

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**



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KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH: NGOẠI NGỮ

HẢI PHÒNG - 2010

**HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITY
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

GRADUATION PAPER

**A STUDY ON DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATING
LYRICS OF SOME ENGLISH SONGS**

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HAI PHONG - 2010

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG

Nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

Sinh viên:.....Mã số:.....

Lớp:.....Ngành:.....

Tên đề tài:

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Nhiệm vụ đề tài

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

(về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI

Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Người hướng dẫn thứ hai:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 12 tháng 04 năm 2010

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 10 tháng 07 năm 2010

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010

HIỆU TRƯỞNG

GS.TS.NGƯT Trần Hữu Nghị

PHẦN NHẬN XÉT TÓM TẮT CỦA CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN

1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp:

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2. Đánh giá chất lượng của khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...):

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3. Cho điểm của cán bộ hướng dẫn (ghi bằng cả số và chữ):

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Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010

Cán bộ hướng dẫn
(họ tên và chữ ký)

NHẬN XÉT ĐÁNH GIÁ
CỦA NGƯỜI CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

1. Đánh giá chất lượng đề tài tốt nghiệp về các mặt thu thập và phân tích tài liệu, số liệu ban đầu, giá trị lí luận và thực tiễn của đề tài.

2. Cho điểm của người chấm phản biện :
(Điểm ghi bằng số và chữ)

Ngày..... tháng..... năm 2010

Người chấm phản biện

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Student

Ngo Bich Thuy

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study

Nowadays, every country all over the world always develops in many fields: economy, politics, society, culture, education. All these fields are very important, and so is the culture. Entertainment is one of indispensable fields of culture. And music plays an important role in our life.

In fact, music becomes more and more important and exciting in society. It makes us feel better when we are in stress, makes us feel relax and comfortable when we get troubles. It makes us love it whenever and wherever, no matter who you are and no matter how old you are. It attracts us to its beautiful rhythms. Besides, the lyrics are also attractive. The lyrics also make an influence on our conceptions of life, on our life-styles, especially on the youth. Music attributes to make the quality of life. And lyric translation has become more and more be fond of. Because people not only enjoy the rhythms of the songs, but also have a tendency to search the lyrics to understand the meanings of the songs which they like. Moreover, we will understand the messages of each song whose musician wanted to express.

When you want to translate lyrics, it is necessary for you to translate it correctly and understand it in the right way. So that is why I choose this title for my study. However, this topic is worth researching because of its modern and fashion in lyrics in some hot kinds of music recently. The Pop songs have been one of the most wanted kinds of music as all of contents are almost about love. The Hip-hop songs have been risen in almost countries in the world with especially rhythms and exciting contents and linguistics and so forth.

My study is unavoidably not adequate to; however, I hope it can be a useful material and interest readers somehow and they would find it helpful.

2. Scope of the study

There are many kinds of music: Pop, Hip-hop, Rⁿ B, Rock, Jazz, etc. It is likely that each kind of music is suitable for each kind of different

listeners.

And in English songs, their linguistics features which are expressed in that are abundant for study. Due to limitation of time, sources and knowledge experience, my study only focus on some hot kinds of music which are popular with almost people, especially the youth. It is Pop, Hip-hop and Rⁿ B music.

As far as we know, the youth are very important class in society. That is the future of country. Therefore, what the youth are doing, listening, seeing, learning is very important. Moreover, the influence of some hot kinds music such like Pop, Hip-hop and Rⁿ B music is very large.

There will be many Pop, Hip-hop and Rⁿ B songs which are mentioned to be examples for studying, and these are almost songs in vogue. And because of those favorite songs, we will see the trend of the youth in listening music.

3. Methods of the study

To study successfully and effectively in my studying process, the methods of this study are information collection and analysis, personal observation and assessment.

Reference from methodology documents and websites are studied to establish the theoretical background.

Based on my experience of learning English as a student and help from my teachers and friends, the objectives of this paper have been successfully achieved.

The study will show some favorite Pop, Hip-hop and Rⁿ B songs and find out some words, or phrases which are used popular in almost those songs and all of them have many different meanings. So, to translate those words, phrases, we have to put them in the right text in the song. The method which is used in this research is regarded to be the correctly, fast, convenient and

effectively in research. We can pick up only a word, some words, a phrase or even a sentence to analyze. Then we classify them to determine what kind of each. So we find out its meanings including all its literal meanings and metaphor meanings. Besides, we can see that there is no better way than looking straight to the words which are written in lyrics because each word has own expression and meaning.

4. Aim of the study

For the above-mentioned reasons, this paper mainly focuses on linguistics in some songs lyrics, especially its ways of being expressed and felt in lyrics. Following this trend, the study will serve some purposes.

Firstly, it will provide readers with the concept of lyrics, the meaning of it and the languages in the lyrics.

Secondly, it will provide readers with some parts of some lyrics which contain the common trends of writing lyrics.

Lastly, it will raise some difficulties in understanding the lyrics and suggested solutions.

As far as we know, a song is firstly fond of because of its rhythms, so what about its meaning?

The youth are important class in society. They are growing and developing and they easily except and are influenced on something which attract them. So that, a song which has good or bad meanings easily makes an influence on them. Therefore, to translate lyrics correctly and exactly is very important and necessary. Due to from then, the youth will have right conception about the meanings of their favorite songs, and they will know how to except the lyrics which have good and healthy meanings, and direct to a peaceful life and developed society.

Besides, the study will show some difficulties in translating correctly and exactly some words or phrases which have many different meanings in

other different texts. From then, it helps translators as well as the youth can do the translation the lyrics well.

5. Design of the study

This research is divided into three parts.

Part I: Introduction, include rationale of the study, scopes of the study, methods of the study, aims of the study and design of the study.

Part II: Development with three chapters:

Chapter I: Theoretical background dealing with theory of lyrics and translation.

Chapter II: Types of lyrics and their popular words and expressions.

Chapter III: Difficulties for translators in understanding and feeling the original / source lyrics.

Part III: Conclusion which summarizes the study, experiences acquired and states the orientation for further study.

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter I: Theoretical background

I.1: Lyrics

I.1.1: What is a lyric

Lyrics (in singular form **Lyric**) are a set of words that make up a song. The writer of lyrics is a lyricist or lyricist. Lyrics are the words that are sung by characters in a musical.

The word *lyric* came to be used for the "words of a song"; this meaning was recorded in 1876. The common plural (perhaps because of the association between the plurals *lyrics* and *words*), predominates contemporary usage. Use of the singular form *lyric* remains grammatically acceptable, yet remains considered erroneous in referring to a singular song word as a *lyric*.

Lyric derives from the Greek word *lyrikos*, meaning "singing to the lyre". A lyric poem is one that expresses a subjective, personal point of view.

Beside that, there are also many other definitions of Lyric.

- Expressing deep emotion; "the dancer's lyrical performance"
- Used of a singer or singing voice that is light in volume and modest in range; "a lyric soprano"
- The text of a popular song or musical-comedy number; "his compositions always started with the lyrics"; "he wrote both words and music"; "the song uses colloquial language"
- Relating to or being musical drama; "the lyric stage"
- Write lyrics for (a song)
- A short poem of songlike quality
- Of or relating to a category of poetry that expresses emotion (often in a songlike way); "lyric poetry"

- Lyrically - in a lyrical manner; "she danced the part of the Black Swan very lyrically"
- Lyrics (in singular form Lyric) are a set of words that make up a song. The writer of lyrics is a lyricist or lyrist.
- Lyrics - The words to a song
- Lyrically - In a manner that is pleasing to hear, as singing
- A poem, such as a sonnet or an ode that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet. A lyric poem may resemble a song in form or style.
- Lyrics - Mild references to profanity, sexuality, violence, alcohol or drug use in music
- 1. n. a song accompanied by a lyre in ancient Greece; 2. n. any short poem such as an elegy, an ode or a sonnet, expressing a state of mind involving thought and feeling; 3. lyrics, pl. the words of a song.

I.1.2: **The meaning of Lyrics**

The meaning of lyrics can either be explicit or implicit. Some lyrics are abstract, almost unintelligible, and, in such cases, their explication emphasizes form, articulation, meter, and symmetry of expression. The lyricist of traditional musical forms such as Opera is as a librettist .

Lyrics can be studied from an academic perspective. For example, some lyrics can be considered a form of social commentary. Lyrics often contain political, social and economic themes as well as aesthetic elements, and so can connote messages which are culturally significant. Lyrics can also be analyzed with respect to the sense of unity (or lack of unity) it has with its supporting music. Analysis which based on tonality and contrast are particular examples.

Lyric is also a type of brief poem that expresses the personal emotions and thoughts of a single speaker. It is important to realize, however, that

although the lyric is uttered in the first person, the speaker is not necessarily the poet. There are many varieties of lyric poetry, including the dramatic monologue, elegy, haiku, ode, and sonnet forms. **Lyrics** can be studied from an academic perspective. For example, some lyrics can be considered a form of **social commentary**. Lyrics often contain political, social and economic themes as well as aesthetic elements, and so can connote messages which are culturally significant. These messages can either be explicit or implied through metaphor or symbolism. Lyrics can also be analyzed with respect to the sense of unity (or lack of unity) it has with its supporting music. Analysis based on **tonality** and **contrast** is a particular example.

I.1.3: Languages in the Lyrics

The word *lyric* came to be used for the "words of a song"; this meaning was recorded in 1876. The common plural (perhaps because of the association between the plurals *lyrics* and *words*), predominates contemporary usage. Use of the singular form *lyric* remains grammatically acceptable, yet remains considered erroneous in referring to a singular song word as a *lyric*.

Lyric derives from the Greek word *lyrikos*, meaning "singing to the lyre". A lyric poem is one that expresses a subjective, personal point of view.

I.2: Translation

Every translation activity has one or more specific purposes and whichever they may be, translation is mainly to serve as a cross-cultural bilingual communication vehicle among people. This activity, in the past few decades, has developed because of rising international trade, increasing migration, globalization, the recognition of linguistics minorities, and the expansion of the mass media and technology. For this reason, the translator plays an important role as a bilingual cross-cultural transmitter of facts and culture by attempting to interpret concepts and speech in a variety of texts as faithfully and accurately as possible.

Commonly, translation is understood as a transfer process from a

foreign language to mother tongue. However, market requirements are increasingly demanding that translators transfer texts to a target language that is not their mother tongue, but a foreign language.

Since translation is, above all, an activity that aims at conveying meaning or meanings of a given-linguistic discourse from one language to another, rather than the words or grammatical structures of the original, we should look briefly at the most significant and recent developments in the field of study of “meaning”, or semantics. The interest here lies in the shift/change of emphasis from referential or dictionary meaning to contextual and pragmatic meaning. Such a shift represents a significant development, particularly relevant to translation, and to communicative approach to translation. However, with the aim at being conducted in synchronization and harmony with the language learning in the curriculum as well as with the objectives of the course of the term, at this early stage of translation theory a look at the “Meaning of Words in Translation” is supposed to be of an appropriateness.

The meaning of a given word or set of words is best understood as the contribution that word or phrase can make to the meaning or function of the whole sentence or linguistic utterance where that word or phrase occurs. The meaning of a given word is governed not only by the external object or idea that particular word is supposed to refer to, but also by the use of that particular word or phrase in a particular way, in a particular context, and to a particular effect.

Through experience we have learnt that the penalty of wrong translations can be ruinous. Just think of what could happen in cases of serious inadequacy in knowledge areas such as science, medicine, legal matters, or technology. There must be thousands of examples. It is quite clearly that a poor translation can not only lead to laughter or to confusion, but it can also be a matter of life and death. Hence the importance of training

translators, not only in the acquisition and command of languages and translation of strategies and procedures, but also in specific knowledge areas and, what is equally important in professional morals.

So that, if we have sound linguistic knowledge, both theoretical and practical, and a wide cultural bilingual background, we will be successful in the profession.

I.2.1: What is translation

Translation has existed in every corner of our life. It is considered as an indispensable part in the fields of not only literature, culture, but also entertainment, scientific research, education... thus definition of translation are numerous and a large numbers of writers have written about this subject. In this paper, some concepts of translation have been collected as follow.

- **Translation** is the comprehension of the *meaning* of a text and the subsequent production of an *equivalent* text, likewise called a "translation," that communicates the same *message* in another language. The text that is translated is called the *source text*, and the language that it is translated into is called the target language. The product is sometimes called the target text.

Translation, when practiced by relatively *bilingual* individuals but especially when by persons with limited proficiency in one or both languages, involves a risk of *spilling-over* of *idioms* and *usages* from the source language into the target language. On the other hand, inter-linguistic spillages have also served the useful purpose of importing *calques* and *loanwords* from a source language into a target language that had previously lacked a concept or a convenient expression for the concept.

- Translation is the process of changing something that is written or spoken into another language (advanced Oxford Dictionary)

- Translation is a bilingual mediated process of communication which ordinarily aims at the production of a TL text that is functionally equivalent to

a SL text (Reiss, 1971:161)

- Translation is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that author intended the text (Newmark: 1988)

- Translation is the expression in another language (target language) of what has been expressed in one language (source language), preserving semantic and stylistic equivalencies (By Roger T.Bell)

- Translation is the interpretation of the meaning of a text in one language (the source text) and the production in another language of equivalent text (the target text) that communicates the same message (E.A Nida, 1959)

- Translation is the expression in another language (target language) of what has been expressed in one language (source language), preserving semantic and stylistic equivalencies. (By Roger T. Bell)

- Translation is the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent text in a second language. (By Roger T. Bell)

The author continues and makes the problems of equivalent very plain: Texts in different languages can be equivalent in different degrees (fully or partially different), in respect of different levels of presentation (in respect of context, of semantics, of grammar, of lexis, etc.) and at different ranks (word-for-word, phrase-for-phrase, sentence-for-sentence).

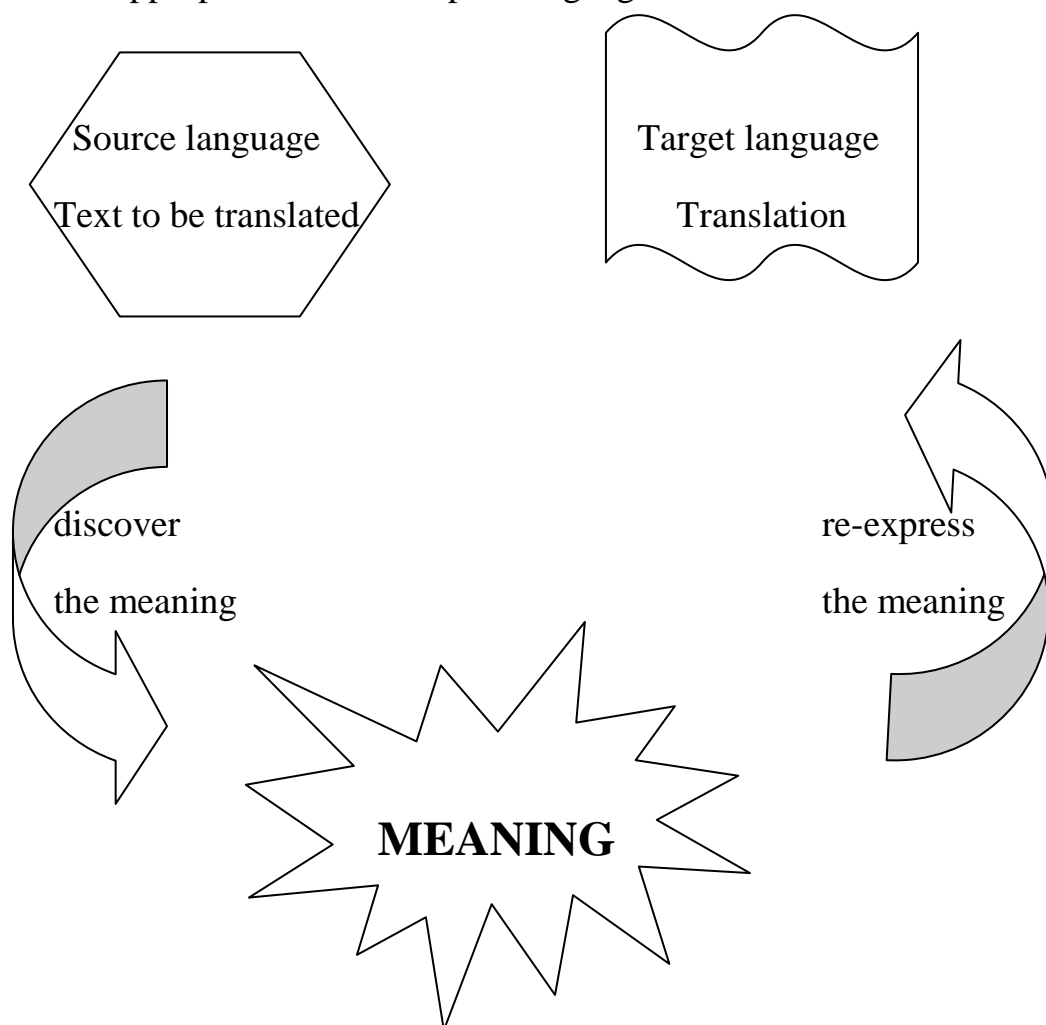
However, languages are different from each other. They are different in form having different codes and rules regulating the construction of grammatical stretches of language and these forms have different meanings.

To shift from one another language to other is, by definition, to change the forms. Also, the contrasting forms convey meanings which cannot but fail to coincide totally; there is no absolute synonym between words in the same language, why should anyone be surprised to discover a lack of synonym

between languages.

Translation is a process based on the theory that it is possible to abstract the meaning of a text from its forms and reproduce that meaning with the very different forms of a second language.

Translation, then, consists of studying the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text, analyzing it in order to determine its meaning, and then reconstructing this same meaning using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the receptor language and its cultural context.



The Overview Of Language Tasks In Translation

* **Three steps in translation:**

- Read and analyze for the basic meaning of the words.
- Transfer the meaning in to the RL.

- Make adjustment or “polish” to meet the stylistic requirements.

The ideal translation will be accurate as to meaning and natural as to the receptor language forms used. An intended audience who is unfamiliar with the source text will readily understand it. The success of a translation is measured by how closely it measures up to these ideals.

The ideal translation should be:

-Accurate: reproducing as exactly as possible the meaning of the source text.

-Natural: using natural forms of the receptor language in the way that is appropriate to the kind of text being translated.

-Communicative: expressing all aspects of the meaning in the way that is readily understandable to the intended audience.

I.2.2: Kinds of translation

**** Literal versus idiomatic***

Because a given text has both form and meaning, as discussed in the previous lesson, there are two main kinds of translation. One is form-based and the other is meaning-based. Form-based translations attempt to follow the form of the source language and are known as literal translation. Meaning-based translations make every effort to communicate the meaning of source language text in the natural forms of the receptor language. Such translations are called idiomatic translations.

An interlinear translation is a completely literal translation. For some purposes, it is desirable to reproduce the linguistic features of the source text, as for example, in a linguistic study of that language. Although the literal translations may be very useful for purposes related to the study of the source language, they are of little help to speakers of the receptor language who are interested in the meaning of the source language text. A literal translation sounds like nonsense and has little communication value.

Except for interlinear translation, a truly literal translation is

uncommon. Most translators who tend to translate literally actually make a partially modified literal translation. They modify the order and grammar enough to use acceptable sentence structure in the receptor language. However, the lexical items are translated literally. Occasionally, these are also changed to avoid complete nonsense or to improve the communication. However, the result still does not sound natural.

A person who translated in a modified literal manner will change the grammatical forms when the constructions are obligatory. However, if he has a choice, he will follow the form of the source text even though a different form might be more natural in the receptor language. Literal and modified literal translations consistently err in that they choose the literal equivalents for the words, i.e. lexical items being translated. Literal translations of words, idioms result in unclear, unnatural, and sometimes nonsensical translations. In a modified literal translation, the translator usually adjusts the translation enough to avoid the nonsense and wrong meanings, but the unnaturalness still remains.

Idiomatic translations use the natural forms of the receptor language, both in the grammatical constructions and in the choice of lexical items. A truly idiomatic translation does not sound like a translation. It sounds like it was written originally in the receptor language. Therefore, a good translator will try to translate idiomatically. This is his goal. However, translations are often a mixture of a literal transfer of the grammatical units along with some idiomatic translation of the meaning of the text. It is not easy to consistently translate. A translator may express some parts of his translation in very natural forms and then in other parts fall back into a literal form.

The translator's goal should be to reproduce in a receptor language a text which communicates the same message as the source language but using the natural grammatical and lexical choices of the receptor language. The basic overriding principle is that an idiomatic translation reproduces the meaning of the source language in the natural form of the receptor language.

**** Translating grammatical features***

Parts of speech are language specific. Each language has its own division of the lexical into classes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and so on. Different languages will have different classes and subclasses. It will not always be possible to translate a source language noun with a noun in the receptor language. For example, English have many nouns which really refer to actions while Vietnamese prefers to express actions as verbs rather than nouns.

Most languages have a class of word which may be called pronouns. Pronominal systems vary greatly from language to language and the translator is obliged to use the form of receptor language even though they may have very different meanings than the pronouns of the source language.

Grammatical constructions also vary between the source language and the receptor language. And it is not uncommon that passive constructions will need to be translated with an active construction or vice versa, depending on the natural form of receptor language.

Certainly, there will be times by coincidence they match, but a translator should translate the meaning not concern himself with whether the forms turn out the same or not

**** Translating lexical features***

Each language has its own idiomatic way of expressing meaning lexical items. Languages abound in idioms, secondary meanings, metaphors, and other figurative meanings.

It is obvious that translation is a complicated process. However, a translator who is concerning with transferring the meaning will find that the receptor language has a way in which they desired meaning can be expressed even though they may be different from the source language form. Considering the complexity of language structures, how can a translator ever hope to produce an adequate translation? Literal translation can only be avoided by careful analysis of the source language. A translator who takes the

time to study carefully the source language text, to write analysis of it, and then to look for the equivalent way in which the same message is expressed naturally in the receptor language, will be able to provide an adequate, and some times brilliant translation. His goal must be to avoid literalisms and to strive for a truly idiomatic receptor language text. He will know he is successful if the receptor language readers do not recognize his work as a translation at all, but simply as a text written in the receptor language for their information and enjoyment.

I.2.3: Strategies for translators

The following strategies have been suggested by translators, commissioners of translations, and others involved in translating as way to approach difficulties in translations from English to Vietnamese.

STRATEGY 1 : for non-equivalent at lexical level

It is often the case that no direct equivalents can be found in Vietnamese for English words. It may be that the concept or idea is new to Vietnamese translators, as in the case of “gender”, which is, in fact, a relatively new concept in general, and a very difficult concept to understand and explain in many languages. It may also be that the concept is known or understood but there is no specific word in Vietnamese used to express it. Another difficulty is that, in addition to their concrete meaning, some words have special connotations that are not conveyed by the Vietnamese word for the same thing. The strategies listed below can be used to handle cases of non-equivalence.

➤ Translating by a more specific word

In some cases, it may be appropriate or necessary to use a more specific word to translate an English word into Vietnamese. This usually involves choosing among several different words, as there may be many Vietnamese words that correspond to the general category or meaning expressed by English word.

➤ **Translating by a more general word**

In other cases, it may be appropriate to use a more general word to translate an English word with no specific Vietnamese equivalent.

➤ **Translating by cultural substitution**

This strategy involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression with one of the different meanings but similar impact in the translated text. Because of their self-described “respect” for the original text, most Vietnamese translators object to this strategy and tend to translate directly, even though it is in appropriate.

➤ **Translating by using a loan word plus explanation**

There is some objection to this strategy in Vietnam, as many translators prefer to coin new words in Vietnamese rather than borrow English words. However, this strategy is very useful when the translator deal with concepts or ideas that are new to Vietnamese audience, culture-specific items, and proper names of diseases or medicines that are widely known in English names.

➤ **Translating by using a paraphrase**

This strategy can be used when we translate an English word or concept that does not exist in Vietnamese, or when the Vietnamese term for it does not include all the meanings conveyed by the English term for the same concept.

➤ **Translating by omission**

Though some translators may reject this strategy as too drastic, it is sometimes appropriate to omit words or phrases that are not essential to the meaning or impact of the text. This is especially true for words that would require lengthy explanations, awkward paraphrases, or literal and unnatural translations, which would interrupt the follow of the text and could distract the reader from the overall meaning.

STRATEGY 2 :for idioms and expressions

Idioms and set expressions can be dealt with in the ways similar to those mentioned above. With idioms, however, there is another difficulty that

the translator may not realize that she or he is dealing with an idiomatic expression, since more idioms may make sense when translated literally.

➤ **Using an idiom or a set expression of similar meaning and form**

It is sometimes possible to find a Vietnamese idiom or expression with a similar meaning to an English idiom or expression, and which is expressed in the same way.

➤ **Using an idiom or a set expression of similar meaning but different form**

It is possible and easy to find a Vietnamese idiom with a similar meaning for an English idiom or set expression.

➤ **Translating by paraphrasing**

When Vietnamese equivalents cannot be found, paraphrasing may be the best way to deal with an idiom or set expression in English.

➤ **Translating by omission**

This strategy could be used when we translate words or phrases that would require lengthy explanations, awkward paraphrases, or literal and unnatural translation. This strategy has also been used when we translate phrases which have two meanings, one of the meanings may be sacrificed for the other.

STRATEGY 3 : for voice, number and person

➤ **Voice**

The passive voice is used very often in English and poses some problems in Vietnamese translation.

➤ **Number**

Though both languages have similar notions of number and countability, each language has its own way to express these notions. In English, number is expressed as a grammar category; that is, there are different grammatical forms for singular and plural nouns. In Vietnamese, however, no such distinction is grammatically made.

➤ **Person**

Participants' roles and forms of address are expressed in Vietnamese

through a very complicated system of personal pronouns based largely on kinship terms. Unlike English pronouns, Vietnamese pronouns bear a number of semantic components depending on the relationship within a family, age, sex, familiarity, social status, and even one's particular mood or attitude in a given situation. These distinctions are not always explicitly expressed in English and can usually be determined by the context in which the language operates. If it is not possible to determine the distinction of the English pronouns, the attention should be focused on the tone and the overall purpose of the text to be translated

STRATEGY 4 : on non-subject sentences(Vietnamese-English translation)

The following techniques could be used to translate the non-subject sentences in Vietnamese texts:

- Passive voice
- It + tobe + Adj + to infinitive
- There + tobe
- Use the subject that is found in the previous sentence(s)

STRATEGY 5 : for newspapers headlines

Some main characteristics of newspaper headlines are as follow.

- Present tense = past events
- Present participle = event in progress
- To infinitive = future events
- Past participle = passive voice
- Nouns
- Verb + noun

Chapter II: Types of lyrics and some popular words and phrases in English songs

II.1: Types of lyrics

A songwriter - an artist who uses music to express exactly what we are feeling about an idea or situation - helps us to cope with life. They create a lot of songs with many different kinds. There are many lyrics which contain emotional words, romantic or hopeful words. On the other hand, there are also many other lyrics with practical and critical words. On the contrary, unhealthy and sexual stimulated words are still existed.

II.1.1: Emotional, Romantic and Hopeful

Everyone feels emotion, but not everyone knows how to express themselves when dealing with life or other people. This is why we love to listen to songs over and over. To demonstrate the sentiment to all people whom you love, you can give them the song which you satisfy because an emotional song is always full of love. Similarly, you also send to your lover the song which expresses so much all of your feelings, your love that you spend for him or her. Some songs also have hopeful, active words. Those express the belief, the desire of human beings in future life. And therefore, by accident, the lyrics become the motivation which helps us to live better.

♦ (**Genie in the bottle** – by **Christina Aguilera**)

“..I feel like I've been locked up tight
For a century of lonely nights
Waiting for someone to release me
You're licking your lips
And blowing kisses my way..”

☞ (*Em có cảm giác mình đã bị khóa rất chặt bởi những đêm cô đơn, đợi chờ một ai đó tới giải thoát, và như thổi vào làn môi em những nụ hôn*)

♦ (**Halo** – by **Beyonce Knowles**)

“..I found a way to let you in

But, I never really had a doubt
Standing in the light of your halo
I got my angel now
It's like I've been awakened..”

☞ (*Em đã để anh bước vào cuộc sống của em và thực sự chưa bao giờ nghi ngờ anh. Sống trong ánh hào quang của anh, em thực sự như một thiên thần, giống như em đã được đánh thức*)

“..Everywhere I'm looking now
I'm surrounded by your embrace
Baby, I can see your halo
You're everything I need and more..”

☞ (*Bây giờ ở bất cứ nơi đâu, em đều thấy mình được che chở trong vòng tay của anh. Anh yêu, em có thể thấy vầng hào quang của anh Anh là tất cả những gì em cần và hơn thế nữa.*)

♦ (**Music of the sun** – by **Rihanna**)

“..Can't you feel the music in the air
Close your eyes and let the rhythm take you there
Doesn't matter who you or and where your from
Come and dance to the music of the sun
Forget about your troubles its alright
Let them go till we see the morning light..”

☞ (*Bạn có cảm thấy âm nhạc đang lan tỏa không. Hãy nhắm mắt lại và hãy để giai điệu đưa bạn đi. Chẳng bận tâm bạn là ai và bạn từ đâu tới. Hãy đến và nhảy theo điệu nhạc của ánh nắng. hãy quên đi hết mọi rắc rối và chờ đợi ánh bình minh*)

II.1.2: Practical and critical

Beside that, there are also many lyrics which have a large number of practical and critical words. You can see it in a lot of songs which are written about many pressing and full alert matters like the environment, the social evil, war and so forth. Obviously, this kind of lyric is very useful for all

people in our society. It describes accurately the social realistic and essentially to the bad aspects of society which are becoming more and more dangerous problems nowadays. There should be more many lyrics like that to bring up a subject or a topic to make everyone know about all important things surrounding us.

♦ (*Earth song* – by **Michael Jackson**)

“What about sunrise

What about rain

What about all the things

That you said we were to gain...”

☞ (*Thế còn ánh hoàng hôn, còn những cơn mưa, còn tất cả những gì mà chúng ta đã nói sẽ giành lại*)

“..Did you ever stop to notice

All the blood we've shed before

Did you ever stop to notice

This crying Earth these weeping shores?..”

☞ (*Có bao giờ loài người để tâm tới những giọt máu mà bao nhiêu người khác đã đổ xuống. Có bao giờ loài người để tâm tới Trái Đất, tới những bãi biển đang khóc than.*)

“..What have we done to the world

Look what we've done

What about all the peace

Did you ever stop to notice

All the children dead from war..”

☞ (*Hãy xem chúng ta đã làm gì với Thế giới. Hãy nhìn vào những gì chúng ta đã làm với nền hòa bình của nhân loại. Có bao giờ loài người để tâm tới những đứa trẻ đã chết trong chiến tranh.*)

And more...

(..I used to dream
I used to glance beyond the stars
Now I don't know where we are
Although I know we've drifted far
Hey, what about yesterday
What about the seas
The heavens are falling down
I can't even breathe
What about apathy
I need you
What about nature's worth
It's our planet's womb
What about animals
We've turned kingdoms to dust
What about elephants
Have we lost their trust
What about crying whales
We're ravaging the seas
What about forest trails
Burnt despite our pleas
What about the holy land
Torn apart by greed
What about the common man
Can't we set him free
What about children dying
Can't you hear them cry
Where did we go wrong
Someone tell me why
What about baby boy
What about the days

What about all their joy
What about the man
What about the crying man
What about Abraham
What about death again
Do we give a damn ..)

♦(*We made you* – by **Eminem**)

This talks about a famous female singer who is a lesbian and fall in love with a female, too.

“..He does not mean to lesbian offend, but Lindsay, come back to seeing man, Samantha’s a two, you’re practically a ten..”

II.1.3: **Unhealthy and sexual stimulated**

Some songs have good meanings and they send to us wonderful messages. Those songs like that make a good contribution to our society. But some songs especially written by youngsters have bad meanings which contains many bad words. Dangerously, it makes a bad influence on all the readers reading or translating it. Moreover, the youth in our society are being at risk.

These are some opinions of listeners about songs, also lyrics, and all of them are bad.

♦ At the risk of sounding like a prude, I'm curious what pop music fans think of the growing number of censored words on top 40 radios today. Since **Gwen Stefani's** "Hollaback Girl" a little over a year ago and its endless "**This my sh**, this my sh****" it seems that the only thing multiplying faster than pop hits with swear words are the multitude of ways the words are (barely) concealed for pop radio play.

♦ **Kanye West's** elimination of the "n" word for radio play of "**Gold Digger**" seemed to so entertain Kanye that he has taken to performing the censored version in concert before breaking into audience sing along in which white people are free to shout the "n" word. A particularly unusual way of censoring the language in a hit song occurs in the sanitized take on **Panic! At the Disco's** hit "**I Write Sins Not Tragedies.**" The offending word is actually used for effective emphasis in the original song, but radio plays a version in which a prefix is blanked leaving us with ***damn as the more acceptable

term. The brain that can't figure out the word being altered is a sheltered one indeed.

♦ Moving forward in time the 2 most recent top added pop songs on radio incorporate their fair share of foul language in the original unexpurgated versions. Fergie luxuriates in an "Oh Sh**" chorus on "**London Bridge**" (replaced in other versions with either "Oh Shh" or "Oh Snap") and former boy band star **Justin Timberlake** sings the MF word on "**SexyBack**". Perhaps this is all a sign of the times since, despite the FCC continued escalation of fines for indecent broadcasts, President Bush finds it acceptable to utter the word **sh**** when meeting with G8 world leaders.

♦ (*I wanna love you* – by **Akon**)

(but the original title is "I wanna f... you")

“I see you winding and grinding up on that pole,
I know you see me lookin' at you and you already know
I wanna f... you, you already know
I wanna f... you, you already know”

II.2: Some popular words and phrases in English songs

II.2.1: Words

♦ (*Hero* – by **Maria Carey**)

“Hero” (*người anh hùng*); “strength” (*sức mạnh*); “survive” (*tồn tại, sống sót*); “hope” (*hy vọng*); “truth” (*sự thực*)

♦ (*I wanna love you forever* – by **Jessica Simpson**)

“Cherish” (*yêu thương*); “mercy” (*lòng nhân từ, sự may mắn*)

♦ (*Big girls don't cry* – by **Fergie**)

“Clarity” (*sự trong sáng, rõ ràng*), “peace” (*hòa bình*)

II.2.2: Phrases

♦ (*Hero* – by **Maria Carey**)

“Look inside your heart” (*Hãy nhìn sâu vào trong trái tim anh*); “don’t have to be afraid” (*Không có gì phải e sợ*); “a hero comes along” (*Một người hùng xuất hiện*); “cast your fears aside” (*Vứt bỏ đi nỗi sợ hãi của bạn*)

♦ (*I wanna love you forever* – by **Jessica Simpson**)

“10,000 lifetimes together” (*Ngàn đời ở bên nhau*)

♦ (*Big girls don’t cry* – by Fergie)

“Share our secret words” (*Chia sẻ những điều bí mật*)

Chapter III: Difficulties for translators in understanding and feeling the original / source lyrics

Formerly, we had lots of immortal songs with good and gentle lyrics. Nowadays, there have been also songs like this, but with the development of our society, the rising of communication, especially in Showbiz, it is likely that there are more and more different trends in writing lyrics. Perhaps, it makes the trends because of some famous songs. They are performed everywhere. So it influences on everybody, including people who are going to be a writer or a singer.

As far as we know, one of the most popular trends in writing lyrics is about love with romance, emotion, about the future, peace and hope. Some are written about the life surrounding. It may be with the criticism, irony about the bad habits, bad behavior or bad lifestyle of someone. Besides, it may be about the environment, the war, the animals, and so forth.

III.1: LIMITED VOCABULARY

As usual, we learn and find out the meaning of a word by looking up it in the dictionary. And the dictionaries are always the places where the words' meanings are analyzed collectively and generally. The most popular and being used meanings of the words would be edited and be shown in dictionaries.

Moreover, in our process of learning English as a foreign language, we have to do lots of exercises to practice, we realize that the words which are popular mentioned as examples in many exercises or documents, reference books almost present their most popular meanings.

This makes us pay attention or focus on some most popular meanings of words to some extent. And so that, we step by step neglect other meanings

of words that may be suitable and correct in other texts.

This is only about the words which have a little meaning, not accounting to the words which each with many distinct meaning. So learning and getting to understand all of the meanings of words will help us translate texts or lyrics correctly, exactly and easily. However, to foreigners who learn English in general and to Vietnamese in private, to understand and to know all of the meanings of all words is really difficult, and it is likely impossible. However, to gain to the percent of 80 or 90 is totally possible. And it depends on the learning process, practicing, improving knowledge of each of us. The more knowledge of vocabulary and distinct meanings of different words we polish up, the more successful, correctly and exactly we translate the lyrics. And it will bring us a good result. Obviously, to the people who have a little knowledge about the new words and its meanings, it is so hard to know what that word means.

Besides, it is supposed that grammar is to have been the most reason which makes difference for the readers to understand lyrics. It is likely that you will not easily understand what a sentence says if you are not good at its language.

❖ **blue**

♦ (*Blue (Da Ba De)* – by **EIFFEL 65**)

“..I have a **blue** house with a **blue** window.

Blue is the colour of all that I wear.

Blue are the streets and all the trees are too..”

In general context, the meaning of the word “blue” is considered as one kind of colors of a clear sky, or of the sea in sunny days, or you can see blue eyes, a blue dress, shirt, and so on. And in this lyric, we can see that it is the

color of a house and a window. The writer also mentions that all of his clothes are blue, and all trees are blue too, of course. Really, blue always seems to be a familiar color to all of us. Therefore, in this context, we can easily translate the general meaning of the word “blue” and we see that it is completely suitable for this context of this lyric.

☞ “ *Tôi có một ngôi nhà xanh với một cửa sổ màu xanh*”

♦ (*Apologize* – by **TIMBALAND**)

“..And I need you like a heart needs a beat

(But that's nothing new)

I loved you with a fire red, now it's turning **blue**

And you say sorry like an angel, heavens not the thing for you.

But I'm afraid it's too late to apologize, it's too late..”

However, in this lyric, this is a love song with a bad mood of the writer. The word “blue” now does not have its general meaning. “I loved you with a fire red, now it's turning **blue**”. That is a bad mood, sad and despondent, disheartened, and dispirited. In this lyric, the writer uses the word “blue” to express the feeling of the boy whose girlfriend always makes him disappointed. At the first time, he loves her with a fire red, it means fervent, he devotes to her a passionate love, but in the end, he feels everything falling down.

☞ (Anh luôn yêu em một cách nồng cháy, nhưng giờ đã thật chán ngắt)

not “ *..nhưng giờ chuyển sang màu xanh*”

❖ **fall**

♦ (*Trophy Wives* – by **VANNA**)

“..Scarlet’s ribbons **fall away**.”

She lets down her hair
polished lips that tear
your heart from your chest..”

The word “fall” means to move quickly downwards from a brighter position, usually by accident. It also means to descend freely by the force of gravity, losing the balance, tumbling down, dropping or coming down. The word “fall” can combine with many prepositions and then creates many different meanings. For example, in this lyric, we can consider the meaning of the word “fall” when it combines with the preposition “away” as its general meaning that is the Scarlet’s ribbon is dropping to the ground.

☞ “ Những chiếc ruy-băng của Scarlet rơi xuống”

not “*Những chiếc ruy-băng của Scarlet ngã ra xa*”

♦ (*Truth Begins* – by **DIRTY PRETTY THINGS**)

“..What you want is to stay away from people like me
Who twist most everything they see
And leave the grey old world behind you
So sow it up kid have some clout
We’ll do some wine and **fall about**
The sun will shine again tomorrow..”

But in this lyric, the word “fall” when combining with the preposition “about”, it creates the new meaning which is a different creation. That is shaking with laughter, laughing derisively, laughing uncontrollably, keeling over with laughter. If you fall about or fall about laughing, you laugh a lot at something.

☞ “ Chúng ta sẽ uống rượu và cười ngặt nghẽo”

not “*Chúng ta sẽ uống rượu và ngã về*”

III.2: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Besides, the cultural differences among nations should be mentioned.

Because when writing the lyrics, the writers or musicians, of course, bring their traditions of culture, customs, ways of living, ways of thinking, behaviors which have gone with them from generation to generation.

A man who was born and grown up in a country surely has that country's traditions. And the cultural traditions among different areas are different, of course, not counting in nations. Without learning, searching in books, websites, newspapers, communicative transportations or mass media, we could not get to understand the cultural traditions all over the world. From then, we understand ourselves the reason why that with the same ideas, different musicians express it in many different ways.

A word, some words or phrases are suitable in one text, but in other locals or other countries, they are not suitable and are not used. So the more cultural traditions we learn about, the more we get into the knowledge treasure of humanity, And from then, we can easily and correctly translate any lyrics which we like.

Therefore, if you do not have a thorough knowledge of English and its culture, it is improbable for you to understand lyrics, not counting feeling it.

Word collocation consists of the associations a word acquires on account of the meanings of words which tend to occur in its environment. Each of language has its own principle in word collocation.

III.2.1: Difficulty with set expressions

For example, in Vietnamese the word “uống” (drink) can go with many different kinds of liquid including water, beer, alcohol, medicine and even

poison. However, in English these are clear distinction as follow:

Drink beer/ water/ wine/ coffee

Take medicine/ poison

♦ (*Painkiller* – by **FREESTYLERS**)

“..I'm reaching in my cupboard for a painkiller

Ah-uh ah-uh for a painkiller-killer-killer...

You see we work hard play hard

Man I gotta stay charged

Can't sleep, tired out

Trouble on my radar

Runnin' 'round live wire

Had anotha red bull

Everybody's burnin' baby

Let me come and get a pull

Isn't it incredible

That i'm even still awake

Still alive still I **take poison** that debilitates..”

* *”take poison” means “ uống thuốc độc” not “ lấy thuốc độc”*

As mentioned above, in Vietnamese, the word “drink” is used for all the cases that we want to express the action of swallowing something which is liquid, no matter whatever it is, for example water, beer, wine and even poison. But in this lyric, we can see that English combine the word “take” with the word “poison”. It is shown that not all of liquid, English use the same word to combine with it to express the action that we bring liquid into our body. And with each fixed group words, English use each fixed words to combine with it without making it into another meaning.

In this lyric, “take poison” also means that “uống thuốc độc”. If we translate it word by word: “take” means “lấy”, “poison” means “thuốc độc”, so we have “lấy thuốc độc”. This translation may cause a different meaning. We may understand this as an action of taking something, so that this action not for sure means he or she brings the poison into his or her body. Hence, the meaning of the lyric is misunderstood.

Another example indicates that in Vietnamese the word “nói” (say) can be collocated with “lời tạm biệt” (goodbye), “lời chào hỏi” (hello), “dối” (a lie), “sự thật” (the truth), “tiếng Anh” (English). However, in English it is quite different.

Say hello/ goodbye/ yes/ no

Tell a lie/ the truth/ a story

Speak English/ French/ Chinese

♦ (*It's A Sin To Tell A Lie* by **JOHN DENVER**)

“..Be sure it's true when you say I love you

It's a sin to **tell a lie**

Millions of hearts have been broken

Just because these words were spoken

I love you yes I do I love you

If you break my heart I'll die

So be sure that it's true

When you say I love you

It's a sin to **tell a lie..**”

* “*tell a lie*” means “*nói dối*” not “*kể một lời nói dối*”

As far as we know, Vietnamese use the word “nói” to indicate all the action of making sounds. Really, we can combine “nói” (say) with “hello”,

“goodbye”, “yes”, “no”, “a lie”, “the truth”, “a story” or any language. But English do not use like that. In English, to express this action, there are even four words that are “say”, “speak”, “tell”, “talk”. But the use of each is quite different and it is fixed in distinct cases. The word “tell” is used to make someone know about something, especially by words or writings. So that, instead of translating “tell a lie” is “kể một lời nói dối”, we translate it simply “nói dối”.

III.2.2: Difficulty at collective noun

In Vietnamese, the word “đàn” can be collocated with many different nouns such as “cá” (fish), “chim” (bird), “sư tử” (lion), “gia súc” (cattle). On the contrary, in English there are many words meaning “đàn” as follows.

A pack of dogs/ calves

A flock of birds/ sheep

A herd of cattle/ buffaloes

A pride of lions/ deer

A school of fish/ chickens

♦(*Pride Of Lions* by TOKYO SKA PARADISE ORCHESTRA)

“..An innocent boy’s going to find a dream

Someone’s going off the rails

Tiny poets are going to the end

Treating life as a book on fire

Naked eyes are open wide

“What’s the meaning of my life?”

A wise man shouts a prudent verse

He's hiding anger
Wake up to play the game of truth
A pride of lions runs about
You've lost your mind but keep fighting
For wonderful fellows..”

*“*A pride of lions*” means “đàn sư tử” not “niềm tự hào của những con sư tử”

Similarly, in Vietnamese, we call all the groups of cattles, or animals: “đàn”. But English use the fixed words to combine with each kind of group of animal. For example, in this lyric, a group of lion are combined with “the pride” which means “niềm tự hào” although it expresses the meaning which doesn't concern with “đàn”. So, we can not translate “A pride of lions” is “niềm tự hào của những con sư tử”, then we translate “đàn sư tử”.

♦ (*Whole Lot Of Love* by **TOM. T. HALL**)

“..We live on a farm in Tennessee like old McDonald's was
We have all the things that a farm should have and a whole lot of love
We have a brace of ducks and a clutch of chicks
Cry of hounds and a candle of kits
Enough of frogs and as it gets dark and an exaltation of larks
We live on a farm in Tennessee...
We have a drove of cattle and a grist of bees
A colony of ants and a gaggle of geese
A school of fish and a murder of crows and a great big tribe of goats
We live on a farm in Tennessee..”

* “*A school of fish*” means “đàn cá” not “một trường học cá”

Another example, we have to use the word “school” which means “trường học”, but we can not translate “Một trường học cá”, we translate “Một đàn cá”. Those combinations are really fixed and unchangeable.

III.3: DIFFICULTY IN TRANSLATING SLANG AND IDIOMS

III.3.1: Difficulty in translating slang

Slang is the word or phrases, which are very intimate and informal, are often used in spoken language, especially spoken by a group or a crew in society. It is regarded not to be suitable for formal situations and not be used for a long time.

Nowadays, there is a trend in writing lyrics in some kinds of music, especially in Hip-hop or Rⁿ B music, the singers who sing the songs write the lyrics themselves. They bring to lyrics the practical words which express the ordinary life, express many styles which are very be fond of by the youth. And those lyricists do not hesitate to bring the slang in their songs.

Therefore, if we are not native speakers, it will be difficult for us to understand what one word, which is slang, means. People who learn foreign languages really have troubles with translating the lyrics which contain slang.

Everyone knows that you can study the English language for years and still not understand a native speaker of English when you meet one. Everyone knows that native speakers say a lot of things that you can not find in any dictionary. Well, here is a secret for you: a lot of British people can not understand each other either!

There are different regional accents across the UK, and a number of regions have several different **dialects** i.e. they have their own unique vocabulary and grammatical phrases. There were at least six different accents **indigenous** to London the last time I counted.

Worse than that, it is not just where a person is born in the UK that decides their accent. For example, a language and its accents often vary across

class or level of education. Another example is how language can differ across age-groups in the UK. The words and pronunciations used by young people in the UK can be **radically** different compared to those used by adults.

Yoof culture

The word “yoof” is a slang spelling of “youth”. Some people consider “yoof” to be a negative term, since its pronunciation is easier and lazier than “youth”. Other people see the term as positive, because it describes how young people are creating their own language, concepts and identity. When parents find it difficult to understand their children, the children can say more things without the censorship of their parents.

In this way, young people are starting to find freedom, independence and self-expression. They are creating a “yoof culture”. It is not possible to come up with a complete list of words used by yoof. By the time the list was completed, it would be out of date. New words **come and go** like fashions. However, a few features of the yoof style of language are as follows:

- ‘cuz / ‘coz / ‘cause = because; I ain’t = I am not ; Gonna = Going to ; Wanna = Want to ; Gotta = Have got to ; Yeah = Yes
- Instead of saying something like ‘That’s good!’ or ‘I understand’, yoof will use a single adjective like ‘Safe!’, ‘Sorted!’, ‘Sound!’, ‘Cool!’ or ‘Wicked!’
- Instead of ‘She then said no!’, yoof will say ‘She was like: no!’
- Instead of ‘...if you understand what I’m saying’, yoof will say ‘kindathing’ or ‘sortathing’
- Instead of ‘think’, ‘the’, ‘that’, ‘what’ and ‘because’, yoof will say ‘fink’, ‘da’, ‘dat’, ‘wot’ and ‘coz’

- Instead of ‘She’s attractive!’, yoof will say ‘She’s fine!’ or ‘She’s fit!’
- Instead of using different tag questions like ‘...isn’t it?’, ‘...can’t you?’ or ‘don’t they’, yoof will use ‘innit’ (e.g. ‘It’s hot, innit!’, ‘You can dance really well, innit!’ or ‘They always say that, innit!’)
- Instead of using ‘very’ or ‘really’, yoof will use ‘well’ (e.g. ‘I’m well tired’ or ‘You well got it wrong!’)
- Instead of ‘I don’t care!’, a yoof will say ‘Whatever!’.

♦ (*How Low* – by **LUDACRIS**)

“..I may not **wanna** get low so i post it up **kinda** like a playa do, but if you come to the crib, then i might show you girls a thang or 2, Yea i think you a superstar wit a ass like that you **gotta** blow, before you make it big..”

In this lyric, we can see some slang, “wanna” means “want to”, “gotta” means “have got to”, “getting” means “getting”.

♦ (*Sexy Bitch* – by **DAVID GUETTA**)

“..They say she low down
It's just a rumor and I don't believe **em**
They say she needs to slow down
The baddest thing around town..”

The word “em” in this lyric refers to “them”.

♦ (*Tik Tok* – by **KESHA**)

“..Wake up in the mornin **feelin** like P diddy
Got my glasses i'm out the door **gonna** hit this city
Before I leave, brush my teeth with a bottle of jack

Cause when I leave for the night, I **ain't comin** back. I'm talking - pedicures
on our toes, toes
Put your hands up. Put your hands up
Now, the party don't start **til** I walk in...
Don't stop, make it pop
DJ, blow my speakers up..”

III.3.2: Difficulty in translating idioms

Besides, there are many idioms, proverbs or local dialects and so forth that may cause us difficulties to understand and translate. Here are some examples of the lyrics which contain idioms.

♦ (*Breakthrough* – by **GALACTIC COWBOYS**)

“..I should've seen it comin' should've seen the signs
Seems that there's a break in our communication lines
You haven't heard me talkin' for a long long time
I guess you're in a new dimension but I'm still in mine
Look out 'cause I'm **a bull in a china shop**..”

Idioms are very popular in many lyrics of English songs. Obviously, idiomatic translation is a challenging work for almost translators as it requires not only the linguistic knowledge but also cultural knowledge of both source language and target language. It is impossible for the translators to translate these idioms without basing on the specific contexts as well as cultural characteristics of each culture.

For example, in English culture, in this lyric, the image of “bull” is considered as an awkward animal and when it combines with the prepositional phrase “in a china shop” it means a clumsy person. Apparently in this song the bull is personalized as human being.

☞ (*a bull in a china shop* : người thô lỗ vụng về trong khi cần sự khéo léo và thận trọng)

not “ *Con bò đực trong cửa hàng Trung Quốc*”

♦ (*Storm in a Tea Cup* – by **HILLOY RAY**)

“..I woke up in the morning to drink some tea -

But suddenly I noticed a strange honey bee !

She was buzzing all over the room,

So I picked up a long yellow broom !

Soon I chased her out but she stung my face,

'Cause she was mad to follow a broom race !

Out of fear, I jumped on a too small table,

When my leg slipped and broke the TV cable !

Tea was spilled and I got a strong hiccup,

What a mishap ! **A storm in a tea cup !!!!..”**

“Storm” is an extreme weather condition with very strong wind, heavy rain and often thunder and lightning. We probably heard the word “storm” used to describe weather, like in the definition above. But the word “storm” is also used to describe strong emotions especially when it combines with the prepositional phrase “in the teacup”. “A storm in a teacup” is when someone makes a situation seem much worse than it is. They make a small problem seem like a big problem. If someone exaggerates a problem or makes a small problem seem far greater than it really is, then they

are making “a storm in a teacup”.

☞ (*a storm in a tea cup* : rất nhiều sự rối rít, om sòm, náo động, lo âu..về cái gì không quan trọng.việc bé xé ra to, việc không đâu cũng làm to chuyện)

not “ *Một cơn bão trong một cốc trà*”

♦ (***Down And Out*** – by **GENESIS**)

“..It's good to be here! How've you been?
Check my bags boy! Where's my room?
Gotta sit on the phone, that's my game,
Keep up the pressure all the way!
I don't want to **beat about the bush**

but none of us are getting any younger..”

The verb “beat” is to strike repeatedly and with force, pound. And a bush is a low shrub with many branches. But when these two words combine with each other, they mean to avoid talking about a difficult or embarrassing subject because you are worried about upsetting the person you are talking to, and it is usually used in negative form. If you “beat about the bush”, or “beat around the bush”, you don't say something directly, usually because you don't want to upset the person you're talking to.

If someone doesn't say clearly what they mean and try to make it hard to understand, they are beating about (around) the bush. When you ask questions or hint at things without being clear about what you mean, you are beating around the bush.

☞ (*to beat about the bush* : nói vòng vo, quanh co, không đi vào điểm chính)

not “ *Đập bụi rậm*”

♦ (*Carrot Juice Is Murder* – by **ARROGANT WORMS**)

“..I've heard the screams of the vegetables (scream, scream, scream)

Watching their skins being peeled (having their insides revealed)

Grated and steamed with no mercy (burning off calories)

How do you think that feels (bet it hurts really bad)

Carrot juice constitutes murder (and that's a real crime)

Greenhouses prisons for slaves (let my vegetables go)

It's time to stop all this gardening (it's dirty as hell)

Let's **call a spade a spade..**”

“Spade” is a sturdy digging tool having a thick handle and a heavy, flat blade that can be pressed into the ground with the foot, or any of various similar digging or cutting tools. It is evident that the word “spade” refers to the instrument used to move soil or something like that, it is considered as a very common tool.

“**Call a spade a spade**” is to speak plainly, bluntly, frankly about something, even if it is unpleasant. It is used to call something by its right name, to describe something as it really is and to tell the truth in a blunt manner. To "**call a spade a spade**" is to speak honestly and directly about a topic, specifically topics that others may avoid speaking about due to their sensitivity or embarrassing nature.

It is also understood to expose somebody for what they are when every one else is too scared to. Call a spade a spade is not a racial slur. Obviously, it is used to avoid euphemisms or beating around the bush.

☞ (call a spade a spade : nói rõ ràng và thẳng thắn, nói toạc móng heo)

not “ *Gọi cái xẻng là cái xẻng*”

♦ (*Love To Love You* – by **CARAVAN**)

“..Oh, I would love to, love to love you

Yes, indeed, I do love you, love you

My, my, **pigs might fly**, that can't be bad

How you have the cheek to smile and tell me I'm mad..”

“Pig” is one kind of mammals, having short legs, cloven hooves, bristly hair, and a cartilaginous snout used for digging, especially the domesticated hog. It is generally considered as a farm animal used for its meat. But pigs can not fly. To say “**pigs might fly**” expresses disbelief, or the idea that miracles might happen but are extremely unlikely. If you think something will never happen or succeed, you can say that “**pigs might fly**” (or “pigs can fly” and “pigs will fly” because the idiom is possible used in many forms. There are lots of variations on sayings associated with the idea of pigs flying, as an example of something obviously nonsensical or of some event that is extremely unlikely to occur.

Other forms that have appeared at various times include “*pigs could fly if they had wings*”, and “*pigs may fly, but they are very unlikely birds*”.

☞ (*pigs might fly* : được dùng để biểu lộ sự thiếu lòng tin, những chuyện kỳ lạ có thể xảy ra nhưng cực kỳ hiếm) (quả là chuyện lạ trên đời)

not “ *Những con lợn có thể bay*”

PART III: CONCLUSION

III.1: Summary of the study

It can not be denied that today English is the most widely spoken language in the history of our planet. English has acquired the largest vocabulary of the entire world's language, perhaps as many as two million words, and has generated one of the human races. Therefore, lyrics play one of important roles in satisfying constantly increasing requirements of entertainments.

This study examines about the linguistics in song lyrics. The data were collected by gathering lyrics of some current famous songs. Results show that there are many lyrics which contain beautiful, romantic, hopeful and emotional linguistics. But there are some which have actual, critical and ironic meaning. The findings emphasize that the good linguistics make us feel better, enjoyable to the life, and have more hope to the future. It praises beautiful action, beautiful love stories and encourage us to have more power to live. Besides, some shows us the bad side of life. It criticizes people who have luxurious and wasteful lifestyles, or bad behavior. However, there are also many lyrics which have bad words and unhealthy contents. All of them show us the current trends in writing linguistics in song lyrics of modern music nowadays.

This paper includes three main parts. The first part is the Introduction, the second part is the Development with the Theoretical background, Some current trends in writing lyrics and Difficulties for translators in understanding and feeling the original / source lyrics , and the third part is the Conclusion. I would also like to give as many examples as possible which are of best selection from different sources of English songs lyrics so as to help readers have a wide and clear understanding of my study. I hope that this

study can help readers understand English songs lyrics.

Due to the limitation of time and comprehensive knowledge of mine in this field, the research paper may not satisfy the readers entirely. There still remain some shortcomings and limitation in the paper and some aspects of the subject could not be mentioned. Yet, it might guide readers to other interesting ideas of the subject for further study.

III. 2: Suggestions for further research

Translation of linguistics in song lyrics is a profound and broad subject to researchers. The writer is awful aware that the study is only a very tiny research on this field. Therefore, the author of this study would like to give some suggestions which may be useful for further study.

- Research on rate of occurrence of slang in lyrics.
- Research on there should be or not abbreviation of bad words in lyrics.
- Research on there should be or not lyrics which contain bad contents.

Once again, I would like to send my sincere thanks to the ones who encourage and help me to do this study. Finally, I specially thank to my English teacher, Mrs Hoang Thi Bay, M.A who directly guides me in this time . She gave me some useful suggestions, helped me to complete this study well.

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