VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HA NOI

UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

FACULTY OF POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

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PHẠM THANH TÂM

DESIGNING A SYLLABUS OF TRANSLATION MODULE 1 FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH MAJORS IN THE TEACHER-TRAINING SECTION OF HOA LU UNIVERSITY

(Xây dựng chương trình chi tiết học phần Dịch 1 cho sinh viên Cao đẳng sư phạm tiếng Anh tại trường Đại học Hoa Lư, Ninh Bình)

M.A. MINOR PROGRAMME THESIS

Field: English Teaching Methodology
Code: 60140111

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CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT

I hereby declare that this thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.

The work was done under the guidance of Assoc.Prof., PhD. Le Hung Tien at University of Languages and International Studies-VNU.

Ha Noi, 2015

Pham Thanh Tam

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, translation plays a significant role in modern FL teaching and learning. It has not only been used as a traditional aiding tool to teaching foreign languages, but the 'fifth' language skill, together with the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, to help develop learners' language competence. In order to enhance students' English proficiency, this study was conducted to design a translation syllabus for the English Teacher-training section of Foreign Languages and Informatics Department of Hoa Lu University. The study consists of three main parts: Introduction, Development and Conclusion.

The Introduction states the rationale, aims and objectives, research questions, scopes, methods and the design of the study.

The Development which is the main part of the study consists of three chapters. Chapter 1 reviews literature on some fundamental features translation, syllabus design, and needs analysis. Chapter 2 takes into consideration such questions as the teaching and learning situation at HLU, the background of the study's subjects, and the needs analysis conducted to the translation teachers, and the English majors of English Teacher-Training Section with instruments of questionnaires and interviews. The results of the needs analysis provide the basis for the translation syllabus which is proposed in Chapter 3.

The Conclusion summarizes the study, points out its limitations and gives suggestions for further research.

The proposed syllabus is expected to meet students' needs as well as the training objectives of HLU and will make contribution to the improvement of English learning and teaching at the university.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELT: English Language Teaching

FL: Foreign Language

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

GE: General English

HLU: Hoa Lu University

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

SL: Source Language

ST: Source Text

TL: Target Language

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

In the age of globalization and international integration, translation has been considered to be a crucial skill in foreign language acquisition. Other than a traditional method of teaching foreign languages of the past, it is currently considered to be "*characteristically purposed as a profession*" (Candlin, 1991). To most people, translation is an activity confined to those who have already achieved a high degree of language proficiency. In language teaching, actually, translation is a valuable aid that reinforces the teaching of language skills. It is of great value in sensitizing students to contrasts and comparisons between grammar of their own language and the source language (Bicer, 2002). Translation provides students with a linguistically demanding, mind stretching, and creative exercise. As a result, offering a translation course to foreign language learners is of great necessity.

Recently, translation and EFL are very much integrated through necessity. A survey undertaken by Swell (1996) about the teaching of translation at British Universities indicates that translation courses continue to attract students for "many lovers for language love to translate" (Swell, 1996, cited in Anderman, Malmkjaer at al., 1998). In South East Asia and in Latin America, it is quite usual for translation to be incorporated into English syllabuses at university level (Campbell, 2002). Some universities that adopt translation course in language curriculum to be mentioned could be Toyama University of International Studies (Japan), Wenzao Ursuline University of Language (Taiwan), University of Guyana, etc.

In Vietnam, translation is employed as a compulsory subject in foreign language curriculum of many education institutions, ranging from the top-rank ones such as University of Language and International Studies or Hanoi University to the local ones such as Nha Trang University or Hong Duc University.

Like many other universities in Vietnam, translation is taught for students of the English Teacher-Training Section at Hoa Lu University (HLU) in the second year. However, in preparing for this course, teachers of the English section face a lot of difficulties due to the lack of teaching materials and an appropriate translation syllabus. It is a matter of fact that the target students of Hoa Lu University, who are attending three-year program for teachers of secondary schools, possess not-very-high English proficiency. Complicate texts full of technical terms, thus, would be too difficult for them to handle. Since no really suitable published materials are available for the identified needs, teachers have no choice but to provide the materials for the course.

Besides, the teaching job is completely left to individual teacher, which means the teachers teach whatever they consider necessary or capable concerning the convenience and availability of materials. This, consequently, leads to a confusion in the aims and objectives of teaching, which results in the inconsistency in teaching content, methodology as well as evaluation.

Being one member of the teachers who are in charge of this challenging task I realized that designing an appropriate translation syllabus is of great necessity and significance given the time allotment of the course and the students' English proficiency. This is the main reason why the topic "Developing a syllabus of translation module 1 for college English majors in the teacher-training section of Hoa Lu University" is chosen for my thesis.

2. Aims and objectives

The study aims at designing an appropriate translation syllabus for the second-year students of English majors at HLU. To achieve this aim, the following objectives are established:

(1) To identify the needs perceived by the teachers, the students toward an appropriate translation syllabus for the target students.

(2) To propose a translation syllabus for HLU.

3. Research questions

In order to attain the above aims and objectives of the study, the researcher developed the following research questions:

(1) What are the students' learning needs and target needs from the perspectives of the students and the teachers?

(2) What is an appropriate Translation Syllabus for HLU?

The answer to these questions will help to develop an appropriate translation syllabus for the second-year English majors at HLU.

4. Scope of the study

This study is initiated and developed from the urgent need to design an appropriate translation syllabus for the English-major students at HLU. Within the scope of a minor thesis, this research paper focuses on the designing process itself; only the basic theories related to translation and syllabus design are presented. The study's major objects are the translation teachers of the English section, and the English-major students at Hoa Lu University.

5. Methods of the study

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed in this study. The quantitative method, which is used to collect data by means of questionnaires, aims at identifying the needs for the translation syllabus from a broad view. The questionnaires are administered to the English-major students at HLU. Besides, the qualitative method is used to collect in-depth data through interviews with the translation teachers of English section as well as through informal discussions with colleagues.

6. Design of the study

The study contains three main parts:

Part I – Introduction presents the rationale, aims and objectives, research questions, scopes, methods and the design of the study.

Part II – Development, which is the main part of the study, consists of three chapters:

- Chapter 1 reviews the literature concerning translation in language teaching, syllabus design, and need analysis.
- Chapter 2 describes in details the study including its background, subjects, instruments for collecting data and the findings of the study
- Chapter 3 proposes a translation syllabus for English-major students at HLU

Part III – Conclusion offers a summary of the study, limitations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. An overview of translation

1.1.1. Definition of translation

Translation is an activity of enormous importance in our modern world. Until now, a great number of books and articles have been written about this area of human knowledge. Regarding the question "What is translation?", there exist many a different perspective over this process. Catford, in his work in 1965, described translation as *"the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language)"*. Very much similar to this definition is that by Hartmann & Stock (1972) where translation is defined as "*the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of another equivalent text in a second language*". To make it more specific, Dubois (1973) claimed translation to be "*the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another (source language), preserving semantic and stylistic equivalencies*". Likewise, Nida and Taber (1974) stated that, *"translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closet natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style"*.

It can be seen that despite some differences in the definitions mentioned above, which is the matter of fact; a common point of view shared among the authors is the pursuance of as much equivalence as possible between the source text and the target text of the translation process. This would be helpful in later teaching and learning activity where students are aware of what translation process aims at; it also provides a base for translation evaluation.

1.1.2. The use of translation in teaching FLT

By the late eighteenth century, Grammar-Translation Method was absorbed into teaching from an effort to adjust the scholastic approach, which was traditionally used

to teach Latin and Greek in grammar school. Grammar Translation Method approached the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, and then applied to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language. Language learning, as a result, was a little more than a process of memorizing rules and facts in order to manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. From the 1840s to the 1940s, Grammar-Translation rose to prominence and even considered to be "*right at the heart of language teaching*" (Duff, 1989). About this method of language teaching, Stern (1983:455) claimed that "*the first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language*". There is not usually any listening or speaking practice, and very little attention is placed on pronunciation or any communicative aspects of the language. However, in the late 19ᵗʰ century Grammar-Translation method lost its dominant position in foreign language teaching because of the emergence of the Direct, Natural, Conversational, and/or Communicative methods of language teaching. At the centre of this learning theory is the target of communicative performance whose task is to guide the pupil by making him actively participate in foreign language lesson, to gain command of a foreign language in such a way that he is able to figure out its lexical and syntactic inventories according to situational conditions.

However, despite the uncompromising theoretical rejection of translation as an instrument of foreign language learning, translation classes have never been fully crowded out of practical FLT. In addition, the so-called direct method with the aim of being as 'natural' as possible in the classroom has turned out to be unable to live up to pedagogical expectation. "*Like any FLT methodology, direct method, and its successor, the audio-lingual method has its own theory-immanent drawbacks*" (Wilss, 1981). It is obvious that a comprehensive foreign language learning theory simply cannot be built on a monolithic behaviorist FLT model. Due to the limitation of using mother tongue in foreign language classrooms, "*many important grammatical and other issues remain*

half-understood or completely distorted in the mind of the student" (Naimushin, 2002). Translation, which has been particularly disclaimed within the EFL community, is now beginning to regain respectability among teaching professionals due to the remarkable change in the role it has assumed in language teaching in recent years.

1.1.3. Translation as the fifth skill in FLT

Since the late 1970s, "*translation has come to be seen, increasingly, as a complex process involving a variety of cognitive components which are the building blocks of translation intelligence*" (Wills, in Malmkiaer et al., 1998, cited in Ferreira, 1999:39). Translation has not only seen as an aiding tool for teaching language but even the "*fifth skill*" together with the four other skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

It is necessary to discriminate between the teaching of translation as a vocational skill and an aid to language learning. Klaudy (in Vermes, 2010) classifies pedagogical translation into two types which she calls pedagogical translation and real translation. According to her, pedagogical translation is an instrumental kind of translation that serves as a tool of improving the learner's foreign language proficiency. Its object is information about learner's language level. On the other hand, in real translation, the translated text is not a tool but the goal to reach. Its object is information about reality. Nigel Ross, of the City of Milan School for Translators and Interpreters, rightly suggested that FLT teachers are not in the job of training students to become professional translators, and that the real usefulness of translation in the EFL classroom lies in exploiting it in order to compare grammar, vocabulary, word order and other language points in English and the student's mother-tongue.

1.1.3.1. The role of translation as the fifth skill in FL teaching and learning.

At the first place, there remains a strong relationship between translation and other four language skills. Ferreira (1999) indicates that an acceptable translation requires a great deal of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and that when students translate language, they may be practicing other skills, too. This is why translation cannot be

radically different from other skills; hence, there is no reason to consider translation a time-wasting activity in language teaching. According to Baker (2006), "*the fifth skill not only deserves as much attention as the other four, but is in fact key to master the language*".

According to Dagiliene (2012), translation activities are a useful pedagogical tool in the way that when introduced purposefully and imaginatively into language learning program, translation becomes a suitable language practice method for many students, and when integrated into daily classroom activities translation can help students develop and improve reading, speaking, writing skills, grammar and vocabulary.

N. J. Ross in his work (2000) also claims translation has a special importance at an intermediate and advanced level, especially, in the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers. In his article "*Translation in the context of EFL – The fifth Macro Skill?*" (2002), Campbell also states that translation teaching techniques can be used to develop students' vocabulary, teach grammar structures, and contribute to fast delivery of semantic content.

Additionally, translation offers students opportunities to discover more deeply the target-language culture as well as figure out cultural differences between the two languages. As Wiersema (2005) suggests, "*Translation can be serving an increasingly important function for people to understand and learn foreign cultures*". She believes that translation on one hand can play a role in presenting to a target culture an image of a source culture, thereby achieving mutual understanding in the sense of a growing awareness of differences; on the other hand, cultures may also use translations to represent and define, or redefine themselves, i.e. delimit themselves from other cultures. According to Kuhiwczak and Littau, (Eds.). (2007), with the practice in translating texts into and out of the target language*, "students can often first experience*

a foreign culture and get a better understanding of original materials". Stuart Campbell (2002) also said "*students could be exposed to cross-cultural differences through interpreting role-play exercises where they cope with hard linguistic evidence*" Apart from that, translation is also believed to allow students to practice a variety of styles and registers (Duff, 1992), provide useful reinforcement of structural, conceptual and sociolinguistic differences between the native and target languages (Atkinson's, 1987), promote noticing and language awareness, as well as highlight the differences and similarities between the new and existing language (Cook, 2010), and promote learner autonomy (Ahmadinejad, 2006).

Concerning students' opinions towards translation tasks in the classroom, according to a study conducted by Fernandez-Guerra (2014), students considered translation tasks as the most motivating activities. The reasons is translation helps them acquired knowledge about the source and target cultures, improve knowledge of language registers and dialects, broaden lexical knowledge, acquire more fluency and fastness in re-expression and raise awareness of the differences between both linguistic systems.

Newmark (1988, in Ross, 2000) stated that "*translation is a two-edged instrument: it has the special purpose of demonstrating the learner's knowledge of the foreign language, either as a form of control or to exercise his intelligence in order to develop his competence*". Although translation requires a significant proficiency of L2 and most suitable for final stage, with carefully designed activities, translation tasks can still be applied at early stages (Campbell, 2002).

1.1.3.2. Application of translation in FL teaching and learning.

When it comes to the application of translation in language teaching, in their co-work, Rivers and Temperlry (1978) discussed some 'judious use' and 'opportunities' to engage in translation as an activity in the classroom.

First, translation can be used as a teaching and learning device. Accordingly, translation is divided into two processes, i.e. translation from the second or foreign language to the native language, and translation from the native to the second or foreign language. The former process is used for clarifying the meaning of certain abstract concepts, function words and logical connectives, and some idiomatic expressions which context alone does not illuminate. This translation, however, is suggested not being used too frequently since it can become a crutch which reduces the amount of effort given to inference. The latter process of translation is divided into two smaller ones: translation of isolated sentences – where a set of short sentences focusing on a particular grammar feature could be used as a stimulus for eliciting formulations in English; and translation in imitation of a text - a specially constructed exercise useful for identifying student problems in grammatical and vocabulary usage in written English.

Second, translation is considered as a specialized study. It not only involves the students in serious consideration of the expressive possibilities of the new language, but also extends their appreciation of the semantic extensions and limitations of their first language and the implications for meaning of its syntactic options. In this translation, a careful analysis of the meaning of the source text plays a significant role. Some searching questions about the text that should be taken into consideration are *type of writing, the overall meaning of the text, the tone of the text, equivalence of general structure and lexical items, the sociolinguistic and emotional levels of language, cultural related items, idiosyncratic features of the author's style, etc.* To fulfill this task, students need to be given much practice with translation graded in

difficulty, with particular passages selected that allow the student to focus on specific problems. Meanwhile, in translation from English into the native language, it is advisable to begin with useful things which are near at hand, such as *labels, slogans and advertisements.* The higher level could be translation of *instructions for the use of products, letters from correspondents, historical documents* or *a poem.*

Another useful activity mentioned is to help student explore the dictionary. Since one of the aims in teaching another language is to open up to the students the world of language itself; besides, different languages view reality from different perspectives and many of these cultural differences are reflected in words, the dictionary can be an invaluable friend.

In the case of this study, teaching translation as the fifth skill will help students enrich their vocabulary and improve their language competence as well.

1.2. An overview of syllabus design

1.2.1. Defining syllabus

Though most teachers might regard the question of what a syllabus means as unnecessary, it should be noted that clarifying the concept of syllabus is extremely problematic. There seems to be as many definitions as definers, each apparently covering similar ground, whilst containing various aspects and differences in emphasis. For example, Pienemann (1985:23) sees the syllabus as "the selection and grading of linguistic teaching objectives", while for Breen (1984:47) it is a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students' learning". On close examination, Pienemann's emphasis on linguistic objectives misses the possible non-linguistic functions of a syllabus, which Freire emphasizes, and Breen's attention to achievement seems to overlook the indeterminate relationship between what is taught and what is learned. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:80) define syllabus as "a document which says what will (or at least what should) be learnt" whereas its function is "to specify what is to be taught and in what order" (Prabhu, 1984).

Despite these difficulties, a working understanding of what a syllabus means in this thesis is needed. Candlin's summary of a syllabus will be here followed.

> Syllabuses are concerned with the specification and planning of what is to be learned, frequently set down in some written form as prescriptions for action by teachers and learners. They have, traditionally, the mark of authority. They are concerned with the achievement of ends, often, though not always, associated with the pursuance of particular means. (Candlin, 1984:30)

While acknowledging that this summary can be challenged, I feel it recognizes most of the academic and social implications of syllabuses without specifically prescribing the results and processes of syllabus design. It thus provides a sufficiently broad base from which to continue my research.

1.2.2. Translation syllabus design

Syllabus is a part of an overall language course. Therefore, in order to design one, it is important to look over approaches to course design. In what follows four major approaches to translation syllabus design will be reviewed named grammar-based, text-based, culture-based and topic-based.

1.2.2.1. Grammar-based syllabus

The grammar-based syllabus is used to refer to a syllabus for teaching translation in which a contrastive analysis of the two languages plays a significant role. This approach tends to divide the curriculum into discrete translation techniques for practice one at a time, such as amplification, conversion, repetition, negation, adverbial clauses, etc. This so-called "bottom-up" approach moves from smaller units to larger ones. The learner's task is to combine these broken down skills to form his own translation process. Focus is laid on specific linguistic problems while less attention is given to the overall picture of the translation process. An example of Grammar-based syllabus is D.Y.Loh's: *Translation: its principles and techniques* (in Hatim, 2001:174-175).

1.2.2.2. Culture-based syllabus

The idea for teaching translation changed as people increasingly see translation in a cultural context rather than simple transfer of linguistic signs. According to Vermeer (1998:61), translation is "*an act of intercultural communication rather than a skill in transferring minimal linguistic units across language boundaries*". His "functional approach" advocates that a text is produced in a specific context with specific recipients, communicative functions, and so on. So the translation of a text cannot be limited to the transformation of the text linguistically. It, instead, must involve the consideration of the source and target communicative contexts. As Vermeer (1998) stated, "*cultural competence comprises the whole range of everyday interaction as well as types of specific profession behavior with which a translator has to become familiar*". An example of cultural-based syllabus can be found in Hatim (2001).

1.2.2.3. Text-based syllabus

In modern translation theory, text level equivalence has replaced sentence level equivalence to be pursued in translation process, and communicative purposes are also emphasized. As recognized by this approach, mistranslating a word or having an ungrammatical element in the translation does not ruin the whole translation or alter its effect on the readers, but a failure to recognize register, text type, genre or author's implications will lead to an unsuccessful version of translation.

Along with the advent of text linguistics, a "top-down approach" to translation has been suggested with the overall evaluation of a ST, moving from larger units to smaller ones. Organizing the translation experience around the analysis and experience of text types has become a common practice because it is believed to "*closely related to the actual process of translation, with different types placing different demands on the translator*" (Reiss in Hatim, 2001).

Regarding text typology, there have been a number of trends. Based on subject matter, for instance, texts can be grouped as journalistic, technical, and literary and so on. Such

text typologies, in Hatim's word, "*have been influential, informing translators'*
decision and forming the theoretical background of many a programme in translation
training" (1998:263). Among a number of functional typologies, Newmark (1988)
suggested a division of three types of texts namely expressive, informative and
vocative. This has set some useful light on the translation process. In recent work,
Hatim and Mason (1997) suggested a text typology based on rhetorical purpose that
categorizes texts as argumentation, exposition and instruction. This framework has
been suggested especially for advanced translators training program (Hatim, 2001).

1.2.2.4. Topic-based syllabus

This type of syllabus is organized around themes, topics or other units of content.
Content provides the vehicle for the presentation of language rather than practicing language
structures, functions, or skills. "It is the teaching of content or information in the language
being learned with little or no direct effort to teach the language separately from the content
being taught" (Krahnke 1987, 65).

Claims made for the advantages of courses based on topic-based syllabuses are:

- They facilitate comprehension.
- Content makes linguistic form more meaningful.
- Content serves as the best basis for teaching the skill areas.
- They address students' needs.
- They motivate learners.
- They allow for integration of the four skills.
- They allow for use of authentic materials.

<div align="center">(Brinton, Snow, and Wesche 1989; Mohan 1986)</div>

This approach was used in a German university program described in Brinton et al. (1989)
that was built around the following themes:

Television	modern architecture
Religious persuasion	microchip technology

Advertising	ecology
Drugs	alternative energy
Racism	nuclear energy
Native Americans	Dracula in myth, novel, and films

In translator training programs in Vietnam, this framework is also very popular. The two curricula that we fortunately have from Vinh University and Hanoi University of Business and Technology are of this type.

1.2.2.5. Choosing an appropriate type of translation syllabus

As discussed above, there are several different types of syllabus and each one has its own advantages as well as disadvantages. Taking into account this, Hutchinson (1987:89) suggested: "Any teaching materials must, in reality, operate several syllabuses at the same time. One of them will probably be used as the principal organizing feature, but the others are still there, even if they are not taken into account in the organization of the material". Since the course aims at providing translation as the fifth skill to help students develop their English competence, a combination of topic-based and text-based syllabus appears to be the most appropriate for the translation course in this study. A text-based syllabus adopts modern perspective of translation - to achieve text level equivalence with attention paid to specific features of the text such as genre, type, purpose, etc. This prepares students with ability to deal with various types of texts in real world, hence, diversifies their ways of using language. A topic-based syllabus, additionally, provides students with not only vocabulary of various fields but also texts of interest, which is very important in language learning. As Richard (2001) observed, topic-based syllabus is believed to address students' needs and thus motivate them.

Accordingly, students will choose the topics they are fond of. Then, the teacher, with students' interests in mind, will decide the suitable texts for the course. Regarding text typologies to be included in this course, Marsh (1987) suggested two categories

journalistic and technical or scientific being the most appropriate for language learners because "they are usually based on the issues which the students are likely to have knowledge of and interest in, therefore increases motivation". Literary texts are not recommended because they are believed too challenging to the students at the current level.

1.2.3. Steps to design a syllabus

Course design specialists have developed various frameworks that break down the process of syllabus development into components and sub-processes. Munby (in John A.S. Read, 1984:58) suggests that "designing a syllabus involves a logical sequence of three stages: 1. Needs analysis; 2. Content specification; 3. Syllabus organization". Nunan (1988) offers four steps to syllabus design: 1. Needs analysis; 2. Goal and objective setting; 3. Selecting and grading content; 4. Selecting and grading tasks. Graves (1996:13) proposes a more detailed framework with seven steps including needs assessment, determining goals and objectives, conceptualizing content, selecting and developing materials and activities, organization of content and activities, evaluation and consideration of resources and constraints. The author further notes that the framework is not of equal parts: each individual's context determines which processes need the most time and attention.

Based on all these ideas, the syllabus will be designed by working out mainly on three steps: Needs analysis, determining aims and objectives, selecting and grading content. Since the first step, needs analysis provides validity and relevancy for all subsequence design activities it will be further discussed in the next part of the thesis.

1.2.4. Needs analysis

There are many definitions of needs analysis given by different scholars and researchers. According to Nunan (1988:75) needs analysis "refers to a family of procedures for gathering information about learners and about communication tasks for use in syllabus design". A more detailed description of needs analysis is presented by

Bachman and Palmer (1996:102) as follows: "needs analysis, or needs assessment, involves the systematic gathering of specific information about the languages needs of learners and the analysis of this information for purposes of language syllabus design". The rationale for needs analysis is that by identifying elements of students' target English situations and using them as the basis of translation instruction, teachers will be able to provide students with the specific language they need to succeed in their courses and future careers (John, 1991).

Concerning the types of needs Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguish between target needs and learning needs. *Target needs* comprise necessities (what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation), lacks (the gap between target and existing proficiency of the learner), and want (the learners' view on their needs). *Learning needs*, on the other hand, is a cover term for all the factors connected to the process of learning like attitude, motivation, awareness, personality, learning styles and strategies, social background etc. Both target needs and learning needs are taken into account when determining the aims and objectives of the syllabus. The best methodology for studying the needs of any particular group of students, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), is to use such methods as questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and collection of authentic texts.

1.3. Summary

This chapter reviews theories related to all basic aspects for designing a translation syllabus, including theories of translation (definitions, translation as a method and a fifth skill in foreign language teaching) and theories of syllabus (definitions, approaches to translation design, and steps in syllabus design). Besides, attention is paid to needs analysis since it is the important initial step in translation syllabus design. Hopefully, an appropriate translation syllabus will be designed for the English majors English Teacher-Training Section at HLU in the light of this literature review.

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDY

Introduction

It is obvious that needs analysis is a very crucial first step prior to designing and developing a syllabus. Thus, this chapter is devoted to the discussion of the results collected from the teachers of the English section, and the target students by means of questionnaires and interviews. Moreover, some situational factors such as training institution, the teaching staff, facilities, the teaching and learning English situation, and the learners' background are also taken into account in order to have a useful analysis of learner needs as suggested by Hutchinson and Waters (1987:61): "the needs, potential and constraints of the route (i.e. the learning situation) must also be taken into account, if we are going to have any useful analysis of the learner needs".

2.1. Training Institution

Established in 2007, Hoa Lu University was upgraded from the original Ninh Binh Teacher Training College. As a multi-subject university, HLU currently offers various training programs for many majors such as teacher-training, accounting, business administration and Vietnamese studies, etc.

Among the nine training departments founded, Department of Foreign languages and Informatics consists of two main subjects – foreign languages and informatics with the missions of training foreign languages (English and French) and information technology.

Aiming at preparing the students well to meet the demand of modern society after graduation, English teaching is paid close attention and considered one of the strategic tasks of HLU.

2.2. Facilities

HLU enjoys rather good physical condition with standard quality classroom and modern facilities. Every classroom is equipped with projector, display screen and computer. Cassette players are always available as audio tools for listening lessons. For

the sake of developing English skills, a lab room has been recently built with the latest technologies and facilities.

For teachers, each department has one function room with three Internet-accessed computers and two printers, which are useful aids for searching and preparing teaching materials. There is also a library offering books and newspapers in English where teachers and students can find necessary materials for reference. A few computers are also available to serve. However, a limited feature is the shortage of translation books and materials, which is an unfavorable factor to the study.

2.3. The teaching staff of the English section

The teaching staff of the English section consists of 14 teachers, aged between 25 and 38. Among them, eight teachers have just got M.A degree in English language; two are studying for the same degree at Hanoi University; the others have Bachelor degree in English. As revealed above, teachers in English section are quite young and all officially trained in national foreign language universities with degrees from Bachelor to M.A. Even though having received no training in translation teaching, they all used to enjoy translation courses offered in university. It is also worth noticing that among the teachers, three graduated from Hanoi University, where translation and interpretation courses were focused deeply in language training programs. In addition, all teachers are quite familiar to modern methodology, their experience and knowledge would be an important source for the study.

2.4. The students

The students come from different parts of Ninh Binh province, ranging from remote areas to villages to towns to the city, and some nearby provinces such as Nam Dinh, Thai Binh, etc. This leads to the variety in learning styles and expectations. At the beginning, the ones who come from towns and cities seem more active and confident. However, as the time goes by, the shy ones gradually become more social and integrated well into learning atmosphere. At the time of the third semester when this

study is conducted, it could be safely claimed that the students move in the same line despite of some certain differences in some respect.

Before taking translation course, the students have already finished some linguistic courses such as semantics and British and American literature. They have actually made good progress in study; however, a period of a year and a half is not enough for a remarkable improvement, so their English level is still not very high. An awareness of this fact is of great importance for course designers to develop an appropriate syllabus for them.

2.5. The study

2.5.1. The subjects

The subjects of the study are three translation teachers and 40 third-year English majors of English-teacher training section.

2.5.2. Instruments for collecting data

In this study, questionnaires and interviews are used as the main instruments for collecting the data because using questionnaires the researcher can collect information quickly from large numbers of respondents and interviews allow for in depth information on specific questions.

The questionnaire administered to 40 English majors of the English section at HLU includes two parts:

  Part A: seeks the information about the students' background

  Part B: concerns with information about the learning needs and syllabus designing needs

There are two types of data: qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions, and quantitative data from multiple choice ones. For multiple choice questions, the frequency of each item was calculated. For open-ended questions, the data was first grouped based on the content, then the researcher tried to find out the frequencies. The data of each item will be discussed one by one.

Besides, the interviews with 3 translation teachers aimed at colleting their opinions on the course content, learning activities, students' challenges and some recommendations to make the course better.

2.5.3. Procedure

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following procedures were pursued:

First, questionnaire including both open- and closed-ended questions was developed for the students based on the theoretical framework of the study. It was administered at the closing minutes of the classes. Each questionnaire was gathered after 15 minutes of administration. The data obtained from this questionnaire was imported into the computer and treated in Excel. The data was then subjected to some descriptive and inferential statistics. For accurate and effective interpretation of data, the author uses frequencies to find out the percentage that indicate more emphasis given to each item.

Second, interviews with the three translation teachers were constructed on the basis of the theoretical framework of the study. The interview questions were semi-structured with open-ended items. Appointments were made with these teachers prior to interviews. All the interviews were conducted in the teachers' spare time and each one took at least half an hour.

2.5.4. The findings

This section describes the statistics obtained from the questionnaires for the 40 English-major students and the interviews with three translation teachers of the English section.

2.5.4.1. The survey

2.5.4.1.1. Learners' background

Part 1 of the questionnaire is devoted to seek information about 40 third-year students' background. The result indicates that the students' ages range from 20 to 23 years old, 39 of them (97.5%) are female, and most students (70%) come from rural areas. They have learnt English for about 5 to 14 years. It is a fact that the students from rural areas

have shorter time learning English as well as enjoy less convenient learning condition in comparison with those from urban areas. This leads to a gap in English level between these two groups at the beginning. After the first two year, the gap has, fortunately, somewhat been bridged.

2.5.4.1.2. Learning needs

Item 1

This open-ended question is conducted to find out students' definition of translation. The answers are divided into three groups.

Group 1 define that translation is transferring a text from SL to TL in the way that the meaning is kept the same (n=25). Group 2 includes 9 students who think that translation is transferring the message of the author from SL to TL. Three students in group 3 share the opinion that translation is transferring a text from SL to TL with equivalence in style and cultural characteristics. It can be seen that, in general, the students are aware of the significant factors in translation process which are the text's meaning, cultural figures, style or author' message. What they need is more time of practice to fulfill their skill.

Table 1

What is translation?	*Number*	*Percentage*
1 – translation is transferring a text from SL to TL in the way that the meaning is kept the same	25	62.5%
2 – translation is transferring the message of the author from SL to TL	9	22.5%
3 – Translation is transferring a text from SL to TL with equivalence in style and cultural characteristics	3	7.5%
4 – No answer	3	7.5%

Item 2

As shown in Table 2, the four most important objectives from the students' perspective are items 1, 2, 4, 6 which have the total percentages of the four first priorities ranging from 70% to 85%. Besides, the students add another important objective, item 3 *to learn more about the cultures of English speaking countries*, with the total percentage of the first four priorities of 55%. This can be easily understood as the students' major is English; they assuredly desire to have a deeper knowledge of English countries' cultures. However, through informal discussions and interviews, all the three teachers agreed that this objective, despite its importance, should not be included in the syllabus because 'culture' is such a wide field that with a large range of areas to deal with, the given time frame of 60 periods, and the low English level of the students in addition, it is not practical to pursue. Yet having an awareness of this expectation of the students, the syllabus designer will take it into consideration by choosing some texts mentioning English culture in accordance with the defined topics, and providing supplementary materials about cultures of English speaking countries to help them broaden their knowledge.

Table 2

Items	Objectives	First priority	Second priority	Third priority	Forth priority	Fifth priority	Sixth priority	Seventh priority	Eighth priority
1	To expand vocabulary of various areas	6 (15%)	7 (17.5%)	11 (27.5%)	6 (15%)	4 (10%)	5 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.5%)
2	To adopt more native-like style of using English language	7 (17.5%)	8 (20%)	8 (20%)	9 (22.5%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	3 (7.5%)	1 (2.5%)
3	To review and consolidate basic grammatical structures	3 (7.5%)	6 (15%)	4 (10%)	9 (22.5%)	6 (15%)	5 (12.5%)	3 (7.5%)	4 (10%)
4	To deal with linguistic problems in pursuance of producing natural sounding translation	15 (37.5%)	9 (22.5%)	5 (12.5%)	5 (12.5%)	3 (7.5%)	1 (2.5%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)
5	To take part in international seminars and workshops on translation	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	6 (15%)	8 (20%)	9 (22.5%)	13 (32.5%)
6	To develop integrated skills of using English language, especially reading and writing	5 (12.5%)	6 (15%)	10 (25%)	7 (17.5%)	4 (10%)	2 (5%)	3 (7.5%)	3 (7.5%)
7	To become a professional translators	1 (2.5%)	2 (5%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	8 (20%)	5 (12.5%)	10 (25%)	12 (30%)
8	To learn more about cultures of English speaking countries	2 (5%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	7 (17.5%)	12 (30%)	10 (25%)	6 (15%)

Item 3

This question concerns the way students start translating. As can be seen from the results, six students (15%) start translating by looking up new words of the whole text. Twelve students (30%) translate right from the start. None of them translate word-for-word and 24 of them (60%) find the structure of sentence and think of how to express the idea in TL. The analysis indicates that more than half of the students realize the importance of understanding the sentence' structure and try to find out an appropriate way to express the idea in TL, which is a positive signal. However, 40% of the students seem not to have common strategy by either looking up new words or translating the text right from the start. This implies that more attention should be placed on developing appropriate translation strategy for students in during translation process.

Table 3

How do you start translating?	*Number*	*Percentage*
Look up new words of the whole text	6	15%
Translate right from the start	10	25%
Translate word-for-word	0	0%
Find the sentence's structure and think of the way to express the idea in TL	24	60%

Item 4

The result reflects problems that students face in translation process. It can be seen that long, complicated sentences and technical terms are the two most challenging problems to the students in translation (agreed by 82.5% and 50% of the students respectively). Word's meaning, long text and idiomatic phrases are considered to be challenging by smaller amounts of students (20%, 25% and 30% respectively). This could be inferred that more attention should be paid on helping students analyze and understand sentences meanings as well as technical terms in translation classrooms.

Table 4

What are your problems when you do translating?	Number	Percentage
Finding word's meaning	8	20%
Long and complicated sentences	33	82.5%
Long text	10	25%
Technical terms	20	50%
Idiomatic phrases	12	30%

Item 5

The question seeks students' opinions on the role of translation to their English acquisition. The result shows that most of the students (77.5%) say that translation has contributed 'very much' and 'much' to their English learning. Only 22.5% of the students consider translation's contribution 'not very much' or 'little'. Obviously, the students, although at different levels, acknowledge the contribution of translation to their English learning. This encourages the author to design an appropriate translation course to help improve students' English competence more effectively.

Table 5

To what extent has translation contributed to your English learning?	Number	Percentage
Very much	19	47.5%
Much	12	30%
Not very much	5	12.5%
Little	4	10%
Not at all	0	

Item 6

This question researches what sources of reference students use in translation. According to the result, materials from internet and dictionaries are used most widely among the students (82.5% and 100% respectively). Only 27.5% of the students use books and newspapers. It is obvious that besides dictionaries, technology development

has played an important role in language learning in modern time. Being aware of this fact, some extra tasks could be designed to take advantage of students' skill of using internet in order to diversify learning activities.

Table 6

When doing translation, which source of reference do you use?	Number	Percentage
Materials from internet	33	82.5%
Dictionaries	40	100%
Books and newspapers	11	27.5%

Item 7

This question is conducted to find out whether the students like the translation lessons. The result indicates that 45% of the students have positive opinions ('very interesting' and 'interesting'), while 55% of them occupy negative opinions ('not very interesting' and 'boring'). The lessons have been somewhat effective; however, much still need to be done to bring about more successful translation course

Table 7

How do you find the translation class?	Number	Percentage
Very interesting	6	15%
Interesting	12	30%
Not very interesting	14	35%
Boring	8	20%

2.5.4.1.3. Target needs

Item 8

The question asks for students' idea of who should involve in the course content. 62.5% of the students think that both teachers and students should decide the course content, while 37.5% of them prefer the course to be prepared by the teacher. Since learner-centered approach is employed in the course, students' opinions on the course's content plays an important role in designing an effective syllabus.

Table 8

Who do you think should decide the course content?	Number	Percentage
Teachers	15	37.5%
Both teachers and students	25	62.5%

Item 9

This question focuses on students' favourite activities in translation classroom. The result shows that most of the students (80%) are fond of discussing in pairs and groups. Working individually is ranked at the second place with 37.5%. Only 5% of students like translating by teacher all the time. It is advisable that pair work and group work should be regularly used in classroom to motivate students.

Table 9

Among the following activities, which activities do you prefer?	Number	Percentage
Students translate individually	15	37.5%
Students discuss in pairs and groups	32	80%
Teacher translates all the time	2	5%

Item 10

This question aims at figuring out the role of translation methods in students' translation learning. The result shows that all of the students (100%) consider translation methods 'very important' and 'important' factor in their translation learning. It can be inferred that translation methods should be included as basic knowledge about translation in the first part of the syllabus.

Table 10

What do you think of translation methods in translation learning?	Number	Percentage
Very important	31	77.5%
Important	9	22.5%
Not very important	0	0%
Not important	0	0%

Item 11

The aim of this section is to find out the topics needed for the syllabus from the perspective of the English-major students. As can be seen from the table, no other topics were added. The topics which receive the highest percentage of 100% positive responses (very necessary and necessary) include topics 1 and 3. Other important topics as perceived by the students are topics 2, 4 and 5 with 75%, 82.5% and 77.5% of positive responses (very necessary and necessary) respectively. It can be suggested that these topics should be included in the syllabus. On the contrary, topic 6 and 7 could be excluded from the syllabus as 57.5% to 82.5% of the students perceived them as slightly or not necessary. The topic 8 can either be included in the syllabus or in the supplementary materials.

Table 11

Items	Topics	Very necessary	Necessary	Slightly necessary	Not necessary
1	Environment	25 (62.5%)	15 (37.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2	Education	12 (30%)	18 (45%)	6 (15%)	4 (10%)
3	Tourism	32 (80%)	8 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
4	Economy	22 (55%)	11 (27.5%)	2 (5%)	5 (12.5%)
5	Social issues	13 (32.5%)	18 (45%)	3 (7.5%)	6 (15%)
6	Literature	8 (20%)	9 (22.5%)	16 (40%)	7 (17.5%)
7	Science	2 (5%)	5 (12.5%)	15 (37.5%)	18 (45%)
8	Entertainment	14 (35%)	7 (17.5%)	11 (27.5%)	8 (20%)

Item 12

In this section, the designer chose 8 linguistic points that would be useful to help develop students' translation skill. Obviously, almost all the items should be included in the syllabus except for items 3 and 6 with the percentages of negative

responses (not important) ranging from 50% to 67.5%. This can be explained by the fact that these items were already given much care in the students' General English course, and thus would not be too challenging for the students to handle. It is supposed that these items should be taken out from the syllabus. The rest items should be dealt with in the course, with a focus on items 2, 7 and 8 because they receive the highest percentages of positive responses (very important and important) from 92.5% to 100%, in which 72.5% to 85% of the students consider them to be very important.

Table 12

Items	Linguistic points	Very important	Important	Not important
1	Emphasizing with cleft sentences	17 (42.5%)	15 (37.5%)	8 (20%)
2	Collocations	29 (72.5%)	10 (25%)	1 (2.5%)
3	Conditional sentences	8 (20%)	12 (30%)	20 (50%)
4	Using passive voice	11 (27.5%)	14 (35%)	15 (37.5%)
5	Describing trends	16 (40%)	17 (42.5%)	7 (17.5%)
6	Uses of tenses	2 (5%)	11 (27.5%)	27 (67.5%)
7	Expressing with noun phrases	31 (77.5%)	6 (15%)	3 (7.5%)
8	Proverbs & idiomatic expressions	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	0 (0%)

2.5.4.2. Interviews with translation teachers

In order to collect in-depth information about teaching the subject matter, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with three translation teachers of English section. The content of the interviews is illustrated in Appendix 3.

The first part of the interviews is designed to get general information about the informants. The interviewees are young teachers aging 29, 31 and 35 years old. All of

them graduated from English Department of Hanoi University in the years 2003, 2005 and 2009 respectively. One of them has got a M.A. in English and the other two are attending post-graduated training program in Hanoi University.

The rest questions of the interviews aims at finding out more about their opinions on the translation courses and asking for some suggestions for the course's materials.

Concerning their satisfactoriness towards the translation course, one teacher answered 'not much' and two teachers said 'very little'. The reason brought out is although they are free to prepare for the course' materials, it is in fact a really challenging task to decide what is appropriate for teaching. The lack of coherent framework also causes disagreement among teachers on the content of the course.

When it comes to whether the course should focus on theory or practice, all teachers agreed that the main part of the course should be devoted to practice translation skill while translation theory can be mentioned briefly at the course's beginning. The teachers think that knowledge of translation theory will provide students with basic skills in translation. They also suggested that translation' definition and translation methods should be referred in the course.

In response to the question about the challenges the students confront in studying translation, all the interviewees agreed that technical terms and complicated sentences caused the most trouble, since they required a deep knowledge of the fields as well as a rich vocabulary in both SL and TL to understand and transfer. Other obstacles queuing in the list were words' various meanings, and idiomatic expressions which also took a good deal of time and knowledge to deal with. To help students overcome the problems, they often designed extra exercises to enrich students' vocabulary relating to each topic.

Regarding the activities taking place in translation classes, the discussion on new words and phrases and teacher's guidance to translate sentences were referred as the

'traditional' activities. Additionally, pair work and group work for text analyzing as pre-translating activities were used from time to time.

The three teachers also confirmed that translation made a positive contribution to students' English learning. The two most obvious benefits were a large amount of vocabulary provided and the flexibility in expressing ideas. These, eventually, led to an improvement of language skills, especially reading and writing.

When being asked to give some suggestions for the materials of the course, the interviewees claimed that the materials, in consideration of the students' level, should focus on some certain translation techniques and the topics should be based on students' favorite or what they are familiar with. It is also advisable that the texts are neither too short nor too long. Accordingly, the students would be more motivated and the tasks would not be far beyond their ability to fulfill.

2.6. Summary

This chapter has discussed the results of the needs analysis conducted to the English-major students and the translation teachers. The information about learners' needs has been analyzed and conclusion has been drawn out to create the basis for designing an appropriate Translation Practice syllabus for the English-major students at HLU. The setting for the needs analysis including the teaching and learning situation, the details of the subjects (the English majors and the translation teachers) has also been described.

CHAPTER 3: DESIGNING A TRANSLATION SYLLABUS MODULE 1 FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH MAJORS IN THE TEACHER-TRAINING SECTION OF HLU

In this chapter, an attempt is made to design a translation syllabus for the second-year students of English teacher training section at HLU based on the theoretical background (chapter 1) and the results collected from the needs analysis (chapter 2). The focus of designing the syllabus in this chapter is on:

- Aims and objectives of the syllabus
- Sequencing the content and the tasks in the syllabus
- The proposed translation syllabus

3.1. Aims and objectives of the translation syllabus

After the needs analysis, the second step in the syllabus designing process is the determination of aims and objectives of the syllabus.

Generally, aims and objectives refer to knowledge, skills and values that educational planners believe learners need to develop. Specifically, an aim is something we want to achieve and in the case of language learning, it is a statement of a general change that a program seeks to bring about in learners. Objectives, on the other hand, are defined as statements of specific changes a program seeks to bring about and result from an analysis of the aim into its different components.

In consideration with the students' background, their motivation as well as the results of the need analysis, the aims and objectives of translation syllabus for the second-year English majors are set as follows:

Aims:

- Provide the students with a basic knowledge of translation process
- Develop necessary skills to produce an adequate translation through practice
- Improve students' English proficiency

Objectives:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- To develop integrated skills of using English language

- To deal with linguistic problems in pursuance of natural sounding translation

- To enrich vocabulary of various areas

- To adopt more native-like style of using English language

3.2. Sequencing the content and the tasks in the syllabus

3.2.1. Selecting the content

In order to improve students' English proficiency through translation skill, most of the course's content will be devoted to translation practice, except for the first two weeks when basic knowledge of translation process is introduced. The course will cover the following content.

3.2.1.1. Theory

1. Introduction to translation

      a. Definition of translation

       b. Criteria for a good translation

The introduction of translation's definition and criteria for a good translation will raise some awareness towards translation. Getting to know the criteria of a good translation, students can assess their own and other's translation.

2. Translation methods

Some basic translation methods introduced by Newmark (1988) are included in the course:

1. Word-for-word translation	5. Adaptation translation
2. Literary translation	6. Free translation
3. Faithful translation	7. Idiomatic translation
4. Semantic translation	8. Communicative translation

3. Text analysis

Analyzing the text is a decisive step of translation process. The steps that the researcher would like to introduce in the course are as followed:

- o Reading the text
- o The intention of the text
- o The intention of the translator
- o Text styles

- o The readership
- o Stylistic scales
- o Attitude

Sample texts for discussion as well as exercises will be brought about to help students understand the steps.

3.2.1.2. Practice

1. Topics of the course

Based on the results of the questionnaires conducted to the students and the results from the interviews with the subject teachers, six following topics chosen by the majority of the informants will be included in the syllabus:

- o Environment
- o Education
- o Tourism

- o Economy
- o Social issues
- o Entertainment

2. Linguistic points

On the basis of the results from the questionnaires conducted to the students and from the interview with the subject teachers of the English section the suggested linguistic points for the syllabus are as follows:

- o Emphasizing with cleft sentences
- o Collocations
- o Use of passive voice

- o Describing trends
- o Expressing with noun phrases
- o Proverbs & idiomatic

  expressions

3. Tasks and skills

Concerning classroom activities, the basic model might be to have individual students translate a text then read out their translations and have them evaluated, either directly by the teacher or by other students (Anthony Pym, 2009). Nevertheless, to develop students' skills of using language as well as create active learning classroom, it is essential to offer various tasks and activities.

During the translation process, the following skills are focused:

- o Analyzing a source text
- o Discussing and negotiating
- o Working in teams
- o Commenting and evaluating
- o Researching and consulting
- o Using dictionaries

3.2.2. Grading content

Decisions about which content is needed early in the course and which provides a basis for things that will be learned later are extremely complicated and difficult to make.

Wilkins (1976) feels that staging and sequencing should be carried out according to the criteria of *simplicity, regularity, frequency* and *contrastive difficulty*. Yalden (1982) suggests that more simple language should be taught before the more complex, so as to facilitate learning.

Regarding the intrinsic/extrinsic distinction, both Wilkins (1976) and Gibbons (1984) agree that in practice, syllabus organization is determine largely by extrinsic considerations especially learner needs and pedagogical factors. Sharing this idea Kaur (1990) claims that where language is learned for more specific purposes, learner needs plays a larger role. The author then proposes the principle of utility as follows:

For the learner needs criteria, earlier language is taught according to

i. which is needed most immediately by the learner,

ii. which has high surrender value, that is, of most use to the learner

iii. which is necessary to avoid a communication breakdown,

iv. which is flexible, that is, can be used most widely, and

v.   which is most frequently used by the learner.

Based on the above ideas, the researcher decided to choose the principle of utility to grade the content of the syllabus for the second-year English majors at HLU. Therefore, the course will consist of both theory and practice so that students can have chance to apply some of the theoretical knowledge in practice. The syllabus will be broken down into 7 units, the first of which is devoted to translation theory, and the rest deal with 6 most-wanted topics as perceived by the students and the subject teachers.

3.3. Designing tests for the translation course

Different reasons for testing lead to the existence of various types of tests such as placement tests, progress tests, achievement tests, aptitude tests and proficiency tests. For this course, three progress tests and one achievement test will be designed. The three progress tests will be given to the students at the early, in the middle and near the end of the course to assess the progress that students make in mastering material taught in the classroom. The tests are also expected to enable the teachers and the students to assess the degree of success of teaching and learning and to identify areas of weakness and difficulty. The final achievement test, though similar to progress tests is designed primarily to measure individual progress rather than as a means of motivating or reinforcing language. For the target students, the test will be given after they finish the course to discover how far they have achieved the objectives of the course. Feedback from the tests' results will help the teachers with decisions about the improvements of all the elements relevant to the students' needs. The intended contents for these tests are shown in the proposed syllabus.

3.4. The proposed translation syllabus for College English majors at HLU

The proposed translation syllabus

Time	Unit	Topic	Content	
			Theory/ Linguistic points	**Practice**
8 periods	1	Background knowledge of translation	*Session1:* - Definition of translation - Criteria of a good translation	- Deal with translation passages - Discuss in groups and give comments
			Session2: - Translating methods - Text analysis	- Define translation methods used in translation texts - Practice analyzing texts in groups
8 periods	2	Environment	*Session1:* Emphasizing with cleft sentences	- Practice translating sentences using cleft sentences - Deal with texts on environment - In groups, discuss possible translating versions - Assign homework
			Session2: Discussion	- Work on the second draft - Hand-in translation
1 period	First Progress test - Defining translation methods used in translation texts - Analyzing texts - Translating paragraphs			

8 periods	3	Education	*Session1:* Collocations	- Match words to make correct collocations - Deal with texts on education - In groups, discuss possible translating versions - Assign homework
			Session2: Discussion	- Work on the second draft - Hand-in translation
8 periods	4	Tourism	*Session1:* Use of passive voice	- Translate sentences using passive voice - Deal with texts on Tourism - In groups, discuss possible translating versions - Assign homework
			Session2: Discussion	- Work on the second draft - Hand-in translation
2 periods	Mid-term test - Translating text of 200 words from English to Vietnamese - Translating text of 200 words from Vietnamese to English			
8 periods	5	Economy	*Session1:* Describing trends	- Make sentences to describe trends - Deal with texts on economy - In groups, discuss possible translating versions - Assign homework
			Session2:	- Work on the second draft

			Discussion	- Hand-in translation
8 periods	6	Social issues	*Session1:* Expressing with noun phrases	- Translate sentences using noun phrases - Deal with texts on social issues - In groups, discuss possible translating versions - Assign homework
			Session2: Discussion	- Work on the second draft - Hand-in translation
1 period			Second Progress test - In groups, searching a translation text of about 300 words from English to Vietnamese on the internet - Giving comment on the translation and suggesting new translation versions where necessary	
8 periods	7	Entertainment	*Session1:* Proverbs & idiomatic expressions	- Translate proverbs and idiomatic expressions - Deal with texts on entertainment - In groups, discuss possible translating versions - Assign homework
			Session2: Discussion	- Work on the second draft - Hand-in translation

CONCLUSIONS

1. Conclusions

With the growing tendency to consider translation the fifth skill in language teaching and learning, designing an appropriate translation course that suits target groups in an academic setting assumes great importance. Accordingly, the purpose of this minor thesis is to propose an appropriate translation syllabus for the second-year English majors of English teacher training section at Hoa Lu University.

In order to achieve the aim of the thesis, some fundamental aspects needed to be considered. First, insights into the nature of translation syllabus design were gained by reviewing the relevant literature. The review of literature was of great help for the author to choose the appropriate approach to the design of the course. Three steps to design the syllabus have been determined including *needs analysis, determining aims and objectives, selecting and grading content.* Through the implementation of questionnaires, interviews and discussions, information about both target needs and learning needs was obtained from the translation teachers and the students and analyzed in order to identify the formulation of aims and objectives, content, and the planning of the course. After this thorough analysis, topic-based and text-based syllabus were chosen as basic types for designing the translation syllabus for the second-year English majors of English teacher training section at HLU. The objectives of the course as perceived by both the teachers and the students were to provide the students with vocabulary and translation skills to improve students' English competence. It can be concluded at this point that the aims and objectives of the study presented in the Introduction have been achieved.

2. Limitations

Like most research projects, limitations are unavoidable. First of all, the population of the study is small. Second, the author has no extra information from the target students

who will take part in the translation course since there have not been new enrollments for English classes at HLU this year yet. Additionally, the translation teachers of the English section who participated in the study are quite young and have little experience in teaching translation. All these limitations may affect the interpretation of the data.

3. Suggestions for further study

Within the scope of a minor thesis, the study only focuses on designing a translation syllabus, module 1, for students of English teacher training programs. This should be a valuable material to design a translation syllabus module 2. Additionally, it is hoped that more projects will be carried out on designing a translation syllabus, that is, not only for students of English-teacher training programs but students of professional translator training programs.

Finally, it is hoped that the syllabus proposed in this study will be implemented in the coming years for the translation course of the target students. Since course development is an on-going process, the syllabus is expected to be revised and refined through course evaluation so that it can be of great use to the students and the translation teachers in many years to come.

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APPENDIX 1

A Sample Unit
UNIT 6: SOCIAL ISSUES

❖ **Part I - Use of Noun Phrases in English**

Noun Phrases are favorably used in English as an effective mean to express ideas.

1. Possessive adjective + Noun

a. Tôi xin cám ơn ngài Bộ trưởng Ngoại giao Phạm Bình Bình *đã tiếp đón tôi*

   I would like to thank Minister Minh for *his welcome*

b. Việt Nam cần phải tiếp tục và tăng cường *đổi mới*

   Việt Nam needs to continue and intensify *its reform*

2. Preposition + Noun Phrase

a. Với tôi, có sức khỏe tốt là *vô cùng quan trọng*

   Having good health is *of great importance* to me

b. Freddy mệt nhoài sau khi *luyện tập bóng quá lâu*

   Freddy is stiff *from long football practice*

3. Compound Nouns (N1 + N2 + … + Head Noun)

a. Quyển sách trên sàn nhà tắm phình ra vì ngấm *hơi nước từ vòi hoa sen*

   The book on the bathroom floor is swollen from *shower team*

b. Chẳng quyển sách nào ở đây có công thức của *món hầm mắt mực theo kiểu của Manhattan*

   Neither of these books contains the recipe for *Manhattan-style squid eyeball stew*

✎Practice. Translate the following sentences into English, pay attention to *italic* **phrases.**

1. *Dù bề ngoài không mấy dễ coi* nhưng anh ấy vẫn được mọi người quý mến

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Trong bài diễn văn, vị thống đốc cam kết sẽ có giải pháp tháo gỡ cho *hoàn cảnh khó khăn của những người vô gia cư*

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. Thế giới đang kêu gọi *họ tôn trọng* bản hòa ước mà họ đã kí kết với các nước láng giềng

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. Chúng tôi phải huỷ chuyến picnic vì *thời tiết xấu*

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. Vốn kiến thức đặc biệt của anh ta *vô cùng quý giá* trong suốt cuộc chiến

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

❖ **Part II - Translation**

Task 1. Read the following text and answer the questions.

1. What is the topic?
2. Where is the text probably taken from?
3. What is the writer's main purpose?
4. Who is the intended reader?
5. In what style is it written?

ADVANCING GLOBALISATION

Because of many countries' inability to deal adequately with the effects of globalization, as has happened in Asia during the financial crisis, many pundits declared the nation-state to be in retreat. Multinational corporations, financial institutions, labour unions, non- government organizations and other civil groups now seem to play more important roles in the world economy. This has led to the belief that the market has taken over, leaving governments on the sidelines. The danger in such a view is that it prompts another belief that since globalization may not be in a nation's best interest, neither can it be in an individual's. And in this may be a backlash against globalization.

Against this, the world leaders have responded with a "third way", which seeks to place the nation-state firmly at the heart of globalization. While a government's role may not be to intervene in the market, it can be in helping markets function properly and efficiently; and when there are social costs involved, it can lend a hand. Understood in this way, the nation-state isn't retreating, just repositioning itself as an integral part of globalization. But while many European leaders have responded favourably to this new view, none has successfully shown how to translate it into policy.

The emphasis on the importance of globalization was spelt out recently by AT&T president John Zeglis, who believes that companies in the future will have only two options: go global, or go bankrupt. His idea captures the spirit of a corporate world where now, more than ever, the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest holds true. In many ways, this is nothing new. The past century saw plenty of multinational corporations extending their influence across the globe and many of the largest and most successful are still dominating international markets. Among the list of the best global companies, the majority, including Ford Motor, General Electric, and IBM, have long been favourite household names around the world.

Task 2. Find the Vietnamese equivalents to the following phrases

globalization: ………………………………………………………………

crisis:……… ………………………………………………………………

pundit:……… ………………………………………………………………

nation-state …………………………………………………………….....

in retreat …………………………………………………………………

multinational…………………………………………………………….....

non- government organization ………………………………………………

backlash ……………………………………………………………………

social costs …………………………………………………………………

lend a hand ………………………………………………………………….

Task 3. In groups, translate the text into Vietnamese.

Task 4. Discuss possible translation versions among groups.

Task 5. Complete the final translation individually.

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWS WITH TRANSLATION TEACHERS

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Graduated from:
4. Years of teaching translation:
5. To what extent are you satisfied with your translation teaching –much, not much, very little or not at all? Why?
6. Do you think the translation course should focus on theory or practice? Why?
7. What activities do you use most regularly in your classes among translating by teacher, translating individually by students and translating in pairs/ groups by students? Why do you prefer that activity?
8. What problems do you think are the most challenging to students in studying translation? What do you do to help them overcome those problems?
9. In what way do you think translation help improve students' English competence?
10. Can you give some suggestion to the course's materials?

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This questionnaire is aimed at designing an appropriate Translation syllabus for second-year English majors of Teacher-training sections. The syllabus is expected to be appropriate to the training objectives of HLU and to meet the students' needs. Your assistance in completing the following items makes a great contribution to my study. Thank you for your co-operation!

PART A: Please fill in your personal information

Gender: a. Male   b. Female

Age: ……………………………………………………

Years of learning English: ……………………………..

PART B:

For the multiple choice questions, please put a tick in the box for your choice.

Learning needs

1. Can you define what translation is?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

2. What do you expect when taking the translation course? Order the following items from the most important to the least important.

   ☐ To enrich vocabulary of various areas

   ☐ To adopt more native-like style of using English language

   ☐ To review and consolidate basic grammatical structures

   ☐ To deal with linguistic problems in pursuance of producing natural sounding translation

   ☐ To take part in international seminars and workshops on translation

☐ To develop integrated skills of using English language

☐ To become a professional translators

☐ To learn more about cultures of English speaking countries

☐ Others (please specify) …………………………………………………

3. How do you start translating?

☐ Look up new words of the whole text

☐ Translate right from the start

☐ Translate word-for-word

☐ Find the sentence's structure and think of the way to express the idea in TL

☐ Others (please specify) …………………………………………………

4. What are your problems when you do translating? Order the following items from the most challenging to the least challenging.

☐ Finding word's meaning

☐ Long and complicated sentences

☐ Long text

☐ Technical terms

☐ Idiomatic phrases

☐ Others (please specify) …………………………………………………

5. To what extent does translation contribute to your English learning?

☐ Very much

☐ Much

☐ Not very much

☐ Little

☐ Not at all

6. When doing translation, which source of reference do you use?

☐ Materials from internet

☐ Dictionaries

☐ Books and newspapers

☐ Others (specify) …………………………………………………

7. How do you find the translation class?

☐ Very interesting

☐ Interesting

☐ Not very interesting

☐ Boring

Target needs

8. Who do you think should decide the course content?

☐ Teachers

☐ Both teachers and students

9. Among the following activities, which activities do you prefer?

☐ Students translate individually

☐ Students discuss in pairs and groups

☐ Teacher translates all the time

☐ Others (please specify) …………………………………………………

10. What do you think of translation methods in translation learning?

☐ Very important

☐ Important

☐ Little important

☐ Not important

11. Please give your rating for each of the following topics based on YOUR opinion that should be included in the translation practice course.

☐ Environment

☐ Education

☐ Tourism

☐ Economy

☐ Social issues

☐ Literature

☐ Science

☐ Entertainment

☐ Others (please specify) …………………………………………………

12. Please order the following linguistic points from the most useful to the least useful to your translation

☐ Emphasizing with cleft sentences

☐ Collocations

☐ Conditional sentences

☐ Using passive voice

☐ Describing trends

☐ Using tenses

☐ Expressing with noun phrases

☐ Proverbs & idiomatic expressions

The end