

# Some Principles For Translating Experiential Meanings In English & Vietnamese Business Correspondence Texts

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## **Abstract:**

*At the time being, the demand for translation skill of business texts from English into Vietnamese and vice versa in general, and business letters in particular is greater because this skill will help Vietnamese enterprises create more effective business texts to communicate with their foreign partners. It should be acknowledged that the translation of a business letter must be treated in a scrutiny manner because any incorrect or wrong use of business terms or phrases may lead to unnecessary misunderstandings or even conflicts or disputes during the transactions between local and foreign business partners. In response to this demand, quite a few of Vietnamese universities have incorporated the course of business correspondence into their curriculum to provide students with the techniques of writing English business letters and translating skills. On the basis of register theory developed by Halliday (1994), the article will put into analysis of some typical linguistic features of business correspondence discourse in term of their experiential meanings, and suggest some principles for translating this type of text, with a pedagogical implication of providing English teachers with a useful tool for translating business correspondence.*

**Key words:** translating business letters, register, experiential meanings

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## **I. Introduction**

At present, the demand by Vietnamese enterprises for the writing and translation skills of business texts in general and business letters in particular is greater because of the increasing business transactions between Vietnamese and foreign partners. It should be noted that in business practices, any incorrect or wrong use of English business terms or phrases in business correspondence may lead to unnecessary misunderstandings or even conflicts, disputes during the transactions. In response to this demand, a number of Vietnamese business schools have incorporated the course of business correspondence into their curriculum. This course will both provide students with the techniques of writing English business letters and translating them from Vietnamese to English and vice versa.

On the basis of *register theory* by Halliday (1994), this essay will put into analysis of some typical linguistic features of business texts in terms of their *experiential meaning*, and suggest some principles for translating this type of text, with the aim to providing English teachers with some useful instruments for teaching the subject of English business correspondence.

## **II. Literature review**

Up to now, not so many studies have been conducted about the translation of business letters. From the source of our corpus collected, it can be seen that most of these studies are made by Asian authors from Thailand, Indonesia, and China .... It is probable that, the demand for translating skills of this type of discourse is higher in these countries where English has been in primary use to communicate between local and foreign partners.

In general, most authors, in their research on this issue, often share a common belief that the lexical and syntactical differences between their languages and English originate from the cultural differences. For example, in his study, Tao Zhang (2011) has clarified the differences in politeness principles between English and Chinese cultures, and suggested the way to address some maxims under Leech's (1984) for translating some pronouns "We, I, You" and the salutation "Dear..." in relevant Chinese terms. In addition to this, he thinks that some commonly used polite expressions in English such as "*we would be grateful/ obliged*" or "*we would highly appreciate it if...*" should be put into careful consideration when choosing the equivalent Chinese markers.

WuQun (2007) has applied a genre analysis approach to point out some different aspects in genre structures of English and Chinese letters, such as the number of moves, types of move (obligatory or optional). He suggested that the move structure of an English business letter should be changed when it is translated into Chinese because of the differences in English and Chinese notion of communicative purpose in business dealings.

On the ground of the equivalence theory in translation by Nord (1997), Wang Zheng (2017) has analyzed and point out the differences in the use of lexical, syntactical, textual features, specified terms and abbreviations in English and Chinese and suggest some translation strategies from English into Chinese.

Further, Lifen Gao (2018), also rests his study on the equivalence theory by Nida (1964), and has investigated the equivalence in semantics, stylistics in translating business letters from English to Chinese. He analyzed the differences in equivalence in two perspectives: Surface Semantic and Deep Structure Semantic, which are in a close link with environmental, folk and religious cultures. He claims that the whole process of translating this type of source text must be in strict conformity with the criteria set by the behavior culture in the target text.

When researching the translation of business letters from English into Arabic, Shanavas et al (2021) found six challenges in translating process namely the used of special business terminologies, degree of formality style, grammatical features, and the use of lexis, legal issues, because all of which are affected by the cultural factors. Therefore, from his viewpoint, a translator is required to stay alert to the cultural influence of the source language and to keep the cultural sense to the translation task.

Pedro A. Fuertes-Olivera et Sandro Nielsen (2008) pointed out the problems of using English-Spanish dictionaries for translating business letters in demonstrating the politeness equivalence in the salutations, reflexive verbs, common business expressions, phrases and so on. Their findings indicated that lexicographers should make more crafted and valuable bilingual commercial dictionaries. In Vietnam, almost no recognized studies have been made in this field.

### **III. Methodology**

To conduct this study, the *register analytic approach* has been used to research the lexical features in business correspondence in terms of their experiential meanings defined by the theory of register by Halliday (1994). The corpus includes about 35 English letters collected from the currently used English textbooks in Vietnamese universities including “*Oxford Handbook of Commercial Correspondence*” (Ashley, 2003); *Model Business Letters* (Gartside, L., 2002); *Email English* (Emmersion, Paul, 2004); *The language of business correspondence in English* (Nguyen Trong Dan, 2001), and about 35 Vietnamese business letters are accumulated from the websites of some companies (*tpos.vn*, *talentbold.com*, *luatminhkhue.vn*, *xuatnhapkhauleanh.edu.vn*), who provide some Vietnamese business letter templates online to those who are interested in. These letters carry messages of business activities between partners including offers, orders, enquiries, sales, quotations, job application or claims. The lexical features of the letters are put into a contrastive analysis between English and Vietnamese experiential lexical features in order to clarify the differences in the use of special jargons, abbreviations, terminology and conventional expressions. From the findings researched, this study will suggest some principles for translating such experiential linguistic features in conformity with the equivalence theory by Koller (1979).

### **IV. Theoretical framework**

#### **Experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings in register**

Register theory, adopted by Halliday (1978), has been used as a method to analyze texts and their contexts of application. As a result of its dual nature, the study of register focuses on explaining the way a language is used and organized for its different purposes. From Halliday’s view, language is evaluated if it can fulfill certain social functions, and if it can carry certain meanings to serve such functions. Halliday classified such meanings into three categories: “*experiential*”, “*interpersonal*” and “*textual*”. In this sense, he claimed that language can be considered as ‘systemic’ since it comprises a series of optional systems, each of these can furnish speakers or writers with various approaches to explore “*their intended meaning, and it is ‘functional’ because it serves functional purposes*”. Halliday (1994) also maintained that the linguistic function is at the same time reflected in the three above-mentioned meanings.

In his theoretical framework of register, Halliday (1994) suggests that a text itself cannot be separated from its settings, which he named “context”. According to him, context consists of three strata: *cultural, situational and linguistic*. The cultural and situational contexts are placed in an external circumstance to language, and the linguistic context is located in an internal language. The situational context is constituted by three elements: *Field, Tenor and Mode*, all of which will make up a *register* of a discourse. (Halliday, 1994)

The *field* of a discourse indicates what is happening, the nature of social actions, and it is the answer to specific questions of what activities participants are involved in. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) states that the

field tells which domain of experience the text is about. In other words, *field* deals with the range of topics demonstrated in a text. *Field* also specifies whether the topics remain focused or relevant to determine if the discourse is consistent or not. Martin (1985, p.236) also adds that field reflects a chain of activities concerning what is happening, the location, time and the mode of a discourse. He also states that field answers the questions in which social context a typical text is produced, and how this context imposes constraints and obligations on the participants in this case (Martin, 1985).

The *tenor* of a discourse refers to the nature, position and role of participants in a discourse. Tenor expresses the relationship between or among participants concerned, including temporary and long term social relationships in connection with the participants. The tenor of a discourse consists of two factors: *roles of participants* and *cultural values*, which will determine the form of language used. In other words, tenor clarifies the relationship between writers and readers, and the shared cultural values required for writers and readers. (Martin, 1985).

The *mode* of a discourse expresses the role of language, the linguistic function that a participant wants to realize in a particular situation. In other words, the mode reflects how a text is structured by particular linguistic features.

Halliday (1994) asserted that **experiential meanings** are concerned with the approach in which people use language to demonstrate their experiences in all physical, psychological and social issues. He notes that three important components are constituted in experiential meanings including *transitivity system, participants and circumstances*. A transitivity system is realized by a process to be presented by a verbal group. Participants are demonstrated by nominal groups and circumstances is normally indicated by adverbial groups.

**Interpersonal meanings** relate to the interaction between speakers/writers and listeners/readers. This function includes all grammatical sources to represent the general social roles and the roles of speech in particular in communication. The primary grammatical system used to express interpersonal meanings is the mood system, which is necessary for the analysis of a passage in a text. In business correspondence, the interpersonal meanings are structured under the two-way interactivity between writers and readers, whereby three main functions are to inform, persuade, or request readers. The interactivity of a discourse is demonstrated by three elements such as: personal status of a speaker/writer, social distance, and relative social status between writers and readers.

The textual function refers to the production of a text suitable with its communicative situation. In grammar-lexico perspective, **textual meanings** are realized by a system of Theme, which is the main point of departure of a clause, and Rheme, the remaining elements of a clause. A Theme can be classified into three types: *topical, textual and interpersonal*, each of which serves its own function to make a text in conformity with a situational context.

The relationship between a situational context and its functional meaning can be illustrated by the table below:

**Table 1: Relationship between situational context and functional meaning (Martin,1985)**

Situational context	Reflected by	Functional meaning
Field (Stating social domain of experience, serving communicative purpose in social settings)	—————→	Experiential meaning
Tenor (Specifying roles of writer and reader and their relationship under their cultural values)	—————→	Interpersonal meaning
Mode (Defining features of text structures and its formats)	—————→	Textual meaning

**The situational context of business letters**

As discussed, a text is always in a close relation with a context where it is created. In business, the situational features of a business letter can be described in the following table.

**Table 2: Features of situational context of a business letter**

Context	Function	Description
Field	Social settings	Business partners participate in their business transaction.
	Communicative purpose	Informing, requesting, and persuading
Tenor	Hierarchy	Equality among business partners.
	Relationship	Business relationship established for business purposes
Mode	Text type	Printed texts
	Turn-taking	Monologue among participants
	Rhetorical device	Application of formal business terms

The above table indicates that business letters are the communication between and among business partners, who are of equal status, with the aim of *informing, requesting, and persuading* readers. They are normally written in a more positive and formal manner to create goodwill with readers (Satterwhite et al, 2007).

Due to the limited size, this essay will only explore the characteristics of business letters in their *experiential meaning*, and on the basis of this framework, we will reveal some special lexical features of experiential meanings for the purpose of finding the way to translate this type of text.

### **Lexical features of experiential meaning in a business letter**

In terms of experiential meanings, the first lexical feature of a business letter is that this type of message favors formal and positive words. Krisan et al (2007) claims that international business correspondence is recognized by their formal writing style. Therefore, formal written words seem to be more dominant than informal or colloquial words. Sometimes neutral terms are used to maintain accuracy and concreteness, and to make the characteristics of a business letter more businesslike.

Second, business English letters tend to use condensed and concise words and are characterized by its clarity and succinctness. In the transmission of information, apart from the adoption of technical terms to express the communicative purpose, the application of various rhetorical instruments is rather popular in this type of text. (Satterwhite et al, 2007, p.189)

Next, when producing a business letter, writers often use rigorous and impressive words or terms. Giménez (2000) believes that to make a letter clear and avoid ambiguities, expressions used in the letter must be precise. Otherwise, it will easily lead to misunderstandings or create obstacles to future interpersonal communications, even triggering economic losses and harming the reputation. It should also be noted that business English letters impart business connotation to common vocabularies, and quite a few of words changed from normal words with specified business implications (Giménez, 2000).

Finally, the use of conventional abbreviations in a business letter is very common because it will save time for both writers and readers, who belong to the same business community (Satterwhite et al, 2007, p. 324). Along with this, a number of customary expressions or terms have also been incorporated into this type of text. Further, the increasingly used technical terms, jargons, foreign loanwords, acronyms in business settings is attributable to the fact that the specific and businesslike terminology will make the actual transaction between business partners much easier and quicker.

### **Equivalence in translation**

The theory of equivalence has been defined by a number of scholars but the most closely related theory to translation of business texts is Koller's. In order to give a solution to the question of equivalence in translation, Koller (1979) suggests the following definitions:

(i) denotative equivalence involving the extralinguistic content of a text, (ii) connotative equivalence relating to lexical choices, (iii) text-normative equivalence relating to text-types, (iv) pragmatic equivalence involving the receiver of the text or message, and, finally, (v) formal equivalence relating to the form and aesthetics of the text (p.186-191). (Koller, 1979, p.87)

In accordance with this theory, the first important point for a translator to bear in mind is that when translating a business letter, he/she should be faithful to its content and cohesive to the style of the source language. In business, the effectiveness of a translated text may contribute to the success of a business transaction, therefore, the demand for the accuracy of the content must be emphasized. To do this, the unit of translation used for translating a business letter should be as marginal as possible, which are words and phrases. In addition to this, the choice of customary-business expressions should also be noted because it will make the target text more businesslike and more cohesive to the style.

The second point is that equivalence to source language and appropriateness for target language must be put into careful consideration. As suggested by Newmark (1991) business language carries informative function, which requires the application of a communicative approach so that communicative efficiency should be gained at various levels. Target language norm should be found, and lexical as well as grammatical mistakes in language should be circumvented.

The third point is related to business conventionality and standardization. When translating a business letter, the content, structure and style of a translated text must be adaptable to the conventionality and meet the standardization required by target readers who belong to a business community. To do this, the translator must stick to the commonly accepted way of expression, change the format related to the intended publication and obey the characteristics of unusually-structured genre, all of which will give contribution to the effective translated text recognized by the native professional community. (Hoàng Van Van, 2002)

## **V. Result and discussion**

English business correspondence texts are customarily structured, which requires a translator to be well aware of its register, which may change subject to different cultural and textual circumstances (Hofstede, 2001; p.143).

When translating a business letter, it is advisable for a translator to put into his analysis of the linguistic

features as well as structure of the source text so that he/she can have an overall comprehension of how such a text is organized and structured.

Hatim and Mason (2001) assert that under the theory of register, the equivalence between an original text and its targeted text in their functions is the equivalence in experiential, personal and textual meanings. Such functions required a translator to restructure the register features of the source text to suit the context where the target text exists. The purpose is to make the two texts to carry the same or similar functions.

In general, a translator, at the outset, must be well aware of the characteristics of the field, tenor, and mode of the source text which can be realized at the textual, clause and vocabulary levels for his efficient translated text.

On the basis of the theories of register and equivalence discussed, following is some specific principles for translating business correspondence texts

### Defining business meanings when translating homonyms

Halliday (1994) claims that a word itself does not carry its experiential meaning until it is placed in a certain context. This can be seen when translating a business correspondence text where a word may serve different meanings in different business transactions. Let's see the case of the translation of the word "negotiate" below:

(i) If the settlement of any disagreements, controversies or disputes arising by friendly, informal **negotiation** proves impossible, then the same shall be referred to the tribunal of Economic court in Hochiminh City.

( *Nếu các bên không thể giải quyết được các tranh chấp, bất đồng hoặc mâu thuẫn phát sinh bằng **đàm phán thương lượng**, vấn đề sẽ được giải quyết bởi tòa án kinh tế Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh* )

(ii) Would you note that the **negotiating bank** will check your shipping documents and if they are in strict compliance with the stipulations of the L/C so issued, they will make payment to you.

(*Vui lòng lưu ý rằng **ngân hàng thanh toán** sẽ kiểm tra bộ chứng từ của quý công ty và nếu chúng phù hợp với các quy định trong thư tín dụng đã mở, họ sẽ thanh toán cho quý công ty*)

In general English, the term "negotiate" in Vietnamese is "*thương lượng, bàn bạc, xem xét*", but in the context of a payment clause, "*negotiate*" means the act of paying or discounting a time draft by a bank. Therefore, the term "negotiating bank" in the second sentence must be translated into Vietnamese as "*ngân hàng thanh toán*".

Or the translation of the word "*approval*" in the following examples:

- He thought that the decision depended *on approval* from an authorized office.

(*Ông ta cho rằng, quyết định này tùy thuộc vào sự **phê duyệt/chấp nhận** của cơ quan thẩm quyền*)

- As the range of goods is new to our market, please let us have 100 units *on approval*.

(*Vì dòng hàng này mới đối với thị trường của chúng tôi, vui lòng gửi 100 chiếc theo hình thức bán ký gửi*)

The translation of a word with multi-meanings can be challenging to a translator, who is left with no choice but to work out the meaning of such word in a particular context. The following table will list the meaning of the word "**hàng hóa**" in Vietnamese with its English equivalence used in different situational contexts.

**Table 3:** Experiential meaning of the word "hàng hóa" and its English equivalence

Vocabulary	Vietnamese meaning	Example	Suggested translation
Goods	<i>Hàng hóa</i> (tangible commodities)	<i>Hàng phải được đóng trong các bao kép, phù hợp cho vận tải xa bằng đường biển.</i>	<i>The goods must be packed in strong double bags, suitable for long sea voyages.</i>
Merchandise	<i>Hàng hóa</i> (used for retailing)	<i>Quý khách có thể lựa chọn nhiều chủng loại <b>hàng hóa</b> tại các hệ thống cửa hàng bán lẻ của chúng tôi.</i>	<i>You will find a wider choice of <b>merchandises</b> in retailing outlets.</i>
Commodities	<i>Hàng hóa</i> (goods of material nature)	<i>Hàng <b>hàng</b> (<b>nguyên liệu</b>) như gạo, cà phê, ngũ cốc, dầu thô...thường được chuyên chở bằng đường biển.</i>	<i>Commodities such as rice, coffee, grain, crude oil...are often transported by sea freight.</i>
Cargo	<i>Hàng hóa</i> (goods in transit)	<i>Trong quá trình vận chuyển, nếu tổn thất xảy ra đối với <b>hàng hóa</b>, bên bán phải tiến hành bồi thường cho bên mua.</i>	<i>During transit, if any damage to the <b>cargo</b> arises, the seller shall be liable for compensation.</i>
Stock	<i>Hàng</i> (goods kept in a warehouse),	<i>Công ty chúng tôi luôn quay vòng hàng nhanh.</i>	<i>Our company has kept a very high turnover of <b>stock</b></i>
Shipment/ Delivery	<i>Việc giao hàng, lô hàng</i>	<i>Vui lòng lưu ý rằng, giao hàng từng phần không được phép.</i>	<i>Please note that partial <b>shipment</b> is prohibited</i>
Item/ article	<i>Mặt hàng</i> (referring to the unit of goods)	<i>Khi cho mở thùng hàng, chúng tôi phát hiện thấy nhiều mặt hàng bị chầy xước.</i>	<i>When we had the cases opened, it was found that quite a few of <b>items</b> were scratched</i>
Ware	<i>Hàng</i> (used in compound noun: cookware, kitchenware, chinaware...)	<i>Dòng hàng dụng cụ nhà bếp của chúng tôi không chê vào đâu được về độ bền và tính sang trọng.</i>	<i>Our <b>kitchenware</b> is beyond any criticism in terms of its durability and rich-looking designs.</i>

### Translation of technical business jargons

Like other professional communities, members of a business community also use a number of technical business jargons in their internal communication. The translation of these jargons can be considered as the most challenging for a translator if he/she does not belong to such a business community. In this case, the translator must work out the special business meanings of such words by using professional dictionaries because any inconsiderate translation may lead to mistakes or errors in the source texts which may not be accepted by a business community.

In business correspondence, a number of business terms refer to payment, for example, CWO (*Cash with Order*- Thanh toán khi đặt hàng), COD (Cash on Delivery-thanh toán khi giao hàng), *draft at sight* (hối phiếu trả ngay), ..., The same challenge that a translator may encounter when dealing with delivery terms, because they will find quite a few of technical jargons such as FCA (Free on Carrier- Giao hàng cho người chuyên chở), FAS (Free Alongside Ship- Giao dọc mạn tàu), FOB (Free on Board- Giao hàng lên tàu)...all of which originate from Intcotems 2020, a reference book issued by International Chamber of Commerce. These terms are used to specify buyers' and sellers' liabilities in making and taking delivery in international trade. For example, the sentence "Please note that the price should be understood CIF, Saigon port, excluding packing and accessories" should be translated into Vietnamese as "Vui lòng lưu ý rằng giá này được hiểu là giá CIF (Tiền hàng + Bảo hiểm + Cước phí) không tính chi phí đóng gói và phụ kiện kèm theo". In this case, it is advisable to use professional business dictionaries to have an accurate translated text.

In general, the accurate translation of technical business jargons, abbreviations, idioms or expressions requires a translator to have deep professional business expertise because it will help him/her to comprehend the nature of professional activities so as to produce equivalent terms accepted by target readers.

### The choice of Nominalization and Verbalization

Experience meaning is also reflected in the choice of nominalization and verbalization in English business correspondence. According to Baker (1992), in English business texts, nominalization often dominates verbalization to express the behaviors and acts of a participant. This can be seen in the following examples:

- (i) *If you quote your price reasonably, we will order substantially.*
- (ii) *if your quoted price is reasonable, we will place further substantial orders.*

The two sentences above carry the same meaning, but the second is given more priority by English writers, who have changed the verbs "order", in (i) into the equivalence nouns, which is in more common use by English business community (Baker, 1992, p.145). This phenomenon is, on the contrary, not preferred by Vietnamese writers, who often give more priority to verbalization. Let consider the following examples.

Vietnamese verbalized structures	English nominalized structures
Chúng tôi đã nhận được chi phiếu của ông số N0.248 trị giá 2000 đô la Mỹ để <b>thanh toán</b> tiền hoa hồng.	<i>We have received your check No.248 for US\$2,000 in <b>payment</b> of our commission.</i>
Bất kỳ mức tăng giảm nào về cước phí sau khi hàng đã giao sẽ <b>tính cho người mua chịu</b>	<i>Any increase in the freight after the date of goods sold will be <b>for the buyer's account</b>.</i>
Ngày mai, chúng tôi sẽ gửi các tài liệu kỹ thuật để quý công ty <b>xem xét</b> .	<i>Tomorrow, we will send our technical documents <b>for your reference</b>.</i>
Chúng tôi sẽ <b>xem xét</b> kỹ lưỡng khiếu nại của quý công ty ngay và xin <b>hồi âm</b> sớm.	<i>We will put your claim into our careful <b>consideration</b> and give you <b>an early reply</b>.</i>

From the above discussed translation, the suggested principle here is to give more priority to the use of nominalization in English, but verbalization in Vietnamese.

### The choice of clauses or noun phrases

A number of linguists claim that in business communication, English is used as a professional language, where the use of noun phrases often prevail over other grammatical forms (Mizapour & Ahmer, 2011; Collins & Hollo, 2009). In English business letters, English writers tend to use noun phrases rather than clauses to make sentences more formal and concise (Giménez, J. C. 2000) while Vietnamese letters favor the use of clauses (Nguyen, H. T., 2004). Let's consider the following examples.

The use of Vietnamese clauses	The use of English noun phrases
<i>Khi chúng tôi kiểm tra các thùng hàng nhận được, thì phát hiện thấy lô hàng bị <b>tổn thất nghiêm trọng</b>.</i>	<i>Upon examination of the cases received, we found that the shipment was in <b>fundamental damage</b>.</i>
<i>Trường hợp quý công ty cần gấp số hàng này, chúng tôi sẽ sắp xếp gửi bằng đường hàng không</i>	<i>In case of your <b>urgent need of the goods</b>, we will arrange them to be sent by <b>airfreight</b>.</i>
<i>Vì lô hàng này rất dễ vỡ, vui lòng nhẹ tay trong quá trình vận chuyển</i>	<i>Because of its <b>fragile nature</b>, please handle this consignment with care during transportation.</i>

From the experiential use of clauses or noun phrases in business letters, the choice of clauses (for Vietnamese) or noun phrases (for English) should be noted.

**Translation of negative wording**

One of the most important functions of business letters is to build goodwill through communication. To do this, writers are advised to avoid negative wording in order to maintain an amicable relationship with their readers. Giménez, J. C. (2000) recommended a strong list of negative words to be avoided and suggest positive ones in business writing as indicated in the table below.

**Table 4** List of negative and positive terms (Giménez, 2000)

Negative terms (should be avoided)	Positive terms (should be used)
Don't forget...	Remember to...
Never give up...	Keep going...just keep going... just keep going...
Don't be so hard on yourself...	Have compassion for yourself...
I can face my fear...	I am courageous...
I am completely stress free...	I am completely calm and relaxed...
not accept, refuse, reject	Decline, turn down
Disorganized	Unstructured
Bossy	Leadership
Disobedient	Self-directed
Not present	Absent
Fire / sack/(verb) (a job)	Dismiss
No fewer than	At least
No fewer than	At most
Not/no	Free (from)/ absent/ unavailable

As a result of the above experiential feature of negative English business vocabularies, when translating words with negative meaning from Vietnamese into English, the choice of words with equivalent meaning in English is important because the proper use of negative words will make a message sound more positive and will certainly mitigate readers' annoyance.

For example:

Vietnamese sentence	Suggested translation
<i>Vì mức chiết khấu đề nghị quá cao, chúng tôi rất tiếc phải từ chối đặt hàng của quý khách.</i>	<i>Because your requested discount is high, we regret that we have to <b>turn down</b> your counter offer.</i>
<i>Chúng tôi phát hiện thấy không có một số mặt hàng đặt mua và được lập trên hóa đơn trong lô hàng này.</i>	<i>It was found that some items ordered and invoiced are <b>absent</b> from this shipment.</i>
<i>Trường hợp không có bằng chứng khác về việc chậm giao hàng, thì ngày ghi trên vận đơn phải được coi là ngày giao hàng chính thức.</i>	<i>In the event of the absent of other evidences <b>to the contrary</b> about delay in delivery, the date stated on the Bill of Lading must be considered as the official date of delivery.</i>
<i>Cần lưu ý rằng, hàng hóa phải không có lỗi khi giao.</i>	<i>It should be noted that the goods must be <b>free from</b> any defects on delivery.</i>

**VI. Conclusion**

This essay has applied the register analytic approach to research some typical characteristics of business correspondence texts under register theory by Halliday in terms of their *experiential meanings*, and suggested some principles for translating this type of discourse from Vietnamese into English and vice versa. It can be concluded that, apart from his/her linguistic expertise, the knowledge of professional business will help a translator to comprehend the experiential meanings in a business text to produce an effective translated version.

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