

# Understanding Framing Strategy in Translation of Socioeconomic Commentary Discourses in American Newspapers into Vietnamese

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**Abstract:** In the translation process, the translator has not always been objective, neutral but is an individual with specific linguistic and cultural skills involved in the process of text production. Thus, the translation activity, especially newspaper translation, typically implies a degree of manipulation of the text for a certain purpose. This paper applies Baker's framing strategy to explore socioeconomic commentary discourses in Vietnamese newspapers translated from American newspapers. Eighty translated commentary discourses have been selected for analysis in a classification of the headlines translation, information retention and selective appropriation.

**Keywords:** commentary discourse, headlines translation, information retention, selective appropriation.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Commentary discourses in American newspapers and their translations can appear in various newspapers and in different languages, but they play an important role in forming language and govern readers' opinions as well as social practices in specific ways for the benefit of those who hold power (or the government), the interests of the authors, the press organizations and the whole society. At the same time, the commentary discourses, when shaped, are more or less relevant to the aforementioned contextual characteristics. In this view, it is important that the language used in both source discourses and target discourses is always systematically associated with its context.

Lefevere (1992) stated that translation could be a rewriting of an original text so that it functions in a given society in a given way. In the translation process, the translator has never been a neutral party but is always an individual with specific linguistic and cultural skills already involved in the process of text production. Thus, the notion of translation, especially newspapers translation, typically implies a manipulation of the text for a certain purpose.

The translation of English commentary discourses in Vietnamese newspapers is a process that needs to be carefully studied since these discourses are published in another newspaper and presented to a target audience with language, ideology and social elements different from those of the source discourse. Hence, in this paper, we apply concepts and views of Baker's "framing" theory to explore the translations of socioeconomic commentary discourses published in the printed newspaper of "Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon" translated from US newspapers including The New York Times, the Washington Post, Bloomberg and the Wall Street Journal. First, this theory can provide tools to explain the various aspects of translation activity related to the broad political, economic and social context. Second, this theory can also explain the practices of media organizations, in this situation is the press, the place where construct and publish translated newspaper commentary discourses. Last but not least, since ideology is viewed as a part of human behavior which means that it is more or less possible to explain views or stances by realizing stories that the authors/translators support.

## II. OVERVIEW OF THOI BAO KINH TE SAIGON

Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon is a publication of The Saigon Times Group, which is a leading Vietnamese media organization with prestigious business and consumer publications. After more than two decades of its development along with the country's reform process, the Saigon Times Group has built a good reputation through four groups of publications about economy, business and markets in Vietnamese and one group of English publications for foreign readers. They are: Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon Online, Saigon Tiep Thi, Saigon Tiep Thi Online, The Saigon Times Weekly, The Saigon Times Daily, The Saigon Times Online.



Figure 1. Image of the front page of Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon

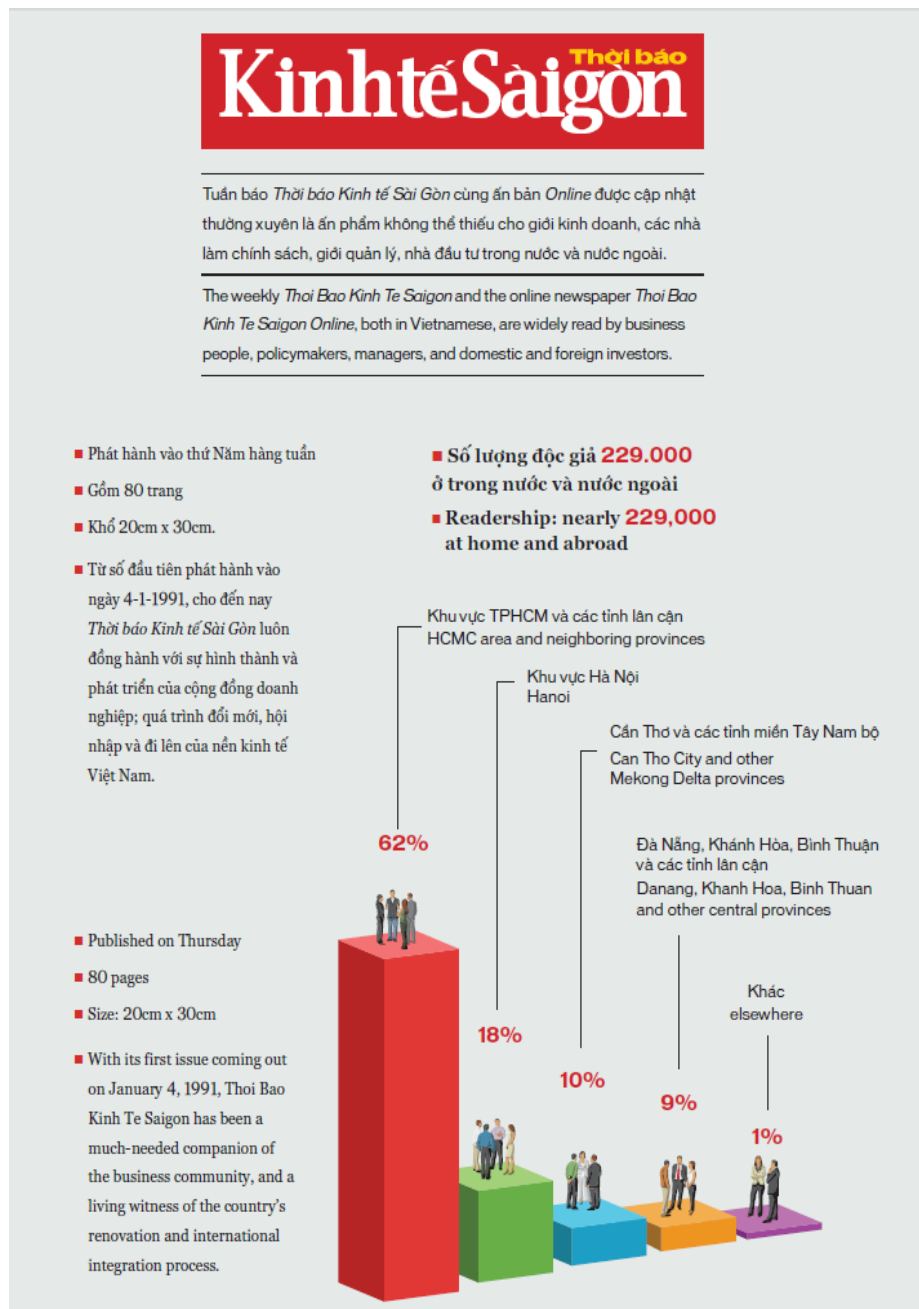


Figure 2. Detailed information of Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon

### III. THE NOTION OF 'FRAMING'

Baker introduces the notion of framing, which can be understood as the 'deliberate discursive moves designed to anticipate and guide others' interpretation of and attitudes towards a set of events' (Baker, 2007, p. 156). Framing can help outline the 'discursive work' performed by the narrators to build a set of events into a narrative (p. 155). It is a crucial part of activism, where the process of framing a narrative mainly 'involves setting up structures of anticipation that guide others' interpretation of events, usually as a direct challenge to dominant interpretations of the same events in a given society' (p. 156).

Baker states that:

*The notion of framing is closely connected to the question of how narrative theory allows us to consider the immediate narrative elaborated in the text being translated or interpreted and the larger narratives in which the text is embedded, and how this in turn allows us to see translational choices not merely as local linguistic challenges but as contributing directly to the narratives that shape our social world. (Baker, 2007, p. 156)*

This notion refers to the ways in which narratives are projected and embedded in a particular text or talk. In the case of translation, framing denotes how narratives embedded in source texts are accentuated, undermined, or modified by translator(s) and interpreter(s) in different language and culture. Baker (2007: 156) argues that this notion is closely connected to the question of how narrative theory allows us to consider the immediate narrative elaborated in the text being translated or interpreted and the larger narratives in which the text is embedded, and how this in turn allows us to see translational choices not merely as local linguistic challenges but as contributing directly to the narratives that shape our social world. In her discussion of framing, Baker (2006: 112-39) offers extensive examples to show how narratives are projected using a number of devices, including temporal and spatial framing, framing through selective appropriation, framing by labelling and repositioning of participants. It is worth pointing out here that it is not the intention of this paper to offer a comprehensive discussion and analysis of how narratives are constructed, but rather to explain aspects of translational behavior and practices of media organization (newspapers) when translating newspaper commentary discourses for Vietnamese-language newspapers.

### IV. FRAMING CHARACTERISTICS IN TRANSLATED SOCIOECONOMIC COMMENTARY DISCOURSES IN VIETNAMESE NEWSPAPERS

#### 4.1. Framing headlines

Headline is a priority place of framing and a position of ideological bias. According to van Dijk (1998, p.188), headline indicates the most important information of the article and identifies the situation, programs the readers a preferred reading and explanation plan. The choice of what to translate is most likely based on ideological positioning. van Dijk (1991) argues that headlines indicate what the journalist or translator thinks is the most important information in the text, which includes an assessment of the events in the text.

Zhang (2013) also studied translations of headlines related to four news events over a two-year period. The author discovered that the headlines had mediation in translation, which helps translator's knowledge and values be included in the translated text. In this part, we compare the translated headlines with headlines in the source discourses to understand the changes among headlines.

Example 1:

**ST:**

This economic model organized Asia for decades. Now it's broken (Bloomberg, June 21, 2017)

**TT:**

Robot sẽ tiêu diệt mô hình kinh tế châu Á  
(Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, August 24, 2017)

Example 2:

**ST:**

U.S. pushing effort to develop 5G alternative to Huawei  
(The Wall Journal Street, February04, 2020)

**TT:**

Mỹ tập hợp ứng viên "đấu" Huawei trong cuộc chiến 5G  
(Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, February 07, 2020)

Example 3:

**ST:**

Felicity Huffman and 13 others to plead guilty in college admissions scandal (The New York Times, April 8, 2019)

**TT:**

Bê bối chạy trường ở Mỹ: Nhiều phụ huynh nhận tội  
(Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, April 11, 2019)

Example4:

**ST:**

Virus threatens U.S. companies' supply of Chinese-made parts and materials  
(The Washington Post, February 03, 2020)

**TT:**

Doanh nghiệp Mỹ 'đau đầu' do các chuỗi cung ứng bị gián đoạn tại Trung Quốc  
(Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, February 4, 2020)

In these translations, the author translated parts of headlines of the source text and created a new headline that not only highlights the information, draw the readers' intention as the meaning of the headline but also identifies the situation and reframe for the contents selected for translation in the Vietnamese translation.

#### 4.2. Framing by retention

The use of headlines to reframe translated discourses often accompanies by the careful retention of information in discourses. In newspaper translation, the retention is the act of preserving the information contained in the source discourses. As the headlines always set up a frame for translations, the author can choose to translate individual paragraphs from the source text to match frames set in headlines of the translated discourses. Thus, the retention of information can be done throughout the entire discourse, but it sometimes only includes a few passages from the source discourses, especially when using to support the frames outlined in the headline. Considering the example below, the bold parts in the source discourse have not been translated:

**ST:**

Headline: Trump administration proposes stiff penalties on steel and aluminum imports  
(The New York Times, February 16, 2018)

**TT:**

Headline: Mỹ tìm cách ngăn chặn thép và nhôm nhập khẩu  
(Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, March 01, 2018)

The Trump administration for the first time declared imports of steel and aluminum from China and other nations a threat to national security, laying the foundation for President Trump to impose the types of punitive tariffs he has long championed.

Chính quyền Mỹ lần đầu tiên tuyên bố thép, nhôm nhập khẩu từ Trung Quốc và các quốc gia khác là "mối đe dọa đối với an ninh quốc gia". Đây là cơ sở để Tổng thống Mỹ Donald Trump đưa ra các biện pháp thuế quan và hạn ngạch đối với các mặt hàng này.

In a report released on Friday, the Commerce Department said a recent influx of foreign metals posed a risk to national security by threatening the viability of American manufacturers who make planes, armored vehicles and other products for the military. **It outlined an array of recommendations the president could take to help domestic manufacturers struggling to stay competitive, including a sweeping tariff of 24 percent on steel imports from all countries.**

Trong một báo cáo vừa công bố, Bộ Thương mại Mỹ cho biết kim loại nhập ngoại tràn ngập thị trường Mỹ trong những năm gần đây đã đẩy các doanh nghiệp nội địa sản xuất máy bay, xe bọc thép và các sản phẩm khác phục vụ quân đội vào nguy cơ phá sản.

**The recommendations hand Mr. Trump an opportunity to make good on the get-tough approach to global trade that he has long espoused by giving him authority to decide the scope and severity of any trade action by mid-April. Mr. Trump has previously embraced tariffs on imports of steel and solar products as crucial to protecting American companies.**

**Yet erecting barriers could prompt swift retaliation from other trading partners, including China and the European Union, which have already warned of reciprocal action in response to protectionist measures. It could also further erode relations with foreign allies that might be ensnared by the measure and drive up prices for American consumers.**

Wilbur Ross, the secretary of commerce, outlined three alternatives Mr. Trump could choose from to protect American steel producers, which have struggled to compete with a flood of cheap metals from China and other countries. The options included a broad 24 percent tariff on all steel imports, or a targeted 53 percent tariff on all steel products from 12 countries, including China, Brazil, India, South Korea and Vietnam. Under this option, imports from all other countries would be limited to the level they imported in 2017. Mr. Ross also proposed an alternative for the steel industry that involved no tariffs, but would set a quota limiting steel imports from all countries to roughly two-thirds the level they were at last year.

Bộ trưởng Thương mại Mỹ Wilbur Ross đã đưa ra ba khuyến nghị để ông Trump có thể lựa chọn nhằm bảo vệ các nhà sản xuất thép của Mỹ, vốn đang phải vật lộn để cạnh tranh với sản phẩm giá rẻ từ Trung Quốc và các nước khác. Ba khuyến nghị này bao gồm: thứ nhất, áp thuế nhập khẩu 24% đối với thép từ tất cả các quốc gia; thứ hai, áp mức thuế thấp nhất là 53% đối với tất cả sản phẩm thép từ 12 quốc gia, trong đó có Trung Quốc,

Brazil, Ấn Độ, Hàn Quốc, Việt Nam... Thứ ba áp hạn ngành cho tất cả các nước và không được vượt quá hai phần ba số thép nhập khẩu vào Mỹ năm 2017.

For aluminum, the Commerce Department also outlined three alternatives, including a flat 7.7 percent tariff on imports from all countries, or a targeted 23.6 percent tariff on aluminum from China, Hong Kong, Russia, Venezuela and Vietnam. A third option involved putting into effect quotas to limit aluminum imports to lower levels than were shipped to the United States last year.

Đối với nhôm, Bộ Thương mại Mỹ cũng đưa ra ba lựa chọn, bao gồm mức thuế chung 7,7% với tất cả các nước nhập khẩu, hoặc mức thuế lên tới 23,6% với nhôm từ các quốc gia/vùng lãnh thổ Trung Quốc, Hồng Kông, Nga, Venezuela và Việt Nam hoặc áp hạn ngạch nhập khẩu thấp hơn con số năm 2017.

**Mr. Ross did not indicate which way Mr. Trump might go, saying the president could pick a separate path, or reject the penalties altogether. But the president's longstanding support for tariffs and his recent remarks suggest he is likely to support some kind of action.**

In a meeting with lawmakers of both parties on Tuesday, Mr. Trump played down objections to the trade measures, and said that the United States was considering tariffs, quotas or both. "You may have a higher price, but you have jobs," Mr. Trump told the bipartisan group.

Trong một cuộc họp với các nhà lập pháp của hai đảng Cộng hòa và Dân chủ vài ngày sau báo cáo trên của Bộ Thương mại Mỹ, ông Trump cho biết Mỹ đang xem xét áp dụng thuế quan, hạn ngạch hoặc đồng thời cả hai biện pháp trên. "Chúng ta có thể phải chịu một mức giá cao hơn, nhưng chúng ta có việc làm", ông Trump nói.

Supporters of the trade action, including American steel companies and the United Steelworkers union, say American metal makers badly need the White House to step in and halt the flood of cheap imports, which has depressed the price for steel and aluminum. Many American steel and aluminum plants are struggling to compete in an oversaturated market and some have had to scale back production and eliminate jobs.

Những người ủng hộ các biện pháp thương mại, bao gồm các công ty thép của Mỹ và công đoàn ngành thép, cho rằng các nhà sản xuất kim loại của Mỹ rất cần Nhà Trắng có những biện pháp ngăn "dòng chảy ồ ạt" thép và nhôm nhập khẩu giá rẻ. Nhiều nhà máy thép và nhôm của Mỹ đang chật vật cạnh tranh trong thị trường đã bão hòa này, một số đã phải thu hẹp quy mô sản xuất và sa thải lao động.

**"This is a step in the right direction, and hopefully the president responds sooner than later," said Todd Leebow, the chief executive of Majestic Steel USA, which buys American-made steel from mills to sell to customers in construction, agriculture and other industries. Mr. Leebow said he had seen a troubling decline in the industry in recent years, and he was hopeful Mr. Trump's measure might reverse that.**

**But the investigation has also prompted criticism from American industries that use steel and aluminum to make their products, including automakers and food packagers. These businesses say tariffs or quotas will cause their prices to rise and shrink their profits, and could end up costing American jobs.**

Christine McDaniel, a senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center, a think tank that supports free markets, said that for every one steelworker that may be helped by trade restrictions, more than 38 workers in other sectors that could be harmed by it. "There is ample evidence that import taxes will harm economic growth and cost American jobs," she said.

Christine McDaniel, một nhà nghiên cứu cao cấp tại Trung tâm Mercatus, một tổ chức nghiên cứu hỗ trợ thị trường tự do cho biết cứ mỗi lao động trong ngành thép được hưởng lợi do tác động của thuế, hạn ngạch thì có tới hơn 38 lao động trong ngành khác bị thiệt hại. "Có nhiều bằng chứng cho thấy thuế nhập khẩu sẽ gây tổn hại cho tăng trưởng kinh tế và việc làm tại Mỹ", bà nói.

**In a call with reporters on Friday, Mr. Ross played down any negative impact from the trade actions, saying that any increase in the cost of steel and aluminum for products like soft drinks and canned soup would be "trivial." "We really don't buy that argument," Mr. Ross said.**

Shares of American steel companies, including United States Steel, Nucor and AK Steel, rose following the release of the report. Stocks of Ford Motor Company and General Motors, which purchase aluminum and steel for their cars, declined.

Cổ phiếu của các công ty thép của Mỹ, trong đó có United States Steel, Nucor và AK Steel đã tăng sau khi báo cáo nói trên được phát hành. Ngược lại, cổ phiếu của Ford Motor Company và General Motors, những công ty mua nhôm và thép để sản xuất xe hơi, thì giảm xuống.

United Steelworkers, which strongly supported the tariffs, commended Mr. Ross's announcement. "These recommendations have the potential to focus on the bad actors in the world that historically and systemically cheat in international trade," said Leo W. Gerard, the president of United Steelworkers International.

Companies with operations outside of the United States were more circumspect. Aluminum companies including Alcoa, Rio Tinto Aluminum and Constellium issued statements urging the administration to exempt Canada, a major supplier of aluminum, from the rule, and focus on the issue of Chinese overcapacity instead.

Ai cũng biết mục tiêu chính của những biện pháp trừng phạt trên chủ yếu nhằm vào thép Trung Quốc. Theo báo cáo của Bộ Thương mại Mỹ, sản lượng thép và nhôm của Trung Quốc chiếm một nửa số thép và nhôm của thế giới, trong khi chỉ khoảng hai thập kỷ trước, sản lượng này là không đáng kể. Hiện nay, chỉ tính riêng sản lượng thép của Trung Quốc sản xuất mỗi tháng đã bằng sản lượng thép sản xuất cả năm tại Mỹ. Chính điều này đã khiến giá kim loại toàn cầu giảm tới ngưỡng mà các công ty Mỹ mất khả năng cạnh tranh.

**Mr. Trump will have authority to determine which countries should be subject to any trade action, in part because of way in which the investigation was started. In April, the administration opened an investigation into steel and aluminum imports with a little-used provision of trade law that gives the president broad discretion to act to protect national security.**

**Drastically remaking American trade has been one of Mr. Trump's defining political promises. But his first year in office delivered a mixed record on trade. He withdrew the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an Obama-era trade deal, and began renegotiating trade pacts with South Korea, Canada and Mexico. Those talks now look likely to take longer than he anticipated.**

**The administration is also weighing a series of trade cases this year that would protect American industries against imports. In January, the Trump administration decided to impose tariffs on washing machines and solar cells and modules to help domestic industries. It has also started an investigation into claims that China infringed on American intellectual property, which could result in investment restrictions or further tariffs.**

**The Trump administration has said that its steel and aluminum investigation would help address a global issue created by China, which has used generous state subsidies to dominate the global metals trade. China now produces roughly half of the world's steel and aluminum, after making little two decades ago. That surge in production has helped push down global metal prices to a point where American companies say they can no longer compete.**

But American options for aiming at China directly are limited. Because the United States has already imposed a raft of restrictions on Chinese steel in previous years, only 2 percent of American steel imports came directly from China in 2015. That means that any measures from the Trump administration are likely to weigh more heavily on other countries, including some close allies. In 2016, Canada accounted for the largest proportion of United States steel imports, about 17 percent, followed by Brazil, South Korea, Mexico, Turkey and Japan.

**Allies including the European Union, South Korea and Japan have also pushed back against the United States curbing imports, saying their products support the American military by providing a secure supply of metals, rather than harming it.**

Tuy vậy, những biện pháp trừng phạt của Mỹ nhắm trực tiếp vào thép Trung Quốc còn rất ít. Bởi trước đó, Mỹ đã áp dụng một loạt biện pháp hạn chế thương mại đối với thép Trung Quốc dẫn tới chỉ 2% thép của Trung Quốc được nhập khẩu trực tiếp vào Mỹ năm 2015, còn lại được nhập khẩu gián tiếp qua các nước khác. Do không thể áp dụng trực tiếp các biện pháp thuế và hạn ngạch với thị trường Trung Quốc nên chính quyền Tổng thống Trump buộc phải cân nhắc áp dụng các biện pháp trên với nhiều nước khác. Năm 2017, Canada đứng đầu danh sách các nước mà Mỹ nhập khẩu thép với hơn 5,8 triệu tấn, tiếp theo là Brazil, Hàn Quốc, Mexico, Nga, Thổ Nhĩ Kỳ và Nhật Bản.

**Tổng thống Trump sẽ đưa ra quyết định cuối cùng vào giữa tháng 4 tới.**

This information is added by the author.

#### 4.3. Framing by selective appropriation of textual material

Baker (2006, p.114) stated that: "Selective appropriation of textual material is realized in patterns of omission and addition designed to suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or aspects of the larger narrative(s) in which it is embedded". In addition to the selective appropriation of source text, due to the page size, the author can use different paragraphs, and this feature shows the author's intentional action through subtraction and addition of information. Consider the following translated text:

**ST:**

Virus threatens U.S. companies' supply of Chinese-made parts and materials  
(The Washington Post, February, 03, 2020)

**TT:**

Doanh nghiệp Mỹ 'đau đầu' do các chuỗi cung ứng bị gián đoạn tại Trung Quốc  
(Thoi Bao Kinh Te Saigon, February 04, 2020)

The battle to contain the Chinese coronavirus threatens to cut off U.S. companies from parts and materials they need to produce iPhones, automobiles and appliances and drugs to treat medical conditions including Alzheimer's disease, high blood pressure and malaria.

Cuộc chạy đua ngăn chặn đà lây lan của virus corona chủng mới (nCoV) gây viêm phổi cấp ở Trung Quốc đang đe dọa cắt đứt nguồn cung linh kiện và nguyên vật liệu mà nhiều công ty Mỹ cần để sản xuất iPhone, ô tô, đồ điện gia dụng, thiết bị y tế và thuốc men điều trị các căn bệnh như Alzheimer's, cao huyết áp, sốt rét...

Some of the United States' best-known manufacturers such as General Electric, Caterpillar and the Big Three automakers, along with many smaller American businesses, depend on what is made in Chinese factories.

#### **Chuỗi cung ứng bị gián đoạn vì dịch nCoV**

Từ lâu, nhiều nhà sản xuất nổi tiếng nhất nước Mỹ như General Electric, Caterpillar, 3 hãng xe General Motors, Ford, Fiat Chrysler cùng nhiều doanh nghiệp nhỏ hơn phụ thuộc vào linh kiện và nguyên vật liệu đầu vào được sản xuất tại các nhà máy ở Trung Quốc.

Now, they confront life without those items. Major airlines in the United States and Europe are halting their cargo and passenger flights to China for up to two months. **Recent visitors to the country are barred from entering the United States.**

**After four decades of growing integration with the rest of the world, China almost overnight has become an economic island. Its temporary isolation — no one knows for how long — will hurt companies that depend upon Chinese inputs as well as those that sell to Chinese customers.**

Giờ đây, họ đang đối mặt với nguy cơ chuỗi cung ứng của họ bị gián đoạn **khi nhiều nhà máy tại đây vẫn chưa được phép hoạt động trở lại cho đến ít nhất là ngày 10-2 để ngăn ngừa dịch nCoV**. Các hãng hàng không lớn ở Mỹ và châu Âu tạm dừng dịch vụ vận chuyển hàng hóa và hành khách đến Trung Quốc trong thời gian có thể dài đến hai tháng.

**Dịch bệnh khiến Trung Quốc tạm thời bị cô lập với thế giới và tình trạng này vẫn chưa biết sẽ kéo dài bao lâu.**

In this translation, the translator transedit contents of the source text: omitting some information: **Recent visitors to the country are barred from entering the United States, will hurt companies that depend upon Chinese inputs as well as those that sell to Chinese customers**, adding information: **khi nhiều nhà máy tại đây vẫn chưa được phép hoạt động trở lại cho đến ít nhất là ngày 10-2 để ngăn ngừa dịch nCoV**, and summarizing a paragraph: **After four decades of growing integration with the rest of the world, China almost overnight has become an economic island. Its temporary isolation — no one knows for how long — will hurt companies that depend upon Chinese inputs as well as those that sell to Chinese customers.**

In the source text into a conclusion sentence in the translated text with his/her aim: **Dịch bệnh khiến Trung Quốc tạm thời bị cô lập với thế giới và tình trạng này vẫn chưa biết sẽ kéo dài bao lâu.**

The above example of omitting and adding information in the source text can provide the necessary insights of trans-editing practice of a newspaper. The subtraction in translation can reduce the number of problems associated with events from the perspective of the author of source discourse. As a result, the translation may convey messages that may differ from the meaning of the source discourse.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS**

The purpose of the paper is to understand the framing strategy in translation of socioeconomic commentary discourses in American newspapers into Vietnamese newspapers. The framing strategy applied in translated Vietnamese discourses clearly demonstrates that the newspaper translation made by journalists is sometimes unfaithful to source discourses. In the process of altering the source discourses, translators rewrite the story from the source discourse and incorporate new information into the translated discourse. Editing in translation may be positive or negative but always intended.

The analysis show that the translated discourses in Vietnamese newspapers are not fully faithful to the source discourses. The changes of source message in the translation goes beyond simply adding or omitting information. The changes also include rewriting the message and creating new information in translated discourses.

The main reason is that translators are mostly journalists rather than translators, so they cannot fully translate but have an orientated choice and only select contents or events which not only bring about the public benefits but also be effective for the propaganda. Another reason is that the translation activity of this genre depends on the political views and foreign language ability of each translator - journalist as well as the contents that are unsuitable to cultural traditions, thinking style, or the Vietnamese way of life will be cut off.

## **TÀI LIỆU THAM KHẢO**

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