

**STRATEGIES FOR NON-EQUIVALENCE AT WORD LEVEL IN LITERARY  
TRANSLATION – A CASE STUDY**

Tran Vi Anh  
FPT University  
Hanoi, Vietnam  
anhvt22@fe.edu.vn

**Abstract**

Equivalence has long been considered the central issue in translation studies by many scholars. Naturally, the problem of non-equivalence emerges which troubles most translators, particularly in literary translation because in texts of literature a translator often encounters culture-specific, period-specific terms, buzz words, or concepts that are not lexicalized at all in the target language. Therefore, this paper aims at studying the problem of non-equivalence at word level because according to Newmark (1988), the chief difficulties of translation are lexical, not grammatical. Specifically, through the case-study approach, the focus of the paper is on studying how strategies for dealing with non-equivalence at word level are applied in literary translation, with specific examples for illustration taken from the English translation of the Vietnamese satirical novel “Sô Đô” (Dumb Luck), written by Vũ Trọng Phụng, translated into English by Nguyễn Nguyệt Cầm and Peter Zinoman. The theoretical framework of this paper is largely based on Mona Baker’s classification of non-equivalence at word level as well as strategies to deal with it. Finally, the paper attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of each strategy in dealing with non-equivalence at word level in a Vietnamese-English literary translation. Overall, words denoting culture and period-specific concepts prove to be most challenging, and six strategies as proposed by Baker are employed with approximately equal frequency but their effectiveness varies by each specific case.

*Keywords:* Translation Studies, Non-Equivalence, Literary Translation

**Introduction**

The central issue that is concerned in translation is translatability and equivalence, as after all the word “translation” itself comes from Latin “translatio” which in turn means “to carry across”. Thus, generally speaking, translation is the process of carrying ideas from a language and representing them in another, during which the translator is tasked with finding and manipulating the words in the receptor language so that they will be adequately “equivalent” with what has been meant in the source language. Therefore, it is sometimes said that the whole act of translation is to achieve the “equivalent effect” (Newmark, 1988). However, this is still a controversial idea, as according to Newmark (1988), the “equivalent effect” should only be a desirable outcome, and not necessarily the aim of translation. This viewpoint is also maintained by Nida (1964), as he asserts that the absolute correspondence between languages is impossible. As a consequence, the issue of equivalence and non-equivalence is a problematic one, and translators have endeavored to seek solutions to the problem of non-equivalence and untranslatability, because regardless of the methods applied, the ultimate goal is still to represent the text in a manner which the author has originally intended. Anything short of that can be considered an unsuccessful translation. Thus, this paper seeks to look deeper into the matter of non-equivalence and the strategies that can be applied to tackle this problem, with specific

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examples taken from the English-translated version of one of the greatest satirical novels in Vietnamese literature.

The novel “*Số Đổ*” is chosen for this case study because “although there is a large body of work debating the issues that surround the translation of poetry, far less time has been spent studying the specific problems of translating literary prose” (Bassnett, 2002, p. 114). Moreover, few papers have been dedicated to studying the problems in Vietnamese to English literary translation; the majority invariably focuses on the other direction of translation, i.e. English-Vietnamese, which is understandable as there are much fewer Vietnamese literary works being translated into English than the other way around. The novel also contains many words and phrases which are culture-specific and/or class-specific typical of its historical period. Thus, these words not only prove to be a challenge for translation but can also be really interesting examples to look into.

### Literature Review

#### Equivalence

Equivalence is considered a central concept in translation theory, as confirmed by Catford (1965), where he recognizes “equivalent” as a key term, and argues that “the central problem of translation practice is that of finding TL translation equivalents. A central task of translation theory is that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence” (p. 21). However, unlike in mathematics or logic, in the translation field the term “equivalence” itself is ambiguous. This is due to the problems associated with the question: can we define translation equivalence in terms of sameness (Boushaba, 1988)? This notion has been rejected by a number of scholars like Van Der Broek, Holmes, Jakobson, or Bassnett, who claims that “equivalence in translation, then, should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version” (Bassnett, 2002, p. 37, 38).

Nevertheless, there have been efforts by numerous theorists to define translation equivalence. Pym (2010) sees equivalence as the relation between the source text and the translation. He bases his arguments on the notion that one language can have the same value when translated into another language. That is not to say that languages are the same, only that values can be the same.

#### Baker’s approach to the problem of non-equivalence at word level

According to Baker (1992), “non-equivalence at word level means that the target language has no direct equivalent for a word which occurs in the source text” (p. 20). There are many kinds of non-equivalence at word level, the difficulty of which varies greatly and will require different strategies to handle. Moreover, the context and purpose of translation have to be taken into account when considering which strategies might be used. The study of Baker involving non-equivalence at word level is important and meaningful as she provide a list of common types of non-equivalence at word level as well as some strategies that translators may apply to deal with them.

The most common types of non-equivalence at word level, as suggested by Baker (1992), are culture-specific concepts, the fact that the source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target language, the source language word is semantically complex, the source and target languages make different distinctions in meaning, the target language lacks a superordinate, the

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target language lacks a specific term (hyponym), differences in physical or interpersonal perspective, differences in expressive meaning, differences in form, differences in frequency and purpose of using specific forms, and the use of loan words in the source text.

Based on the above problems, Baker (1992) lists some of the common strategies used by professional translators to deal with non-equivalence at word level. It is worth bearing in mind that this list is by no means exhaustive, and only represents some of the more commonly applied methods in handling this type of non-equivalence. Six strategies presented in this study are (1) translation by a more general word, (2) translation by a more neutral/less expressive word, (3) translation by cultural substitution, (4) translation by a loan word or loan word plus explanation, (5) translation by paraphrase and (6) translation by omission.

### Evaluation of the translation

Scholars have discussed at length on what makes a good translation. Some have compared a good translation to a pane of glass, stressing the importance of transparency in a translated text. In the book *Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti (1995) has offered a quite detailed explanation on what is meant by “transparency”:

A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text—the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the “original.”(p. 1)

Newmark (1988) argues that in order to evaluate any translation, one should cover five aspects, namely:

1. A brief analysis of the SL text stressing its intention and its functional aspects;
2. The translator's interpretation of the SL text's purpose, his translation method and the translation's likely readership;
3. A selective but representative detailed comparison of the translation with the original;
4. An evaluation of the translation, first in the translator's terms, then in the critic's terms;
5. Where appropriate, an assessment of the likely place of the translation in the target language culture or discipline.

### Methodology

With a view to analyzing the strategies specifically applied in solving non-equivalence at word level in the English translation of the novel *Số Đỏ*, as well as assessing the effectiveness of said strategies, the author sets out to answer the following questions:

1. What are some strategies applied in dealing with non-equivalence at word level in the Vietnamese-English translation of “Số Đỏ”? How are they employed by the translators?
2. Are these strategies effective in dealing with non-equivalence at word level? In the cases that they are not, are there any suggestions for another method of translation?

All of the samples for analysis in the next chapter are taken from the Vietnamese and English versions of the novel *Số Đỏ*. The Vietnamese version used for the study was published

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by Literature Publishing House in 2010. The English version is the translated work of Nguyễn Nguyệt Cẩm and Peter Zinoman, published in 2002 by the University of Michigan Press.

The procedure of collecting data is conducted in the following steps:

Step 1: The data used in this study are examples of non-equivalence at word level. The Vietnamese version of the book is read thoroughly so that the general context containing non-equivalents can be understood.

Step 2: The Vietnamese and English versions are read side by side in order to identify the strategies used to deal with non-equivalence at word level. Then, the examples are noted down.

Step 3: The examples are categorized based on the strategies used to deal with them.

The samples found in the data collection step are analyzed based on the strategies used to deal with them. These strategies are proposed by Baker (1992), which are (1) translation by a more general word, (2) translation by a more neutral/less expressive word, (3) translation by cultural substitution, (4) translation by using a loan word or loan word plus explanation, (5) translation by paraphrase, and (6) translation by omission. In fact, Baker divides translation by paraphrase into (a) translation by paraphrase using a related word and (b) translation by paraphrase using unrelated words, however in the analytical procedure these two strategies are combined into one general strategy of translation by paraphrase. The strategy of translation by illustration is not included in the analysis due to absence of relevant examples.

Next, each strategy is evaluated separately for its effectiveness in dealing with non-equivalence at word level in the particular case of the translation of “Số Đô” is evaluated based on assessment of accuracy, the degree of loss in meaning and the stylistic effects that the translation produces. Then, some suggestions for other methods of translation are also proposed when necessary.

### Analysis

The number of non-equivalents as classified by the strategies employed is summed up below:

*Table 1*

Translation strategies and quantity of use

Translation Strategy	Quantity
Translation by a more general word	10
Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word	10
Translation by cultural substitution	9
Translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation	13
Translation by paraphrase	15
Translation by omission	14
Total	71

Among these, it can be easily seen that translation by paraphrase and translation by omission have the highest frequency of use, which are 15 times and 14 times respectively (accounting for 21% and 20% respectively). The technique of using a loan word or loan word

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plus explanation is used 13 times, making up for 18%. Translation by a more general word and translation by a more neutral/less expressive word follow, each strategy is used 10 times, equaling to 14%. The method of translating by cultural substitution is employed the least, with 9 times of use, making up for 13%. Due to the constraints of the paper, only notable examples are selected for analysis as below:

### Translation by a more general word

As have been mentioned before, this strategy involves using a superordinate in order to overcome a lack of specificity in the target language, i.e. the translator is forced to find a more general word that has the same propositional meaning as the word in the source language. The examples illustrating how the translators of “Số Đỏ” employ this technique are shown below.

SL 1: [...] một bà trạc ngoại tứ tuần mà y phục còn **traï lơ** hơn của các thiếu nữ [...] (p.9)

TL 1: [...] made up like a **fashionable** young seductress [...] (p.37)

In this case, the word “traï lơ” is an adjective to describe women who are flirty and easy in their relationships with men. This word often has a negative connotation. In this particular context, the word is quite correctly used to introduce Mrs. Deputy Customs Officer. However, this word is translated into “fashionable”, which is defined by the Oxford Dictionary of English as “(of a person) dressing or behaving according to the current trend”. Obviously, Mrs. Deputy Customs Officer is not just a “fashionable” woman, and by choosing this word, the translators have missed an entire shade of meaning which could have revealed a lot of the character’s nature.

When utilizing this technique, the translators almost always face the possibility of loss in meaning. Therefore, the translators’ job is to minimize this loss or ensure that this loss will not negatively influence the target readers’ understanding of the text. The following example clearly demonstrates this point, when the translators endeavor to preserve the core propositional meaning of the words:

SL 2: Một người đàn bà **nạ giòng** [sic], phần sáp bôi rất vụng [...].

TL 2: A poorly made-up **middle-aged** woman [...]. (p.60)

The word “nạ dòng” is used to refer to a middle-aged woman who has children. This word is quite specific, therefore the translators opt to only render the core, general meaning, and use the word “middle-aged”.

### Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word

In this strategy, the word in the source text is replaced with a word carrying less expressive meaning. This can be considered a compromise when there is a risk of a word being perceived differently in the target language, despite seeming to be equivalent to the word in the source language. Examples of how this strategy is employed in the novel are shown below:

SL 3: Xuân Tóc Đỏ cứ sấn sổ đưa tay toan **cướp giật** ái tình (p.6)

TL 3: Extending his hand rudely, Red-Haired Xuân **requested** a little love... (p.34)

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“Cướp giật” is to take something from somebody by force, against their will. This verb with its expressive quality accurately reflects the nature of Red-Haired Xuân as a rude, uncouth man. When translated into English, the word “requested” is used, which is a lot less expressive than the word in the original.

SL 4: Hai người bắt tay nhau, tiếng Tây **ngậu xỉ** cả phố.

TL 4: They shook hands and greeted each other **noisily** in French. (p.58)

The word “ngậu xỉ” in Vietnamese is usually used to refer to a person who is being noisy and causing a fuss. The word “noisy” that the translators choose for the translation can be a good equivalent, although the expressive quality of the Vietnamese word has to be lost.

### **Translation by cultural substitution**

This strategy is used to deal with culture-specific words by replacing the SL word with a TL word of different prepositional meaning. However, this TL word is likely to have the same effect on the TL readership as it does on the SL readers.

All of the examples of this strategy found in the novel are concepts specific to the Vietnamese culture. For example, “tử vi” is the forecast of a person’s fate based on the relative positions of the stars. It is similar to horoscope in Western culture. Therefore, “tử vi” is often translated as “horoscope”. Although the nature of the two concepts is different, using the word “horoscope” would ensure the immediate understanding of Western readers (who are the target readers of the novel’s English version). Likewise, “giấy bản” is a type of paper typically used in the past, made from the bark of the thymelacaceous plant. The decision to use “tissue paper” in the TL is questionable because it might be misleading to the TL readers. They may easily confuse it with the type of paper typically used for wiping, while in the context of the novel, the fortune-teller is clearly using a piece of paper for writing.

The compound noun “cải lương Nam kì” is translated into English as “southern opera”. Much like opera in Western culture, “cải lương” is a type of theater originated in the South of Vietnam which involves singing to tell a story. Therefore, using the cultural substitution “opera” is a reasonable choice which helps the readers to understand the core concept of this type of art, without the translators having to explain further in a footnote.

In short, the strategy of using a cultural substitution works best when there is a concept in the target language with the same cultural impact on the TL readers as in the SL readers. It is advantageous as the TL readers will immediately identify with this concept, and the translators do not have to provide any further explanation. However, this technique should be used with caution as not everyone is tolerable with replacing cultural-specific words and expressions with another, even though it may produce the same result.

### **Translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation**

Another useful strategy that professionals might use to deal with non-equivalence at word level is translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation. In the particular case of the novel, this technique is used to specifically handle culture-specific items and buzz words. The words used in all of the examples are specific to the Vietnamese culture and the period of French occupation in the early 20th century. Thus, all words are non-equivalent, and in the translated text the translators borrow the original words and add a footnote at the bottom of the page to

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provide further explanation. For example, the word “Me Tây” meaning “wife of a Westerner” obviously has no equivalents in English, therefore it is used again in the translated text as a borrowing, coupled with a footnote to make clear of the meaning of the term. The same technique is applied to “Quan Phù” and “Thái Tuế”, however the explanation is provided right in the translated text, to let the readers know that these are the names of two unlucky stars.

SL 5, SL 6: Quan Phù và Thái Tuế

TL 5, TL 6: Unlucky Stars: Quan Phù and Thái Tuế

Another interesting case is the next example because “Hoạn Thư” is a very commonly-known word in Vietnamese. Borrowing the name of a character in Nguyễn Du’s famous “Truyện Kiều”, this has become a noun to refer to women who are notoriously jealous. Thus, this word is worth being kept in the translation for the interesting anecdote that is associated with it. The word is then translated as follows:

SL 7: Một khi **Hoạn Thư** đã nổi giận.

TL 7: The anger of **Hoạn Thư**.

Then a footnote is provided giving the readers an idea of how and why this proper name is used.

In the same way, this technique is applied to translate a number of “buzz words”, which are words that were in vogue during that specific period in history. During that historical period, the French came to Vietnam and imposed their ideology, culture and language on the Vietnamese people. They also brought to Vietnam many new concepts and ideas, and thus helped introduce many new words into the Vietnamese language as borrowings. In the novel, we might come across some of these words such as “ma nơ canh” (mannequins), “bích-toong” (concrete), or “ba đờ xuy” (overcoat).

Moreover, many intellectuals were influenced by the French language, or simply used French as a way to show they were of higher social status (as in the case of the characters in the novel). That fact is manifested through the way many of the characters use French words and phrases in their everyday speech, even though those words might have their Vietnamese equivalents. For instance, “min đơ”, “gu”, “văng đơ”, “tay ơ” all have their equivalents in Vietnamese (“1002”, “khiếu thẩm mỹ”, “người bán hàng”, “thợ may” respectively). However, many people at that time chose to use French words to show off their status. When translating the novel into English, the translators have decided to preserve this way of speech to introduce the pretentious ways of some “intellectuals” of the time to Western readers. The translators’ detailed explanation is provided right from the beginning of the novel in an important “Note on translation”:

The novel also contains many representations of direct speech in which the French language is rendered using *quốc ngữ* transliteration. In all cases such *quốc ngữ* transliterations of French are used to represent the speech of Vietnamese who speak French and serve to reveal the cultural pretensions and poor pronunciation of the novel’s francophone Vietnamese characters. Given the obvious symbolic and thematic significance of *quốc ngữ* transliterations within the novel and the fact that Vũ Trọng Phụng used this device in order to capture the actual sounds of his character’s voices, we have decided to leave them in the text essentially unchanged. (p. 32)

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Therefore, in these cases the technique used can be considered a special way of using loan words to serve a particular stylistic purpose. This method is specific to the translation of this novel and evaluation of its effectiveness may vary.

### **Translation by paraphrase**

In this novel, translation by paraphrase is used for the highest number of times to deal with particularly complex concepts. The two ways of paraphrasing, using a related word and using unrelated words, are looked into together in this part.

The first striking thing about this strategy is that although all of the items in the original are words, when translated into English they are paraphrased into lengthy phrases. For example, the word “mũa mật” is translated into “practicing their asses off”. Both the word in the original and the phrase in the translated text are slangs meaning “to work very hard”.

Some culture-specific terms have to be paraphrased so that its meaning will be clear and confusion can be avoided. The words “con cầu tự”, “thủ tiết”, “nội tướng”, “đồng bóng”, “cưới chạy tang” are concepts that are unique to the Vietnamese or Eastern culture, which would be hard to grasp if the reader is not familiar with such cultures. Therefore, in order to make it easier for the general, Western readership to understand, the translators have transferred these words into phrases which are in their nature lengthy explanations of the concepts. A typical example is the word “nội tướng”, which is translated as “Commanders of Internal Affairs - housewives, in other words”. As the title “Commanders of Internal Affairs” might prove to be confusing to the TL readers, the explanation “housewives, in other words” have to be added. Likewise, “đồng bóng” has to be translated as the “traditional practice of spirit possession”, “thủ tiết” is “to remain a widow”, “con cầu tự” is “a gift from Heaven”, and “cưới chạy tang” is “move the wedding up before the funeral”. In these examples, the translators have carried out the act of “unpacking” the meaning of the semantically complex SL word. As a result, there is a disproportion between the SL text and the TL text.

It cannot be denied that using this strategy helps the translators achieve a very detailed and precise translation, which could also be of extreme benefits to the readers if they are interested in knowing the Vietnamese culture in detail. However, the discrepancy in length between the SL text and the TL text is not always desirable, and if not used with caution, the translators may risk turning a brief, concise passage into a lengthy, clumsy one in the target language in the effort of preserving the full meaning of the SL word.

### **Translation by omission**

This strategy is often mentioned last in the list as it is considered as the last resort, when all other strategies cannot be used to effectively deal with a lexical item. It goes without saying that in translation loss of meaning should be minimized to the best of the translator’s capacity, however there are times when this loss can be justified, particularly when the meaning conveyed by a particular item or expression is not essential to the development of the text to the point when lengthy, distracting explanations are justified, or when omission is needed in order to avoid redundancy and awkwardness.

It is noticeable from the table that in the majority of the examples, the word omitted is an adverb. Some such examples are selected to be listed below for further analysis:

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SL 8: Ông Victor Ban **kinh hãi** cúi đầu rất thấp, bắt tay Xuân Tóc Đỏ xong thì đứng ngây mặt ra như người bằng gỗ.

TL 8: Victor Ban bowed his head low and shook hands with Xuân, who stood frozen in place like a wooden statue. (p.99)

SL 9: Xuân Tóc Đỏ **hất hàm** hỏi:

- Ông hỏi gì? Mời ông ngồi!

TL 9: "What can I do for you?" asked Red-Haired Xuân. "Please take a seat!" (p.130)

In all of the above examples, the words in bold which get left out in the translated text are adverbs which modify the meaning of the verbs like "cúi đầu" and "hỏi". Admittedly, omitting these words does little to no harm to the meaning of the sentence; however, to a certain extent the expressive quality does get lost, as these adverbs help the readers to know clearly about the manner with which the action is carried out. Moreover, it needs to be said that it is possible to render these adverbs into English as these words are not exactly "non-equivalents". Rather, this particular case is a matter of whether the translators want to retain these modifiers or not. In fact, they have chosen to leave these words out, however the impact of this decision is up for questions, as this technique is applied in the same way in a considerable number of other cases. This technique is also applied by the translators of the novel to deal with culture-specific items, as in the following example:

SL 10: Buổi chiều hôm ấy, vừa ở nhà báo Gõ Mõ ra, sau khi đã chén một bữa chó hầm **rựa mận** như một thượng khách của những vị sư chân tu khác, [...]

TL 10: One afternoon, after sharing a huge meal of dog meat with a handful of devout monks, [...]

"Rựa mận" is a type of dog meat dish particular to the Vietnamese cuisine. This word is left out in the translated text, and the dish is referred to generally as "a huge meal of dog meat".

### Discussion

The main focus of this study is looking into how these strategies are employed in dealing with non-equivalence at word level in the translation of "Số Đỏ". The question "*What are some strategies applied in dealing with non-equivalence at word level in the Vietnamese-English translation of "Số Đỏ"? How are they employed by the translators?*" is discussed and analyzed carefully based on Baker's classification of strategies. All examples for analysis are taken from the English version, translated by Peter Zinoman and Nguyễn Nguyệt Cầm, with a view to seeing how Baker's theory is reflected and applied in a practical situation of literary translation. Six strategies presented in this study are (1) translation by a more general word, (2) translation by a more neutral/less expressive word, (3) translation by cultural substitution, (4) translation by a loan word or loan word plus explanation, (5) translation by paraphrase and (6) translation by omission.

Throughout the analysis in the previous part, it can be clearly seen that different techniques produce different results; each technique has its own pros and cons that the translators have to take into careful consideration. For example, translation by a more general word frees translators from struggling with a semantically complex word, however, using this technique

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may easily lead to oversimplification or generalization. Fortunately, this never seems to happen to the translators of “Sớ Đở”, and they seem to handle this strategy fairly well.

The method of translation by a more neutral/less expressive word poses the same risk of oversimplification, and apparently the translators have fallen into this trap of over-generalizing the meaning of the word, which leads to considerable loss of meaning or even misunderstanding. It has been continuously said that translation by a cultural substitution should be used with caution, and it is not without reason. The dilemma lies in the question whether the translators should stay faithful to the original as much as possible or should they make it as easy as possible for the TL readers to identify with a cultural concept being mentioned. The translators of the novel have dealt with the culture-specific items to provide a quite smooth TL text, however dealing with culture-specific concepts is not limited to only using cultural substitutions. In the cases of physical entities like “giấy bản”, “giấy bạc con công” or “thuốc Lào”, translation by illustration could be used to give the readers a clear picture of the object. However, literary translation usually does not allow illustration in the TL text, thus this technique might not be feasible.

A strategy which has been successfully used by the translators is the technique of translating using a loan word or loan word plus explanation. It needs stressing that in the case of the English version of “Sớ Đở”, a special kind of using loan words is applied, when transliterations of the words are kept. This is an effort of the translators to preserve the stylistic purpose originally intended by the author. As a result, the TL readers may get an idea of the vernacular of the time, how it is used and what it represents.

The next strategy which is also useful and has been successfully applied is the method of translating by paraphrase. As have been mentioned above, it is particularly advantageous in a text with so many culture-specific concepts which are not lexicalized in the TL like “Sớ Đở”. The only disadvantage is the disproportion in length between the SL text and the TL text, however in the translated version of the novel it is not too noticeable to cause inconvenience to the readers.

The last strategy utilized by the translators in transferring “Sớ Đở” into English is translation by omission. This is the only method which has been used quite carelessly by the translators. Since the majority of the removed words are adverbs, it is possible that these words are retained in order to ensure that loss of meaning is minimized. However, the damage done is not significant, and the omission of the words can be justified.

In answering the second question of the study “*Are these strategies effective in dealing with non-equivalence at word level? In the cases that they are not, are there any suggestions for another method of translation?*” it is discovered that the strategies work really well in handling culture-specific concepts. As “Sớ Đở” is a period novel, throughout the story there are many concepts and ideas specific to the Vietnamese culture and the particular period of the early 20th century. Thus, there are many concepts that are not lexicalized in the target language. The strategies of translation by cultural substitution and translation by paraphrase are truly effective in solving that problem.

### Implications of the study

Although there have been many studies and books that look into the issues associated with English - Vietnamese translation as well as equivalence and non-equivalence both at word level and above, there are few which study the problems that emerge during the process of

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Vietnamese - English translation of a literary work. This study touches upon this issue that may help readers get a better, in-depth understanding of the matter.

The study may also prove to be useful to apprentice translators and students of English, who can use this as a reference material to study more about how the strategies proposed by Baker are used in a practical situation. It can be a starting point in researching the requirements and challenges of literary translation. Because literary-text translators should be familiar with not only the source and target languages but also the source and target cultures. Thus, they should exploit the most effective strategies at their disposal, to ensure that the translated text has the same effect on the TL readers as it does on SL readers (Salehi, 2012).

### Conclusion

It is obvious that in order to effectively handle non-equivalence at word level, the translators cannot rely on one strategy only or use the strategies in isolation regardless of other factors. In order to produce a smooth, readable translated text, there needs to be a combination of all strategies. The translators also have to keep in mind other factors, for example what level of faithfulness to the original should they adhere to, or what level of text readability should they aim at to effectively inform the readers as well as provide a pleasant reading experience? In the context of the English version of “SỐ ĐỒ” alone, some strategies are used more effectively than others. However, as translation is not an exact science, opinions on the methods of translation shall vary and evaluation of the effectiveness of these methods is thus only relative.

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