
4285 our superiors on approaching partners, and at that time, one of his former employees said
4286 that he liked win-win situations. Then I burst out laughing because coincidentally in that first
4287 meeting I had to explain a lot to my boss too and then I also told her to imagine it as a win-
4288 win situation. Well, this is not an example of technical language or terminology, but in my
4289 work, it's often the way I look at it, and apply that win-win to the partner's thinking. Later
4290 on, we read a lot of his reactions, the decisions he made, and the things he wanted to do,
4291 which of course had to be beneficial to his side and it must bring some tangible benefit to
4292 his side, the word win-win still stuck around. It's not about translating terms like you asked
4293 me, but it's like a way that when we know the keyword, we can always figure out what the
4294 next step he's going to want to do, to say and to promote... Of course there are always
4295 priorities in the next 5 years, the next two or three years for Vietnam... then with the mindset
4296 coming along with that keyword being applied to such a person, and with our understanding
4297 of his positionality and role, then we always see what our next move and expectation should
4298 be. This example makes me think that if I understand people, I will get such a clear sense of
4299 generalisation.

4300 *Who do you think would be in the best position to translate terms and concepts in*
4301 *development work?*

4302 I believe that those who work most closely will be best to translate technical terms and
4303 concepts. For example, when we have a technical workshop, it's always the same... There
4304 are two things that you appreciate from your {a Western country} colleagues. One is that the
4305 boss always wants to make sure that the translator met her the day before, because the kiwi
4306 accent is more difficult to listen than the British or American English. She'd invite them to
4307 the office or to coffee to talk so that they could listen and take hold of the way she'd speak.
4308 Second, she'd always ask me to sit down and take notes on terminology for the translator,
4309 and the concepts we'd need to communication in the coming session, in that particular
4310 context. Even so, many times the translator will still not think that it is so important, while

4311 it really is for those who work directly. I once had to apologise for interrupting the translator
4312 at a conference because he used the wrong term and misspelled two technical terms that we
4313 already had translated into Vietnamese but he probably didn't notice and didn't read about
4314 them properly. So those two technical terms in Latin it showed up with equivalents in
4315 Vietnamese, but he only mentioned the Latin words, i.e. the scientific names. That was when
4316 I had to intervene because I really respected the interpreter, but I wanted to make sure that
4317 the participants had a correct understanding of the meaning of the work they were doing. For
4318 me, that's important. It's so true that misinterpretation will make it more difficult to correct
4319 later. Therefore, I find the role of the specialist very important, but just as important is their
4320 attitude.

4321 *Do you also review outsourced document translations?*

4322 Yes.

4323 *How do you see terms that are translated differently or need to be noted compared to how*
4324 *they are communicated at face-to-face meetings?*

4325 It's difficult to avoid this, because this sector is very technical, so for example, there are
4326 terms in plant protection and in the labs... especially when I don't understand everything,
4327 but the specialists at the partner's side will review the portfolio or the translated documents,
4328 then they will correct a little and people will always say, "there is no problem with the
4329 translation, but I would like to correct a few technical terms such as...". As always, I see
4330 that the technicians and specialists with expertise will have a proper understanding and usage
4331 of terms.

4332 *Do you share any tools and resources to outsource translators?*

4333 I'll have to send them a list of terms with translations that we think are correct, but I'll have
4334 to check with my boss to see if anything needs to be added. We never expect the translator
4335 to understand all the technical knowledge because I don't understand that all myself, but I
4336 am exposed to an environment where there are a lot of discussions from many sides on these
4337 topics, so I've become familiar with terminology. And professional translators work on
4338 many different topics, and no one can become an expert in a particular field so it's not fair
4339 to ask them to deliver 100%. So we always try to support them.

4340 *So you already have a glossary or term lists?*

4341 Yes. For each different topic or different project, we have such lists and they are not the
4342 same, for example we have different term lists for animals and plants, or for the subject of
4343 electronic certification. That glossary is not a ready-made list, but with every project or
4344 workshop we run, when the topic becomes more in depth or becomes a funnel, when we
4345 develop documentation, we also develop such glossaries.

4346 *Any other topics related to translation and terminology in development you want to talk*
4347 *about?*

4348 I want to say that the presentation in Vietnamese is often lengthy, and there is a feature that
4349 sometimes sentences do not have grammatical subjects. When you have to translate into
4350 English for Westerners, it's quite a dilemma that if you keep translating exactly the way
4351 Vietnamese people communicate in Vietnamese, the Westerners will find it very confusing.
4352 Then how do we handle this? Are you competent enough to capture the full meaning of what

4353 is being said and address the loss in translation? That's what I've always wondered, because
4354 I often want to know if my language ability is to do the best job. Especially in the context
4355 where sentences don't have a subject.

4356 *How to handle them now? It is the unique style of administrative documents and proceedings*
4357 *in Vietnamese. From my experience, it's okay to use passive voice in English but it's not*
4358 *always possible.*

4359 True. And it is very interesting you mentioned administrative documents. Because I am
4360 taking a translation course, and the teacher also gave this example because he was translating
4361 those proceedings, what should I do if I encounter sentences that do not have a subject? For
4362 example, sentences I don't remember correctly but it writes... “*Nhằm tăng cường, thúc đẩy,*
4363 *nâng cao chất lượng... and so on*”, then I would translate it as "To strengthen, to promote,
4364 to improve the quality of... ". Then in English, if you say that, people will understand that
4365 you have three verbs, strengthen, promote, improve... Many Vietnamese people who
4366 translate leave them like that but Westerners may not fully see the implication. You see that?

4367 *Yes. When I was a newbie myself, I'd see verb sequences like “triển khai thực hiện...”*
4368 *[implement to carry out...]*

4369 Basically “*triển khai*” and “*thực hiện*” are the same, right?

4370 *Right.*

4371 Our thinking must be very open to overcome this difficulty, but this is a feature of
4372 Vietnamese administrative documents, using many verbs with similar meanings, and
4373 sentences lacking subjects.

4374 I want to say one more point before you stop recording. You've asked who would most
4375 suitable to translate terms and concepts in the work... then it is true that the person who works
4376 directly will always grasp the essence of the work areas, right? But my thinking towards
4377 those who have to translate in development is why do they do what they do. That is, they
4378 have skills to translate, skills to memorise, skills to grasp information and communicate to
4379 others. To connect all these skills, I always respect translators in that they have the ability to
4380 listen, understand, and translate, and the mindset of multitasking. My view is that it is
4381 possible that the person who directly do technical work would understand the most about
4382 terms and concepts, but if a translator can take the time to research or discuss with the
4383 technical people, even for a short period of time, maybe after one or two meetings just in
4384 formal chats... For example, in a conference, the first day it may not be good, but into the
4385 second day it may begin to swing in more easily, and on the third day the translator becomes
4386 the expert. So to answer this question, I think, most simply, it's a a translator who has skills
4387 and a good attitude to always stay open to learning, then they will be most suitable for this
4388 task.

4389 *I totally agree. Thank you.*

4390 Interview with Participant 14 (P14-Ph1)

4391 *May I ask you to describe your experience of the development work you do and translation?*

4392 Specifically on development work in Vietnam, I have been involved for a long time, since
4393 1993, in many different areas, fields and locations, especially in {name of province}. There

4394 are many areas, so firstly that was healthcare, education, malaria control, environment, then
4395 quite a lot of fisheries projects and also quite a lot of work related to infrastructure
4396 development such as in irrigation, transportation, water supply and drainage and the
4397 construction of agriculture dams. Currently, I am working in the field of cultivation and
4398 promoting the partnerships between {a Western country} and Vietnamese specialists. This
4399 job in particular involves several sub-areas such as crops, plant protection, pest control,
4400 entomology, soil and water testing, and technologies in harvesting, marketing and the
4401 consumption of produce.

4402 *And also climate change, right?*

4403 Yes, and that too, specifically in terms of infrastructure development, a project implemented
4404 by the provincial climate change office. Five years ago I also did some work on the mangrove
4405 habitats in Binh Dinh coastal areas and flood control.

4406 *What is your primary role in these works?*

4407 Over the years I have held many different roles. First, I was a specialist in the state
4408 administrative system, then was appointed as a manager, deputy head, then head of divisions,
4409 and the highest position in this system was chief of staff of the provincial departments,
4410 namely {names of provincial organisations}. There are also formal and informal roles, so
4411 officially as a specialist and administrative manager who was also in charge of external
4412 affairs at the department levels, and I became more involved in implementing projects on
4413 fisheries and agriculture and infrastructure development. I also worked as a partner with a
4414 World Bank project on building water supply and drainage infrastructure. There is a more
4415 regular but actually unofficial role, that is to translate for different development projects.

4416 *How do you find these roles being expanded to involve translation?*

4417 The roles can be expanded to become a bridge between development partners and
4418 stakeholders. Initially working as a project officer and translator, this role was very clear.
4419 Then my other roles in the government system in terms of staff management, external affairs
4420 and regular work with foreign partners really mean that I contribute to development work
4421 as a language bridge and also a cultural bridge when working with foreign partners in their
4422 work in Vietnam as well as when leading Vietnamese delegations in overseas missions.

4423 This role of being a broker and mediator in the middle is also about bridging work cultures
4424 between stakeholders. In the past, when Vietnam was just opening doors, its work culture
4425 was still heavily related to the nature of the subsidy period, say, for example, strict
4426 punctuality was never important. But with more and more development projects coming in
4427 and more work with international partners, we gradually became aware that punctuality was
4428 important when working with Westerners, so we adjusted a lot in our working styles and
4429 performance. It happened because there were those in the middle who facilitated.

4430 Over the years, I notice that the cross-language communication between Vietnamese
4431 stakeholders and foreign colleagues has also improved markedly, especially among project
4432 technical staff and managers who are active in learning. Some managers can now
4433 communicate directly in English with foreign experts at basic levels. We have here a vice
4434 chairperson of the provincial people's committee who can communicate well and at
4435 meetings, sometimes he doesn't need an interpreter as he directly speaks with the foreign
4436 partners. Some department managers also have a very good level of English. As for the

4437 technical staff, they were unable to communicate at first, but through working with experts,
4438 it is imperative that they learn more and listen and speak every day with the help of those
4439 whose language skills are better or by learning from translators, so for many of them,
4440 communication in English has improved. The technical staff has an advantage that, it is not
4441 necessary for them to say the full sentences, but they only need to say the correct key words
4442 or key technical terms, then foreign experts will understand. This is very important. For
4443 example, when they go to the field, they only need to say a few key words about the subject,
4444 and the experts can understand what they mean. This is a great development in
4445 communication between Vietnamese officials and foreign partners in development work.

4446 Conversely, a small number of foreign experts also attempt to learn and use Vietnamese at
4447 basic communication levels and even advanced levels to work with the Vietnamese. I have
4448 met some foreign experts who speak Vietnamese very well because they learned Vietnamese
4449 even in their home country. Others learnt in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Some of these
4450 can even use Vietnamese in maybe 90% of the work situations and they don't really need
4451 help with translation. An American expert working with the climate change office spoke
4452 excellent Vietnamese. And because Vietnamese is a monosyllabic language, when we talk,
4453 they can pick up the words and understand. It is interesting that the foreign management
4454 people pay more attention to learning Vietnamese than the technical experts, but technical
4455 experts often do not have the time to study, or if they can speak Vietnamese, that is at the
4456 daily communication level and not in depth about the work.

4457 *Now could you tell me your experience of terminology in development work?*

4458 The daily use of the development terminology, especially social-economic development
4459 terms, depends to a large extent on the professional or technical fields and also the state
4460 administration related to translation or interpreting. For me, understanding terminology
4461 requires a lot of reading of not only specialised and technical documents but also the
4462 everyday administrative documents and proceedings. If the understanding is not that
4463 advanced, it needs to at least be a basic and common level in the technical fields, and at the
4464 same time those who deal with terminology and translation must acquire the knowledge of
4465 state administration related to the laws, decrees and guidance documents from relevant
4466 ministries and sectors as well as other legal and administrative documents at the central level
4467 and local levels. I find that if we know about the state management of certain sectors
4468 and fields in which the development projects are underway, it's easier for us to communicate
4469 knowledge and terminology with the stakeholders. In fact, while Vietnamese and English
4470 are too different and belong to two different language systems, so in the translation process,
4471 we rarely use word-for-word translation, and we almost have to deal with translation and
4472 terms in several different ways which I'll talk about later.

4473 *Yes. Could you share with me a story of difficult or problematic terminology in development*
4474 *work?*

4475 In the project I am currently working on, there are many technical terms from different sub-
4476 fields and sub-areas of agriculture such as horticulture, plant science, plant protection,
4477 chemistry, insects science, plant diseases, microbiological and parasite testing and pesticide
4478 residues, and so on. But also there are difficult terms that seem problematic to translate,
4479 especially ones that are loaded with development practices, and they are difficult not only in
4480 this project and also in previous projects.

4481 The first is the term “nhóm cùng sở thích”. Here, I want to talk about project administration,
4482 not technical work, so we have CIG, “common interest group”. In fact, “nhóm cùng sở thích”
4483 has been used in production of other sectors and not a new term. However, for me, at first
4484 when I heard it, I found it unfamiliar and some people I work with also found this term
4485 unfamiliar to the ears, so they did not use it. The strange thing is that when we say “nhóm
4486 cùng sở thích”, then everyone relates “sở thích” to a hobby, some entertainment activities
4487 and not to production. Therefore, specifically in this project, the director of the local
4488 department of agriculture never used the term “nhóm cùng sở thích” but only “nhóm sản
4489 xuất” [production group] so he might have the same view, although the term is used in other
4490 sectors. Later, our business stakeholders also said “the group of Commune A”, “nhóm sản
4491 xuất” instead of “nhóm cùng sở thích”. However, it did sound unfamiliar to me at first, but
4492 then I got used to the term. I see this is a term translated into Vietnamese from English, but
4493 it is not found in dictionaries. Our team of experts from overseas in this project used the
4494 original term in English, "community interest group" and not "common interest group", and
4495 from here I think that the “interest” part does not necessarily “hobbies” but “interest” may
4496 also relate to benefit, i.e. a group that shares benefits with the community, that is, they work
4497 together, produce together and gain together from a common benefit. So it will be clearer in
4498 meanings and better to avoid confusion if "community interest group" is used instead of
4499 “common interest group” because there is a "community" element. Therefore, when working
4500 with stakeholders who are not familiar with the term, we should explain it further then put it
4501 as “nhóm hộ nông dân cùng sở thích” [group of farmer households with similar interests]
4502 because "farmer" already implies production team. Or we just say “nhóm sản xuất” without
4503 the “cùng sở thích” [same interests] part, as the director of the used. An alternative can be
4504 “nhóm sản xuất cùng sở thích” [production group with similar interests]. So “nhóm cùng sở
4505 thích” is a problematic translation because it makes people think of entertainment which has
4506 nothing to do with economic activities.

4507 *For this term, do you see other alternative equivalents from other projects? How is this dealt*
4508 *with?*

4509 Some projects even translate “community interest group” or “common interest group” as
4510 “nhóm đồng thuận”, or they might even specify the object of production, for example, “nhóm
4511 cùng sở thích chăn nuôi bò” [group of the common interest of cow farming], “nhóm cùng sở
4512 thích trồng rau” [group of the common interest of growing vegetables" and not using the
4513 generic term of “nhóm cùng sở thích”. Anyone involved in the project, of course,
4514 understands this concept. But in a formal document, for example, when they are sent to the
4515 provincial level for approval, if they have never seen “nhóm cùng sở thích”, there will be
4516 criticism, so sometimes we have to clarify the production factors and economic activities so
4517 they’ll see it more clearly.

4518 *Would you say this is also an example of how a certain practice has existed locally but*
4519 *another similar is introduced, and development workers need to find a way to translate the*
4520 *new term?*

4521 Correct. In these cases, it is important to explain to the stakeholders about the introduced
4522 concept and practice so they’ll see the difference or similarity for themselves.

4523 For introduced concepts, the terminology emerging to describe them is mainly English
4524 terminology. Currently, infrastructure development projects, especially in Vietnam, have
4525 quite large risks in relation to natural disasters and climate change. That is why investors
4526 pay great attention to the development of “cơ sở hạ tầng thích ứng”. If no one has been in

4527 contact with new terms in these areas, it is most important to explain, for example, what
4528 “thích ứng” is. Here “thích ứng” is not adaptation or response, but it’s “thích ứng” to natural
4529 disasters and climate change, and the element of “thích ứng” was embedded in the original
4530 concept of “resilience” with the term in English. So in this very particular context, it’s not
4531 “adaptation” or “response” but it is “resilience”. “Resilient infrastructure”, which I
4532 understand clearly here, is being adaptive to the changes of natural disasters or climate
4533 change. Or if necessary, we can explain it in another way, infrastructure that is resilient to
4534 natural disasters or climate change. Resilience means it was under impact but its essence is
4535 not lost but can be restored, if you hit it, it will flatten a bit but will recover. In fact, in large-
4536 scale projects from central to local levels, it is not much different in project documents, so
4537 mostly “resilience” is translated as “khả năng thích ứng” [adaptability, and in some cases
4538 “khả năng chống chịu” [endurability], and only these two translations, nothing more.

4539 For some projects, it is a requirement to carry out environmental and social impact studies.
4540 In addition to assessing actual impacts, donors will also anticipate environmental and social
4541 potential impacts. So “potential impact” are usually translated as “tác động tiềm tàng” and
4542 “tác động tiềm ẩn”, these two translations are not very different. In some projects, they
4543 translate as “tác động tiềm năng”, then this translation will be appropriate if the impacts are
4544 positive. If it is a negative impact, then it must be translated as “tác động tiềm ẩn” or “tác
4545 động tiềm tàng”, because they can imply also adverse impacts, adverse effects, unfavourable
4546 impact, bad impacts as a consequence of development, and so on, so these translations into
4547 Vietnamese are not wrong.

4548 I want to also return to those cases of terms which carry the meanings loaded from the way
4549 development is practised, that is for example, development project management and the
4550 toolkits to conduct impact measurement. Then there are terms like “output, outcome, result,
4551 impact”. It is true that in English these are fundamentally different concepts. Outcomes,
4552 outputs, results... when understood in English they are quite clear, but translating these into
4553 Vietnamese to show the difference is extremely. I see “outcome” as more general. For
4554 example, “kết quả của cuộc họp hôm nay như thế nào?”. If it’s a Vietnamese development
4555 worker with not much experience, they translate “kết quả” as “result”, and it is not wrong
4556 but problematic, because “outcome” might be a better choice. Then “outcome” is “kết quả
4557 chung” “Output” is also “kết quả” but... [Laughter]. Most projects translate “output” as “kết
4558 quả đầu ra”, because they immediately think of something specific, that is, the specific
4559 achievements by the end of the project, by what benefits might be, the vegetable growing
4560 areas expanded, how many households participate in growing vegetables, for example... to
4561 express specific objectives. “Result” is also “kết quả”, nothing else. But if it is negative, then
4562 it is sometimes “hậu quả”, and if it is positive, it is a “kết quả”, and is usually measured in
4563 specific numbers and figures. For example, “kết quả của buổi họp hôm nay như thế nào?”,
4564 then we will give a figure of how many people attended, how many questions and problems
4565 were raised, how many of these were resolved, for example. We often see “kết quả kiểm
4566 nghiệm” and they are truly "test results", clearly expressed in numbers. So when translating
4567 these concepts into Vietnamese as “kết quả”, it is only relative, but it is difficult to see the
4568 absolute difference. New people who translate these, inexperienced, after a period of time,
4569 should clearly see the difference, otherwise it will cause misunderstandings.

4570 *How do you think these problems with terminology should be dealt with?*

4571 Unification of terminology usage among different projects is very important. There are
4572 already popular translations for development terms and these are relatively familiar to
4573 everyone, so we should use them and not create any new equivalents. But there are also cases

4574 where change is needed. For example, in English, when something suggestive is written to
4575 give specific actions, ie, the word is “recommend”, and often in many development policy
4576 documents it’s translated as “khuyến nghị”. However, in the language of state administrative
4577 documents, “khuyến nghị” is never seen. It’s okay to say “khuyến nghị” in the projects, but
4578 if we send these documents to the People's Committee, saying that our project “khuyến nghị”
4579 like this... then they will not accept it, so we must replace “khuyến nghị” with “kiến nghị”
4580 and “đề nghị”, a little adjustment suit the context.

4581 *Is this to "soften" the language?*

4582 Right. Work stress must be avoided. In the case of too much stress, we have to say it out
4583 loud, but normally, we should avoid it.

4584 *Have you ever used translation and language to mediate tensions?*

4585 Yes but not often. In cases of misunderstandings from both sides, usually after the meeting
4586 we will explain. Once there was a translator working with a foreign expert at a safe vegetable
4587 packhouse that had a sprinkler system for washing vegetables. The expert only commented
4588 that this system worked poorly, but the translator added, "water dripped like urine"
4589 [laughter], then came strong reactions from the Vietnamese co-workers. Then I had to meet
4590 with those co-workers privately to explain to them what the expert said which was purely a
4591 technical comment.

4592 I find that often people who are able to speak both English and Vietnamese, and having the
4593 role of technical staff or managers in projects will translate very well and use terminology
4594 precisely because they understand it very well the meanings in English and they engage
4595 directly with the work on a daily basis in Vietnamese. They are very flexible. For example,
4596 in a project on water supply and drainage, there was a Vietnamese leader of the WB mission,
4597 originally a state official at the {name of ministry} who knew very well both technical terms
4598 and administrative language. There were common words such as “consultation meeting”,
4599 and you know, it’s “tham vấn” in the language of development projects, for example you
4600 “tham vấn” with the {name of departments}... but if you have it in the documents to submit
4601 to the People's Committee, the Committee will not like to hear this word “tham vấn” because
4602 they found it unfamiliar and just wanted to hear their "pure" wording. Then immediately he
4603 had an alternative with the same meaning, that the department and the project held a meeting
4604 to “lấy ý kiến” [collect opinions] from other departments and sectors. “Lấy ý kiến” is correct,
4605 and that’s the nice-to-hear wording for government stakeholders. He managed to come up
4606 with such a word that was precise in meaning and appropriate in the context and style. That's
4607 why I think that the strategy for handling terms is mainly trying to find an equivalent
4608 explanation, and translating word-for-word is rarely used.

4609 *How would you describe the policy on language and translation in the projects you have
4610 been involved in?*

4611 For the project I am doing, which is a technical support project and a small part is equipment
4612 support, the language and translation policy is very necessary to equip the translator with
4613 basic technical knowledge before participating in the project or the early phases of the
4614 project. Especially if the translator does not have a basic background in the specialty and has
4615 not yet understood the project's areas of expertise, it must be prepared in advance in many
4616 forms such as providing easy-to-read and understandable technical documents, or facilitating
4617 so they can interact with key stakeholders before they actually start working, so they should

4618 actually speak to foreign experts and Vietnamese specialists, professional officials and those
4619 from government departments ... Through that, they will understand the technical knowledge
4620 of the project.

4621 *Now I would like to ask your opinion on the role of translation and terminology in*
4622 *development work?*

4623 I think that translation between English and Vietnamese plays a very important role and
4624 plays a big part in the socio-economic development in Vietnam today. Vietnam is a
4625 developing country and has a series of development projects funded by international
4626 financial institutions or institutions such as the World Bank, ADB, Childcare Japan, AFD,
4627 and other developed countries such as Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Nordic countries and
4628 the United States... from which English is the main language of communication. So
4629 translation is a bridge for the parties that helps them understand investment conditions in
4630 Vietnam and make funding decisions through funding agreements or arrangements. In
4631 addition, Vietnam is also an increasing import, export and processing country, then for
4632 foreign trade, English is also the main language, so that we can see its importance.

4633 Terminology in development also plays an important role because two or more parties need
4634 to understand and use exactly the terms and jargons in the source and target languages to
4635 work more effectively together and avoid misunderstandings.

4636 *Who do you think would be best suited to translate development terminology?*

4637 I must say right away that a full-time, professional translator will be more effective. Of
4638 course they have to master the language. That person must also have a basic knowledge, not
4639 necessarily in-depth, of the specialty that he is translating. These translation professionals
4640 can be recruited as in-house translators in development organisations and projects, and they
4641 know the source and target languages, say 100% and 95% respectively, and have only basic
4642 knowledge about the areas. But I think this is ideal. The reality shows that professional staff
4643 can communicate bilingually, but with important and in-depth issues, they are not able to
4644 fully express themselves in English, or listen to English and convey sufficient information
4645 back in Vietnamese, because they are not professionals and do not have translation skills.
4646 But those experts working for international organisations, both professionally and as a bridge
4647 in daily communication, often translate better than a specialised translator of a project or
4648 organisation, because that's their area of problems they know everyday, and they also use
4649 English everyday. But there are not many of these.

4650 I would like to add that the people who perform tasks of translation in development work
4651 are always very active, always learning and ready to learn from others. Because in a
4652 development environment there are many parties involved, there are always stakeholders or
4653 people who have the knowledge or perspectives for them to learn, and they must learn if they
4654 want to solve problems of translation.

4655 *Thank you so much for your contribution. I hope we can talk again next time.*

4656 Interview with Participant 17 (P17-Ph1)

4657 *Please share with me your involvement with development work so far...*

4658 So I got into development work while I was doing my MPhil in {redacted}. This is 1993,
4659 94. And I was invited to work with {redacted} as a research assistant to a tribal studies unit.
4660 So this was based in {redacted}, and this entailed work with indigenous populations in
4661 {redacted}, two and a half hours flight from {redacted}, and then another part of {redacted},
4662 which is again populated by indigenous peoples.

4663 o we were working on indigenous peoples displaced by big development projects like dams,
4664 yeah, the building of major dams or transport or freed firing range by the army. You know,
4665 populations, huge communities were displaced and they happened to be mostly what we call
4666 tribal populations in those parts.

4667 *So the language that the stakeholders used were...?*

4668 That is why I was stressing on the indigenous population.

4669 *Yeah.*

4670 So I have lived in different parts of {redacted}. And if, you know, {redacted}, like every
4671 state, has a different language. So it is very difficult to understand the language of a different
4672 state. Now, very broadly, of course, {redacted} is a state where you speak {redacted}. That's
4673 the dominant language. But it is also the language of the plain's people. Now it so happens
4674 that I belong to the state and my mother tongue is {redacted}. But when I went to the tribal,
4675 went to remote parts of {redacted}, the dialect was changing and indigenous people had their
4676 own language. So this is something that I had not known before, and I would say I never
4677 paid attention to.

4678 So because I was working with {redacted} who have their own little churches or chapels in
4679 those parts in the remotest parts of India. Some of the most beautiful properties are owned
4680 by Jesuits. So they would know the language, so they would translate for me. But more
4681 recently, when I went for my PhD, I just want to link it to, you know, or I finished my PhD
4682 in 2008, so when I went to do fieldwork in Koraput, again it's a tribal district in {redacted}.
4683 This is between 2012 and 2014, and I finished my fieldwork more or less, I had to take a
4684 translator with me because now it was getting more... you know, it's my PhD study and I
4685 needed a translator. So local community groups, activists, I did have a few indifferent
4686 thoughts and I felt very helpless. I must say that. So the language was always a problem. I
4687 was always an outsider even in my own state.

4688 *Did you also deal with documents produced in English mostly?*

4689 Mostly in English or it was translated by somebody in the Jesuit organisation. And more
4690 recently for the PhD, my documents, I did get it translated by, you know, friends and local
4691 people. But I did not use a lot of... I can read {redacted} because remember, it is the dominant
4692 language in the state of {redacted}. Now just to get an idea, {redacted} itself is more than
4693 twice the size of Ireland. So it has its own 30 districts and very different dialects. And so the
4694 tribal people are focussing on developing their language, it was corrupt and there is a
4695 movement for that. I don't know how to read that. But the government uses the main
4696 language, which is {redacted}. I can read a bit of {redacted}. Otherwise I would ask other
4697 people to read it out aloud for me because I understand the language.

4698 *So can you also tell me some stories about any experience of the terminology used for that*
4699 *kind of work?*

4700 Let me come back to my PhD because I did go to do fieldwork for my PhD in {redacted}.
4701 My PhD was on how rights-based approaches to development are operationalised in the state
4702 by using the example of one food programme. It's called the {redacted}. It helped different
4703 duty bearers or officials at grassroots level who are implementing it. But remember, the
4704 whole concept of a rights-based approach is Western imposed, and that is something it was
4705 becoming difficult to ask people. What do you mean rights-based? You know what I actually
4706 mean? They would tell me, it's our right to land. I said, no, no, I'm not asking you about the
4707 right to land. I'm asking you about, you know, do you get the delivery of these, you know,
4708 this full entitlement programme that the state is deliverin, attempting to deliver to your
4709 doorstep or in the village? Are you able to access it? And that is what I was going to ask
4710 about rights-based, you know. It is not what we mean by a rights-based for us. Land rights
4711 is primary. If you're talking about food rights. Right to land is my right to food. So it was
4712 looked at differently.

4713 Now terminologies like development, I had issues with the whole idea of development from
4714 the very beginning. Even as a 20-year-old, you know, working with the indigenous
4715 populations in the mid 90s. I felt, one, they were happy. I'm not talking about, you know,
4716 access to health or access to some kind of education. Literacy is what I would say was
4717 important, because the education that we were giving was geared to Western kind of
4718 education to aspire for something outside of your village, for instance, whereas people
4719 needed to be in the village to be able to live a happy life, happy in the sense of well-being or
4720 social network supports. This is something I found even when I went for the Ph.D. fieldwork.
4721 You know, this is last decade. I was asking, so, 'Are you in self-help groups of women?'
4722 When I was interviewing these women for my thesis. Rights based meant on what well-being
4723 meant. it was not about economic empowerment alone, which the government projects did
4724 support. It was about being able to be together. Trust and respect were at the top, most top
4725 level. So when I asked about, what is it that you expect if you are able to have access to land
4726 or employment or whatever you are looking for. They said, for us, the fact that I can trust
4727 my fellow women in a self-help group, for instance, or in my community or in my small
4728 hamlet of 20 families. If we can trust each other, that is most important. And that is
4729 something I was not going with from my definition of rights-based approach or from my
4730 understanding from what I read. For me in one of the biggest findings in my thesis, which I
4731 keep writing about in different papers. And these two features are aspects of human
4732 condition, of life, or our lives or women's lives, is actually not discussed in development
4733 studies. And through my writings, I am bringing those in, saying, no, sorry women are saying
4734 what a rights-based would actually mean. And for instance, I don't talk about a concept called
4735 Sachetana, which awareness it means. So in the urban slum of... you know, I'm not supposed
4736 to use the word 'slums', but it is a fact of... it is used for a cut-up city for instance where I
4737 interviewed a lot of women. The methodology is, I can talk about a lot of methodology
4738 differences... I was following the women and men whenever were free. I would talk to them
4739 or I would talk to them while walking, while they're doing their work. So I met this amazing
4740 woman. She says, she drew it on the floor for me, saying this is what it means for me. Right?
4741 And I have that, I can share it with you. I can remember all the words of that right now. But
4742 I'm trying to put that framework as that's what it means, empowerment. This is what she
4743 understands by empowerment from her own experience.

4744 So empowerment doesn't mean just having, you know, livelihood options. Yes, it is very
4745 important. But she also talks about awareness and respect. When she says there are five 'S',
4746 as you know, it starts with S in {redacted}, so which means opportunity savings, you know,
4747 they're all 'S', in a diagram. Because I want to talk about those things. I don't want it to be

4748 said that, you know, “{redacted}, 2014” paper, you know, because that concept is not mine.
4749 I am only the conduit of that concept in the world of academia.

4750 *So alongside with your project or your work, did anybody do any similar kind of work about*
4751 *the right-based approach?*

4752 No. When NGOs work, so whatever work when I went before - my literature review talks
4753 about it - I have written about that, that most work has focussed on what NGOs to...
4754 remember rights-based approach is a big strategy. It's like moving away from what they call
4755 charity-based, or service providers to rights-based. But you know, how they describe rights-
4756 based is not what people actually want. You know, in my thesis is also a little bit using words
4757 by activists, you know, they have said a rights-based, if you're talking about a rights-based
4758 approach to food entitlements, you know, what do you mean? Entitlement itself doesn't mean
4759 it's rights-based entitlements somebody is giving you. Some kind of... Unless you have the
4760 right to claim it, it is charity. So you will have the right to claim it only if you have it in law.
4761 So if it's not in the law of the country or the land, you cannot claim it if it's violated. So work
4762 by NGOs is great. Most of them are delivery-based. Most of them are designed in the
4763 Western world. Most of them, whereas, my PhD work was the first one to look at how
4764 government implements a rights-based approach using the example of the food entitlement
4765 programme. Even when I talk about the government, I'm not talking about the policy-making
4766 level. I am talking about the grassroots level. The woman who implemented it, the worker
4767 in this case herself is a poor woman. But there are many contradictions. She's a poor woman
4768 at the village level, chosen by the community to represent them in the government, as the
4769 lowest level worker at the village level. OK, so who are these women who are chosen ? That
4770 is where it's... I, I would say the policy, it is very rights-based at one level. So the women
4771 they choose that... there is a few criteria, there's a quota system, so if you're widowed, if
4772 you're abandoned, if you are destitute, if you are a single woman, unmarried... These are the
4773 women who are chosen. So if you look at the {redacted}, it's a very progressive act, an
4774 opportunity for, remember, women in India in the rural areas have been sidelined. I don't
4775 want to speak about women's rights in India. There are many issues, but this gives them an
4776 opportunity to earn a livelihood at that level. It is rights-based. It is giving an opportunity to
4777 women who have no option. And I have interviewed one hundred and eighty people in my
4778 thesis. So I'm talking about women who are totally, totally empowered by this. But
4779 remember, in terms of... I'm linking it to everything... in terms of their position in family, it
4780 still was not what the Western world would call, you know, very rights-based. She listens to
4781 her husband. But would they know how to negotiate in their situation? I don't say constraints
4782 or limitations. We are all limited. So while we may think they are not empowered, they have
4783 been empowered. The fact that they can step out of their homes, or be trained for different
4784 programmes of the government, which was meant for other women in the community. So
4785 this programme actually is to provide health and food, health services, and food entitlements
4786 to people who live under what is called the below-poverty line in India. And it is focussed
4787 on what they call the lifecycle approach of the poor woman to begin with. So in two years,
4788 if you are pregnant, you'll get the cash transferred into your account. When you deliver your
4789 child, the child is given food, mother is given food. Then between two and six years when
4790 the child is growing, it is mandatory for helpers. So there are two people who work in that
4791 centre to go to the village and collect all the people and bring all the children between two
4792 and six and bring them to the centre for educational activities. So what I am trying to bring
4793 here, on paper, if I had not done this thesis, I would have been, say at one level, the women
4794 are so empowered, so this widowed woman who was shunned by society has a job now, for
4795 example. I have a few examples of those. But what was also happening is if there was
4796 corruption, if the food was not coming from the centre to this village, eventually, remember,

4797 it's a long process, it goes from one department to the other department, from the capital to
4798 the district level, and from district to the block level and then to the village. And by the time
4799 that truck of food comes, I'm just giving a very rudimentary example... a lot of people have
4800 taken their cuts and it may not reach the village. At that point, who gets thrashed? The
4801 villagers won't. See that worker in the village, they have children, say oh so you are taking
4802 the food, you are taking the money, you are not giving us what has to be given... So they
4803 have a lot of controversy around eggs, for instance, because they are supposed to provide for
4804 two meals in the centres every day. Hot meals. So if it was not given, I found out they had
4805 to be using their own money and they were paid pittance, you know, probably something
4806 like five euros a month or something like that. And that also wouldn't come every month
4807 because they're supposed to be voluntary workers of the state. They would be paid once in
4808 three months and once in six months. These are poor women themselves. So these
4809 contradictions are coming up. But if I hadn't gone with a paper and pen with a questionnaire,
4810 and I think I would not have gotten these stories, if I'd gone with the methodology I was
4811 prepared to go with. So I had to adapt myself to the field and then I had to... I can stand by
4812 it. And which is why I work towards what I now know is feminist methodology.

4813 *Yes. So it's like a change of interpretation of the concepts over time, you know, interpretation*
4814 *from your side and from your co-workers' side at local levels?*

4815 My participants. Yeah. Every time I was rethinking, so one of the most dynamic, one of key
4816 informants in {redacted}, she was with {redacted}, and now she does her own activism.
4817 She's built a little place for herself there. But she said, Nita, what you are actually talking
4818 about is not rights-based. We want to see what rights-based is taught to these women. And
4819 so it was changing for me, with my own understanding, because I went with the concept
4820 which was different. Because I'm not questioning... So if you look at their strategy plan of
4821 2010 - 2020 or something, they talk about a rights-based approach. But they are a {redacted}
4822 charity organisation, so I see the contradiction, but I don't see why they didn't see the
4823 contradiction. So they all... there are many such contradictions. So it's only when you
4824 immerse yourself in the field you will understand if you really want to. Or it would have
4825 been probably easy to write from the perspective that I went with. But that was not what I
4826 was going to do.

4827 *Did you have a chance to look at, you know, the paperwork and in general, you know, how*
4828 *right-based approaches are translated into, you know, the local dialects for participants to*
4829 *understand, were there different translations for that term and concept?*

4830 People always want right-based. The concept is new, you know how it changes in the world,
4831 in the development world. And we call it development studies. We call global development.
4832 International development. Depending on where the funding is going and somebody comes
4833 up with a new concept. But I worked in the 1990s in those spots. I always was an outsider,
4834 even though I knew in most parts, like when I went to {redacted}, again I always felt I was
4835 imposing myself, even though in {redacted} I would be seen as an insider because I belong
4836 to {redacted}. Or I've lived in the top. Or something like this, when I say I've been in
4837 {redacted}, I'm an {redacted} citizen. Well, the {redacted} I would be seen as an insider for
4838 {redacted}. Right? But if I go to {redacted} I might still be at ease in the {redacted}
4839 environment, but by the minute I go to the rural areas, it's different. I'm always an outsider.

4840 I feel the same many times myself, even coming back to do research or even to represent an
4841 agency, you know, coming to the very community I was coming from, it's always that sort
4842 of feeling.

4843 *Yeah. But coming back to the paperwork in the 90s, did you notice any definition of the*
4844 *rights-based approach?*

4845 No. No definition. There was nothing. It was the first time and it came in {redacted} I think
4846 was late 1990s or maybe 2001 when the right to information was at stake.

4847 *OK, how about now?*

4848 In my work, I don't remember. I think the government also uses it OK. I think {redacted} is
4849 what I see. I mean I've seen so... I think even the {redacted} probably does use the word
4850 rights-based, say I have to check.

4851 *Yeah, well, that's a great example.*

4852 I can check and I can get back to you on that one.

4853 *Yeah. Please. Well so apart from that concept, would there be other examples?*

4854 See, when you go to an NGO saying this is what I'm doing and they look at you surprisingly,
4855 we've always worked for people's rights. In the mid 1990s, many NGOs in {redacted} who
4856 are working with tribal people had to shut down because... and when I'm talking about those
4857 NGOs which did real great work with tribal people in {redacted} , yeah, the southern
4858 {redacted} is even today known for its people who are on the... they call Maoist, you know.
4859 So that they believe in taking back with force what belongs to them. And I did interview
4860 many people who had leanings towards that, and I have had my own experience of being
4861 stopped a day before the {redacted} celebrations in the middle of what we would call
4862 nowhere, one of the most beautiful parts of {redacted}. So, yeah, I obviously had a vehicle
4863 with me, you know, a local guy was taking me there. It's a three hour drive. So many NGOs
4864 in those parts, I think I interviewed one for the webinar also I had last month. So they say
4865 people who do really work, when I say real work and really, you know, help people from
4866 communities with understanding the law, teach them the language. When I say language,
4867 meaning the language of the policies, which is {redacted} in those parts. Train them to be
4868 able to speak in a local government office, and give them the confidence. It's a long process.
4869 It could take years. I mean, to get me to speak on a mic might be longer. I'm just saying no.
4870 People hesitate to speak, especially when you don't know your rights, you are not literate.
4871 So some NGOs just find it difficult to convince the government that they are not {redacted}
4872 and that they find it equally difficult to convince the {redacted} that they are not with the
4873 government, that all they want is what the {redacted} themselves want, for instance, which
4874 is the good of their community to help people get back their rights to their land, through
4875 legal means, to knowing the law, to know that, you know, you actually you still have the
4876 land. It's just that you didn't know how to get it back. It's still in your names. You just, you
4877 know, the way how to get it back. So I think those were the rights-based activities that local
4878 community groups are engaged in. I did go to {redacted} in the first instance, but then I
4879 decided to go do my own thing because I did not want to be limited. I wanted to be able to
4880 speak out. And that would not have been possible if I had gone to any international NGO
4881 which were {redacted} based. So that was different from the work that partners of big
4882 international NGOs were doing, which is like delivery of programmes, you know, when they
4883 call it partnerships. Actually, you know, the money comes, it's given, and a lot of experts
4884 from the West to go and deliver programmes. If you see a lot of finance and admin costs are
4885 involved here And they work with the government and deliver a government-based
4886 programme, for instance, and that's not what community-based groups are doing, I found

4887 out. They were more into what is the real need, what do people want? And that's the right
4888 they were willing to work for. And people wanted right to land. So a lot of partners fed up
4889 that, they could not deliver that because they did not want to be anti-government. It should
4890 not be looked at as I did not want to agitate the state.

4891 *I'm curious also about your experience working with translators even back in the 90s when*
4892 *you did your your research...*

4893 So in those times, probably I was very young. So when the Jesuits help me with my work, I
4894 was happy. I didn't have to worry much, but I think I was a very... I probably loved going
4895 and talking to people even then, so I would get immersed in their stories and forget probably
4896 the work [Laughter]. Yeah, I was very young, I was 23, 24, and I was so excited and I was
4897 on the left of the left.

4898 *Did you yourself ever work as a translator sometimes?*

4899 I did. For a {redacted} in 1994. I had to translate in {redacted}, I can understand even in
4900 most rural parts of {redacted} that {redacted}. We had to go. This was over night by my
4901 boss and {redacted} lent me to this.... OK, so this was a film on child labour in the what is
4902 called the {redacted}.

4903 I was 23 I think, and I was also doing my MPhil but I was working. And I was enrolled for
4904 a PhD which I quit. Any extra money was welcome so I went with three, with two big men.
4905 Big {redacted}. And I think they flew to {redacted} {redacted} and I had to pick the local
4906 train. I see the differences because now you know, I knew the white people were treated
4907 differently than the locals. We were paid less. They stayed in a five star hotel, big rooms.
4908 And probably I don't remember where I stay.

4909 *Yes, the issue of living well while doing... [Laughter].*

4910 Oh yeah, I mentioned {redacted} and {redacted}, and I know expats had a different salary,
4911 they had different places to live. So we didn't question it those days, now I question
4912 [Laughter]. But I tell you why I remember this experience and I vowed never to do that
4913 again. Well, we were given... so this was for {redacted}. He' known in the circles on child
4914 labour. He was an amazing personality and he freed a lot of children from bondage. And he's
4915 a big name. So I was thrilled to meet him and then go out with these guys.

4916 So we were given tips by local people and we would be suddenly running through fields and,
4917 you know, villages, they the huge men as far as I can, running with them to field, and
4918 suddenly, you know, we would bang open doors of small huts in nowhere, you know, in very
4919 remote areas. You know, this remote area is different from the remote areas I'm talking about
4920 in {redacted}, {redacted} where the tribals live. This is the plains. So I'm talking about the
4921 field of wee rice or paddy fields, sugarcane. And we would see children lined up against the
4922 wall. Yes, they would be sitting on a thin bench, the loom would be in front of them, any
4923 manoeuvring space for arms and the food they were given, I'm telling you, I've seen it on a
4924 small bowl, wheat with salt. Eating and glazed eyes, all they were doing was the loom work.
4925 So the first day was fine I mean so many, we, we were invading those places, and then there
4926 would be guys, who would be locking down and then somebody would come and break the
4927 lock and that's what we did. When after that, when I came back to {redacted} I said I would
4928 never do this again. I felt... I translated for them what the locals were saying, what the
4929 children were saying, the children were not saying anything. They were in shock and they

4930 were talking about between six to 15 years of children. And, you know, the whole idea of
4931 nimble fingers, they do better carpet. You know, they can do it easier. But I vowed I am not
4932 going to take foreigners into and expose such atrocities happening to the children of my
4933 country. And I did like it. If I had gone with Indians, probably I would not have been so bad,
4934 but for foreigners with a big TV camera and everything was being, you know, on camera, I
4935 felt I was I didn't feel good. And I told myself, I'm never going to be an interpreter, never
4936 ever [Laughter].

4937 *Invasion?*

4938 It was an invasion. It was an invasion. It should have been dealt with. People of our own
4939 country and not by foreigners. If we should have found out, we should have worked on it
4940 together and not have more people coming from outside.

4941 *But without you as the translators, it would not be possible for the German co-workers to*
4942 *come in and do their work, no?*

4943 No, they needed, but any interpreter would done. I think the one they had hired didn't work
4944 out that day or something. That's why it was a last minute thing.

4945 *So any kinds of problematic terminology in that experience if you remember?*

4946 This was a long time back. If you want, you see I haven't even done through my last year in
4947 Vietnam. That could lead to more controversy because it's my ongoing work. I did plan to
4948 write one on methodology. So in terms of words, I could not probably say much yet, in terms
4949 of methodology of approaching people in another context, it'd be different to {redacted}
4950 where I don't understand their language, or I have never been exposed to that culture
4951 differences.

4952 But I'm there, also culturally closer to the Vietnamese. I'm a practising {redacted} also. And
4953 the Vietnamese have a special regard for {redacted} , but I understand the way the university
4954 or the West works. I've been in the system for long enough, but I have not forgotten my own.
4955 So I know a lot of people who would work the way the Western universities were, nd like to
4956 impose that over there. So I see the difference. So I see the way, I see the way the principal
4957 investigator for instance, works, and he's amazingly understanding that, you know, we
4958 should allow the Vietnamese people's way of work to come to the fore and take lead from
4959 them from a popular university instead of us telling how to do, but I also see in that there's a
4960 different approach to the approach I have. I don't know, I think it could be a personality
4961 thing.

4962 So, I mean, I think I get along with people very well, touchwood. So to me that helps. But I
4963 can't say much about this one right now. And the thing could be covid-19 also influencing.
4964 I think it's done an amazing thing. I think covid-19 has, if I look at the positive aspects, the
4965 first one is that we don't get to go to Vietnam, for instance, and leave Vietnam to the
4966 Vietnamese, for partners to figure out how to do field work, for instance, and do it the way
4967 they want to do it they are doing it and and be accepted as the best possible methodology.
4968 And I see that as a positive.

4969 *During meetings or field work, then there would be Vietnamese colleagues who translate*
4970 *for you and other investigators?*

4971 OK, so the first thing that happened was it was difficult for me as a foreigner to go and do
4972 fieldwork. The second was, when I took up this job I was looking at even you would know
4973 I said, teach me Vietnamese. And you said it's difficult. Just for your information, I'm
4974 learning Japanese right now [*Laughter*].

4975 *Okay! [Laughter]*

4976 But I feel helpless. So in many of those women workers, domestic workers meetings, which
4977 I love talking to women, you know, if I were in India, I'd be talking with them. Like I told
4978 you, I had an {redacted} participants in my PhD. So I felt so frustrated sitting there unable
4979 to understand and asking Chinh, why are they thinking, what are they saying? And we could
4980 see that, you know, I'm like struggling. The women are smiling to me. They taking a pen
4981 from me. We are talking, they're smiling helplessly at each other. But we can't communicate
4982 without this very important person. And what is coming to that other person or to me to that
4983 person depends on the person, on the interpreter. And I find that very, very... I feel helpless.
4984 There's no other word for it. I feel limited. I said should not be heard if I don't understand
4985 the language. I should not be there. And I feel that strongly.

4986 *Have you tried using Google Translate on the phone sometimes to communicate at a basic*
4987 *level with women?*

4988 No, it's you don't have that kind of time.

4989 *No.*

4990 You are in a group meeting. And you're kind of say... I saw when there was music and
4991 singing, so what they asked me, you know how we connected without understanding each
4992 other's language. They sang, they asked me to sing and I sang. That's been recorded.
4993 Actually, I could go on. Somebody recorded it. And that's how you communicate without
4994 actually knowing who say what at some level, you know. You can feel it.

4995 *So non language communication, that's that's the whole field of amazes.*

4996 Completely different. So there was understanding at a different level. So when I went to the
4997 Buddhist temples that I would go there in the evenings and sit. There was no need to tell
4998 anybody why I was there or for them to tell me why they were there, for one wanting to be
4999 one that you know, some sort of a, you know, God. I won't say God. To be one with yourself.
5000 We had one great experience on the streets of Vietnam, so we were buying those fans and
5001 all, and we thought we'd just talk to... so we had our interpreter with us. He basically asking,
5002 how come you are here? Remember my work in Vietnam is on migrants, rural migrants, and
5003 he played along. But the next day I found out and he spoke, you know, if I were walking
5004 across that lake, I'm getting the name of the lake...

5005 *West Lake?*

5006 No, what's the name?

5007 *West Lake? You mean local name? Hồ Tây? Hồ Hoàn Kiếm?*

5008 Hoan Kiem.

5009 *Oh, the Sword Lake. So I know which temple you went to.*

5010 So he stopped me in English and he was talking to me in English and I said we have no
5011 English. And yesterday you pretended you didn't know that we had to use a translator! It is
5012 amazing [Laughter]. But he saw me without my white colleagues. He wanted to talk to me.
5013 So he pretended he had no pretension. He thought he could be himself and I thought that was
5014 amazing.

5015 *You know, and actually I suppose there must be scenarios for even formal meetings where*
5016 *participants would understand English. But because there is an interpreter or a translator*
5017 *there. The best way to communicate is via the translator or the interpreter. Have you come*
5018 *across that experience before?*

5019 You talk about Vietnam?

5020 *Yeah.*

5021 So, yeah, but I'm going to link it to in fact rural {redacted}. Yeah, you're right. It's kind of a
5022 respect. That person has that job, why should I even bother? Or it's not my place to take over
5023 from the other person. But I tell you in a few meetings in Vietnam, people who do a lot of
5024 work at a higher level, you know, in terms of their position in NGOs and civil society
5025 organisations did not know English, so we always needed interpreters. But when they would
5026 be like in a bigger meeting of five or six higher level staff, there would be heated debates.
5027 And I am just sitting there and wondering what's happening, so you are listening at the end,
5028 you would get the gist of it. That could be after half an hour, 40 minutes.

5029 *So somebody reports on the outcome of that debate?*

5030 Yes, there is an interpreter sitting, but you can't you can't hear both sides of the debate.
5031 There's a heated debate going on there and you feel helpless, left out, and even those who
5032 can speak in English are better in their debates and arguments in the local language, in their
5033 own mother tongue. I've trying to do that. So people forget that because there isn't somebody
5034 from the outside, we should be doing this debate in English. It is not normal for people to do
5035 that anywhere in the world.

5036 But in those meetings, do you see if that happens, local participants debate between
5037 themselves in Vietnamese... do you think there's an issue of power there?

5038 No. OK, if you speak, you can say power will come into the forefront when they don't want
5039 me to know why. For example, they want to be paid at a higher rate, for instance. Or being
5040 a participant. Or you know, so it of course suits them. It's like in my own family, my son
5041 doesn't understand in Hindi or Odia. So when me and my husband are talking, my daughter
5042 understands. So we, we changed the word so that he won't understand what we are trying to
5043 say, you know [Laughter]. So those things do happen I guess, yeah, and the meetings also.

5044 *But it's not related to any kind of power in conversation?*

5045 Maybe at a higher, middle level, staff level, it can be sensed. There is a power thing there. If
5046 I want to look at it like that I could, but I think it's more to do with that. You're comfortable
5047 talking in the language that you talk all the time in.

5048 *Is there some kind of defined policy about translation and language in the work in Vietnam*
5049 *between the project, between the Irish team and the Vietnamese team? I mean, what would*

5050 *there be arrangement for a contracted interpreter who is always there to translate and he*
5051 *or she has a job description.*

5052 We tried that to have a couple of people. It didn't. Remember, I've been there twice. It didn't
5053 work out like that, but I did have one student who was now a lecturer there. We tried others,
5054 it didn't work out because people were busy. And I think nobody was specially contracted
5055 just to be an interpreter.

5056 *So they just assigned to do the translation?*

5057 For me if I wanted to. If I wanted to, because remember, we are working on this project with
5058 a university. So there will always be somebody to go with.

5059 *That is quite a special setting though because in the university atmosphere, there would be*
5060 *more people who speak English, and maybe can translate.*

5061 Yeah. Having said that, you know, there was a project which my principal investigator,
5062 {redacted} has been involved in before we started this course on {redacted}. And
5063 {redacted}, who was working with us on this, also was also a lecturer, um, translated an
5064 entire book on international development into the Vietnamese language, you know, to be
5065 used in colleges, a textbook.

5066 *So he did that by himself?*

5067 Yes, I know it.

5068 *When we were in {redacted}, two other friends and I had a similar project, but we didn't*
5069 *really pursue it till the end, it is tough.*

5070 This guy did it single handedly.

5071 *That's amazing. I guess it's the best thing. I mean that's the best they could do now in terms*
5072 *of developing textbooks for the programme. Now just a final question about the role of*
5073 *terminology and translation, what do you think about it in development work?*

5074 So I think it's crucial to what comes under decolonial discourses to bring in words that we
5075 think are important. The way things like, veranda, a word which is used by the British and it
5076 has become an English word, a little portico outside your house.

5077 Because I feel that there are some words which, you know, like monies, you know. I will
5078 give you the link to the article which describes it, but I've also written again about self-
5079 awareness diagram this woman made. She talks about awareness. Such a thing. Well, you
5080 know, with chattiness awareness, with awareness, {redacted}, as being a model of
5081 empowerment. I want to bring in these words. So if you want to be really go to the grassroots,
5082 I don't want to appropriate that terminology to say, oh, this person says, you know, you
5083 should use the word {redacted}. I wrote a paper chapter that it's going to come out this year
5084 on other ethnography or methodologies. And I have spoken, you know, why I don't want to
5085 represent the {redacted} workers. I want to bring their voice into it, their definition and give
5086 them the name. But what happens in most cases that we want to, beside ethics, you know,
5087 from saying we have to protect the participant, respondent. And when we're are doing that
5088 protection. Yeah, we are taking away their agency. So I think, you know, the woman I spoke
5089 with wanted me to give them their due recognition. And she told me to tell my story and she

5090 wants to be seen. So even in my thesis, I said, no, I don't want to say that in terms of because
5091 what happens there is you take over the agency, and you take away the due to the woman,
5092 for instance, voice, agency, the local system of knowledge, that sort of yeah.

5093 I am still going to be an outsider no matter the fact that I have an Irish passport and will be
5094 living here for probably the rest of my life. Yeah, I could never be an {redacted}, but surely
5095 I'm not embedded. I will always be an outsider is the same. When I go and do so, I find it
5096 awkward to do research in within Ireland, although I have an {redacted} passport. So it's the
5097 same. Even if I go to Vietnam with Vietnamese and live there for a long time, I can
5098 remember, or the tribals in {redacted}, I would be an outsider. I could never know what
5099 they're thinking. So I would rather have people coming from Vietnam doing the work.

5100 *I guess we've been covering quite a few things so far.*

5101 Just send me the presentation you made and I'll come back with more examples.

5102 *Thank you.*

5103 PHASE-TWO INTERVIEWS

5104 (April – June 2021)

5105 Interview with Participant 1 (P1-Ph2)

5106 *Based on issues around translation and terminology in development work we discussed last*
5107 *time, could you tell me how these issues should be dealt with among stakeholders?*

5108 As you can see, there are some difficulties, such as with our Vietnamese language which is
5109 not as "sharp" as English, especially in the field of business and development. Certain things
5110 in English we cannot translate into Vietnamese because the semantics in Vietnamese are not
5111 "deep", but in English it is, which is why it has become a universal language. For example,
5112 terms like "wellbeing", "gender equality", "women empowerment"... when we hear them,
5113 we understand the meaning very much, but when translated into Vietnamese they become
5114 "cuộc sống thịnh vượng" or "trao quyền cho phụ nữ"... [*Laughter*] then these equivalents
5115 do not convey the original meaning well enough. First, it is that these translations into
5116 Vietnamese do not make enough sense, and second, these topics in development, especially
5117 in development, are new for beneficiaries. And in fact, development work in Vietnam has
5118 not yet become a profession. For example, we studied another major in the past, then got a
5119 job in development, and we self-study, so during the process of working in development, we
5120 learn from this and that person, I studied that other person, I followed the sisters and brothers
5121 who started before us in this sector and we just kept doing it. Then our English improved
5122 over time, we went to study abroad, plus there were more and more specialised training
5123 related to the specific areas of work we did. So there were no formal education for the
5124 professions of social work or development work. There is no obvious thing called a career
5125 in development. So development workers themselves do not have in-depth professional
5126 knowledge. So translation causes a lot of difficulties. As for problem solving, we may think
5127 of big solutions such as proper or formal professional training which is very difficult to
5128 implement [*Laughter*], because that is related to policy. But more realistically, if we build a
5129 vocabulary in each area or sub-area of development and use that as reference, and with
5130 thorough consideration... and not only include the input of people doing development work

5131 or input from language experts, but also input from beneficiaries so that people understand
5132 those concepts being introduced by those who come to work with them.

5133 For example, when I work with single moms, and I introduce, "today I come from {name of
5134 organisation} to work with my sisters to “empower” you...” [Laughter], then the sisters will
5135 not understand what empowerment means. Also in my work related to empowerment, there
5136 are also many different areas, such as empowerment in terms of mindsets, in terms of
5137 thinking, changing their outlook on their lives and themselves. Then they'll ask, "What right
5138 do you give me here?" [Laughter]. Actually, people don't understand the meaning of that
5139 term, even though we work to help them change their mindset, it's true that it "empowers"
5140 them when people heal their traumas and change their outlook. it is true that they are
5141 "empowered". I obviously don't know how to translate it into Vietnamese, although it has
5142 always been translated as “trao quyền”.

5143 So, if we have a tool, a specialised lexicon of terms for example that consists of terms being
5144 translated from English into Vietnamese which also considers the understandings of the
5145 beneficiaries, who are often people with little or no knowledge about the development work
5146 or who have not yet understood what our activities are, it will make them understand more
5147 easily. Then they feel closer to the knowledge and activities about development, and so it
5148 brings in better and more effective communication. Now, in my view, the work of
5149 development groups has not come into life. For example, in Vietnam currently there are a
5150 lot of organisations that support women. There must be between 20 and 30 NGOs working
5151 in the field of gender and women development, and every year they spend a lot of money...
5152 but when asked about the number of beneficiaries they reach every year, it is sometimes not
5153 as significant as the jobs I am doing "for fun", that I call "sisters getting together on the
5154 internet", or "when we have free time we play together"... That sort of thing. Therefore, the
5155 impact is not large enough compared to the amount of money spent because the approach is
5156 too rigid. Of course, I don't want to talk about what is called embezzlement, corruption,
5157 sluggishness or laziness... but I just want to say that the approach is too rigid. When I ask
5158 the women who were suffering and having difficulties in my community, for example... there
5159 were tens of thousands of people, nearly 40,000 people... did anyone know of any
5160 organisations that support women? Probably very few among the 40,000 across the country
5161 who have ever experienced violence, divorce and suffered from psychological problems as
5162 a result... they never know such organisations exist somewhere. But sometimes if they
5163 explore, perhaps they live right next to {redacted} or other women supporting organisations
5164 but don't know about their activities.

5165 So I'd say, translation also contributes to the process of changing the approach in
5166 development work. Because the problem is there, that the buzzwords and jargons being used
5167 by development organisations and practitioners are still too unfamiliar. For example, on the
5168 same conference poster, "women empowerment" is translated as “hội thảo trao quyền cho
5169 phụ nữ”; it is possible that people such as single moms do not necessarily understand what
5170 “trao quyền” means and they don't find it relevant to them so they are curious and ask, “can
5171 I attend?”. So all these activities usually need to go through the Women's Union to "invite"
5172 but more accurately force them to attend [Laughter], or the Women's Union recommends
5173 someone, that person will attend, while others who are not recommended or not participating
5174 in the Women's Union will not attend. But obviously, there are also many reports pointing
5175 out that the Women's Union is just a front and brings in no impact, or the Youth Union is of
5176 no benefit, and the Vietnamese are increasingly trying to stay away from these unions and
5177 associations. So such communication has inadvertently excluded many people who need to
5178 be approached. So translation in development communication will be very useful here. For

5179 example, if we use more friendly terminology on a poster, on facebook or banners on the
5180 streets, use more touching expressions, make people feel more related, it will stimulate their
5181 curiosity, and thereby if they feel they can, they will participate. Not to mention other
5182 consequential factors such as the way invitations are made, how the event is organised, along
5183 with the use of modern facilities... these will include more people, although these factors are
5184 not related to translation which is what we say here.

5185 *So you're also touching on my next question about the real-world impact of translation and*
5186 *terminology on development work. Can you elaborate further on the day-to-day impact?*

5187 There, first, on communication, such as on banners and advertisements, and video clips to
5188 communicate about development work, but these publications and media products are often
5189 less relevant. Take a look. Recently, I am doing some research about media channels like
5190 youtube, for example, to try to include more women... then I see, there will be some content
5191 that I don't even confidently share on my personal facebook page. Why? In a facebook group,
5192 I can share many things, but on my personal platform, if I share, the colleagues working in
5193 that field come in and correct, "you said this wrong", or "what you said is not quite accurate".
5194 Yes, if I say it right and people don't come to me anymore, what's the point of what I do? Of
5195 course, it's not that I'm not educated and trained properly, but if I want to help someone, if I
5196 do it methodically, "accurately" according to the formula, according to the package, and if
5197 that doesn't mean enough friendliness to attract people, then I am not helping people, and
5198 our work does not bring any benefit. So recently I watched video clips of other NGOs and
5199 learned how people do it. It's true that even with a very small number of views, say 5-7
5200 views, they still have to produce a video. And the content of communication is often very
5201 dogmatic and impractical. Surely the translation of the content or the script writing also play
5202 a role in that. Perhaps the translation must be "deeper" to come to life, that is closer and
5203 easier to understand for those who have little knowledge of the content of communication.

5204 *So you emphasise using the language that is commonsensical, popular and less specialised?*

5205 That's right. Avoid jargons and buzzwords. For example, today, this week, we practice what
5206 is called "ngồi thiền" [sitting meditate], so I suggest, "maybe we should do nằm thiền" [lying
5207 meditation] [*Laughter*]. Because when people hear about meditation, people think about
5208 how to sit cross-legged, how to put their hands, this posture is very difficult for people who
5209 have not had much practice. Because it's not just sitting meditation, but just sitting together
5210 for a bit, they can't do it because they have the trauma inside, the psychological problems
5211 for example... That's mindfulness, meaning they need to stay focus on what they are doing,
5212 but traumatised people have a hard time doing this because people are so busy with everyday
5213 life, and they may not have a sense of belonging, they may feel this is a place for them, so
5214 they run after or wait for something to come. So I just have to say, "or we can lie down and
5215 meditate", or "we can sit down here or lie down here and sing together"... [*Laughter*]. That
5216 is, sometimes I have to use colloquialism and that's weird but casual as long as that makes
5217 them understand the concept, they try and if it works, they will gradually achieve the final
5218 goal. Because its purpose is just to balance the mind, but if I keep forcing people to use the
5219 correct terminology, they will be anxious, just hearing it makes them afraid and they will not
5220 join my activities, and just like that my work becomes meaningless. But I can do this because
5221 I think that my work doesn't have to be recognised by anyone, or done in a correct way, or
5222 that I have to go to this and that event and conference... I don't have that need. I also don't
5223 have the need to do big projects to get big funding. So what matters is that we do small things
5224 to satisfy the values we offer as real support and have a real impact on the beneficiaries. But
5225 it is not easy for others to do this. Most people in development work, if you interview them,

5226 you can see that they are always rigid, thinking inside a box and putting this whole box into
5227 implementation without any flexibility. It is difficult, but in general, if you are more careful
5228 and mindful about the use of terminology, and paying more attention to impact than
5229 professional standards, you can improve people's participation. It doesn't have to be the
5230 accurate terms, it doesn't have to be the right words, as long as people understand the
5231 message, they'll feel included and participate better.

5232 In the past, I think I'd disagree with using such use of the "nôm na" language because those
5233 Vietnamese "nôm na" expressions sound funny and incoherent. But then when I think more
5234 deeply, with such education and culture, the majority of people are using the "nôm na"
5235 language, while only a minority of people who do development work like me, if we separate
5236 ourselves from the majority, we will not bring in any impact. If you want people to
5237 participate, you must first make them feel like you are part of them, you are like them. Only
5238 then do I point out the small differences and help make small changes over time. And it is
5239 true that "when in Rome, do as Romans do", so I find the "nôm na" language suitable.

5240 *Now suppose you have to explain "empowerment" in a "nôm na" way to the women you*
5241 *meet on the street or at the market, how would you do it?*

5242 *[Laughter]* Really tough! In my groups, people'd ask, "What do we learn today, Miss
5243 {redacted}?", and I'd say "oh my, just some chit-chat", and they'd say "Chit-chat? Ok" and
5244 join us happily. When I entered the session, I'd first say what they'd want to hear, then
5245 gradually I'd go into sharing the key messages. At first, I always had a fairly good
5246 participation, but over time the participation rate became less and less. And in the end, only
5247 those who really understood remained, I'd talk about serious matters. For the past year, I
5248 have tried this method and found it very tiring *[Laughter]*, much more tiring than seeking a
5249 grant, such as one million dollars, and doing by the book, the outcomes, outputs, activities...
5250 and then reporting, that'd much energy to save. But now I am managing and trying to find a
5251 method that gives real benefit, so it's tiring. There is a group called the {redacted} initiative,
5252 this group was created for the purpose of making changes for disadvantaged people so they
5253 have a more positive outlook on life, to help them better understand themselves, to plan their
5254 lives better... then that's a rough explanation for "empowerment". With the original 45
5255 members, after a year, the group was left with 8-9 people, but I observed a real change.
5256 Making a real impact like that is always more exhausting than the previous method of
5257 "collecting participants" to report that after a year we brought in some impact to thousands
5258 of people *[Laughter]*.

5259 *So far you've suggested 3 solutions. First, it is necessary to have a policy of formal and*
5260 *professional training. The second is to build a tool that is a lexicon of terminology for*
5261 *development workers, and the third, using "nôm na" language for difficult concepts, which*
5262 *according to your reflection, you didn't like it at first, but then you changed it because you*
5263 *found it really effective in making changes. Do you think of any other solutions?*

5264 Right. Regarding the first solution, that the development organisation or project can develop
5265 a policy on translation to provide training on that for their human resource to overcome
5266 barriers of language and translation in development work may be a bit far-fetched, but if it
5267 is possible, it will be very good and very sustainable. It is an ideal solution but difficult to
5268 implement.

5269 *Again, in the previously interview and this time, you've mentioned some confusing terms that*
5270 *are difficult to translate into Vietnamese such as "women empowerment", "gender equity",*

5271 “gender development”, “advocacy”, “participatory approach”, “stigma”, “wellbeing”,
5272 “LGBT”, “trauma”, “mental health”, and also the language of the SDGs in general. In your
5273 opinion, should problematic terms in development not be translated into Vietnamese?

5274 Specifically, like “wellbeing”, any translation is inaccurate because there are so many
5275 aspects. “Empowerment” also covers so many deep-seated aspects that when it’s translated,
5276 it will never convey the full meaning. It would be better if we kept these terms and put the
5277 explanation between parentheses. However, beneficiaries sometimes don't care what terms
5278 are used [Laughter], and don't care what the organisation is doing. For example, today, I
5279 said that there was a “mental health group meeting”, they wouldn’t like it and didn't
5280 remember, but they simply said about “go gathering”, ie at that hour, that day, they’d meet.
5281 Then, about “stigma”, they’d tell me “I’m not crazy, I'm not mentally ill, why do I have to
5282 go to learn about psychology and psychiatry?”. So just say “go gathering”, “go chit-chat”,
5283 then the sisters will like it better [Laughter]. If I talked about relationship or domestic issues,
5284 they’d immediately say, “I know there's a problem with my divorce, but it's not my fault”
5285 [Laughter] and immediately refuse and wouldn’t participate.

5286 Actually in the environment of development professionals, it is possible to keep original
5287 terms as they are, because when mentioned, the professionals immediately understand and
5288 refer to certain Vietnamese equivalents that are already available. But for the beneficiaries,
5289 they will refer to something more “nôm na” because there are problematic terms that are
5290 difficult to translate. For example, on the video channel that I am working on, there are terms
5291 that I don't know how to translate, so I have to leave them as is because I am worried that if
5292 the translation is wrong, psychologists or experts will judge and say, “you do nonsense, you
5293 do it wrong”... so I’d be hesitant. For example, I’d keep the original phrase, “Keep becoming
5294 more you”, although it is a very good one, I don't know how to translate it into Vietnamese.
5295 But beneficiaries may find it annoying that you often use English and don't translate. They’d
5296 say, “as if you're the only one who can speak English”. They don't understand our suffering
5297 [Laughter] and think that I am showing off or something or do this or that, they’d feel hurt.
5298 Someone put up a comment, “Your video is very good, you have a lot of good knowledge,
5299 but I won’t watch it anymore because you speak too much English” [Laughter]. Such a
5300 dilemma, to translate or not to translate.

5301 *Such a conflict of decision-making [Laughter].*

5302 [Laughter] Yes, a very difficult decision. Many things I had to leave as is because I don't
5303 know how to translate. Outcomes, outputs, layouts... are other examples. Among colleagues
5304 who work together in development, I often keep these and we still understand each other,
5305 and sometimes I am so used to it that I can't remember what the Vietnamese is. But those
5306 who do not know English will not understand this suffering. But it’d have to stay that way,
5307 and I’d accept the consequences and impacts when key players do not understand each
5308 other's suffering in terms of communication. Why is it called development work? Because I
5309 bring in new things to places where those concepts are not familiar. I think the most
5310 important thing is to make this knowledge more relatable and understandable to the
5311 participants so that they feel included to participate. That's okay.

5312 *uch a manifestation to the debate whether development is a process or a product?*

5313 Right. I am feeling that development is not a product but a process, so I go ahead and adjust
5314 my approach gradually. As a person working in development, I see more and more the

5315 importance of becoming more sensitive when working with vulnerable groups through
5316 communication and use of language.

5317 *Now moving on to the second topic of the interview, "shared learning"...*

5318 Actually, I see in Vietnam, this is not an easy thing to do for a number of reasons. First, there
5319 are many people who are not willing to share the knowledge they have learned from the
5320 outside. Second, there will also be people who don't like to learn. Also several development
5321 professionals in Vietnam are knowledgeable, having very high persona and holding
5322 respected roles in the society, but they are often arrogant and like to show off. Say, when I
5323 asked how a term should be translated, many would immediately come in and come up with
5324 an "official" translation for that term. But the problem here is, it's not that I don't know the
5325 "official" translation but that I'm not satisfied with it. After all, all choices lead to a
5326 "framework", i.e. if UNDP has translated it, why are you not satisfied and questioning?
5327 Vietnamese people do not have the habit of questioning. But like I said, I care about
5328 beneficiaries so I always have to find ways to create the impact by myself. In the
5329 development industry, people keep sharing and sharing proposals and conventional ways ...
5330 so in fact, the development industry is a very conservative and a "slowly developing"
5331 industry compared to other sectors such as business and start-ups... where people change
5332 constantly and learn from each other very quickly, while in development, people are very
5333 conservative and always to do what they think is right, "it has to be right this way, right that
5334 way". But of course shared learning is still what everyone in Vietnam is doing, and it's
5335 probably still the best way because if we expect the state to come up with some standard
5336 training in a certain field, it's not easy. So sharing and collaborative learning is still the best
5337 way. For example, it's most reasonable these days to create forums on social networks to
5338 share information and discuss solutions.

5339 *I want to share with you 2 examples of shared learning in translation and development. One*
5340 *of these is an initiative of the Saigon Community of Interpreters and Translators (SGCI&T)*
5341 *under the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation Foundation (HPDF) from*
5342 *which learning activities such as seminars and workshops on importance of translation for*
5343 *the comprehensive development and integration of Vietnam or "translation in the 4.0 era"*
5344 *were held. The other example is the contest organised by ADF in collaboration with the*
5345 *Youth Union for young people to participate in translating the concept and term "resilience"*
5346 *using language and means of visuals. These are examples that are quite consistent with the*
5347 *understanding of shared learning, that is, different parties join and share their knowledge*
5348 *on certain topics about translation.*

5349 Also a shared learning effort.

5350 *So what do you think about the importance of shared learning in addressing translation*
5351 *problems in development?*

5352 Currently, there are groups for those working in NGOs, NPOs and other networks... to
5353 exchange, share experiences and cooperate in learning, mostly it promotes self-study and
5354 throwing questions back and forth. Until now, people also mainly relied on acquaintances,
5355 networks, and thereby knowing each other's expertise so they who are the right people to
5356 ask questions. For example, in a psychology training programme, learners who are
5357 psychiatrists will show others how to properly use mental health terms. Those who are
5358 psychologists will help with psychological terms. As a community worker and social worker,
5359 I mainly listen, learn and draw for myself what can be applied. That was before COVID. In

5360 the time of COVID, online communities seem to be effective. I go online and read articles,
5361 learn, and choose what's good to follow. So far I have not seen any seminars or events on
5362 translation, or any training materials specialising on translation for development workers.

5363 Of the three solutions I mentioned initially, the one on training and capacity building in
5364 translation is most directly related to this shared learning approach. Running a contest to find
5365 the translations of a difficult term like you mentioned, for example, is also a very useful way.
5366 Or if someone is willing to coordinate, all organisations working on gender can sit down and
5367 share their own definitions of a concept and term. And if the beneficiaries are included, the
5368 impact of knowledge sharing will be even greater, but it's important to drive the approach
5369 away from being locked in. It has to be fun and friendly enough so they are curious to
5370 participate. Such ability to raise awareness of development issues and ideas is better than
5371 presenting knowledge introduced from the outside using big jargons.

5372 Currently, in the existing space of NGOs and NPOs, people talk a lot about fundraising, how
5373 to make a lot of money, and seeking awards [*Laughter*]. Those are topics with most interests.
5374 People share opportunities with each other and are greatly appreciated for sharing these.
5375 Other topics have not been paid much attention, for example, how to manage human
5376 resources... Recently I have been more involved in the start-up community and seeing that
5377 the process of shared learning is more active there. Of course, they are also interested in
5378 finding investments, but young people also share and care more seriously and methodically
5379 about the essentials of performance. So if we talk about NGOs and NPOs, although they are
5380 also very professional, their way of working is still rigid and not as comfortable as in the
5381 corporate sector.

5382 So shared learning can be a good approach to create a community that combines
5383 development professionals and translators. Professional translators sometimes do not have
5384 the experience in development, so many times they do not translate accurately. Yesterday, I
5385 sought to hire a translator for an event about psychology therapy and social work, which was
5386 a training programme for moderators responsible for coordinating support activities for
5387 groups of single moms. I reached out to a professional translator with experience in
5388 simultaneous translation, but she refused because she did not know enough about the content,
5389 and that was the first time I saw a translator decline a job offer. In the past, I noticed that
5390 translators with experience in the fields such as business and commerce would accept any
5391 job offers to translate for conferences on marine conservation, and they wouldn't mind
5392 [*Laughter*]. And often projects and organisations will hire and rehire translators that they
5393 have worked with and kept in contact with. I think the recent refusal of the job offer by the
5394 translator shows her awareness that if she accepted, she would have to translate about new
5395 knowledge very well, such as about social work, about activism, code of conduct, terms of
5396 reference, skills needed by social workers, and also issues related to the use of internet and
5397 information security and many more. She read through the agenda and said that I should go
5398 look for someone with a background in psychology and social work. So it took me a little
5399 while to find someone like that. In general, it was the first time I saw a translator turn down
5400 a job offer on the grounds that they did not understand the content and technical terms in
5401 that field. That's a serious thinker about the profession.

5402 *Let's go to the final topic. Since our last discussion, do you have any recollection of the*
5403 *problems of translation and terminology in your work? Have you talked to anyone?*

5404 I don't have anyone to talk to [*Laughter*] but I think a lot. Most recently, I attended a training
5405 on psychology provided by a well-known Vietnamese expert. He is using the so-called

5406 “think-tank” of people in that specialty who are good at English to translate American
5407 textbooks into Vietnamese and build a set of textbooks to train students in the psychology
5408 major in Vietnam. My experience is that when I try to translate a certain sentence into
5409 Vietnamese, even though I have carefully considered grammar and word usage, when a
5410 psychiatrist translates the same sentence, I find the meaning changed, completely different
5411 [*Laughter*]. It is a sentence like this: "The personality test used in the workplace are mostly
5412 self-report measures of specific traits or disposition".

5413 *With sentences like this, what would be the impact if the translations are inconsistent?*

5414 Lots of impacts. For me, it's a misunderstanding of technical terms. And if the translation is
5415 wrong, then when these documents are later used for training, that is the misunderstanding
5416 being spread out.

5417 *I had the opportunity to share with you about a text analysis tool. Thanks to this tool, we can*
5418 *identify different translations for different terms in the original and translated texts. Thereby*
5419 *we may consider for myself the most suitable translation... Later if I ask you to share with*
5420 *me some pairs of bilingual documents in your work for further analysis, would you be*
5421 *willing?*

5422 My pleasure.

5423 *One last question. Do you think there are any other topics about translation in development*
5424 *and shared learning that we haven't covered?*

5425 I think it's important to raise awareness about translation issues and terminology in
5426 development. For example, I talked about a translator who refused a job because she was not
5427 confident with her professional knowledge, that was the first time I saw that. In the past,
5428 professional translators often refused only because they could not arrange the time, or
5429 because the rate was too low [*Laughter*]. In addition, I think if those who translate in
5430 development work have access to the tools of text analysis as you say, it will be very helpful.

5431 *Then, in the future, if I organise a small workshop on using this tool, will you be willing to*
5432 *participate?*

5433 Yes, and I would recommend it to anyone who is interested.

5434 *Thank you.*

5435 Interview with Participant 6 (P6-Ph2)

5436 *Let's start.*

5437 May I answer first the question on some particular examples of persistently problematic
5438 terminology in my work?

5439 *Okay.*

5440 Last time we talked, I focused more on the terms I used at the central level or in the urban
5441 contexts. But when I brought them to remote areas, ethnic minority areas, areas where
5442 cultural similarity is low for example, it creates barriers. At that time, I saw that there were
5443 terms that could not be explained in a succinct way with enough meaning, or maybe if I'd

5444 have to steer them in an easy way so people understood better, then I had to sacrifice some
5445 of the insights embedded in that term. Take, for example, the terms in the area of domestic
5446 violence. So this time I'm going to focus on terms that can raise a political sensitivity. On
5447 the other hand, I found last time I was "going down", i.e. going into the grassroots level and
5448 its barriers. So this time I "go up". Politically, I see that when we "go up" like that, in the
5449 role of a development worker for an NGO, I am conscious of how to "install" ideas, concepts
5450 and terms which may have an influence on policy, or on views or ideologies, such as "what
5451 is development?". I think these are cases that create a lot of "bumps".

5452 The first example is about the term "governance" and related terms about governance. As
5453 we understand it or use it, they're all about the governance system, and it doesn't have to be
5454 "quản trị" in a public or private context, but in state governance for example, the translation
5455 of "governance" is sometimes not very welcome. I don't know the exact reason why, but
5456 when I talked to my friends at the {redacted} programme of UNDP, they also said that this
5457 was not a new term. Take the term "quản trị tốt" for example, "good governance", it has
5458 long been in UNDP documents and working agendas between the two sides. But the state is
5459 very reticent in adopting the term "governance". I don't know if it's because the content of
5460 "governance" has increased the transparency of the state, or whether it's about "I need the
5461 state to hold accountability", or something... so the state is conservative and reticent in
5462 adopting this. Recently, there are documents, such as directives of the prime minister, that
5463 also mention the terms about governance, it is one of the first times that the state is officially
5464 adopting a new knowledge in development and the new term "governance" which has been
5465 commonly used by UNDP and large NGOs. The reservations may also stem from the fact
5466 that the term is tied to its origins in Vietnam - i.e. because UNDP or NGOs in Vietnam tend
5467 to be pro-Western or more legal. So I think attaching it to liberal thinking, for example, will
5468 make the state want to distance from them with terms like this.

5469 A second example is the terms about the civil society or civic space, "xã hội dân sự" or "các
5470 tổ chức xã hội dân sự". This is extremely sensitive in the Vietnamese context. Right now we
5471 have a movement about... Since COVID, it's been very clear, but before that there was also
5472 censorship from the government. For example, in 2019, the Law on Cybersecurity was at
5473 the time amended to include provisions related to restricting the exercise of free speech and
5474 expression online, and these are used to crack down on groups of dissidents. On the other
5475 hand, it also justifies other situations related to national security, for example, reporting false
5476 information, disinformation and fake news. COVID makes the deployment of cyber security
5477 forces itself possible and "legitimised", that is, when there is a case of fake news, the state
5478 uses this in a way that is legitimised. Discourses on civil society also emerge very clearly.
5479 For example, the state often portrays civil society as pro-Western, Western-dominated
5480 organizations. Recently, there was a case of a self-nominating candidate of the National
5481 Assembly and a People's Council member election, that is {redacted}. When {redacted}
5482 launched his campaign agenda and also gave information to the media that he was running,
5483 there was also a series of news articles from the opposition forces stating that {redacted}
5484 received money from {a Western country}, and {redacted} is an organisation associated with
5485 funding reactionary organisations, so {redacted} is considered a reactionary organisation in
5486 that way. Discourses of this kind make "xã hội dân sự" itself a very negative word, so
5487 negative to the extent that when we invite organisations that include CSO groups, that is,
5488 those that are already formalised and registered, and community-based organisations, CBOs,
5489 which are community organisations, or mass organizations such as the Women's Union and
5490 Youth Union, etc., many who participated in that meeting denied and they said "I'm not part
5491 of "xã hội dân sự", I'm not part of CSO". The reason here is that CSOs are often described
5492 as dissidents that are reactionary, pro-Western, or liberal, while they themselves also don't

5493 want to be associated with the term. It is a denial of CSOs, but in essence, in the European
5494 understanding, non-state and non-private organisations are all “xã hội dân sự”. But in
5495 Vietnam, because the context is too sensitive... dissident organisations don't care, they can
5496 call themselves “xã hội dân sự”. But organisations that are inclined to cooperate, or because
5497 of the nature of their work, for example in education, in healthcare, for example - naming
5498 them “xã hội dân sự” puts them at a disadvantage, so they also ask not to call them “các tổ
5499 chức xã hội dân sự” but “các tổ chức xã hội”. Then there is a shift here, that is, in the English
5500 texts, they still call themselves “các tổ chức xã hội dân sự”, but when we translate them into
5501 Vietnamese, we all use “các tổ chức xã hội”. So the connotations are not the same, but I
5502 think in the context of Vietnam, it is necessary to avoid censorship by using more friendly
5503 phraseology to be accepted and institutionalised in legal documents, such as “các tổ chức xã
5504 hội”, “các tổ chức chính trị - xã hội liên quan đến công tác cộng đồng” [socio-political
5505 organisations doing to community work], các đoàn thể [mass organisations], etc... Next week
5506 I have a talk at {redacted}. Actually, my topic is also related to civil society organisations -
5507 in essence and in English it is still CSO - but I will not use the term “xã hội dân sự” but use
5508 “các tổ chức xã hội” to make sure it passes the censors and doesn't cause problems.

5509 Those are two examples of terms that, in my opinion, are difficult to translate because it
5510 entails political sensitivity and can create disadvantages for the parties using the terms, if we
5511 translate them correctly.

5512 *Thank you. Now I want to know more of the real-world impacts of these translation-related*
5513 *problems to your work, if that's ok...*

5514 Now I go on to say that we are also trying to influence policy, but when we use these terms,
5515 the misunderstanding or different understandings create a technical barrier. Take the term
5516 "inclusiveness" for example. This term, I see from 2017 onwards, the Prime Minister also
5517 uses it, and people also translate it as “phát triển bao trùm” or “nền kinh tế tạo sự bao trùm”
5518 and so on, but the translations are not used consistently and in agreement. For example, mid-
5519 level organisations often ask, “So what translation do your organisation use? Is it possible
5520 for ours to translate like this?”. Actually, the term “bao trùm” may not be entirely correct,
5521 but imagine now that if we use a different term from government documents or government
5522 speeches, for example, sometimes it will create a disparity out of “Am I talking about the
5523 same thing, or am I talking about two different things?”. Then the fact that we still use what
5524 belongs to the language of the state and the government, and the use itself makes them realise
5525 that the two sides are speaking a common language, then okay, that makes it easier to work
5526 together.

5527 Or when talking about start-up nation for example, or talking about start-ups, some people
5528 just use "start-up", some use “khởi nghiệp”. In terms of content, it is not certain that these
5529 two usages are the same, but the thing is that when I use "start-up", it coincides with the
5530 government's narrative that the start-up nation creates this and that “môi trường khởi
5531 nghiệp”. I think in essence, I understand that there may be different translations depending
5532 on what my agency or organisation does and adopt it, but it's a choice that is both realistic
5533 and strategic, that is, using the language used by the government, so that expression and
5534 communication are more easily accepted and heard by people.

5535 *I want to know more about different translations of a term that does not appear in the state*
5536 *documents...*

5537 There is an example. Currently I am pitching a new term called "human economy". Actually,
5538 it's not really new because this term in English is relatively clear to refer to an economy that
5539 is more oriented towards human needs, harmonious, balanced and sustainable. But
5540 translating this term into Vietnamese is also not easy because its connotation is very broad,
5541 and it is impossible to describe the characteristics of both inclusive environmentally and
5542 socially and ecologically sustainable. We usually translate it as "nền kinh tế nhân văn"
5543 because it is the closest thing to the government's understanding of something more human-
5544 oriented, although it would exclude the connotation about the environment. Another factor
5545 I also consider, for example, there is a {name of university}, the "nhân văn" [humanity]
5546 factor lies in the way people understand, that is, what is related to the society of people. With
5547 our current translation, when we say it, we never assume that people will understand, and
5548 sometimes with new government agencies, for example when we work with the {redacted},
5549 they've been working on this for 2-3 years so they're used to it, and I don't have to explain it
5550 in meetings with {redacted}. However, when I go to other ministries, departments and
5551 sectors, that is when scope of work expands, so I go to pitch with these agencies such as the
5552 {redacted}, the {redacted}, the {redacted} and investment for example... to talk about "kinh
5553 tế nhân văn", they don't understand, so I have to explain a little bit, "this is what "human
5554 economy" means how my organisation defines it, and the term is translated into Vietnamese
5555 like this", so that people have a way of understanding that, "it sounds like that, but it's
5556 actually broader" [Laughter].

5557 *Do you think about the next steps to communicate this concept and term in policy advocacy*
5558 *so that the stakeholders gradually adopt it?*

5559 In terms of strategy, whether people adopt or not lies not in terminology but in whether its
5560 content is consistent with the government's priorities. So the story about language and
5561 translation is true, but choosing which way to pitch and whether it is easily adopted or not
5562 lies more in sharing our insight with the government. For example, when we say "tăng trưởng
5563 bao trùm", people immediately understand, but when we say "nền kinh tế nhân văn", they
5564 do not immediately understand even though the connotations are very similar. So
5565 strategically, I think we'll embark on more relatable expressions. Second, the way my
5566 organisation is doing now is to pitch in a lot in meetings. Almost any meeting related to
5567 policy, giving consultation, or consulting workshops, seminars... we all come to pitch. And
5568 the first step is probably to justify with the meeting attendees about these terms. And our
5569 second is to do research projects with institutes. Because in fact the institutes here are the
5570 focal institutes of government agencies, they are the space to generate ideas, and they are the
5571 direct advisory body to the prime minister. So when they bring that up, there's legitimacy.
5572 So I think the problem is no longer about the terminology but whether they adopt it or not is
5573 not up to us.

5574 Another case which is also related to political sensitiveness is the term "empowerment". I
5575 remember about 10 years ago we translated it as "trao quyền", and then tweaked it a bit to
5576 "nâng cao quyền năng". First, in terms of development, the translation as "trao quyền"
5577 implies a hierarchical power problem. Therefore, developer practitioners had this
5578 thinking, that it should not be translated as "trao quyền" because "trao quyền" means that I
5579 am assuming that I am in a higher position and the person being "trao quyền" is in a lower
5580 position. Then we argued and said it shouldn't be translated as "trao quyền" any longer but
5581 as "nâng cao quyền năng", which means it's already there by default and what I'm doing is
5582 just raising it [Laughter].

5583 *The problem lies in the word "quyền", yes?*

5584 Yes. And when translating it as “nâng cao quyền năng”, later on, an agency that I can't name,
5585 blew its whistle and said that we shouldn't talk about “quyền” [Laughter]. Because using
5586 words like “nhân quyền” [human rights] raises very sensitive issues. So they asked me to
5587 use another word, and later on it became “nâng cao năng lực” [capacity building] [Laughter].

5588 And there is one more example that I may have mentioned in the last time. It is a trio of
5589 different terms in English, "advisory", "consulting" and "counselling". I understand advisory
5590 as “tư vấn” in the style of "I am an expert or a technically qualified person and I will give
5591 advice". Consulting means "I listen to you and then I will customise my approach to what
5592 you need", which still means I give professional advice, but it's more engaging. As for
5593 counselling, I think it means purely “tham vấn”, that is, "there is a session where I sit and
5594 talk, you listen, you give feedback and then I will make a decision based on your feedback."
5595 In English, I think the distinction is very clear. In the field we are trained, social work, and
5596 the other field which is close, psychology, for example, the term "counselling" means purely
5597 for a therapeutic relationship, "I sit and listen and I ask my clients questions, I help them
5598 discover their problems and help them make decisions based on their self-reflection." When
5599 we work on “tham vấn nghề” [career counselling], it's as simple as sitting with someone who
5600 needs career counselling, I ask a question, and the person discovers the answer themselves.
5601 However, in Vietnam, people still use “tư vấn nghề” [career consulting]. So when we were
5602 doing career counselling for middle school students, a {name of Western country} expert
5603 specialising in vocational counselling came over to do a workshop, at the time I hadn't yet
5604 joined the translation team for this conference, everyone had already translated it into “tư
5605 vấn nghề” and put it on the banner and invitation letters. But when I joined the team and
5606 asked, "If it's “tư vấn hướng nghiệp”, then what is the English term?”. The expert said
5607 “counselling”, then I said, if so, it must be translated as “tham vấn nghề nghiệp” in
5608 Vietnamese rather than “tư vấn nghề nghiệp”. I told him it was wrong because “tư vấn nghề
5609 nghiệp” is consulting. Then he turned to the other translators and said "why do people
5610 translate it in terms of consulting?". They replied that “because the Agency of Teachers is
5611 using this term, and so are all ministries and departments, and there is a whole system of
5612 centres providing “tư vấn nghề nghiệp” for students, so it is correct to translate as “tư vấn
5613 nghề nghiệp””. Then in the end I became the one standing in the middle of "arrows and
5614 bullets” because I was the one giving the opinion. But because I think in our expertise, we
5615 make a clear distinction: when it comes to consulting, its nature is very different because
5616 "I'm a consultant, I will advise and you will be the one to like it and not ask any questions",
5617 but with counselling, its nature is completely different as I mentioned above.

5618 *Yes, I mentioned this example the other day...*

5619 Then please disregard it for me.

5620 *No problem. The fact that you remember these shows that using these terms has had a*
5621 *profound impact on your daily work.*

5622 I think it has a practical impact on my work, because it caused conflicts between me and the
5623 other translators. I think the background of each translator may be different, but because my
5624 background is directly in this technical field, I think I have a different input from other
5625 translators who studied at foreign language universities. They didn't look in that direction,
5626 so I thought it's a bit difficult to work because they may think that I was putting a spoke in
5627 the wheels, I just joined the team not for a long time but already and voiced criticism
5628 [Laughter].

5629 *Can you tell me more of the real-work impacts on your day-to-day work?*

5630 I just think that I know the task of translation is not easy. I find that through the translation
5631 process, the content of a word has changed, so I think that sometimes leaving the English
5632 term as it is without translating will eliminate the fact that people do not understand correctly.
5633 Moreover, I see development practitioners have a habit of using English when they speak to
5634 each other. There are words that we're used to using in English, then we don't see the habit
5635 of translating those. Actually, it's easy to work together in the same "level", see, I am mixing
5636 Vietnamese with English again *[Laughter]*, but it's easy to work together in the same
5637 environment. But working with local stakeholders, that can be a barrier. When going to the
5638 locality and contacting their senior leaders at the provincial or departmental level, the
5639 inconsistent use will create a clear gap. Local people might think "he is putting himself in a
5640 higher position, or his thinking is too "Western" so his way of doing things will not be the
5641 same as the local way".

5642 *So you actually think that there are original terms in English that are better used like that*
5643 *and better not translated into Vietnamese?*

5644 I think there are some terms that if we translate into Vietnamese, they sometimes are more
5645 difficult to understand than. So leaving them as they are and not translating will minimise
5646 the... "I speak Vietnamese and I don't understand what it is" *[Laughter]*. For example, the
5647 terminology in computer science is a very good illustration of this idea. When we touch on
5648 the areas of innovation, sometimes the use of Vietnamese terms causes confusion for
5649 listeners. For example, when it comes to AI, artificial intelligence, everyone understands.
5650 But if I say "internet of things", IoT, sometimes stakeholders don't understand what it is,
5651 even in Vietnamese if they've never seen that *[Laughter]*. And for example, "design
5652 thinking" is a very trendy thing these days, but I don't think it's easy to translate into
5653 Vietnamese, and I see everyone in development work still keep the original term. Or like
5654 "logframe", then people keep it like that and not translate.

5655 Or like "wellbeing", now in our organisation, we don't translate anymore and everyone uses
5656 the English term. But fortunately in our work agenda, we have not yet reached the level of
5657 explaining the concept to local communities. It may not be a problem yet, but it is clearly a
5658 difficult term to grasp in all the respects it encompasses.

5659 *Now I want to ask, with such problems, what do you think the solutions would be?*

5660 I don't know if there is one in Vietnam, but for example, a bar association or a professional
5661 association abroad will have a set of standards of practice which standardises all matters
5662 related to skills and terminology. I think this tool will be good because it unifies the standards
5663 when using the language. When it comes to the development sector alone, the work is already
5664 very multi-disciplinary, let alone other sectors like business, technology or medicine... then
5665 I think people will have similar problems with terminology, and they'd also ask themselves,
5666 to translate or not to translate, and if it is to translate, is it easier to convey information than
5667 not to translate... Therefore, if an association is to be established in the field of translation
5668 and interpreting, it is necessary to have a consensus and a set of standards for this sector in
5669 Vietnam.

5670 Second, I think it is possible to build forums or platforms. For example, I am a member of
5671 the ProZ group, a translation group, and when someone raises a problematic term to translate
5672 into Vietnamese they will ask questions and everyone will contribute. If there is a similar

5673 model for the development sector, then I think some of the development terminology will
5674 also be finetuned gradually from the contribution of many interested people.

5675 Third, I remember that in Saigon, there were often seminars organised by private translation
5676 companies and they invited many speakers and parties to talk about the peculiarities of the
5677 translation profession, and then gave professional discussions also on examples of
5678 terminology. These activities were also live streamed. I think if these activities can be done,
5679 it will be very good because it makes the activities not purely academic, and it's possible to
5680 call for the participation of others parties, such as businesses, development organisations and
5681 workers, embassies. When discussions are in an informal space, the parties will more
5682 effectively share about translation or terminology issues in development.

5683 That is, I have not mentioned the need for a strategy of formal training for interpreters in
5684 universities, for example, if you want to practice as an interpreter, you need to be certified.
5685 I know in overseas contexts, translators and interpreters are required to undergo training and
5686 take a standardised test to be granted a practicing certificate. If we do that, the quality of
5687 translation will be improved and it will make a difference. Or maybe development
5688 organisations can think of training, and improving the translation and terminology capacity
5689 for their staff and they allocate budget and resources for this activity. Ideally, if they can
5690 make the training content shareable, say, as videos, for example, on how certain terms are
5691 translated, then other parties can benefit from it. Also, these training materials can also be
5692 reused for different project cycles.

5693 *If there is an opportunity for a shared learning space, what do you think the effect could be?*
5694 *Say, the two groups, development workers and professional translators have a platform or*
5695 *forum to work together to solve translation and terminology problems in development, how*
5696 *do you think they will learn from each other?*

5697 I think we can learn a lot from each other. From the perspective of a development
5698 practitioner, I cannot clearly see how these two groups can complement and and interact, but
5699 I think if we're going to translate in an area other than development, it's very important to
5700 talk to a professional. From the perspective of development professionals to learn from
5701 translation professionals, I think learning will stop at a level of curiosity. For example, when
5702 I sat down to talk to an HR manager of an organisation, she asked me about terminology,
5703 but I don't know if she was testing me or if she was curious from a personal perspective by
5704 asking, for example, when encountering difficult terms, how I handle them, or when I don't
5705 listen to a full a sentence, how I can translate it completely in real time. Translation is a
5706 profession where outsiders sometimes can't see all the difficulties, so the two-way exchange
5707 will make both sides aware of what needs to be done to avoid problems, say to avoid tortuous
5708 explanations, to adjust the speed of talking, avoid misleading words, and so on. If
5709 professionals do not have experience working with translators before, they may not be aware
5710 of these things.

5711 Back to the question you asked last time about who may be in the best position to translate
5712 development terms. Previously, I thought that professional translators would handle it more
5713 flexibly because they were able to use language more fluently. Now after a while, I think
5714 that some development professionals sometimes have better language skills [*Laughter*],
5715 accuracy and their control over language are also higher. So if asked again, I'd say this
5716 authority should be with development professionals because they have more in depth
5717 expertise and the ability to explain knowledge more accurately.

5718 *I want to ask now, do you have any experience with the so-called “nôm na” language,*
5719 *especially when working with the community?*

5720 I think it is a very common way to handle language. For example, I currently work mainly
5721 in two areas, research and governance. I usually don't talk much about governance because
5722 I don't think it's easy to explain, but usually I just say that I work on anti-corruption and
5723 increasing transparency, although these are two very small parts of governance. But if I just
5724 say I work in governance, people won't understand. So I will "filter myself", or in my
5725 thinking I will choose a simple expression for them to understand and aim to make the
5726 conversation not hindered. Since one might ask, "What is governance?", the conversation
5727 can go in a different direction. So I have to choose a simple and friendly term which is easy
5728 enough to understand but not too far from the original. But choosing a “nôm na” explanation
5729 like this only works for normal conversational contexts.

5730 The disadvantage of “nôm na” is when we have to do some professional intervention. If we
5731 use simplified or casual language, there is a risk that the stakeholders will think that we are
5732 not being honest and have not told everything, and then they might be doubtful whether we
5733 really have a good agenda or not. I have this feeling when working with the government and
5734 talking about governance with them, it is not enough to say that I am working on anti-
5735 corruption because the scope of work will be wider than that, so it can be misleading.

5736 *Before we say goodbye, do you think there are other topics on translation and terminology*
5737 *in development work that we haven't covered?*

5738 I think this is a very good reflection, as I am a development practitioner and also a translator.
5739 So when you ask a question, I have to think about it, and I find that it is tremendously
5740 pointing to the way I think and not just the way I use language. For example, in the past, I
5741 thought simply that translation was just language processing, but now I see that translation
5742 means I'm navigating a value system between two different contexts, and the fact that I am
5743 using certain terms in certain contexts to formalise also greatly affects my practice. I think I
5744 learned a lot from the questions you asked because it made me reflect a lot.

5745 *Thank you for your insights.*

5746 **Interview with Participant 8 (P8-Ph2)**

5747 If possible, I would like to talk to you first about some terms that I have found persistently
5748 problematic at work. So I want to combine a little between some of the questions in topic 1
5749 and topic 3, is it possible?

5750 *I agree.*

5751 After the first interview with you, I recently had a discussion with my work partners, two
5752 senior {redacted} experts in the field of psychology, and we discussed the exact same issue
5753 that our brothers were discussing, i.e. how to translate concepts in development work. In
5754 fact, up to now, I still preserve the view that it depends on the case and the development
5755 work context that we use terminology accordingly.

5756 For example, with some local stakeholders, I can provide the original term in English with
5757 detailed explanations of the meaning to be communicated to avoid misunderstanding.
5758 Recently, I met with those senior experts working in development industry in the fields of

5759 psychology and mental health, and they came up with the idea that make me think about the
5760 two problematic terms, "self-esteem" and "wellbeing". So far, "wellbeing" is often translated
5761 as "sức khỏe", but in reality, "wellbeing" is not necessarily just that. The experts explained
5762 that "wellbeing" is the opposite of "ill being", which is a "state", a "being" or existence where
5763 "wellbeing" is healthy existence and "ill being" is unhealthy existence. That's to explain it
5764 "nôm na". So it can be "sức khỏe" [health] among many other things. So it is not to translate
5765 as "sức khỏe" or "hạnh phúc" according to how it's translated in the SDGs in Vietnam
5766 currently because we can completely use the noun "health", and nor is it "hạnh phúc" because
5767 it is entirely possible to use the noun "happiness". Translating "wellbeing" as "cuộc sống
5768 tốt", then it's more just about "good life". The expert told me "wellbeing" should be
5769 understood and translated as "sự lành mạnh" [wellness], but I find that to be an unfriendly
5770 expression. So we see here a number of different and inconsistent translations, so I am
5771 suggesting that depending on the relevant stakeholders we are working with, we use a certain
5772 translation for "wellbeing".

5773 The experts who talked to me also worry about not finding a good equivalent in Vietnamese
5774 for "self-esteem". It's not "tự tin" because that relates to "self confidence", nor is it "tự trọng"
5775 [self-respect] because that also presents a different thing. I think this concern is very true.
5776 Our project is aimed at improving the self-esteem for secondary school students so that they
5777 can improve their values then they can become resilient [Laughter]. And the field of
5778 psychology is quite new, so these experts have not yet agreed on the terminology. There are
5779 equivalents that sound ear-pleasing to one person but not to the others.

5780 So there is also another way to handle it, for example, we consider that in the work agenda,
5781 it is necessary to consult with a specialty advisory panel, as suggested by the mentioned
5782 experts. They assume that we are project doers at the grassroots levels, so sometimes we
5783 need to call meetings like that. In fact, so far, we have invited some experts to develop
5784 training materials on a certain SDG, just take the example of SDG No. 3, which UN Vietnam
5785 translates as "sức khỏe và cuộc sống tốt". Then, depending on the field of work, we can offer
5786 a different translation than that one, but it is necessary to hold a consultation meeting with a
5787 specialty panel. Then, with a training module where "wellbeing" will be constantly used over
5788 and over again, the panel must agree in advance on a consistent translation for those training
5789 activities. Ideally, there should be a panel of experts and linguists, or even some agency with
5790 the authority, to unify the understanding, translation and usage in different contexts of some
5791 given terms and concepts.

5792 Of course, it is still possible to use the existing translations from others, but it is necessary
5793 to put the originals in parentheses, and when training and disseminating the knowledge, the
5794 concept must still be explained "nôm na".

5795 *In fact, in development work, does this approach (consulting with the panel to and agree)*
5796 *always apply?*

5797 Depends on the context. For example, when I go to work with the community, I use language
5798 or documents, then the language of expression must be friendly, at common levels, easy to
5799 understand as much as possible. Any parts in the SDGs, whether that's poverty reduction or
5800 livelihoods... must be explained in the most basic way. Actually "sinh kế" [livelihoods] is
5801 also a Sino-Vietnamese word that sometimes should not be used in the community. I can
5802 explain to the community roughly that "sinh kế" means the work and a way to generate
5803 income for people. Meanwhile, at a higher level or in documents, I can completely use "sinh
5804 kế" without any further explanation if there is no request.

5805 Another context is when I develop documents, in my work there are 2 types of training
5806 materials and materials for media publication before they are circulated in public and with
5807 the community. At this stage, I'd consult with an expert to agree on translation before these
5808 products are officially used. But this takes a lot of resources, labour, time and money... while
5809 the society is constantly developing, so all issues are happening at the same time. So I think
5810 at the stages when the parties have not reached an agreement, it's most important to convey
5811 the ideas, message and story and message to avoid misunderstanding. The problem here is
5812 the identifier, and if a word is used long enough it becomes familiar and formal. For example,
5813 if everyone thinks "wellbeing" translates as "cuộc sống tốt" then it is "cuộc sống tốt", but if
5814 they all translate it as "sự lành mạnh", then maybe we should officially use "sự lành mạnh".

5815 For new concepts that are conveyed by new terms, we have to go through the
5816 communication process again, so that these concepts and terms gradually become friendly
5817 and popular with all parties. "Sức khỏe tâm thần" for example, "mental wellbeing", in the
5818 past was a new concept, even misunderstood by many people, when many people heard "tâm
5819 thần", they immediately relate to going to psychiatric hospitals, that is, they thought it was
5820 a very negative thing. But lately it is a concern of many and a very hot issue nowadays. "Sức
5821 khỏe tâm thần", after a long process of communication and not just in a day or two, has
5822 become familiar to the people, and everyone understands this concept in a unified way, that
5823 is is a state of wellness that includes not only physical health of the body but also
5824 psychological and mental health. Very glad that many people now understand that in
5825 addition to physical health, a person also has psychological, mental states and in a certain
5826 stage of life, anyone can experience mental health problems.

5827 In short, the solution I want to suggest here is that, when we encounter a term that has too
5828 many different translations and we cannot reach consensus, we can use a "nôm na"
5829 explanation when working with the community. For new terms, we must first agree on the
5830 translations with a panel of experts, then officially have it in the media publications of our
5831 organisation, and we conduct communication with the stakeholders to make that knowledge
5832 come into life and make an impact.

5833 *Can you tell me more about the real-world impacts of translation and terminology on your*
5834 *day-to-day development?*

5835 Some of the key impacts I already shared with you last time. In my current job, it is not very
5836 clear. But in terms of development work in general, people have been doing it for 30-40
5837 years, using a lot of knowledge from the outside, it is very "Western", so people are used to
5838 it and don't retort like they did in the past, so I think translation and terminology no longer
5839 bring in problems as barriers. Except for a few cases at the very high level and in some very
5840 new specialised fields in Vietnam, for example, let's look again at the areas of mental health
5841 and wellbeing. Although it is no longer new topics for most people, it is still quite new in
5842 terms of expertise. About 4 months ago, the profession of "psychological counselling" was
5843 recognised as a profession in Vietnam when it officially had a "career code". So you see, in
5844 the past, there was no such profession, but only the profession of "psychologists", and these
5845 doctors had to work in a hospital and not necessarily in a clinic - if a doctor opens a clinic,
5846 it must be clinical services and not psychological counselling services. And when it has
5847 become such a profession, the language used with it must be correct, because it will be
5848 related to therapy and counselling for patients or for clients, those who need to use
5849 psychological counselling services, so they are clients and the service will operate as a
5850 business before the law.

5851 But in the development industry, the current trend as I see it, the problem of translation and
5852 terminology no longer have a major impact because we are used to the ways such problems
5853 are handled, such as explaining in a “nôm na” way the difficult concepts, or putting original
5854 terms in parentheses after the translation as a reference point in reports or when we develop
5855 documents. Back in the day, {redacted} as an organisation doing both diplomacy and
5856 development, they had huge resources and was very careful with the language and
5857 documents they sent out. They had good policies to improve the capacity of employees in
5858 many different positions, including translators and interpreters. They also allocated a budget
5859 to make glossaries and lexicons for different portfolios. In the past when I worked there, in
5860 terms of development work in general, there were be many specific areas like climate
5861 change, environment, economic development, healthcare, support for people with
5862 disabilities, higher education... in all these areas there were glossaries of commonly seen
5863 vocabulary as very good reference base for in-house translators. And in the process of
5864 working, these translators were enriching these glossaries, however these were mainly
5865 shared and used internally. At that time, when we signed an MOU with {a Vietnamese
5866 ministry}, the {redacted} required both sides to sign all documents in English and
5867 Vietnamese. At that time, at my side, usually the only signed documents were the English,
5868 and those English versions would be translated into Vietnamese then notarised for the
5869 Vietnamese side to sign. But at that time, because of such a requirement, at the working level
5870 we had to sit down with our colleagues at the Ministry to discuss word-by-word. After both
5871 agreed on the wordings, we sent it to {redacted}, the translation division at {redacted} to
5872 certify the translation. Another problem occurred, because you know, nothing was absolute.
5873 As you probably know, they hired a famous Việt kiều translator to certify the translation.
5874 That person was probably from the generation that immigrated to the {name of a Western
5875 country} long ago, so they used unfamiliar wordings, and when the translated text came back
5876 to us, there was an opinion that it was impossible to accept such a translation because
5877 nowadays, in Vietnam, no one uses such an old language anymore. In the end, my agency in
5878 Vietnam had to agree to trust its local employees. But in short, it caused a lot of disturbance
5879 at work.

5880 So going to the use of lexicons as a tool, I think if it is built, it should be at a moderate level
5881 to be used for reference purposes and should only list out the most common ones. But in
5882 terms of language and high-level issues such as who will verify to take the final
5883 responsibility, there are many tricky things like in the story I just told.

5884 *What would be some other problem-solving options you could think of?*

5885 I think if a development organisation can develop a language policy, train employees or build
5886 translation-assisting tools such as lexicons for internal use, it will be great. But now the
5887 general trend is “xã hội hóa”, and I even think that development also needs to be “xã hội
5888 hóa” in the direction that not only NGOs would do development work but sustainable
5889 development should be inclusive of the common will everyone’s doings. So those tools
5890 should be made available as a reference point for everyone and beyond the scope of internal
5891 use. We can hope in the future that English becomes the second language of Vietnam, and
5892 if so, starting to build these tools and making them available to everyone, it will be very
5893 good for future use of the language.

5894 *I think you just arrived at our next topic for discussion. Now I want to share with you 2*
5895 *examples of “học hợp tác”, shared learning in translation and development. The first is an*
5896 *initiative of the Saigon Community of Interpreters and Translators (SGCI&T) under the Ho*
5897 *Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation Foundation (HPDF) from which*

5898 *learning activities such as seminars and workshops on importance of translation for the*
5899 *comprehensive development and integration of Vietnam or “translation in the 4.0 era” were*
5900 *held. The other example is the contest organised by ADF in collaboration with the Youth*
5901 *Union for young people to participate in translating the concept and term “resilience” using*
5902 *language and means of visuals. These are examples that are quite consistent with the*
5903 *understanding of shared learning, that is, different parties join and share their knowledge*
5904 *on certain topics about translation. What do you think about the importance of shared*
5905 *learning in seeing translation problems in development?*

5906 Shared learning is actually a new approach for me, but I find it very interesting and I think
5907 that not only in the translation profession but also in any fields, we all have something to
5908 learn and share with each other. In development, there will be terms that I understand a lot
5909 more than translators. Translators can translate in many fields and have language sensitivity
5910 because of their expertise. If I spend many hours working and researching on a certain
5911 subject matter, then I become an expert in that field. I have spent a lot of time doing
5912 development work, social work, sustainable development, I am an expert in these fields, so
5913 the concepts, knowledge, the operation of the language, the understanding and expressions...
5914 in this subject area, to some extent, I will be better than translators. In order for translators
5915 to cooperate with us on a specific work item, obviously we have to share our knowledge
5916 with them. There will be many different ways and forms. The example of the HPDF seminar
5917 you mentioned seemed like a professional seminar on the translation profession, but broadly
5918 speaking, for example, if one side organises a professional seminar in another field, then our
5919 side will ask our translators to attend to listen to the professional discussion in that field or
5920 work category. At my organisation, there are project introduction conferences or
5921 consultation workshops, although only Vietnamese people attended and no translators
5922 needed, we still invite translators to attend so that they can understand. In addition, for
5923 document translation that needs to be outsourced to external translators, we will send all
5924 information about the project and field of activities to them. It is also a way for professional
5925 translators to learn about the areas in which they will work.

5926 Having training sessions on Communication and Development is a very common topic in
5927 development work in Vietnam. But there is also new content, for example when we organise
5928 many training sessions on children's rights, an independent monitoring mechanism for
5929 children for example, this is not new overseas but it is still new in Vietnam, so when we
5930 organise the training, we will invite a foreign expert and a Vietnamese expert to co-train. If
5931 it is necessary to have a translator, we usually send in advance the reference documents on
5932 the topic for them to read, or they will be invited to attend a training course before they
5933 translate at future training courses. In addition, I think if an organisation already has lexicons,
5934 it should be shared with outsourced translators and interpreters. In short, for me, shared
5935 learning is a very good approach. The two sides will complement each other a lot. Because
5936 I see myself that many development professionals have the ability to translate, and they still
5937 have to translate every day, but there are also cases where translators are required.

5938 *Now let's move on to the final topic. Any other topics about translation in development work*
5939 *you feel we should talk about?*

5940 In general, in development work, it is necessary to have some cross-cutting elements such
5941 as flexibility and adaptability, collaboration and learning. Particularly in terms of translation
5942 or language use in development, it is of importance to recognise these values. But there is a
5943 trend that I want to talk about here, a problem that I also encounter, that is, the terms in the
5944 development sector mainly came out first in the West, then were introduced to other contexts

5945 including Vietnam. So those who worked in development previously may have come into
5946 contact with the original terms in English, and of course they did their research and had their
5947 own equivalents in Vietnamese to work with the parties, but because of the habit of using
5948 two languages at the same time, many would mix English and Vietnamese when they
5949 worked. As you see the cases of the online community in Vietnam criticising people on TV
5950 who added English to their Vietnamese narration, so a part of the society do not accept this.
5951 In development work, local stakeholders and those of the previous generations may find this
5952 a problem and annoyance, and it may lead to reduced communication efficiency. However,
5953 there are situations when development workers find that there is no uniform translation for
5954 terms, and sometimes they are “stuck” with language, so in some contexts among colleagues,
5955 they sometimes have to use the original English terms, leading to the inclusion of both
5956 Vietnamese and English in their communication. I'm not talking about abusing English,
5957 because that is already a problem. What I mean here is whether people should have a
5958 tolerance from society, because that can be a weakness but it can also because other
5959 development workers are also using that term to communicate with other people, so we really
5960 don't know how to translate and sometimes there is no other way? But myself, at most when
5961 I talk to you or my colleagues, I make this mistake, but when I talk to the rest of them like
5962 family members or when working with local partners, I try my best to 100% not make that
5963 mistake. But I share other people's discomfort. So I think the bottom line of the problem is
5964 that it is best to try to have Vietnamese equivalents for English terms, and if that level has
5965 not been achieved, a “nôm na” way of explanation for others to understand is still a good
5966 way.

5967 *Thank you!*

5968 **Interview with Participant 2 (P2-Ph2)**

5969 *Now let's go to the first topic.*

5970 *Would you mind me answering the first two questions in combination?*

5971 *OK. So can you tell me how translation and terminology issues in development practice*
5972 *should be dealt with among stakeholders?*

5973 In fact, there must be a consensus on how to translate development terms, so it is necessary
5974 to have an authority or a forum for all stakeholders to discuss and contribute to these issues
5975 then thereby finding solutions. out solution. However, in reality, apart from issues with
5976 translation, there are many other contradictions, such as each stakeholder may want to have
5977 its own trademark when they propose their own way of translating a term. Party A can come
5978 up with a translation and want other parties to follow, and so can Party B. So ideally, there
5979 should be a guideline or glossary that applies to the entire sector. But language cannot stand
5980 still, it constantly changes. So if some tools can be built, they also have to be updated all the
5981 time and this is difficult because of resource constraints. In addition, each stakeholder's
5982 translation will depend on their interpretation and understanding, so with an item it will take
5983 a long time to unify. And no organisation alone has enough reputation to say that my
5984 translation is correct and force others to follow. Not to mention it may relate to the
5985 organisation's reputation or branding. So this solution is not very feasible.

5986 *With the constraints and issues like these, maybe we first talk about the real-world impacts*
5987 *of translation-related issues on the day-to-day development work. Do you have any stories*
5988 *to tell me?*

5989 Each organisation's understanding of a concept in development is reflected in their
5990 translation of the term to express that concept, then their approach to development work is
5991 also reflected in the understanding. So different perspectives of different organisations
5992 determine their own approach. For example about "empowerment", if an organisation
5993 translates as “tăng quyền”, they want women to have more “quyền”, more than before or
5994 more than that of someone. And if it is “tạo quyền”, it is understood that those people do not
5995 have “quyền” and we must create “quyền” for them. “Trao quyền” conjures up the image of
5996 some authority from somewhere else coming and giving away something to someone. Just
5997 based on these three translations alone, I can see that these three approaches are very diverse.
5998 It's not the way I translate that determines what I'm going to do, but the way I understand it
5999 and my approach that determines how I translate the term.

6000 There is an example of disagreement between the stakeholders in understanding, translations
6001 their approach of doing development, about "monitor", that is, “giám sát”. The local level is
6002 very sensitive to this word [*Laughter*]. Monitor, “giám sát”, and audit, “kiểm toán”, or social
6003 audit, “kiểm toán xã hội”, have been the tools introduced by the World Bank in Vietnam.
6004 They belong to the group of social accountability tools to be integrated with the citizen report
6005 card, “thẻ điểm cân bằng công dân”, etc. As for the terms in monitoring and social audit, the
6006 government doesn't like these and so it doesn't want organisations to carry out those
6007 activities [*Laughter*], because in their thinking, the audit here is about the numbers, money,
6008 finance... because it's “kiểm toán”, a very sensitive thing. But social audit is not necessarily
6009 like that. Therefore, it is necessary to find other softened translations, or use euphemisms or
6010 indirect speech so that the sensitiveness can be reduced, avoid or steered in another direction.
6011 “Kiểm toán xã hội” sounds so stressful...

6012 *What is really the indirect speech?*

6013 “Social accountability” commonly translates as “trách nhiệm giải trình xã hội”. The
6014 application of social accountability tools is already under a lot of stress, and in those tools
6015 there is even a toolkit for “kiểm toán”. So the government officials don't want to apply these.
6016 So "social accountability" must be translated as “giám sát xã hội”, which is a term borrowed
6017 from the Fatherland Front because “giám sát xã hội” has been their mandate. So this local
6018 term is already available, even in documents of laws. So we're borrowing it to translate
6019 "social accountability".

6020 "Social audit" is still kept as “kiểm soát xã hội”, but it must be accompanied by a clear
6021 explanation. I remember that day when I went with a consultant, the consultant explained
6022 that "audit" was “kiểm toán” of finance, data, money... but "social audit" is not like that, for
6023 example there is a construction project, and the local folks work together to supervise and
6024 check the quality of that construction work, they discuss with other stakeholders to agree on
6025 strengthening and improving the quality of that work. It is like that, it is not just related to
6026 money, but the general idea is that everyone participates and jointly supervises the
6027 construction work or a project in their locality that is invested from social capital. So it must
6028 be explained so clearly but also must be noted that the purpose here is not to “dig up the dirt”
6029 [*Laughter*] but to enable that everyone has their voice to participate and make the public
6030 work better, more meaningful and practical and pragmatic. In other words, it is the state and
6031 the people working together.

6032 *Was that a foreign consultant or a domestic consultant?*

6033 Domestic consulting. I think the WB and other institutions when they introduce these tools,
6034 they all have problems with terminology like this. In 2014, my organisation held a
6035 conference on “giám sát xã hội” at the national level. The issue of translating that term was
6036 widely discussed by many, because after that {name of organisation} chose to translate it as
6037 “giám sát xã hội” and explain how that was used for “social audit”. I think people have a lot
6038 of trouble translating those terms, and the WB brought in a whole horizon of new language.

6039 *Do you think this agenda will be more effectively communicated to local stakeholders by*
6040 *foreign or domestic consultants?*

6041 By domestic consultants more reasonably. Foreign consultants will need an extra step of
6042 translation, and foreign consultants who speak Vietnamese will also be less sensitive. In fact,
6043 the organisation also considers the use of language depends on which stakeholders we work
6044 with.

6045 *So do you think deciding on the language of work is also a solution to translation and*
6046 *terminology problems?*

6047 Actually, I think the most possible solution is probably a space for collaboration, like
6048 creating a forum to discuss issues that are not purely academic, but a common issue, in which
6049 academia will be an angle to look at a certain issue. Usually the most encountered problems
6050 would be raised for discussion and agreement.

6051 *Ah so you have actually touched on our next topic of this time, “shared learning”. Have you*
6052 *joined any kind of forum like that?*

6053 Discussions of development issues, yes, but of translation issues then no. In Hanoi, there are
6054 NGO working groups to discuss specific topics that our organisation’s work is involved.
6055 These working groups are organised by the NGOCENTER, and they include on livelihoods,
6056 corporate engagement, climate change, gender, etc. I don't know how it is in other localities,
6057 but in Hanoi, NGOs commonly meet with each other through such working groups. They
6058 meet in person quarterly or monthly, and the NGOs rotate or can sign up to host the
6059 discussions.

6060 *In those working groups, do people ever raise issues of translation, language or terminology*
6061 *in development?*

6062 Not much. Actually, I haven’t attended an event where translation as a topic is raised from
6063 the beginning for everyone to discuss, but normally it’s raised in the middle of some other
6064 discussions where people see translations that are different, unfamiliar or problematic, so
6065 they’ll ask and it becomes a discussion. But the topic of translation has never been included
6066 in the agenda in the first place.

6067 *Yes, here shared learning also relates to the collaboration between development*
6068 *professionals and translation professionals to learn together...*

6069 My organisation’s work involves a lot of translation from English into Vietnamese and from
6070 Vietnamese into English, and we also have to outsource to a company. But this service
6071 provider is not really specialised in translation in development, so very often I have to edit
6072 their translations and terminology. I mean, currently, there is not a team of translators
6073 specialising in development, so there is no one with enough expertise to advise on translation
6074 and usage of terms. Or maybe there has been one but I don't know about, it's generally

6075 difficult to access. Usually professional translators have a background and training in the
6076 language but do not specialise in development, or if they have development knowledge, it is
6077 also accumulated through practice. As for advice on using terminology and why, I think the
6078 development practitioners still have better capacity for this.

6079 *How do you see these two groups learning from each other?*

6080 I think these two groups can learn from each other. For example, my organisation really
6081 needs those professionally trained in language who understand word usage and meanings in
6082 Vietnamese to advise so that we don't use the language wrongly. For example, when
6083 translating from English into Vietnamese, it is very important to have people who are
6084 knowledgeable about Vietnamese language to understand different layers of meaning and
6085 how to avoid misunderstanding. Often those who translate in development work can find a
6086 word that seems appropriate in Vietnamese to translate a term in English, but they will not
6087 have knowledge of dictionary meaning, for example, or they are not able to find more
6088 suitable words. Because at present the translation and word usage are constrained by
6089 sensitiveness, such as gender sensitivity, so there are terms that can have certain impact when
6090 the male or female audience might have different interpretations and reactions. So it is
6091 necessary to look at the translated term through many different lenses to be able to know.

6092 *Can you think of any other options for problem solving?*

6093 I think it takes people like you to raise the issues, that is, to systematise the issues and provide
6094 evidence that translation and terminology is a problem right now, then people will care about
6095 it to find a solution, otherwise it just goes on like this. There should be documented evidence
6096 that terms commonly used in development have different interpretations and translations,
6097 etc., and that these terms are being used in different meanings by influential parties, or that
6098 there is a need to showcase the terms that often have significant implications. I mean that it
6099 takes some authority to put out such messages in order to make an impact or change. If not,
6100 the development workers still do it their way, the translators still translate and no one points
6101 out the problems they are having. If you have such a set of terms and research findings, it
6102 would make more sense to have them published by an institution like a university because
6103 such published works from a university may evoke a lot of cooperation between different
6104 parties. If a development organisation joins a research institute or university to fund a study
6105 like that, and maybe publish the findings every year and then open up discussions and
6106 seminars, or maybe have the set of terms online as an online document, those will be very
6107 good solutions. And I think those documents will also be valuable as materials for trainers
6108 on development to disseminate to students.

6109 *I am trying to find a good direction for that with my study...*

6110 Back to the problem that it is very difficult for the parties to agree on a translation. Well, I
6111 think first there must be some sort of suggested reference, that is, if we have these ways to
6112 understand and translate these terms, which translation would be recommended, or how
6113 certain translations might have different implications. If these can be documented, published
6114 online and regularly updated, people will be aware of a very good resource becoming
6115 available for those who need to translate in development work, then they have options of
6116 terms to choose from. That is, it is not mandatory for a certain term to be translated in this
6117 or that way, but at least the living document can show that for these terms there are such
6118 translations, and this or that translation has its strengths and weaknesses... so that everyone

6119 can choose. Or they can also feedback that these translations are not good, these terms need
6120 to be translated like this [*Laughter*], then gradually this toolkit will be enriched.

6121 *Thanks for the great suggestions. At the end of the research, my plan is to share the research*
6122 *findings with interested parties, perhaps through a small workshop, and possibly based on*
6123 *your suggestion, I will collect everyone's opinions on such a toolkit. Are you willing to*
6124 *participate in that sharing session?*

6125 Yes, and I will also recommend everyone to participate, like those in charge of
6126 communication in my organisation, those who often write and develop the content for
6127 facebook and other channels... they will be very interested.

6128 *Next question. Since our last interview, do you want to expand on any particular terminology*
6129 *you have found persistently problematic in your work?*

6130 In general there are still problematic terms... Let me read you a something written by
6131 {redacted}: "Đáp ứng giới (tiếng Anh là gender responsive) nghĩa là đáp ứng lại, phản ứng
6132 lại, phản hồi lại, hành động đáp lại, đôi khi nó được dịch là "trách nhiệm giới". Có thể hiểu
6133 gần như thế nhưng chưa đủ. Trách nhiệm nghĩa là đang nói về ý chí, về định theo phạm trù
6134 đạo đức nhiều hơn. Đáp ứng thì mang nghĩa hành động và hành động ở đây là để phản hồi
6135 lại, và mục tiêu là có kết quả thay đổi". So their recommended translation for "gender
6136 responsive" is "đáp ứng giới". And this is not their tool for handling terminology, but a
6137 preamble to a piece of content and they are explaining why they choose to translate such a
6138 term that way. I mean the concern about terminology translation in development is real and
6139 complex. In general, the stakeholders are still very concerned about language, touching any
6140 term is worrying about that term [*Laughter*].

6141 *Can you expand a bit more on the direct and actual impact of translation and terminology*
6142 *on your day-to-day work?*

6143 One thing I see is that in the development sector, the translations of English terms into
6144 Vietnamese are mainly Sino-Vietnamese, which sound very unfamiliar, so ordinary people
6145 do not understand. So it usually takes an extra step of explanation. As a result, sometimes
6146 explaining terms entails extra and lengthy explanations. So it gives people the feeling that
6147 the language used by development workers is an elite language and is a bit distant from the
6148 common people. There is no universality in it, so it is very is confusing and feels a bit distant.
6149 Now that I go to the locality to work on development, I say, "Our project works on "trách
6150 nhiệm giới", "đáp ứng giới" and "tạo quyền cho phụ nữ"", and whatever, it really sounds
6151 distant. And when people hear such big jargons, they don't understand [*Laughter*]. That way
6152 the world of development workers distances itself from them and makes itself "elite" like
6153 this, and the community like this... it distances itself from the people we want to support. I
6154 think it's a real impact.

6155 *How can explanation be effective then?*

6156 It has to be friendly. "Phát triển sinh kế" [livelihood development] means helping the locals
6157 increase their income and reduce poverty. In general, it has to be "nôm na" but "nôm na" is
6158 not necessarily accurate, but only then will people find the knowledge easy to approach. If
6159 you pull out a bunch of words that are translated very accurately, people will be dizzy and
6160 not understand anything.

6161 *Can you expand on this with more examples?*

6162 Livelihood, “phát triển sinh kế”. Sometimes people ask me what I do, if I say “phát triển
6163 sinh kế”, no one will understand what that means. So it has to be explained “nôm na” as,
6164 “the crops we should grow and the animals we should raise” [Laughter]. Now that's not true
6165 anymore, is it? But it's easy to understand. That is, what people should do, what crops should
6166 they grow and what animals should they raise to make money to support their family
6167 [Laughter].

6168 In the SDGs there will also be many. “Wellbeing” is hard to translate. Gender equality, “bình
6169 đẳng giới”, are they still debating on this? It lies in the word “bình đẳng”, so everyone
6170 understands it as fair, that is, how men are, so are women. But it's not like that, there are
6171 many different interpretations of that term. If you go to work, you must be specific. "Decent
6172 work" is also difficult to translate. I don't understand why I keep understanding "decent" in
6173 relation to “phẩm giá” [dignity]. Do I understand correctly?

6174 *Also an angle to look at them.*

6175 An angle indeed. It is work to make money, but how work should be to ensure that the dignity
6176 of the employee is maintained, not exploited or abused, for example, I think about this more.
6177 It is a work of quality, not a work that is simply labour-intensive, but there is an implication
6178 of quality in it. There are projects about decent work, such as in tourism, where it shouldn't
6179 be the woman who does all the hard work but the focus is to increase the role of ownership,
6180 leadership and doing business ... of women.

6181 And I also feel that "sustainable" is also a vague word.

6182 *So when you go to work, how do you describe “sustainability”?*

6183 In terms of sustainability, any party can understand it as “lâu dài” [long term], permanent,
6184 forever, continuing to extend. But for me, I will pay more attention to the factor of
6185 maintenance, including the factors of resources, environment and culture. I still have to put
6186 it “nôm na” like that. For example, if I work in community-based tourism, I will explain to
6187 the stakeholders that tourism can preserve culture, the environment, and even people have
6188 to stay there and not go away. You can't go, right? Then, when it comes to planning,
6189 "sustainability" is also very important. So it must be explained that if you want to achieve
6190 sustainability, you take into accounts the mentioned factors.

6191 “Strong institutions”, UN translates to “thể chế mạnh mẽ”. Strong in what sense? Physical
6192 force? [Laughter]. “Partnerships for the goals”, does this partnership exclude anyone? These
6193 translations are problematic because they suggest implications in the questions I've just
6194 asked [Laughter].

6195 Unknowingly all of us in development work are using that “nôm na” way of explaining
6196 without realising it is a necessary tool or practice in communication. I think everyone realises
6197 that those are jargons and very difficult to reach for everyone. So “nôm na hóa” has become
6198 a very common practice but not recognised really. If you don't apply this practice in the field,
6199 it's almost impossible to get the job done.

6200 Sometimes at my office, the director asks everyone how certain term should be translated,
6201 and then we all have to sit down to agree that when going to work, we must explain in the
6202 “nôm na” way, but it has to be the same “nôm na” way so that everyone can understand,

6203 and avoid different explanations brought in by different colleagues. This activity can be seen
6204 as weekly internal training in my organisation, in a rather formal fashion. In my opinion,
6205 first of all, when there are no inter-organisational solutions, each organisation should agree
6206 internally on how to explain “nôm na” the keywords of development practice such as
6207 "approach", “participatory”, “asset-based approach”, “community-based”, and other big
6208 buzzwords.

6209 *In your opinion, which terms in development should not be translated into Vietnamese?*

6210 I think all the terms in English, when being used at work in Vietnam, will be translated. The
6211 important thing is whether the translations are accepted and what impacts they might have.
6212 How is “Resilience” translated into Vietnamese?

6213 *Currently, there are a few translations: “khả năng ứng phó”, “khả năng chống chịu”, “khả*
6214 *năng phục hồi”, “sự bền bỉ”...*

6215 What I mean here is that there will be different translations like you just said. These
6216 translations may not be good, accurate or have a meaning far different from the original, but
6217 that does not mean that it should not be translated. It’s just that we have not yet found a
6218 suitable translation solution of translation. But there is no word that should not be translated.
6219 A word can be translated in a certain way and the original can still be enclosed in parentheses.
6220 And in case we can't find a way to translate, we can still use a “nôm na” explanation to
6221 achieve the purpose of communicating the information in certain contexts.

6222 *Any other problematic terms in your daily work?*

6223 Now I think of the terms related to "gender". “Gender sensitive”, “nhạy cảm giới”, most
6224 have agreed on such a translation, but I'm not sure if there is any implication or not. “Gender
6225 responsive” is still controversial and I am not sure on how to translate it, but {name of
6226 organisation} translates it as “đáp ứng giới” while others translate it as “trách nhiệm giới”.
6227 And “gender transformative” hasn't really got a translation. These are three different levels
6228 of mainstreaming “gender” in a development project. But it is clear that the above
6229 translations have not shown an increase or decrease in levels.

6230 But I think language contains a subjectivity, that is, each person has a different way of
6231 understanding and using. But when I bring terms to the local community, I must pay attention
6232 to sensitiveness when using terms. There must be regular feedback from those who are in
6233 contact with these terms. That is, the communicator must be more attentive and more
6234 reflexive.

6235 *If you were to propose a policy on translation and language use for your organisation, what*
6236 *would you propose?*

6237 I suggest that the organisation should have surveys to pilot our own translations of some
6238 terms with different stakeholders, then we can document the feedback before finalising on
6239 the most suitable translations. For example, I can survey and document the understandings
6240 of people, local authorities and other stakeholders to know which terms should be used and
6241 to avoid. Of course, I can't do it with every term, but I can do it with some key and commonly
6242 used terms. For example, we can provide different translations for "gender responsive" and
6243 see how people understand the meaning and tell us and which translations they find easiest
6244 to understand. Then score the translations. I think that’s one thing. Next, what has been

6245 documented about the different understandings and translations of key terms being used in
6246 the practice of the organisation will be used for communication activities. It should be kept
6247 accessible to all staff, for those who write documents or project concepts and proposals. It
6248 also will be helpful to field staff. The documented content can be systematically rearranged
6249 as guidelines, then training material for new staff. There are colleagues who come from other
6250 organisations to my organisation to work [*Laughter*], then should be aware of our
6251 organisation's policy on language use and translation. Or even if the organisation outsources
6252 translation, we should also share these materials as a reference base for them to know our
6253 preferred use of translated terminology so they can use in a consistent way, otherwise, I will
6254 have to spend time editing their translation. Besides, if this living document is updated
6255 regularly every year, then I can observe the trending knowledge or which understanding and
6256 translations are preferred and used frequently in a certain period of time. This way, if we
6257 look back after a while, we can see the shift of the development sector in Vietnam. The use
6258 of terminology in each period is the clearest evidence of the work, and thereby shows the
6259 trends of the development sector.

6260 *Who would be the ideal person to conduct the training?*

6261 Probably the HR department or the communications department. Alternatively, if resources
6262 are available, the organisation can invite qualified experts to provide general training for the
6263 entire organisation in language and translation. My organisation has this resource, but I don't
6264 know if others do. But almost every organisation has resources for capacity building.

6265 But generally, the guidelines tool above should be maintained as a living document and
6266 constantly updated.

6267 *One last question. Do you have any other topics on "problem solving" and "shared*
6268 *learning" you want to discuss?*

6269 Regarding shared learning, I gave the example of the working groups organised by the
6270 NGOCENTER. But this is the age of technology, I think technology should be used, then
6271 forums like facebook groups or Zoom meetings will make this discussion easier. Also it is
6272 easier to facilitate this form of organising the discussion for development professionals and
6273 translation professionals to participate. For example, if there are conditions for the two to
6274 exchange, such as to discuss case-by-case the translation for problematic terms, the
6275 development professionals can explain "nôm na" their understanding of the terms to the
6276 translation professionals, and then the translators will make some recommendations from
6277 the language perspectives. On the contrary, I think professional translators only value shared
6278 learning on the topic of "translation and development" if they are very interested in
6279 development or specialise in translating in development work. But if they are translators in
6280 general and linguists in general, they don't care much, because they have too many job
6281 options, so it is difficult for them to have a note or sensitiveness about the development
6282 industry.

6283 I think we should also include another group in this shared learning in translation and
6284 development, that are the academics from the institutions who are teaching development or
6285 compiling and translating teaching materials about development. That way, a consensus on
6286 how development terms should be translated can be achieved among those who translate,
6287 those who use terminology in a community working context and those who write
6288 development textbooks for students.

6289 Interview with Participant 5 (P5-Ph2)

6290 *How would you think translation issues in development work should be dealt with among*
6291 *stakeholders?*

6292 I think it's very difficult to find the right solution to the problems of translation in
6293 development work, but there are some options that may be helpful. First, development
6294 organisations and donors should refrain from creating too many new terms [*Laughter*]. For
6295 example, last time I shared with you the example of "sustainability" which was related to
6296 the SDG about "sustainable consumption and production". The European Union has invested
6297 a lot of money in the programmes called {redacted} and {redacted}, which are basically to
6298 promote sustainable consumption and production in these two continents, but still the work
6299 is actually about various fields such as sustainable consumption and production in tourism
6300 or sustainable consumption and production in agriculture for example. I don't see a big
6301 difference between sustainable consumption and production this time and previous projects
6302 that focused on sustainable development. There is absolutely no difference, but the goal is
6303 still to achieve sustainability in this industry. But when working with local stakeholders, they
6304 don't understand. Last time I did a study on sustainable consumption and production to find
6305 out how local stakeholders understood and perceived these concepts. Many told that they
6306 had never heard of sustainable consumption and production and did not understand what it
6307 meant [*Laughter*]. I asked, how sustainable tourism or sustainability should be understood,
6308 each person had a different understanding. For example, most of the stakeholders in the
6309 public and private sectors thought that they understood "sustainable" here as economically
6310 sustainable, that is, how to continue to do economic development and have economic growth
6311 in the long run in general. That was their understanding, but they did not go deeper, such as
6312 how to make that economic development long-term... and did not mention the requirements
6313 to consider the environment or other social or cultural problems. In general, they did not
6314 think about and had that connection. They generally understood that sustainable
6315 development was economic development, achieving long-term economic goals, how to get
6316 rich, richer and rich forever... and so on, rather than relating to environmental and social
6317 factors as in the original concept of development organisations. Then I see clearly there is a
6318 difference in the way stakeholders understood sustainable development or sustainable
6319 growth, they didn't see that these definitions were different.

6320 *Then how did this directly and indirectly impact your work?*

6321 This certainly made it difficult to implement. It is difficult to actually draw the line or
6322 confirm if this is due to a different understanding of the concept or other factors. For example
6323 all developing countries have governance problems such as corruption and other problems.
6324 So it is difficult to tell if the consequences are due to bad governance or a misunderstanding
6325 of the concept. Si it is obvious that both parties have signed a cooperation agreement, that is
6326 before implementing the project, there is an MOU signed by the both parties to concretise
6327 the project with activities a, b or c... but when the work starts, the project team proposes
6328 these activities, and the government stakeholders want another activity, for example. Often
6329 the activities desired by the state are completely unrelated, or at least in the sense of the
6330 project, irrelevant. The project thinks that the activities proposed by the state stakeholders
6331 are not relevant, while the state thinks that the activities proposed by the project are also not
6332 relevant! So I think all these factors contribute to this problem. But sometimes the state are
6333 double-dipping, that is, they have to do these things in their own plan and they get the budget
6334 from the central government to do those things, but they still want to be funded by the project
6335 to do them so that they may not have to use that state budget, for example. Maybe it's just

6336 speculation, but obviously when I talk to them, I see that they don't understand the goals of
6337 the project like I do, meaning the two sides don't share the same understanding. As when
6338 talking about sustainable consumption and production, most people think it is related to the
6339 environment rather than about society, for example. State stakeholders propose these
6340 activities to reduce plastic waste or make the city green, clean, and beautiful... without
6341 thinking of other social goals. In general, it is difficult to reconcile the factors. This is not to
6342 mention the fact that the same public stakeholders are working on many different projects at
6343 the same time, and in each project, different terms are used and circulated. Projects about
6344 employment have different terms than projects about tourism... Sometimes I feel it's very
6345 difficult for the state to "bring them all together". We often say that the role of the state
6346 should be stronger in bringing all parties to work together and serve their goals, but each
6347 development partner works in a different small area, and then sometimes someone steps on
6348 the other's feet without knowing it. There are things that Party A has done, but Party B
6349 continues to do the same. Maybe that the state stakeholders is incompetent is one thing, but
6350 the other reason is that they don't understand exactly what Party A wants to do and what
6351 Party B wants to do because each party write their projet concepts differently and use all
6352 different terminology. This also matches the knowledge in the area I am studying, that is,
6353 confirmation bias, which means that everyone has biases, so when receiving new
6354 information, sometimes it's just to confirm what they already know. Many times a
6355 stakeholder says, "I know this, I've heard it here and there..."

6356 *How can we actually handle this problem?*

6357 I also thought about this and talked to my colleagues, they joked that maybe we should
6358 "invent a new language all together" [*Laughter*]. But usually a development project has a
6359 short timeframe and big goals, because a lot of the figures were not big, they'd not get
6360 money, right? So everyone sets very ambitious indicators. I think in the early stages of the
6361 project, given the time, I'd make an opportunity where all stakeholders can co-construct or
6362 co-define the goals, concepts and terms used for the whole project life. From this, maybe the
6363 development sector shares the way they understand those, and the private or public sectors
6364 share the way they understand, and everyone develops a common understanding, at least
6365 within the timeframe or scope of the project. Many times a development project comes in
6366 and says, ok this is a project about sustainable consumption and production. Sometimes some
6367 organisations have already provided their own definitions, but there are many smaller
6368 organisations or projects where everyone assumes that they have already understood what
6369 those terms mean, for example. Or there maybe have been a stage 1, then stage 2, stage 3...
6370 they continue to assume that their stakeholders understand terminology, instead of being
6371 able to reflect and try to consider the problems of the previous stages. Often, most MOUs
6372 are drafted by development organisations rather than by local stakeholders, and then
6373 translated into the local language and passed on to the local stakeholders. I have observed
6374 and felt that sometimes the local stakeholders don't read these documents carefully but still
6375 sign them because they'll get the money, having a project is having money. So the
6376 negotiation process, if any, is also very lightweight. So I think there should be activities such
6377 as conferences or consultation workshops before the parties sign so that everyone agrees on
6378 the understanding, language and content of the MOUs.

6379 It is also helpful for organisations and projects to develop handbooks or glossaries if they
6380 have the resources, but this is not easy. For example, "sustainability" and even "sustainable
6381 consumption and production" are too broad in scope, but the actual scope of activities for a
6382 particular project will be much narrower. So there will be cases where a project on
6383 sustainable consumption and production only prioritises the work on environmental issues,

6384 but that doesn't mean that those terms are only about the environment. So if we build a tool
6385 that is a manual or a glossary of terms, the entries must be very specific, and must be
6386 explained very specifically in the form of such as, "generally this term means something like
6387 this, but in the project it focuses on this and that aspect...", then it will be helpful. However,
6388 I still wonder that, explaining is one thing, but there is still a "gap of education". That is,
6389 with a much lower education background, do such explanations really make sense for local
6390 stakeholders?

6391 Or about "gender equality" for example, I have interviewed female leaders and there are also
6392 many who think that this does not exist. But I think not only in developing countries but
6393 even in countries where the concept and terminology of gender equality were created, not
6394 everyone can understand them that way. So I'm still leaning towards the solution that people
6395 working on such agendas should have the flexibility and awareness about when they can use
6396 these terms and when they shouldn't. When talking to local stakeholders such as villagers,
6397 who are actually farmers, is it really a good idea to use such terms, or should we still try to
6398 explain it "nôm na", in simple terms and using an easy-to-understand language, not to
6399 mention very broad terms such as "sustainability".

6400 *In your opinion, are there any development terms that should not be translated into*
6401 *Vietnamese? Last time you mentioned SDG 12 and some other terms...*

6402 In my field, "sustainability" is used a lot, and in Vietnam it translates as "phát triển bền
6403 vững", but in the tourism industry, there are 2 ways to understand it, respectively
6404 "sustainable tourism" and "green tourism" and these are used interchangeably. But obviously
6405 academically, the distinction is very clear, "green tourism" belongs to ecotourism, while
6406 "sustainable" tourism is broader. I'm not sure if we should not translate terminology in the
6407 development sector into Vietnamese, or keep the English originals and then provide the
6408 explanation in Vietnamese. I observe a weakness, that is, if it is a root word is not easy to
6409 "pronounce", i.e. the local stakeholders cannot use it because they do not speak English or
6410 do not feel comfortable pronouncing the word in English, is there a negative effect, that is,
6411 will they really adopt the concept or not? When they can't name it, they can't embrace
6412 that knowledge. So I think naming is very important. If they can name it and pronounce it,
6413 then the concept, even though it is essentially a foreign concept, will be recognised and
6414 supported by them. If we keep the original "sustainability" and add in 4-5 lines of
6415 explanation, then when the stakeholders discuss, they can't read the whole 4-5 lines again,
6416 but they must have a certain name to call it.

6417 In the field of conservation which also intersects with ecotourism, there are also projects that
6418 have similar problems with new concepts and terminology. "Landscape management" for
6419 example. Development organisations tend to try to come up with highly generalised terms
6420 to allow them the flexibility to justify and decide on the development activities they
6421 undertake, and not to have themselves confined to a specific area. I also agree with the view
6422 that even the name of our industry, "development", also shows a contradiction in nature, that
6423 is, whether development is a process or a product. It seems that development and its practices
6424 are more futuristic than current, so buzzwords and jargons in this industry allude to futurism
6425 and generalisation.

6426 Currently, in Vietnam, when we do development work, we all take the translation of UN
6427 Vietnam for the SDGs as a reference point. However, even the translation of the SDGs by
6428 UN Vietnam has different versions. In the short version, "wellbeing" in SDG 3 is translated
6429 as "cuộc sống tốt", but in the interpretation it is translated as "hạnh phúc". And some other

6430 SDGs, the language sounds very foreign and not pure Vietnamese. Obviously I understand
6431 these SDGs in English, I read the Vietnamese versions and they are not ear-please even
6432 though I have been exposed to them a lot. Language is always evolving and changing, new
6433 words are always created, for example on social networks in Vietnam there are always new
6434 vocabulary that I feel like its acceptance is much higher than the extent that I feel familiar
6435 and acceptable. The speed of listening, understanding and accepting that vocabulary is much
6436 faster. Going back to the language of the SDGs in Vietnam, I'm not sure if I would use the
6437 translation “tiêu thụ và sản xuất có trách nhiệm” for SDG 12 in a natural way [Laughter].

6438 Then I also talk to my friends about “resilience”. My friend was surprised to learn that in
6439 Vietnam there was no equivalent for “resilience”. I told them, that there are many words that
6440 mean something like that, but none of them are exactly the same. She said when she thought
6441 of Vietnam, she immediately thought of "resilience" because she thought about the war
6442 situations and the development today, the Vietnamese people and Vietnamese culture are
6443 very resilient. But in short, I think we still have to translate into the local language, and it's
6444 important that we must stop inventing new terms, buzzwords and jargons with the same
6445 meaning. I don't understand why these new terms are constantly being created. Native
6446 speakers in the development industry, if terms are mentioned, the possibility of being able
6447 to understand is still high and that makes sense, but in our language sometimes we have no
6448 such existing concept for example, because our ideologies are also completely different, so
6449 I think it is very difficult to achieve a perfect level of shared understanding of these terms.

6450 *I want to go over the next topic about shared learning, which I temporarily translate as “học*
6451 *hợp tác”, because the term itself does not have a widely accepted translation in Vietnam.*
6452 *But here I just want to share with you 2 examples of shared learning in translation and*
6453 *development. The first is an initiative of the Saigon Community of Interpreters and*
6454 *Translators (SGCI&T) under the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation*
6455 *Foundation (HPDF) from which learning activities such as seminars and workshops on*
6456 *importance of translation for the comprehensive development and integration of Vietnam or*
6457 *“translation in the 4.0 era” were held. The other example is the contest organised by ADF*
6458 *in collaboration with the Youth Union for young people to participate in translating the*
6459 *concept and term “resilience” using language and means of visuals. These are examples that*
6460 *are quite consistent with the understanding of shared learning, that is, different parties join*
6461 *and share their knowledge on certain topics about translation. What do you think about the*
6462 *importance of shared learning in seeing translation problems in development?*

6463 I haven't had a chance to join a community like this. As I mentioned last time, people still
6464 haven't really discussed the issue of language in development. Everyone knows that
6465 language is a barrier, but we rarely address it in the development sector, it can also be a real
6466 barrier. But I have joined some Facebook groups in Vietnam that discuss translation. There
6467 is a group called Reflective English which I think is good. Of course there are unrelated
6468 topics, but I also read to see how people translate, and there are Vietnamese words that I
6469 have never heard of [Laughter]. Someone asked "what is “trauma” translated into
6470 Vietnamese?", and there were many different answers such as “sang chấn tâm lý”. For me,
6471 “sang chấn” is a Sino-Vietnamese word and I don't fully understand the meaning of that
6472 word, so it's quite new to me.

6473 But in short, when I join these communities, I find myself able to learn many things, for
6474 example, the origin of words. Professionals will also explain to others the contexts of use,
6475 or even explain the meaning of specialised term in English, and with that definition in
6476 English, it should be translated into Vietnamese like this... Of course, there are also people

6477 who mistranslate because they do not have any specialised knowledge about a certain field.
6478 However, the scope of knowledge sharing in these groups is quite broad, and I see that there
6479 are extremely few discussions on terminology in my sector. If you are curious and interested
6480 in language in general, you will find these groups and forums quite interesting, but those
6481 who are not interested and less curious will not see much benefit. But from your examples,
6482 knowledge sharing is more specific to a field. But is it difficult, since translators and
6483 interpreters' work also often cover many different fields...

6484 *Imagine if there was a community of practice where development professionals and*
6485 *translation professionals can work together...*

6486 I think it will be interesting. I assume translation professionals have better language skills.
6487 For example, when I talk to you, sometimes I can't think of a Vietnamese word to say
6488 something [Laughter]. So the language ability of the translation professionals, whether
6489 through experience, education or talent, is also higher. So if development practitioners like
6490 me can sit down with them, I can share with them our knowledge of expertise and they can
6491 talk about language, for example. That would be an interesting solution and it seems like a
6492 good and promising idea.

6493 Regarding your question last time, who would be the best person to translate development
6494 terms from English into Vietnamese, I don't think it is necessary to be someone in the
6495 development industry, or a professional translator. As I work in the industry, but a lot of
6496 times I have to go online to research to find the correct expressions and translations. And the
6497 weakness when development workers translate by themselves is that they think everyone
6498 understands but everyone actually doesn't. We assume like that because we are in the sector
6499 and we have the professional knowledge of the sector, so our translation makes sense to us
6500 but to a person who is completely not in the sector. Translation experts may not be like that,
6501 because for new fields they are also laypersons, if they understand then others will too. I
6502 think that is a benefit of shared learning, which means that each party can contribute with
6503 the strengths of their expertise.

6504 There are projects who think outsourcing translation to professionals will solve the problem.
6505 For example, some previous projects that I worked with did not have an in-house translator
6506 position. We all outsourced, but we outsourced from 4-5 different partners. At that time,
6507 everyone thought that if there was an in-house translator, it would be better because over
6508 time they would understand their project better, in addition, building a relationship with the
6509 project team would make the work more effective. Currently, the common practice in
6510 development work is to outsource, then some project staff will review. But with this practice,
6511 there is a lack of communication, which means that the two sides do not really debate or
6512 discuss, and it's not convenient to directly ask questions, "why this or that equivalent doesn't
6513 work?". So the current practice, the exchange only takes place at the level of comments from
6514 the project, and the translator is a service provider, so they accept the project's comments
6515 and they will say, "ok, since this is your expertise, you should use that equivalent," even
6516 though they may not fully understand why. That practice of review is not shared learning,
6517 because it doesn't really involve any debates or discussions to lead to a result for both sides.

6518 There are also cases where, at the initial stage of a project, the project team translates by
6519 themselves or outsources the translation of a concept note into Vietnamese and accepts that
6520 translated document as a standard. However, during the implementation stages, they
6521 continue to outsource translation to the outside, and they can see that there are different
6522 translations for terms, but through the review process, those translations are sometimes not

6523 accepted even though they are better than the original translation of the project team. Of
6524 course, it makes sense to have consistent usage of terms, but we don't know if the original
6525 concept note was actually translated with care and seriousness. In fact, it is never possible
6526 for everyone to sit down and review all the terms they are using and see if they agree on the
6527 translations. This relates to also the lack of co-construction of project documentation.

6528 At this stage, I think there should be a serious investment into language and translation in a
6529 development project, that is, it is necessary to consider budget allocation for policy
6530 development, to take it seriously. Capacity building in language should be proactively
6531 implemented by the organisation or the project at the outset or parallel to the project
6532 implementation. That is, it is necessary to develop specific activities, which can be about
6533 standardising terminology for each specific project, or creating favourable conditions for
6534 professional translators and the development project team to work together right from the
6535 beginning.

6536 I think shared learning is also a solution to the translation problem in development, but it
6537 should not limit to development practitioners who translate and professional translators, and
6538 it should include development stakeholders. Because in the actual work, there are very
6539 different responses about translation and terminology from stakeholders because they pay
6540 less attention to the work agenda and more focus on criticising the language, so sometimes
6541 it makes translation a very painful and time-consuming task. So right from the start, if there
6542 is this component or there is a budget for this, the use of terminology and language will be
6543 "legalised" and it will save a lot of time because the timeframe of any project is usually very
6544 short.

6545 *Now we wrap up today's talk. I want to ask you, since our previous interview, do you have*
6546 *any particular terms that are persistently problematic at work?*

6547 I think I've covered it fairly well. However, there is the term "environmental footprint" that
6548 I find very difficult to accept when it's translated by a social enterprise as "dấu chân môi
6549 trường doanh nghiệp" [corporate environment footprint], word-for-word. That is, if the two
6550 components of this term stand alone, it is okay. But if they stand together like that, it sounds
6551 very funny. I used that term a lot in my thesis but didn't know how to translate it into
6552 Vietnamese. I don't know if my mother read the above translation, she would understand
6553 [Laughter]. Also, if anyone asks me what I do, I say I work in development, and people will
6554 ask me what it is [Laughter].

6555 *Do you think there are other topics on translation and development we haven't covered?*

6556 I also follow social enterprises and they are building and popularising a lot of innovative
6557 models and concepts. Most of their concepts are familiar in the field of development, but are
6558 now being applied in a corporate context. On facebook, there are many people who translate
6559 these very well, but there are also many people who only translate word-for-word, so they
6560 don't sound ear-please. As in the example I just mentioned, if we have a systematic method
6561 to handle difficult-to-translate terms, it will be very applicable.

6562 Actually, I'm very interested in language and translation in development, because when I
6563 learn something from the outside, I really want to apply it to the Vietnamese context, so I
6564 want to find out how I should explain my knowledge in Vietnamese in the future.

6565 *I know, that's why I asked you to be my research participant.*

6566 Thank you for inviting me. Because I'm very interested in this topic but I don't know who to
6567 talk to. When I talked to some bilingual colleagues, everyone thought this was a very
6568 interesting topic.

6569 *Thank you.*

6570 Interview with Participant 4 (P4-Ph2)

6571 The first two questions look similar, don't they?

6572 *Yes. One on translation problems and the other on terminology.*

6573 So can I answer the two questions together?

6574 *Yes.*

6575 Last time we talked, I already mentioned problem solving, yes? Well, I already have some
6576 ideas. But this time I have two more things to add.

6577 So I don't know if it already exists and haven't thought specifically who might be best to do
6578 this in Vietnam, but actually, I have not seen this tool in Vietnam, but if I can make this tool,
6579 I think it will help many people. That is, we need to build a translation manual, or a handbook
6580 of development terminology, and when we produce it, we have to accept the fact that a lot
6581 of these terms come from foreign languages, maybe English or French, and so on... but
6582 mostly English. If I imagine a fairly simple way, then let's say, I put the root term in English
6583 there, then I have an explanation of the meaning, that is, a specific explanation of the content
6584 to help those who don't know English really understand what knowledge that term refers to
6585 and how it can be used a particular field. Next I'd add in suggested translations, there could
6586 be three or four different translations, under what circumstances should they be translated,
6587 etc., and maybe add a few examples to help everyone understand their use. If we have such
6588 a manual, we must be able to use it to check from English to Vietnamese and from
6589 Vietnamese to English. Suppose at first I list the terms in English, then at the end there must
6590 be the reverse, ie. the Vietnamese definition so the English can be looked up, say, on which
6591 page, etc. The original term is in Vietnamese, then at the end, there will be a section to find
6592 the English equivalent. I think that if there is such a glossary of development, it will help a
6593 lot of people, maybe it won't be much helpful to colleagues sitting in their office in Hanoi
6594 and have good English and Vietnamese, but it will help the stakeholders in the province as
6595 well as beneficiaries such as farmers, etc. I think it is a solution that can solve some of the
6596 difficulties with terminology.

6597 The second is a solution that I have actually used a few times in the projects I manage. It is
6598 a step that is roughly called the explanation of terminological or translation before the project
6599 is implemented. Because usually the project concept is written in English in Hanoi, Saigon
6600 or any office, and then when it is approved and funding becomes available, it will be
6601 translated into Vietnamese for approval. But that step of translating into Vietnamese is
6602 usually done quite quickly and at short notice and not much care is invested because often
6603 time is not available, and at that time it is only understood as translation for approval. When
6604 we have that concept document in English or the Vietnamese versions in our hand to go to
6605 work with local stakeholders or the field office, there should be that step, the explanation of
6606 project terminology and translation so that people really see the problem. This step is actually
6607 not only related to the difficulties in terms of terminology, but it also involves understanding

6608 the work agenda and understanding the indicators. Sometimes an indicator is written in
6609 English, for the writer it is always easy to understand, but for the audience, even those very
6610 good at reading English, it can be misunderstood. For example, an indicator that 75% of
6611 young people getting jobs, or 75% of trained young people getting jobs by the end of the
6612 project, for example, there are already two ways to understand the measurement of that
6613 indicator. The first interpretation is 75% of all the trained project participants - we go
6614 interview all of these people. The second understanding is of 75% of the sample that we will
6615 interview, and that sample, we must take according to a certain standard. There are many
6616 different interpretations. That's why this step of explaining the term and explaining the
6617 translation, so I just call it that for now, but it's actually a step for explaining the project
6618 concept document in a "nôm na" and plain way for the stakeholders to understand. In that
6619 there must be explanations of project terminology and translated terminology. If I talk about
6620 "bình đẳng giới" [gender equality], what do I really mean here? I talk about "có sự tham gia"
6621 [participatory], what do I mean... then I think it would be better to explain these things
6622 specifically. For example, we say that there are several types of outputs and outcomes... then
6623 we should understand what they are, how the hierarchy is, which will lead to which, after
6624 each activity we must measure which one first, and when we measure these then after one
6625 or two years, we can start measuring the following results and what that means... then I think
6626 that's a necessary step.

6627 Those are two suggestions for your solution.

6628 *So we implement these steps in consultation workshops with stakeholders or after we have*
6629 *an approved project proposal?*

6630 Really, the more you do, the better. The step of consultation is when we collect information
6631 from stakeholders, and we mainly interview them, so there's not a lot of the so-called "written
6632 text" there, but mostly "speaking". And if the Vietnamese co-workers are assigned with this
6633 task, there are usually not many problems with language, but even foreigners who have a
6634 good interpreter usually don't have too many problems. So of course, this process should
6635 happen as much as possible. But usually I see it become a problem is when there has already
6636 been a document. There are many cases in large organisations, maybe someone writes a big
6637 proposal and it can only be approved after about a year, and by the time it is approved, the
6638 writer has changed organisations several times, retired, or just wouldn't care and do
6639 something else... it's like throwing a proposal to a group of local stakeholders so they'll work
6640 on it. Some local officials are very excellent, but there are also people who may not be
6641 familiar with certain language issues. So I think this step of explanation is always needed.
6642 So I refer specifically to the time after the project proposal is approved and before the project
6643 is implemented. As for consultation, it's fine, but when it comes to consultation, I think there
6644 will be less attention paid to language.

6645 *Do you think there will be any difficulties in terms of resources and funding to do these steps*
6646 *at development organisations?*

6647 This is very easy to do. It's the consultation which is difficult to do, because there is always
6648 not enough time. Always in the project design, it clearly indicates the number of days
6649 working in local areas or in the field, and when you go, how many districts and communes
6650 you'll have to cover, how many people you'll have to meet... always lacking time. Not to
6651 mention the language problem, foreigners need interpreters and other issues. Then being
6652 pressed for time, you have to do it quickly, "okay, that is enough"... difficulties like that.
6653 Also, experts are sometimes paid by the day, expensive Vietnamese consultants are paid 200

6654 or 300 dollars per day, and expensive international consultants can be paid up to 1,600-2,000
6655 dollars per day. But after the project is approved and kicked off for implementation, I think
6656 there will be time to do this step but it has to become a discipline and an organisational
6657 principle. If that's the case then it's doable and it's not difficult at all.

6658 *Who would be in the best position in the organisation or project to explain these translations*
6659 *and terms?*

6660 There are actually two people, but if these two are one, that's ideal, otherwise it'll have to
6661 be one of the two or the two together. The writer may be officially responsible for the
6662 development of the proposal, because sometimes the writer is someone else, and there is also
6663 a team leader, etc. to bring together parts written by different writers into the final version.
6664 Then this person will do this well. But at the same time there is another person who can do
6665 this who is located in the main office but directly managing the staff who carry out this
6666 project. This person will understand more than their staff and they understand better the
6667 challenges posed for implementation. Proposal writers are not always the ones who are
6668 involved in the implementation, and sometimes proposal writers also write things that are
6669 unrealistic, unreasonable, or if they explain, maybe they will explain in a heavily academic
6670 or linguistic way. So the direct manager, the person who does the project, will be the one
6671 who knows. They read through and know that there are places where the writing is not very
6672 clear but it really doesn't matter, because those places are to describe the problem, but in
6673 fact, the local staff and stakeholders know too much about the problem. The topic is so clear
6674 they don't read this part. And for the description of activities and indicators for example...
6675 then the project implementers will know which part is important, which part can be
6676 misleading and which part needs to be explained. Well, I think these two can do it, and if
6677 they're one or two people doing it together, that's fine. If not, one of them has to do it.

6678 *If the proposal is written in English then translated into Vietnamese for the stakeholders to*
6679 *read, is it necessary that the translator participates in this explanation step?*

6680 I rarely see translators interfere, because the translated version they provided is always
6681 approved by the main office. For example, there are a lot of proposal documents that we
6682 send out to translate, but those are a very small number of cases because for example, we
6683 only need an outsource translator capable of translating technical language to translate. The
6684 remaining 99% of cases are because we do not have time to translate, or are not allowed to
6685 translate, or because it is too long. When the outsourced translator finishes the job, we have
6686 to review and submit the document. And if it is me who translates, in most cases the
6687 translation will be better but we still outsource. Then I think outsourcing is just a specific
6688 part of the workflow. As for dragging the translator down to the localities to explain, it
6689 probably won't be necessary in our case.

6690 If the translator is a staff member of the organisation, for example, they can come along to
6691 take notes. Some translators are really thoughtful, they will say "this part I translate like this,
6692 because... I chose to translate this term as because... maybe I didn't choose the standard word,
6693 but I chose the other because it makes more sense for the context". Then they can take notes
6694 somewhere, and can pass the notes to a few other staff members to explain to local
6695 stakeholders. In most cases, I don't think the translator needs to come along.

6696 *The last time you mentioned a solution to the problem of terminology translation in the*
6697 *context of working with local stakeholders, that was the "nôm na" way of explanation. Can*

6698 *you expand on this solution as a tool to deal with problematic and difficult-to-translate terms*
6699 *in development work?*

6700 My point of view is that it is the responsibility of the development project staff to make the
6701 audience, local stakeholders and beneficiaries understand. With any beneficiaries we work
6702 with... there can be those with a masters' degree or even a PhD degree, those can also be
6703 officials of the ministry, or ethnic minorities who are not fluent in Kinh language, we must
6704 have a way to explain for them to understand. And if I can't do it, I have to drag others to
6705 work with me until they understand. Well, my answer is clear, but there is one thing I want
6706 to share more deeply with you about this issue. The word "nôm na" itself is also understood
6707 very roughly, because it is impossible to define what "nôm na" is. What is "nôm na" and
6708 what is the standard? There are two cases. There is a case like I just said, that is, there is
6709 already a standard term, then there should be "nôm na" explanation for everyone to
6710 understand the standard term. But in fact, a lot of standards start as such "nôm na" words,
6711 especially the words we translate. If you look back at the texts of the past, or even the terms
6712 that are now accepted, there are terms that are quite "nôm na" but have been used so much
6713 that they are now standards. Because once upon a time there was a teacher who taught me
6714 said that translation was sometimes labelling. The first people who came up with translations
6715 used by the most projects, in certain cases they made the terms widely used and appeared in
6716 the documents... and finally those became the standard, but at the beginning they might be
6717 very "nôm na". So our definition for "nôm na" is also not standard. There are cases where
6718 "nôm na" is just for use in speaking, but there are cases that "nôm na" can totally be used in
6719 writing, and afterward, if used a lot, they can be used as standards, and then there's no
6720 problem.

6721 For example, "vulnerable" is a very difficult word to translate. The first time I heard the
6722 phrase "dễ bị tổn thương", I also found it very "nôm na", because it's not Vietnamese, it's
6723 just a way of saying it. Later, there were some people who translated as "yếu thế". Then I
6724 think those were the translations that if at first there was a conference, a meeting, an
6725 opportunity where ten excellent and leading translators sit together, they may not have
6726 translated "vulnerable" as "dễ bị tổn thương" or "yếu thế". I find those words quite "nôm
6727 na", but now that I'm used to them, I don't see them "nôm na" anymore. Imagine that I had
6728 been consulted at first, I could have suggested other alternatives such as "chịu rủi ro cao" or
6729 something... I heard "dễ bị tổn thương" and it sounded very funny. There are cases where
6730 the grammatical subjects cannot come along with "tổn thương" but they still put it in, then
6731 it's "nôm na" but over time it becomes the norm, the standard.

6732 Or for example, there are many translations for "resilience", and I find most of them "nôm
6733 na", such as "bền vững", "vững mạnh", "kiên cường" and so on. None of them properly
6734 summarises the essence of "resilience", so it has to be "nôm na" expressed as a series of
6735 words for people to understand, but if there had been really a chance at first when that term
6736 first appeared to actually discuss with each other, and if I had had the time to think and come
6737 up with a suggestion, I would have translated it into something like "khả năng phục hồi" or
6738 "khả năng phục hồi sau tổn thất" for example, because I think "phục hồi" really is the
6739 description of "resilience" and not "bền vững", "vững mạnh" or "kiên cường".

6740 Sometimes our starting point is already "nôm na", so to ask when to use standards and when
6741 to use "nôm na" in translation is sometimes not easy. As for your question, I completely
6742 agree. When we go to work with the local stakeholders, sometimes we have to explain in
6743 the simplest way for them to understand.

6744 *Then do you suggest any other solutions to deal with translation-related issues in*
6745 *development practice?*

6746 Someone will propose solutions of improving language skills for development workers. In
6747 some of the projects I worked on, the fact that foreign experts have been trained in
6748 Vietnamese has made a clear difference in communication between them and local officials
6749 from year to year. Local project staff also improve their English skills and this also makes
6750 reading and understanding English documents easier. It is merely improving the language
6751 ability to communicate better. Of course, when their language skills are better, they can also
6752 translate better, but in most cases it only shows benefits through the two parties
6753 communicating in English or through their reading in English, but not necessarily having
6754 any direct impact on translation. In my experience, the problems I have talked about so far
6755 are problems that are actually difficult for even people who know English. This is not for
6756 people who don't know English to attend a training course for a few days and then they
6757 become able to handle translation and terminology problems and understand the meaning of
6758 words... that's too difficult. I think this is not a matter of learning by attending short training
6759 courses but actually self-discipline. They have to do their own research, they don't go easy
6760 on words, they have to set very clear goals, that what they write, what they show, the
6761 audience must understand. I don't think the translation and terminology problems in
6762 development can't be solved through a few short courses. Of course there are very good
6763 trainers, or there are specific courses designed for dealing with problems like this, but in
6764 most cases you find that it doesn't solve the problem because the problem is quite unique.

6765 *In your opinion, what terms in development should not be translated into Vietnamese?*

6766 In my opinion, nothing as such. Our Vietnamese language is modern enough and up-to-date
6767 enough for us to be able to translate everything. Suppose when I work with ethnic minorities
6768 or even people from other countries whose language may be less updated or less accessible
6769 to new vocabularies, then it may be more difficult and they will need borrowed words. But
6770 Vietnamese, although it has a lot of certain disadvantages, but if we try, we can still translate.
6771 But to ensure understanding, I think after we finish the translation, we need to provide in
6772 parallel the originals, either by giving the explanation in parentheses after the translated word
6773 or in the footnotes at the bottom of the page. Sometimes I do that myself. There are terms I
6774 have to explain, but I know that my audience includes people who, when they look at the
6775 English, they will understand the content faster, so I open the brackets and add in the original
6776 English word, or I provide an explanation in the footnotes specifically. But actually the
6777 problem is not just a matter of translation. Even in English there are a series of terms that a
6778 person who is not specialised in that field may not even understand, and sometimes further
6779 explanation is required.

6780 Your next question, about the specific effects of translation and terminology on my day-to-
6781 day work, I think I've covered it all before.

6782 Then the topic of "shared learning", perhaps my views are the same as above, regarding
6783 solutions to translation and terminology problems in development.

6784 *So could you tell me, from our previous talk until now, are there any terms in development*
6785 *that you still find problematic?*

6786 "Empowerment" is often translated as "trao quyền" and "tạo quyền", right? I don't like both
6787 of these translations for two reasons. Actually it is translated as "trao quyền" more often, but

6788 I don't like this translation because it conjures up images of me being the outsider, the rich,
6789 me belonging to this or that organisation, etc., and I give you this in a very "superior" way,
6790 like a person in a higher position "trao quyền" to someone in a lower position. The second
6791 thing I don't is the word "quyền". Actually, I don't think "quyền" captures this, and could
6792 even be misleading. Because with "quyền", some people will think of "rights", and it's not
6793 completely separate but I think its meaning is broader. If I had to translate and translate in a
6794 softer and more friendly way in Vietnamese, I'd translate as "nâng cao vị thế" [elevate the
6795 status] or "nâng cao" something. I will prefer to use the word "nâng cao", and I will use a
6796 different noun to "quyền". He don't understand who first came up with this word "quyền",
6797 and why "power" is translated as "quyền". So many people can think of "rights" and
6798 politically sensitive issues such as "nhân quyền" [human rights], then "empowerment" will
6799 not be accepted in many contexts in Vietnam and it will hinder development work. This is
6800 also partially answering your question about the impact of translation and terminology on
6801 development work, right?

6802 Yesterday, we also had a project on economic empowerment. When I went to the project
6803 kick-off ceremony, a co-worker translated the project title as "Trao quyền kinh tế cho phụ
6804 nữ" and I was shocked to hear it [*Laughter*]. It sounded very unfamiliar. Why not translate
6805 it as "nâng cao vị thế kinh tế" [elevating the economic status], or "nâng cao vị thế xã hội"
6806 [elevating social status]? I think such translations will be more neutral and also quite clear.

6807 "Social accountability" is often translated as "trách nhiệm xã hội". There is a better
6808 translation because "trách nhiệm xã hội" is easily misunderstood. This is a concept that even
6809 foreigners who do not use this will not understand or will misunderstand. As I understand it,
6810 social accountability applies more to people and organisations in the civil society, those
6811 called "các tổ chức dân sự" in controlling the state and making the state accountable. I
6812 remember I heard a translation called "trách nhiệm giải trình xã hội". I think it makes more
6813 sense to include "giải trình" here and it makes the meaning clearer, although it still has to be
6814 explained later. But if you hear "trách nhiệm xã hội", it will be misunderstood...

6815 *Understood as in CSR, right?*

6816 Yes, yes, corporate social responsibility. As for "trách nhiệm giải trình xã hội", it is still not
6817 fully capturing because the term in English itself is not clear in meaning, but adding "giải
6818 trình" gives it more sense. The projects that we are working on, we have not yet touched on
6819 this, but in the projects in the civic space or relating to the functional activities of the state
6820 functions, they're talking about this to monitor the responsibility of the state in explaining
6821 its actions, everything must be clear and transparent, how people can supervise, how civil
6822 organisations can monitor... many projects are going in this direction, but we haven't done it
6823 yet.

6824 And for "wellbeing", no agreed equivalents can be found in Vietnamese. Sometimes it's
6825 "hạnh phúc", "phúc lợi" "tình trạng ổn định", "sức khỏe", etc. So it depends on the specific
6826 field, on the object and context, for example, society, the environment, humans, and so on,
6827 etc. We don't use "wellbeing" that much in our project, but if I need to translate, it will be
6828 something in the direction of "hạnh phúc" [happiness]. But if you say, the wellbeing of the
6829 planet or wellbeing of the environment, for example, it could be "tình trạng ổn định"
6830 [stability] or "tình trạng bền vững" [sustainability], or about the wellbeing of farmers against
6831 the use of pesticides, it must be "sức khỏe" [health]. But talking about the wellbeing of the
6832 entire community participating in the project, then it is not only about "health" but also not
6833 about their income, economic wellbeing for example. Or if they live in an unpolluted

6834 environment, it may be something else. In short, this is a very difficult term and there is no
6835 standard translation. “Tình trạng ổn định” for something sounds pretty neutral, but it also
6836 applies to certain situations, because sometimes stability isn't what the project wants to
6837 achieve. What they want to achieve is something more. For example, if a project brings
6838 stability to a very unstable situation, wellbeing could translate to “tình trạng ổn định”. But if
6839 the project wants to bring in something better to an something already good, then “tình trạng
6840 ổn định” is not appropriate.

6841 Translating these concepts and terms into Vietnamese is difficult, because their connotations
6842 are too broad. In fact, it will require good presentation and explanation. Because Vietnamese
6843 and English are not two parallel languages. And the language of these concepts in
6844 development, such as those of the SDGs, is at the macro level with huge connotations. These
6845 terms in English are still difficult to understand for native speakers, let alone when they have
6846 been translated into Vietnamese. Therefore, it is necessary to ask the presenter to explain
6847 fully the layers of meaning. Of course, when we look at the Vietnamese translations of the
6848 SDGs, such as those of the UN, we see problematic translations. But if I was to translate, I
6849 would also provide somewhat problematic translations, and other people will continue to
6850 point out what is problematic.

6851 *Thank you so much!*

6852 Interview with Participant 14 (P14-Ph2)

6853 *Could you give me your opinion on how to handle translation and terminology problems in*
6854 *development work?*

6855 In my opinion, the translation-related problems in development work that stakeholders are
6856 facing need to be handled according to the specific approach of each area and practice of
6857 socio-economic development in the context of Vietnam being a developing country. It is
6858 necessary to balance, or in other words, maximise the equivalence between the original
6859 language and the language into which some ideas and terms are translated, in order to achieve
6860 the highest possible level of accuracy and popularity, in accordance with the specific style
6861 and context. In this process, we view the translator as one who is fluent in these two
6862 languages and able to grasp the cultural, social, historical, geographical, scientific and
6863 technical backgrounds when they deal with problems encountered in translation in
6864 development work.

6865 Then with terminology-related problems in development, we too should handle these
6866 depending on the specific approach for each specialised field. I think terminology in
6867 development work, if already translated into Vietnamese used with a certain degree of
6868 popularity or have been standardised or officially recognised, we should encourage the use
6869 of these translations to ensure that the information is communicated purely in Vietnamese
6870 language. For example, there are cases where the original term in Vietnamese is preserved
6871 and not translated. For example, the word “sào” in agriculture. At first, working with foreign
6872 experts in the field, one may reluctantly translate “sào” into English as "acre" and note that
6873 this is a unit of area (500 sq. metres), although not completely equivalent. After a while,
6874 when these colleagues get used to it, we don't need to translate anymore but continue to use
6875 the original “sào”. Having said this, in development work, we also see a number of terms
6876 having agreed translations and being used by most practitioners. For example,
6877 “sustainability” being translated as “tính bền vững” and there is no other way to translate it.
6878 Meanwhile terms like "empowerment”, we see a few different translations such as “trao

6879 quyền”, “tăng quyền” and “tạo quyền”. This concept is often associated with the role of
6880 women. To some extent, we understand that “empowerment” is about creating favourable
6881 conditions for women to have “quyền hành” in socio-economic development. Some parties
6882 still have problems with the translation of this term and they think that the problem lies in
6883 the fact that we often associate empowerment with the element “quyền”, ie. "rights". I think
6884 this element should be included in the understanding of empowerment, specifically
6885 "empowering women" may also mean that many parties are now also trying to create
6886 conditions for women to exercise their “quyền”, “rights” such as "the right to self-
6887 nominate... as a candidate for a seat in the National Assembly" for example. But in a certain
6888 context, “trao quyền” evokes an image of inequality because of the implication of superiority
6889 of being the "giver" against inferiority of being the "receiver".

6890 There is another interesting term that is considered too broad, “wellbeing”. Many
6891 development actors have limited their interpretation of “wellbeing” to the meaning of “sức
6892 khỏe”, health improvement. But in some projects, this concept is associated with economic
6893 development, such as economic wellbeing. Like a project I work on in the field of safe
6894 agriculture, so with the project's support, individual efforts, self-made resources of
6895 individuals and families... beneficiaries are getting better and their wellbeing is improved,
6896 then we understand that the “điều kiện kinh tế” [economic conditions] of the project
6897 participants are improved. This is reflected in the fact that wellbeing also translates as “khá
6898 giả” [well-off]. Or in the SDGs, we see the concept of “decent work” or decent jobs. The
6899 common interpretation and translation for this term is “công việc ổn định” [stable job], or
6900 “đủ sống” [sufficient living]. But speaking in a “nôm na” way, decent is about meeting
6901 certain requirements, and “ổn định” [stability] is just one of those requirements. Because the
6902 above concepts are too broad, it is not possible to have a translation that summarises the
6903 meaning. What I want to say is, in development work with many stakeholders with different
6904 backgrounds in knowledge, we must handle it in a way that we combine some possible
6905 translations with a certain level of explanation. Some of the terms are highly technical which
6906 farmers and local partners may not be familiar with, so they need to be phrased in a way that
6907 is easier for these partners to understand and importantly to remember. But this depends on
6908 3 main factors: the context, the people and the time allowed. As when I go to work with
6909 farmer households, very often I have to be flexible in handling technical terms that
6910 specialised experts had no problem understanding and using. For example, we talked about
6911 a pest, the "leaf miner" on vegetables, our technical staff understood and still often called
6912 the pest “sâu đục lá” [leaf borer], but in the community, farmers did not fully understand
6913 how this pest is boring their vegetable leaves. I went to ask them and it turned out in that
6914 locality, people had a local name for that pest, “sâu vẽ bùa”. On the contrary, in meetings
6915 with departments, we do not need to apply this way of local interpretation because it takes
6916 time and these meetings take place in the "formal" and not “informal” atmosphere. So I think,
6917 handling the translation of terms in a “nôm na” is only prioritised in informal contexts, if not
6918 the only way.

6919 However, for the stakeholders to achieve a more complete understanding of abstract terms
6920 and concepts, the combination of explanation and translation is not the only solution. We
6921 can build other tools to assist in this process such as using images. From my actual work
6922 experience, I find that visual tool plays a great role when combined with “nôm na”
6923 explanation to make farmers understand technical knowledge a development project wants
6924 to convey. So beside using visuals, development organisations and projects with relatively
6925 long timeframes should also consider building these tools to assist in the communication and
6926 standardisation of terminology use in their field of interventions, such as glossary tools for
6927 listing and explaining terms. These are much needed tools. For example, it is needed to point

6928 out what "sustainable development" could be understood in the local context and how it
6929 should be done through project activities. This solution will be positively received by the
6930 locality. I have seen many foreign organisations build this tool to make their language more
6931 consistent among professionals, but when coming to work in Vietnam, many times these
6932 tools have not been used or localised. I think these organisations have the resources for
6933 building these tools. However, if my local stakeholders, for example at department levels, to
6934 develop this tool, I'm not sure if they have the resources. For a project management team
6935 with operational costs, these are completely allocable.

6936 So in short, it depends on the approach of each field, each sector, or development stage, in a
6937 specific context and target audience.

6938 *So you've also just given me some examples for the follow-up questions on terms that should*
6939 *not be translated into Vietnamese, and you also outlined some justification for that. Please*
6940 *allow me to move on to the next topic. First of all, I want to share with you 2 examples of*
6941 *shared learning in translation and development. One of these is an initiative of the Saigon*
6942 *Community of Interpreters and Translators (SGCI&T) under the Ho Chi Minh City Peace*
6943 *and Development Foundation Foundation (HPDF) from which learning activities such as*
6944 *seminars and workshops on importance of translation for the comprehensive development*
6945 *and integration of Vietnam or "translation in the 4.0 era" were held. The other example is*
6946 *the contest organised by ADF in collaboration with the Youth Union for young people to*
6947 *participate in translating the concept and term "resilience" using language and means of*
6948 *visuals. These are examples that are quite consistent with the understanding of shared*
6949 *learning, that is, different parties join and share their knowledge on certain topics about*
6950 *translation. What do you think about the importance of shared learning in addressing*
6951 *translation problems in development?*

6952 Unfortunately, I have not had the opportunity to participate in these "shared learning"
6953 models. In fact, I have had long-term experience of working with development projects as
6954 well as having the opportunity to receive short-term and long-term training in project
6955 management, rural development, socio-economic development, etc. I was also in charge of
6956 translating for many development projects, but I haven't been involved in training or
6957 capacity building activities on translation. For translation, I am mainly self-learning from
6958 experience.

6959 I have an "open" view of shared learning in dealing with translation and terminology issues
6960 in development work in Vietnam. I understand that shared learning here is not only learning
6961 about language translation and knowledge from those who know English but also from those
6962 who do not know English but have used Vietnamese appropriately. Shared learning means
6963 a willingness to share knowledge and learn from others, so different stakeholders should not
6964 stay reserved, because new knowledge and language in the development sector emerge
6965 constantly, and it is essential to create an environment for everyone to discuss, identify and
6966 handle translation issues. Technical people working side-by-side with translators is an
6967 effective support, because translators will learn specialised knowledge, and development
6968 workers will thereby become aware of the translation issues and the way the other party
6969 handles language. Also, like last time you asked about the person who best suits to translate
6970 development terms, I said it's best for both sides to work together, this is also an example of
6971 shared learning.

6972 *Since our previous time, have you any persistently problematic terms in your daily work?*

6973 I want to talk about the terms "governance", "management" and "administration" in the
6974 development sector. So I have found these original English terms quite clear in meanings,
6975 but I find it difficult to find equivalents in Vietnamese. In Vietnamese, we often understand
6976 "governance" as “quản lý nhà nước”, but we also have "governance of a project" in
6977 development practice which is often translated as “quản lý dự án” [project management]. I
6978 had to draw the line between the two different understandings and translate them as “quản
6979 trị dự án” and “quản lý dự án”. Some stakeholders found “quản trị dự án” unfamiliar but they
6980 did not question because they don’t see any great impact on the work. In practice I’ve also
6981 encountered the terms "contract management" and "contract administration" which
6982 sometimes are put together as "contract management and administration". "Contract
6983 management" translates to “quản lý hợp đồng” and that is fine, but "contract administration"
6984 is also translated the same way, while the two work items are different. It must be clearly
6985 stated that "contract administration" is “quản lý hành chính hợp đồng”.

6986 Also, the way we address our participants also poses some problems in development
6987 practice. We say “bà con nông dân”, such as in “giúp bà con nông dân phát triển kinh tế hộ”.
6988 How can we translate “bà con nông dân” for our international colleagues to understand
6989 correctly? In Vietnamese, we clearly see the meaning of being together as a family, a kinshi,
6990 and we say “bà con” [Laughter], but how do we translate the connotative meaning of this
6991 word into English? “Farmers' community” is very neutral and does not convey the meaning
6992 of seeing community members as family members. I find the closest translation into English
6993 of this word is "folks", as in "fisherfolks" of the fisheries industry, when seafaring is a
6994 dangerous profession that requires a very strong connection of the fisherfolks.

6995 *Do you want to talk about other relevant topics of translation and development that we*
6996 *haven't covered?*

6997 I find participating in your study enabling my thinking and useful in that I now have
6998 acknowledged better the issues of terminology and translation in development work. One
6999 thing I see, it’s not that we are Vietnamese and we understand Vietnamese well. So being
7000 involved in translation in development work is not only an opportunity for me to improve
7001 my English, but also to enrich my Vietnamese, my mother tongue. Participating in
7002 translation in development work also helps me perfect my bilingual ability, and at some point
7003 I see that I can switch very quickly. With new and difficult terms, if I have serious research
7004 and discussions with colleagues and partners, I can develop a lot in terms of skills and
7005 knowledge in certain areas. I believe that being aware of translation and terminology
7006 problems and thinking about solutions to these problems are opportunities for personal
7007 development and it makes my work in development more and more effective.

7008 *Thank you for your time.*

7009 Interview with Participant 11 (P11-Ph2)

7010 *Firstly, please tell me how should the problems of translation in general and terminology in*
7011 *particular in development work in Vietnam be handled?*

7012 Please allow me to focus on the problem-solving part based on my experience and
7013 observations. I'm just giving a simple opinion. Because translation work in Vietnam has not
7014 been included in an official framework or regulation, dealing with difficulties is still internal
7015 and depends on specific circumstances. There's really no one-size-fits-all formula.

7016 For example, in a development organisation, the person doing the translation work can be
7017 an employee, staff member, or person in charge of a specialised area of the work agenda and
7018 these will take on the role of translator. Facing difficulties in translation, there should always
7019 be some sort of supervision, ie. the guidance as well as the consultation of the boss or the
7020 manager, for example, or advice of colleagues and those from the team in charge of that area.
7021 Usually, the way the problem is handled is still internal, i.e. within the team working in the
7022 same work area. For example, in the past, I used to work in the field of mine clearance, every
7023 time I translated for a technical consultant and had difficulty, I would seek support as well
7024 as advice from translators who were more experienced or from the technical team leader to
7025 help with translation issues. If another team doing mine prevention education, for example,
7026 when they had difficulty, the first thing they did was to seek support from within their
7027 technical team. For example, in my organisation, there were 5 teams in charge of 5 different
7028 professional areas, when having translation problems, in general, 90% of small teams would
7029 try to handle and support each other internally. Very rarely did they raise issues to other
7030 teams or level up the entire organisation.

7031 *Can you explain more about further steps to handle?*

7032 Certainly, after getting the support, there will be a step to compare terminology as well as
7033 explanations with other sources. For example, in the area of landmines, we read more
7034 documents of the National Committee on Mine Control, that is at the national level, or other
7035 mine prevention organisations and other NGOs. I go to their website to look at the same
7036 topics and see how they use terms in similar contexts. That is, I take advantage of all the
7037 external references and I even compare with fieldwork references, that is, I always talk to
7038 the technical staff working in the field to see if there is a "gap" between the term I want to
7039 translate with documents currently circulating in general in the field of mine clearance, and
7040 with the people who daily receive information from our translation who are technical field
7041 staff. This way of handling, that is, comparison and checking for reliability is almost "code
7042 of conduct".

7043 *In the area of development you work in, are there any tools to assist with this?*

7044 Officially there isn't a single tool or general glossary in the field of mine clearance, but I
7045 know there are tools like this in other fields. But at a personal level, translators often maintain
7046 a notebook to jot down all such terminology. When a new employee enters the job, the
7047 organisation will perform induction for them, then these tools are among the shared training
7048 materials and documents. Such tools and problem handling are only used in this "hand-
7049 operating" manner.

7050 I have to add that the people I work with every day are field workers. I find that I have to
7051 observe the language that they use in the field, that is, I need to learn from them first, and
7052 then through my understanding of the information conveyed by the technical staff, I will find
7053 a way to explain it simply and to the point, otherwise I'll use an explanation that's compatible
7054 with the team I'm working with. For example, if we work with a group of mine clearance
7055 technicians of the army, for example, we must use the language that is compatible with those
7056 of foreign technicians. It can be said that I rarely have difficulty in explaining words or using
7057 academic terms, because when I work, I always try to communicate in the most friendly way
7058 to stakeholders.

7059 *By friendly, are you suggesting a "nôm na" way of explanation for problematic
7060 terminology?*

7061 I think translation is still an excuse. For me, in a meeting or an activity carried out in
7062 development work, setting the goals is the highest priority. For example, in a meeting, the
7063 stakeholders must understand the work agenda and be able to develop their network.
7064 Translation is a means and a way for us to achieve those goals. The goals will guide and
7065 determine the entire way we translate whether in formal or informal contexts. In the end, for
7066 me, translation must serve two main goals. The first is effective communication, which
7067 means that the message is not misunderstood and does not entail any effect of "resistance"
7068 from the audience, that is, the information or knowledge being conveyed must ensure
7069 accuracy and reliability but also it must be ear-pleasing to listeners and match the culture for
7070 example. In addition, there is another very important thing that few people pay attention to,
7071 which is in any communication context, creating connection and trust is very important, but
7072 to achieve this, it is no longer dependent on translation but it is an attitude, the way the
7073 translator shows up, the esteem in such a context, etc... that we can call interpersonal skills
7074 or communication skills I think every translator must have to do their job well.

7075 Regarding document translation in development work, we find that the language can be more
7076 formal, so to match the requirements of the written language, we use formal language and
7077 accept that it might be technical or academic. Because with what is written, there is still a
7078 space for the readers to think and interpret according to their understanding, that is, there is
7079 still a space for the readers to receive that information. The context of document translation
7080 is different from the context of verbal interpreting in development work because field
7081 translation contributes to solving immediate problems and because the flow of
7082 communication must occur continuously to achieve a certain goal of a meeting or a training
7083 session, for example. So the formal or non-formal explanation and whether "nôm na" is used
7084 or not may not be important, but it is important to determine what the goal of translation in
7085 a particular event so that we can be flexible.

7086 In addition to the administrative and procedural documents of a project, in the development
7087 work, it is certainly agreed that there are many types of technical documents that contain
7088 technical knowledge. So for me, the solution to difficulties in translation will be to refer to
7089 official sources. Personally, I often refer to official UN documents such as UNESCO or
7090 UNDP, because in almost every field, they have developed more or less relevant documents
7091 and materials. I also use the dictionary to look up or consult with professionals, especially
7092 those who do research or evaluation, they are very familiar with terms in spoken and written
7093 contexts.

7094 As for interpreting, I am more flexible in spoken language and in less formal activities. For
7095 cases of misunderstanding, listeners do not understand the meaning or when inaccurate
7096 information is provided, I think the solution here is related to preparation. As I said, it is an
7097 attitude, that is, one always has to pay attention to the use of language that is compatible
7098 with the local way of speaking and the audience. For example, also in the field, but when I
7099 explain something to officials who are visiting the project, I use formal language and provide
7100 extra explanation, but when I talk to mine clearance workers or construction workers, I will
7101 use more "nôm na" language. So first, I need to be flexible. Second, I must be sincere when
7102 I translate, otherwise when I make a mistake, I will cover it up or won't dare to come back
7103 to admit, acknowledge and apologise for my mistake. Sincerity is extremely important,
7104 because no matter what and how good we are, we always make mistakes.

7105 Regarding the difficulties related to the role of translators in development work, such as
7106 project or organisation staff assigned to translate in addition to their professional work, then
7107 you know, when we accept a job offer, your job is never fully defined on the job description.

7108 I have to deal with almost everything that unfolds and wherever the work leads me to. But
7109 to handle translation-related in this expanded role, I think it depends on each person's ability
7110 and understanding. For example, there are many translators who do very well but don't have
7111 cultural sensitivity. Many professionals swear at work, or in their use of language they show
7112 a clear bias towards the locals. As a translator, without cultural sensitivity, without that
7113 knowledge, I wouldn't realise that problem. Being culturally sensitive and having cultural
7114 understanding makes us feel the need for a constructive discussion, because when we discuss
7115 openly, the other person also deepens their understanding about another layer of culture. I'll
7116 also have to find an opportunity to revisit, that is, I go back to what I feel needs to be
7117 discussed in more detail, but what is important is my intention. My intention is to build
7118 relationships, because like I said last time, translators are cultural ambassadors, I always call
7119 myself a "bridge", so my intention is still to help others understand the culture because I
7120 believe that when they understand the culture clearly and correctly, they will not use the
7121 language in such a way that hurts others. Personally, because I have a good attitude, I will
7122 choose a time and bring up a way of dealing with that problem. The current situation in
7123 general is that many development organisations do not have a policy for translation and
7124 language, and have not clearly defined the translation work for their staff as I mentioned
7125 above. Personally, I think the importance of translation in development depends on different
7126 stages. For example, in our time, about 10 years ago, foreign language capacity was still
7127 limited, so having an in-house translator almost determined the operation of an organisation
7128 with international or foreign elements involved. But later on with a lot of communication
7129 and more knowledge... then the local specialists basically learned more foreign languages
7130 and became the best to translate because they understand best what they do to explain it to
7131 others. It is fair to say. And I see that a good translator is someone who has strengths in
7132 foreign languages and is very attentive to learning more about other expertise. And if they
7133 only have foreign language skills, it will not be enough to meet the needs and depth of
7134 technical communication. At the present time, there is the social prejudice that the role of
7135 translators is always considered less important than the professional role. This is not
7136 regulatory anymore, but I think it is about society and culture. So everyone has a bias towards
7137 the translator, i.e. it is still an assisting role. If the organisation has a dedicated translation
7138 role, since the translator provides support to almost every work item, then it is extremely
7139 important that apart from developing policy on languages and translation, the organisation
7140 itself must adopt a culture of equality toward translation in order to treat translators with
7141 dignity. And if the organisation operates in the direction that there is no person fully in
7142 charge of translating, they must have a policy to improve the foreign language capacity of
7143 employees so that these employees can translate better. I think there should be better
7144 treatment for these people in development. But actually translating is a very hard job, if we
7145 don't have the passion and we don't see it as a learning opportunity then we'd always find
7146 ourselves undermined, belittled or in some way "invisible" than colleagues in other
7147 positions.

7148 *In your opinion, are there any terms in the development sector in Vietnam nowadays that*
7149 *are better not translated?*

7150 In my opinion, first, the terms derived from proper names or places, I do not translate. For
7151 example, "Steiner education", "Montessori education"... I leave them as is and I explain the
7152 content. Second, the terms derived from a holistic philosophy that combines both inner and
7153 outer dimensions, i.e. being both "form" and "formless" at the same time, are in my opinion
7154 better not translated but explanation is needed. For example, the term "mindfulness", we
7155 should leave it as is. Depending on the context, people can flexibly translate it, but
7156 "mindfulness" has too much of a connotation, and it has both a spiritual dimension and a

7157 practical dimension, and it's very difficult to explain and in each context people understand
7158 in another way. For example, in education, people only translate "mindful practice" as [rèn
7159 luyện sự chú tâm] [concentration training], “rèn luyện khả năng tập trung” [training the
7160 ability to concentrate], ie attention training, because the only goal of applying mindfulness
7161 in schools is to solve the problem of being unable to concentrate or distraction for students
7162 because we are living in an era of distraction. So to solve the problem of distraction for
7163 students, we use the tool of "mindful practice". In the school context, the religious elements
7164 has not been opened and accepted, so it is flexible to translate “mindfulness” in the school
7165 context as “thực hành chú tâm” or “rèn luyện khả năng tập trung” when we work with
7166 teachers or the Department of Education to carry out such activities. But first we also have
7167 to say, “”mindfulness" is the original term”, so that people could locate what concept we are
7168 talking about. "Mindfulness" in Buddhist practice for example, people use “chánh niệm”. If
7169 you or someone in your family has practiced “chánh niệm”, then you will know that the
7170 meaning is immensely broad. “Chánh” is correctness and has an element of morality, and
7171 “niệm” is the ability to be present or focused in every moment, for that is the nature of
7172 mindfulness practice.

7173 A second example that I encountered while working in a field that is also part of development
7174 work in Vietnam, that is organic agriculture. There is a term called "biodynamics" which
7175 was originally coined by Rudolf Steiner. Steiner is a philosopher, theologian, educator, and
7176 agricultural practitioner. "Steiner education” comes after him. So “biodynamics" cannot be
7177 translated into Vietnamese so that the translation might include a very comprehensive and
7178 holistic meaning, which I referred to as inner and outer, both spiritual, material and scientific
7179 dimensions. Biodynamics refers to an agricultural philosophy that puts human ecology first,
7180 and puts "mother nature" at the heart of all practices to guide the doings. Everything is in
7181 harmony with the laws of nature. For example, farming according to biodynamics requires
7182 belief and spiritual and energy factors, such as when the energy from the moon and sun is
7183 good or not for watering plants or gardening during the day... there are very decent moments.
7184 It is the belief in how the energy circulates during the day so that we know when to water
7185 the plants and take care of them, for example. So biodynamics must obey the laws of nature.
7186 For example, everything in nature operates according to the universal law of being a spiral,
7187 not a straight line. So in biodynamic agriculture, we have spiral furrowing and spiral
7188 irrigation systems, and a biodynamic ecosystem is also demonstrated as a spiral rather than
7189 a straight line. Then I take this example to say that there are original terms that have to be
7190 respected and we only explain, because now I see in some technical documents, they
7191 translate biodynamics as “nông nghiệp sạch” [clean agriculture] [*Laughter*]. Clean
7192 agriculture is just farming with less use of fertilisers and pesticides. Or they literally translate
7193 it as “năng động sinh học”, but what's important here is that the core of the term comes from
7194 a so-called living philosophy, a worldview, and it's not purely a narrow way of doing things.
7195 "Bio-" is “sinh học” and "dynamics" is “năng động”, that is word-for-word translation. For
7196 me, if I choose to translate, it will lead to narrowness, obscurity, or misunderstanding about
7197 both the core and the philosophy, because the philosophy of biodynamics is eco-based, it's
7198 about ecology, mother nature is the greatest and everything operates in it; humans are just a
7199 part of the food chain that works in it; human equals worms, cockroaches; all life is
7200 respected, and the food chain must be preserved according to the way the ecosystem works.
7201 Current ways of translating biodynamics as “nông nghiệp sạch” or clean agricultural
7202 practices nowadays still put people first, thus being ego-based. One is eco-based, and the
7203 other is ego-based. If translated that way, it leads to a very basic misunderstanding about the
7204 philosophy and attitude of doing as well as attitude of living, that is, to put human above all
7205 ecosystems and all practices below are to serve the human needs, and so we inadvertently

7206 overturn the food web in the ecosystem, that is, we kill what we like. So for me, with such a
7207 term, I don't interpret or translate, I'll just keep it that way and explain according to the
7208 context to suit the ability and nature of the audience.

7209 *Can you give me specifically some real-world impacts of translation to your daily work?*

7210 I will just add one more point like this. From a practical point of view, I don't think it matters
7211 much. I have to accept that translation must bring misunderstandings, and we'll correct
7212 mistakes. So for me, the core is still experience and the ability to handle situations, and how
7213 to behave with sincerity and ethics. Because even if I say something wrong at a meeting,
7214 then I still have ways to handle the situation in the most "graceful" way. There is always an
7215 elegant solution for mistranslation. So from my view when doing professional translation, I
7216 will not be entangled in the effects on reality, but I will be more interested in the perspective
7217 of how the translation work does not leave habitual sequelae for myself. For example, if I
7218 work ethically and conscientiously... in fact, those who engage in translation in development
7219 work has to do it for months and years, so such an attitude is the way I repeat the same thing
7220 over and over as a good habit, a good mindset, to form a habit that is generic enough to
7221 almost anything and not just about translation. I am interested in the internal impact of
7222 translation and the way I translate, because it will create a very strong, solid and stable
7223 pattern in terms of my mental as well as external behavior. So if there is a concern about
7224 translation, it is an inner concern, and it is because of the inner concern that I choose to think
7225 about and choose the attitude when I translate. Because when I translate with enthusiasm, I
7226 do it right and long enough, it is consciousness at first but later it becomes a habit. But we
7227 benefit from being unconsciously positive, and it will contribute to creating domino effects
7228 for all other tasks.

7229 *I would like to move on to the second topic "shared learning". To clarify, I want to share*
7230 *with you 2 examples of shared learning in translation and development. One of these is an*
7231 *initiative of the Saigon Community of Interpreters and Translators (SGCI&T) under the Ho*
7232 *Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation Foundation (HPDF) from which*
7233 *learning activities such as seminars and workshops on importance of translation for the*
7234 *comprehensive development and integration of Vietnam or "translation in the 4.0 era" were*
7235 *held. The other example is the contest organised by ADF in collaboration with the Youth*
7236 *Union for young people to participate in translating the concept and term "resilience" using*
7237 *language and means of visuals. These are examples that are quite consistent with the*
7238 *understanding of shared learning, that is, different parties join and share their knowledge*
7239 *on certain topics about translation. What do you think about the importance of this shared*
7240 *learning practice?*

7241 First, I have not had the opportunity to participate in such a community. Secondly, I think
7242 that if it is possible to establish such a community of practice, be it formal or informal, it
7243 will be very important and necessary. Because many times people form a community of
7244 sharing or learning, discussing informally, ie. not as a formalised group, people will feel
7245 more comfortable and inspired, and this leads to more effective sharing and collaboration.
7246 The remaining issue is who or what organisation can champion this activity as it is an
7247 initiative that comes with a lot of responsibility. I figure it would be difficult at first. Because
7248 working alone is uncomplicated, but working with many people, the initial inertia will be
7249 great, so it takes someone with internal strength and enthusiasm and great determination to
7250 build a community of practice. Next, it is important to determine that even if there are only
7251 5 or 10 people... it doesn't matter how big or small this community is, because its impact
7252 does not depend on the number of people. I believe this is the right thing to do. The problem

7253 is when is it possible to come out with a burning and urgent need to a certain extent, or the
7254 importance of sharing knowledge in translation to form a community of moving forward
7255 together for a common value because only by sticking to values can it survive. And if needs
7256 change, commitment changes, right? But for example, if ethics in translation is a value that
7257 we commit to and we can live and die with it, then what goes on in the long run must be
7258 based on a commitment to values. Or there will be difficulties but difficulties are temporary.

7259 *Say, we have a group of development professionals and another of translation professionals,*
7260 *how do you envisage these groups engaging in shared learning?*

7261 I think what the two groups learn from each other is an emersion, which means it is difficult
7262 to predict. As someone who works in education-related areas and a learner, I see that in any
7263 situation, if a group of people sit together, cross-learning will definitely happen. Each person
7264 is a separate entity, a separate life experience, we always learn a certain value or insight from
7265 the other person, we must go into the experience to know exactly how. The most important
7266 thing about a learning experience for me is to create an environment, or a “container” to put
7267 something in it to “create capital”, for example we put in a few core values into that
7268 container, that learning community, then, the “seeds” we put in will sprout that way and will
7269 attract people with similar interests and needs. I think the benefit will ripple, even those who
7270 know will learn a lot from people who don't know, because people who don't know are
7271 curious and ask questions. I learn from asking questions and explaining, because when I
7272 explain, I listen again and get feedback from others, then my learning becomes more refined
7273 and enlightened. And if others ask the wrong question, then those who already know will
7274 have more perspectives or a fresh perspective.

7275 *Now, would you share with me particular cases of terms that you find persistently*
7276 *problematic in your daily work?*

7277 Going back to the idea I mentioned earlier about using the translations of the UN and large
7278 development organisations as a reference for some difficult and confusing terms, I have
7279 some examples of problematic terminology as follows. So when I decide on a translation, I
7280 always return to my intention. The use of this or that term, does it serve the intention or the
7281 purpose of the job or not? For example, in SDG 3, I refer to all UN translations for the
7282 “wellbeing”. And of course, beside those references, I also refer to the phrases and the
7283 language flow, so that when I translate, the equivalent I choose will fit in the text, and the
7284 importance is to make it familiar and recognisable to the audience. That is, when the
7285 audience reads my translation, they don't feel any perplexity, especially when that concept
7286 or term has become a global target. For example, “wellbeing” or “cuộc sống tốt” [good life]
7287 according to the UN's translation may not be the best translation, but if it has been used in
7288 writing, I still refer to it for consistency. In fact, if I translate “wellbeing” in a different way,
7289 it's unlikely that the audience will understand my intentions, so there won't be a big
7290 difference to the fact that I have to be careful about the wording, but it is important that I
7291 must ensure the factors such as familiarity, orthodoxy and consistency. For example, when
7292 working with the locals or doing surveys, “cuộc sống tốt” must also be explained very
7293 specifically, for example, whether our non-physical being is stressed or suffering... so I must
7294 explain very clearly both the non-physical dimensions as well as the physical ones. That's
7295 the way I will do it.

7296 *Do you have any other topics about translation and development you want to discuss?*

7297 I just want to add in terms of reflections, that is, when I encounter something difficult, I am
7298 very excited and want to dig deeper. Then learning also stems from the difficulties or
7299 challenges in translation that force me to dive into dictionaries, websites or sources, and I
7300 have to find an existing explanation or translations of certain terms that I feel they make
7301 sense for myself, and not just that they are easy to understand.

7302 *I really appreciate your contribution.*

7303 Interview with Participant 9 (P9-Ph2)

7304 Can I begin with the topic of Reflection?

7305 *Yes, sure.*

7306 Since the last time we talked, I thought about the problems of translation and terminology in
7307 development work and also talked with some colleagues. A friend shared with me her
7308 insights about cultural adaptation, which I found it very close to my work when I
7309 communicate about development knowledge. That is, instead of using an academic
7310 terminology, we have to adapt and make it “nôm na” to suit the audience we are working
7311 with. And we can also relate to cultural adaptation in communication when we do
7312 development work with the the so-called “nôm na” expression.

7313 *So can you tell me how translation and terminology problems in development can be*
7314 *handled?*

7315 When I work with the community and disseminate knowledge, if I encounter a problematic
7316 term which is difficult to understand but I want to make it familiar, easy to understand and
7317 “nôm na” to everyone, I usually introduce a translation in Vietnamese that I use temporarily,
7318 I explain the meaning of it in as much detail as possible, and then I ask people if they have
7319 another way of expressing it. Then it is likely that people will provide alternatives that they
7320 are familiar with. It is generally a form of consultation and getting feedback on word usage.

7321 As an example of a term that has many different translations, “empathy” often translates as
7322 “thông cảm”, “đồng cảm” or “thấu cảm”, and the most common translation is currently
7323 “đồng cảm”, and anyone with expertise in psychology will translate it as “thấu cảm”. The
7324 problem here is that there is no agreed translation, and perhaps it is also difficult to agree
7325 because sometimes the same term has different translations depending on the specific area
7326 of work. And ideally, if we found an agreed translation for a term, who would have the
7327 authority to make the decision? That's the question I ask myself. So the most disadvantaged
7328 in the end will be the beneficiaries of the knowledge about “empathy” in that specific area.

7329 So my own way of dealing with this is still to take an equivalent that I think is most
7330 appropriate, if I know there are several different translations out there, then I put the original
7331 term in parentheses, and I will inform the community that there are currently different
7332 translations for this term alone. If I have time, and if necessary, I will stop to give my
7333 thoughts on the difference of these translations in different contexts. For example,
7334 "compassion" is translated as “tù bi” or “tâm từ” which is very different, so I will explain it
7335 “nôm na” as follows, “Okay, compassion also has a formula, ie. it will include this and
7336 combined with that...”. Since there are people who mistake compassion for empathy, then I
7337 would say, “compassion is empathy plus this and that...”. So explaining the formulation of
7338 a concept is the solution that I often use for these cases.

7339 *In your daily work, do you always have enough time to explain in detail like this?*

7340 That's right, it takes time, and it depends on the audience. For listeners who have the ability
7341 to look up, we handle it as above, that is, we have to provide the original terms with the
7342 translation of our choice, and then provide extra information for them to look up. I do so
7343 because in my work, there may be knowledge in English for example that is undergoing a
7344 process of debate and discussion and there is not yet a consensus. So I better recommend
7345 that they read more. When I have time, it is best to explain in detail.

7346 *Last time you introduced to me the glossary tool that you and your colleagues are building.*
7347 *Can you tell me more about the current and future use of this tool?*

7348 For example, we have a team to prepare different lecture components for the same topic, this
7349 glossary serves the purpose of internal research so that team members can agree on the
7350 language. And my team also has a plan for translating textbooks, so this tool will also be
7351 helpful for looking up and updating new terminology arising in the translation process.
7352 Temporarily in the future, this tool is used for the two purposes mentioned above, mainly
7353 internally, but it will continue to be updated and expanded. Currently, it is a living document
7354 on Google Sheets.

7355 *Can you give me a screenshot of the tool?*

7356 All right, I'll email you.

7357 *Thank you. Do you have other ways to handle translation-related issues in development to*
7358 *share with me?*

7359 I have a feeling that nowadays most development organisations are hiring people with
7360 bilingual English – Vietnamese skills, but with existing problems of translation and
7361 terminology, they should deliver capacity building for those so that the staff can translate
7362 and process language more flexibly, especially in the situation that new criteria comes up at
7363 work such as gender sensitivity or political sensitivity, so the fluent use of language will help
7364 overcome these barriers. Those who have just graduated and go to work in an NGO or are
7365 new in the development sector will need immediate training like this, because those who
7366 have worked for a long time and have experience are almost able to have their own
7367 definitions for the knowledge they work with, and they are more skilled to explain. The
7368 development industry itself in Vietnam nowadays, we have terms which usage is almost
7369 fixed, such as “sinh kế”, livelihoods, which I see has met two criteria, first being inclusive,
7370 that is, it covers all aspects of the problem, and second, it is easy to understand. Of course,
7371 if we explain it “nôm na” and informally, we can translate livelihoods as “kế sinh nhai”, or
7372 “công ăn việc làm” to be more familiar to the majority who may not understand about the
7373 development sector. So if we propose a solution that is to provide training on translation and
7374 language for NGO workers and developer workers, then the trainers must be able to know
7375 the two ways of explanation as I mentioned, first, the term must be widely accepted which
7376 is more formal, and second, it must go with some “nôm na” explanation which is informal.

7377 *I want to ask you the next question. In your opinion, which terms in development should not*
7378 *be translated into Vietnamese?*

7379 Based on the examples I gave earlier, I'm thinking of terms like “resilience” and
7380 “mindfulness” in the field of training on psychological counselling.

7381 “Resilience” in this area has been around for a long time and we still translate it as “khả năng
7382 phục hồi” in a personal perspective. However, recently, when I consulting with others, I see
7383 other translations, namely “sức bật tinh thần” [spiritual pliancy] and “khả năng vượt khó”
7384 [ability to overcome difficulties]. But in the broader development context, “resilience” at the
7385 macro level will go beyond the individual perspective and must include factors such as the
7386 environment, so moving beyond the above translations in psychology, this term must be
7387 translated differently.

7388 I also think that “mindfulness” should be kept as is and not translated. There have been
7389 some mindfulness training courses recently. Until now, “mindfulness” in this area is
7390 translated as “khả năng tập trung”, that is, attention or focus. In practice in Vietnam, people
7391 will associate mindfulness with concepts like “sự tỉnh thức” [awakening] and “chánh niệm”
7392 and these concepts are far from “khả năng tập trung”. Trainers also believe that
7393 “mindfulness” must go beyond “khả năng tập trung”, i.e. focus, attention or concentration
7394 and it must include the element of “sự tử tế”, kindness. Of course, we must clearly define
7395 "mindfulness practice" as an act such as meditation, while "mindfulness" is a state. If we
7396 "formulate" the concept of mindfulness in this area of practice, it would include components
7397 such as “khả năng tập trung”, “sự tử tế” and one more, "non-judgment". Therefore, the
7398 common translation of “khả năng tập trung” is limited and not convincing to many. So I
7399 think, instead of translating “mindfulness” into Vietnamese, it's better to clarify its
7400 components when explaining it to people. Specifically, “mindfulness” helps people
7401 recognise whatever happens to them continuously, time by time, and thereby identify
7402 difficult emotions at an early stage and manage those difficult emotions. Mindfulness also
7403 helps them increase their ability to be present with the relationships around them, so that
7404 when listening to others, they don't see those emotions “emerging” and make them forget
7405 that they are connecting with the others. So when I go to explain mindfulness to my
7406 colleagues, most of whom have university degrees or higher, it is not difficult for them to
7407 accept such an explanation and it seems easy that they welcome terms like “mindfulness”.
7408 This is an explanation provided to those of you who will do the counselling for the
7409 community, but at the community level, this explanation may not work because it is not close
7410 enough. I have not had the opportunity to observe these colleagues counselling and
7411 explaining “mindfulness practice” to the community, that is, people with psychological
7412 difficulties or behavioural disorders. But I think sometimes in the community, we don't need
7413 to stick to the terms, and we don't need to use the phrase "practice mindfulness". I think we
7414 have to borrow from them what is familiar in life, for example, just say "meditate".

7415 *What specific impact do you see the translation and terminology problems like this have on*
7416 *your day-to-day work?*

7417 As a trainer, I am concerned that there will be misunderstandings in communication, and
7418 consequently, community members may practice wrongly and differently to what we expect.
7419 I worry for the users of this knowledge, that if they misunderstand the translated knowledge,
7420 there will be an impact on their practice.

7421 I also want to give an example of how "power" in "empowerment" is understood because it
7422 may cause reservations among stakeholders if we translate "power" as “quyền” or “quyền
7423 lực”. Right now I am thinking and finding an explanation of "empowerment" as well as
7424 concepts such as "power over, power with, power under, power to, power within" which are
7425 emerging concepts in the field of non-violence communication and also in specialised
7426 materials for training. I have discussed with colleagues as well as with other friends in the
7427 development sector but still have not found a satisfactory translation. For this group of

7428 conceptual categories, first we must have our own understanding and agree between
7429 ourselves before it is documented into knowledge in the training curricula.

7430 *You remind me of the categories of "language in development", "language for development",*
7431 *"language of development" and "language as development"...*

7432 That's right, and also the pair of "reflection is learning", "reflection for learning", etc. In
7433 short, apart from the above concerns and the responsibility to clearly explain knowledge to
7434 the trainees, in my daily work, I have not seen any other specific impact of translation and
7435 terminology.

7436 *Shall I move on to the next topic? So I want to share with you 2 examples of shared learning.*
7437 *One is an initiative of the Saigon Community of Interpreters and Translators (SGCI&T)*
7438 *under the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation Foundation (HPDF) from*
7439 *which learning activities such as seminars and workshops on importance of translation for*
7440 *the comprehensive development and integration of Vietnam or "translation in the 4.0 era"*
7441 *were held. The other is the contest organised by ADF in collaboration with the Youth Union*
7442 *for young people to participate in translating "resilience" using language and means of*
7443 *visuals. These examples are quite consistent with the understanding of shared learning, that*
7444 *is, different parties join and shared their knowledge on certain topics about translation.*
7445 *What do you think of the importance of shared learning in translation and terminology in*
7446 *development work in Vietnam?*

7447 I'm thinking about why people get into shared learning and communities of practice.
7448 Currently, I am working on training for many consulting and counselling groups. In terms
7449 of practice, they haven't yet officially established a community to discuss translation issues
7450 as well as terminology, but mainly people observe, self-study and do their own research
7451 through reading and decide for themselves. To a certain extent, this self-study lacks what we
7452 call the "peer review" feature. That's why it's so common that people use English and
7453 Vietnamese in a mixed way when they communicate, when they find it difficult or when
7454 they are lazy to translate, or simply because it's convenient. Recently in the training and
7455 psychological counselling space, people are more and more permissive and they accept the
7456 mixed use of English and Vietnamese like this. In general, this space accepts it naturally,
7457 except for some people with high awareness, when they explain difficult issues, they always
7458 cite sources for others to compare and research.

7459 My view is that shared learning is a necessary and desirable thing. There are not many
7460 organisations that build tools like a glossary for "temporary" use like my team, so it is
7461 necessary to expand this tool and make it more public, but there must be someone with
7462 authority to stand up to make the tool useful in shared learning, or we can say it must have
7463 legitimacy.

7464 *If development practitioners and translation professionals come together, what do you think*
7465 *these two groups will learn from each other?*

7466 First, that the translation people will understand how the development workers understand
7467 and use the knowledge so that they can "standardise" the use of the language. Development
7468 workers who "apply" the knowledge will need the translation professionals who are experts
7469 in translation and language to properly explain the meaning of words, that's what I do when
7470 I don't understand words. As a result, development workers can expand their vocabulary. At
7471 the same time, the two groups can also update each other with new knowledge and new terms

7472 that arise. In addition, the development people can also learn about the techniques, skills and
7473 tips to use when they engage in translation, such as how to use tools to help them use
7474 language and terminology better. Currently, the position of NGOs in Vietnam is sensitive in
7475 terms of political relations. So on the topic of translation at the NGOs, the challenge is to
7476 ensure not only that translation is accurate and helpful in communicating original ideas in
7477 development but also that it has to be protective of the people involved. Using language that
7478 makes the other party feel that they are spreading knowledge in a positive way and with no
7479 bad intentions [*Laughter*] is very important.

7480 *Back to the topic of reflection, do you have any other specific terms that are persistently*
7481 *problematic in your work?*

7482 The story of “mindfulness” is what I have recently come across and I have shared with you.
7483 “Resilience”, I am just starting to come into contact with this concept and have not had much
7484 experience, but my feeling is that when I listen to different translations, they all make some
7485 sense to me. Also, I am not satisfied with the way “empowerment” and the categories of
7486 “power” are understood and translation. When I ask people about these problematic
7487 concepts, the first response is always, “Give me the context”.

7488 *Do you have any other topics about translation and development you want to discuss with*
7489 *me?*

7490 I’ll certainly reach you when I speak more to people about translation and if I see any issues
7491 arising at work.

7492 *That’s great. Thank you!*