

A Comparative Study of Terminology and Fixed Expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts: Implications for Translation

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ABSTRACT: Business contracts play a vital role in international trade by defining the rights and obligations of contracting parties and facilitating commercial cooperation. With the continuous expansion of economic relations between China and Vietnam, the demand for accurate translation of Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts has increased significantly. High-quality contract translation is essential for ensuring legal validity, protecting the interests of both parties, and promoting effective bilateral trade. This study employs literature review, descriptive analysis, comparative analysis, and inductive methods to examine the characteristics of terminology and fixed expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. By comparing the linguistic features of the two languages, the study identifies both similarities and differences in the use of contractual terminology and fixed expressions. Based on these findings, the paper further discusses translation principles and proposes practical strategies for improving the quality of Chinese–Vietnamese business contract translation.

KEYWORDS: Chinese, Vietnamese, business contracts; translation; terminology; fixed expressions.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Literature review

In recent years, business contract translation has attracted increasing attention from scholars because of its importance in international trade. Existing studies mainly focus on two aspects: the linguistic characteristics of business contracts and the theories and strategies of business contract translation.

From a lexical perspective, the language of business contracts emphasizes precision, formality, and legal certainty rather than rhetorical expression. It is characterized by the frequent use of formal written language, technical terminology, archaic expressions, and standardized legal wording.

Most comparative studies have focused on Chinese–English business contracts due to the extensive commercial exchanges between China and English-speaking countries. By contrast, research on Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts remains relatively limited.

Ye Jing (2016), in *A Study on Chinese-English Translation of Business Contracts from a Teleological Perspective—Taking International Business Purchase and Sales Contracts as an Example*, applied German Functionalist Translation Theory to Chinese–English contract translation. The study demonstrated that functionalist theory provides effective guidance for translating business contracts by considering both linguistic features and the communicative purpose of the target text.

Wang Qian (2017), in *Discourse Transition Methods in Chinese-English Translation of Contract Texts—A Translation Report on the Equity Transfer Agreement*, analyzed the textual features of contract translation, discussed common translation difficulties, and proposed practical solutions based on translation practice.

Compared with Chinese–English studies, research on Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts is relatively scarce. Hu Chuilian's *A Comparative Study of the Language and Translation of Chinese–Vietnamese Trade Contracts* is one of the representative studies in this field. The author compares the lexical, grammatical, and discourse features of Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts, analyzes common translation errors, and proposes translation principles and strategies to improve translation quality.

Overall, existing studies provide valuable insights into business contract translation. However, comparative research on terminology and fixed expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts remains insufficient, leaving room for further investigation.

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2. Reason for Topic Selection

China and Vietnam maintain close economic and trade relations, resulting in an increasing number of cross-border commercial activities. Business contracts serve as important legal documents that define the rights and obligations of contracting parties and ensure the smooth implementation of commercial transactions. Therefore, accurate contract translation is essential for protecting the interests of both parties and facilitating bilateral economic cooperation.

Although business contract translation has been widely studied in Chinese–English contexts, research on Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts remains relatively limited, particularly regarding terminology and fixed expressions. To address this research gap, this study selects "A Comparative Study of Terminology and Fixed Expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts: Implications for Translation" as its research topic.

3. Research tasks

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

Analyze the linguistic characteristics of Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts.

Compare the terminology and fixed expressions used in Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts and identify their similarities and differences.

Discuss the principles of translating Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts and propose practical translation strategies based on comparative analysis.

4. Research Subjects and Scope

The study focuses on the terminology and fixed expressions used in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts.

The scope of the research is limited to the analysis of lexical characteristics, fixed expressions, and translation principles in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. Other linguistic aspects are discussed only when relevant to the comparative analysis.

5. Research methods

This study adopts a combination of literature review, descriptive analysis, comparative analysis, and inductive methods. By examining terminology and fixed expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts, the study identifies their linguistic characteristics, compares their usage in both languages, and explores appropriate translation principles and strategies.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF CHINESE–VIETNAMESE BUSINESS CONTRACTS

1. Definition of Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Article 2 of the *Contract Law of the People's Republic of China* 《中华人民共和国合同法》 defines a contract as "an agreement between natural persons, legal persons, or other organizations with equal legal status to establish, modify, or terminate civil rights and obligations¹."

A business contract is a legally binding agreement concluded between parties engaged in commercial activities for the purpose of defining their respective rights and obligations. It serves as an important legal instrument in international trade by ensuring the lawful performance of commercial transactions.

The Faculty of Law (法律系), Duy Tan University (维新大学), in 《谈起商务合同的定义和特点》 (*Discussion of the Concept and Characteristics of Commercial Contracts*), defines a commercial contract as: A commercial contract is an agreement between the parties to establish, modify, or terminate their rights and obligations arising from commercial activities. Commercial activities include the sale and purchase of goods, provision of services, investment, trade promotion, and other profit-oriented activities.

With the rapid development of economic cooperation between China and Vietnam, Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts have become increasingly important in facilitating bilateral trade. Because business contracts possess both legal and commercial characteristics, their language emphasizes precision, consistency, and standardization. These linguistic features provide the foundation for the comparative analysis of terminology and fixed expressions presented in this study.

2. Linguistic Characteristics of Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

2.1 Professionalism of Terminology

Business contracts employ standardized legal and commercial terminology to ensure precision and avoid ambiguity. Most contractual terms have fixed meanings and established translations, making them essential for maintaining legal consistency.

¹ Wu, H. 2011. Analysis of Stylistic Differences Between English and Chinese Business Contracts and Their Translation Methods. China Science and Technology Translation, (5).

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Examples include:

English	Chinese	Vietnamese
Letter of Credit (L/C)	信用证	Thư tín dụng
Bill of Lading (B/L)	提单	Vận đơn
Free on Board (FOB)	船上交货	Giao hàng lên tàu
Litigation	诉讼	Tổ tụng
Judgment	判决	Phán quyết
Joint and Several Liability	连带责任	Trách nhiệm liên đới

These terms generally possess standardized equivalents in both Chinese and Vietnamese and therefore constitute an important object of comparative analysis in this study.

2.2 Fixed Expressions in Business Contracts

Business contracts contain numerous fixed expressions that reflect legal conventions and stylistic formality. These expressions contribute to textual consistency, precision, and legal certainty. Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts employ many formulaic expressions with relatively stable equivalents in English, as shown in **Table 1**

Table 1: Common Fixed Expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Chinese	English	Vietnamese	Function
根据.....	based on... / in accordance with...	căn cứ vào...	Indicates the legal basis or authority.
基于.....	on the basis of...	trên cơ sở...	States the basis or rationale of an action.
在.....天内	within ... days	trong vòng ... ngày	Specifies a time limit for performance.
就.....而言	with respect to... / regarding...	đối với... / về...	Introduces a specific issue or subject matter.
除非.....	unless...	trừ khi...	Introduces an exception or condition.
双方同意.....	both parties agree that...	hai bên đồng ý rằng...	Expresses mutual agreement between the parties.
本合同自.....起生效	this contract shall take effect from...	hợp đồng này có hiệu lực kể từ...	Specifies the effective date of the contract.
如有争议	in the event of any dispute...	trong trường hợp xảy ra tranh chấp...	Introduces dispute resolution provisions.

As shown in Table 1, both Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts rely heavily on fixed expressions to ensure consistency, precision, and legal certainty. Although many of these expressions convey equivalent legal meanings, their lexical forms and syntactic structures differ between the two languages. Therefore, accurately translating fixed expressions requires not only linguistic equivalence but also an understanding of legal conventions and business writing practices.

2.3 Formal and Precise Language

Business contracts require a high degree of linguistic precision. To ensure legal certainty and avoid ambiguity, they employ formal vocabulary, legal terminology, archaic expressions, and internationally recognized abbreviations rather than colloquial language.

Table 2: Common Archaic Expressions in Chinese Business Contracts

Chinese	English	Vietnamese	Function
本	this; the present	này; bản này	Refers to the present contract, document, or party.
该	the said; the aforementioned	nói trên; nêu trên	Refers to something previously mentioned.
兹	hereby	bằng văn bản này; nay	Introduces formal legal statements.
特	hereby; especially	đặc biệt; nay trân trọng	Emphasizes a formal declaration or intention.

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As shown in Table 2, these archaic expressions are rarely used in daily communication but occur frequently in legal and business documents because they enhance formality, precision, and legal authority.

Table 3: Common International Loanwords and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full English Term	Chinese	Vietnamese
L/C	Letter of Credit	信用证	Thư tín dụng
CIF	Cost, Insurance and Freight	成本、保险费加运费	Giá thành, bảo hiểm và cước phí
FOB	Free on Board	船上交货	Giao hàng lên tàu
VAT	Value Added Tax	增值税	Thuế giá trị gia tăng
COD	Cash on Delivery	货到付款	Thanh toán khi nhận hàng

These internationally recognized abbreviations are widely used in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts because they ensure terminological consistency and facilitate cross-border commercial communication. In most cases, these abbreviations are retained in both languages while their full meanings are understood through established commercial conventions.

2.4 Sentence Structures

Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts predominantly employ declarative and long, logically structured sentences. Such sentence patterns enable the complete and precise expression of contractual rights, obligations, and conditions.

Active constructions are generally preferred because they clearly identify the contracting party responsible for performing a specific obligation. Passive constructions are used only when the emphasis is placed on legal procedures or contractual consequences.

3. Relevance to Translation

The linguistic characteristics discussed above—including standardized terminology, fixed expressions, formal vocabulary, and rigorous sentence structures—directly influence the translation of Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. Accurate translation requires not only lexical equivalence but also the preservation of legal effect, stylistic consistency, and contractual conventions. Therefore, understanding these characteristics provides the theoretical basis for the comparative analysis of terminology and fixed expressions in the following chapters and supports the discussion of translation strategies.

III. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TERMINOLOGY AND FIXED EXPRESSIONS IN CHINESE–VIETNAMESE BUSINESS CONTRACTS

Business contracts combine the characteristics of commercial language and legal language. Their language is highly standardized, precise, and formal in order to ensure legal certainty and avoid ambiguity. Among the various linguistic features of business contracts, terminology and fixed expressions are the most distinctive elements because they directly affect the accuracy and legal validity of contract translation.

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of terminology and fixed expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. By examining their classifications, linguistic characteristics, and patterns of use, the study identifies the similarities and differences between Chinese and Vietnamese contractual language and discusses their implications for translation.

1. Comparative Analysis of Terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

1.1 Classification of Terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

In *Research on Business Chinese Vocabulary*, Wu Haiyan (2014) systematically investigated the characteristics of business Chinese vocabulary based on a variety of corpora, including business Chinese textbooks, the Corpus of the Center for Chinese Linguistics at Peking University, the *English–Chinese Dictionary of Economics and Trade*, the *English–Chinese Classified Dictionary of Economics and Trade*, the *Classification of Chinese Vocabulary for International Chinese Education*, and the Business Chinese Test (BCT) syllabus.

Although Wu Haiyan's classification focuses on Business Chinese vocabulary in general, many of these characteristics are also reflected in the terminology used in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. In particular, business contracts are characterized by a higher degree of standardization, legal precision, and fixed usage of terminology. Therefore, this study adopts Wu Haiyan's classification as a theoretical framework while focusing specifically on the terminology found in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts.

Based on this research, Wu Haiyan argues that business Chinese vocabulary differs from general Chinese vocabulary in terms of specialization, formality, and communicative function while still sharing certain common linguistic features. The study

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summarizes seven prominent characteristics of business Chinese terminology, which provide an important theoretical basis for analyzing the terminology used in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts.

Table 4. Classification and Characteristics of Business Chinese Terminology

No.	Characteristics	Chinese Examples	English Equivalents	Vietnamese Equivalents
1	Highly specialized and standardized	买入、卖出、买主、卖主、卖点、销售、联营	purchase, sell, buyer, seller, selling point, sales, joint operation	mua vào, bán ra, bên mua, bên bán, điểm bán hàng, bán hàng, liên doanh
2	Dynamic vocabulary with many newly emerging terms	跨国贸易、股市、并购、上市、牛市、澳元、工行	cross-border trade, stock market, mergers and acquisitions (M&A), listed company, bull market, Australian dollar (AUD), Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC)	thương mại xuyên biên giới, thị trường chứng khoán, sáp nhập và mua lại (M&A), niêm yết, thị trường giá lên, đô la Úc (AUD), Ngân hàng Công thương Trung Quốc (ICBC)
3	Colloquial terms have distinctive stylistic features, whereas formal terms are preferred in written business communication	谦辞：敝、鄙、见笑；套语：恕、赏光、久仰	humble expressions: <i>my humble...</i> , <i>please excuse...</i> ; formulaic expressions: <i>excuse me, it is an honor, I have long admired...</i>	từ ngữ khiêm nhường: kính, mạn phép ; ngữ cố định: xin lượng thứ, hân hạnh, ngưỡng mộ từ lâu
4	Numerous technical terms with relatively fixed meanings	配额、盘点、契据、销售、倾销、清仓	quota, inventory checking, deed, sales, dumping, clearance sale	hạn ngạch, kiểm kê, khế ước, bán hàng, bán phá giá, thanh lý hàng
5	Strong tendency toward nominal vocabulary	股票、基金、期货、库房、广告、买进、卖出	stock, fund, futures, warehouse, advertisement, purchase, sale	cổ phiếu, quỹ, hợp đồng tương lai, kho hàng, quảng cáo, mua vào, bán ra
6	Reciprocity and symmetry are prominent in trade terminology	买/卖、买入/卖出、进口/出口、加价/减价	buy/sell, purchase/sale, import/export, mark-up/discount	mua/bán, mua vào/bán ra, nhập khẩu/xuất khẩu, tăng giá/giảm giá
7	Strong communicative function and frequent overlap with general Chinese vocabulary	保修、分期、公证、查询、半价、买单	warranty, installment, notarization, inquiry, half price, pay the bill	bảo hành, trả góp, công chứng, tra cứu, giảm 50%, thanh toán

As shown in Table 4, Business Chinese terminology exhibits several distinctive characteristics, including specialization, standardization, dynamic lexical development, and the extensive use of technical terms. Many business terms have stable equivalents in both Chinese and Vietnamese, whereas others require contextual translation because of differences in linguistic conventions and commercial practices. These characteristics provide the theoretical basis for the comparative analysis of terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts presented in the following sections.

1.2 Comparison of the Most Frequently Used Terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Wu Haiyan (2014), in *Research on Business Chinese Vocabulary*, identified the most frequently used business terminology based on a large-scale corpus analysis. These terms are widely employed in Chinese business communication and are also commonly found in Chinese business contracts. The results are presented in Table 2.2.

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Although Wu Haiyan's study focuses on Business Chinese in general, many of these terms also appear frequently in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. Based on Wu's classification, this study compares the Chinese terms with their Vietnamese equivalents and examines their similarities, differences, and translation characteristics.

Table 5: The Most Frequently Used Terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

No.	Chinese	English	Vietnamese
1	合同	contract	hợp đồng
2	本	this; the present	bản này; này
3	份	copy; counterpart	bản; bản sao
4	款	clause; article; payment	khoản; điều khoản
5	有	have; there be	có
6	不	not	không
7	期	term; period	kỳ; thời hạn
8	甲方	Party A	Bên A
9	第	ordinal marker	thứ (thứ nhất, thứ hai...)
10	乙方	Party B	Bên B
11	日	date; day	ngày
12	管理	management	quản lý
13	条	article; provision	điều
14	可	may; may be	có thể
15	内	within	trong vòng; trong
16	后	after	sau
17	应	shall; should	phải; có trách nhiệm
18	规定	stipulate; provision	quy định
19	贷款	loan	khoản vay; cho vay
20	由	by; be responsible for	do; bởi
21	按	according to	theo
22	将	shall; will	sẽ
23	因	because of	vì; do
24	按照	in accordance with	theo; căn cứ theo
25	根据	according to; based on	căn cứ vào
26	被	be; passive marker	bị
27	或者	or	hoặc
28	之	of (formal)	của
29	与	and; with	và; với
30	的	possessive particle	của (trợ từ)
31	在	in; at	ở; tại
32	及	and; as well as	và; cùng với
33	对	toward; with respect to	đối với
34	所	nominalizing particle	trợ từ
35	并	and; concurrently	và; đồng thời

Table 5 shows that the most frequently used terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts includes not only legal and commercial terms (e.g., 合同, 贷款, 管理), but also a large number of functional words and formal expressions (e.g., 本, 根据, 按照, 应, 并). These lexical items contribute to the precision, formality, and coherence of contractual language. Although many of them have direct Vietnamese equivalents, some terms require context-dependent translation to preserve both legal accuracy and stylistic appropriateness.

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Bùi Thị Phương Chi (裴氏芳芝), in *Giáo trình Tiếng Việt thương mại* (《商务越南语教程》, Nhà Xuất bản Đại học Quốc gia Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh, 2017), compiled and introduced a large number of commonly used Vietnamese business terms based on practical business communication and commercial contract contexts. These terms cover major areas such as investment, trade, negotiation, payment, transportation, and contract drafting, providing a useful reference for the comparative study of Chinese–Vietnamese business contract terminology. The most frequently used Vietnamese business terms are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Most Frequently Used Terminology in Vietnamese Business Contracts

No.	Vietnamese	English	Chinese
1	hợp đồng	contract	合同
2	thỏa thuận	agreement	协议
3	điều khoản	clause	条款
4	đồng ý	agree	同意
5	mỗi bên	each party	各方
6	phải	shall / must	必须
7	trước	before	之前
8	thời hạn	term / period	期限
9	sẽ	shall / will	将
10	tháng	month	月
11	thời gian	time	时间
12	không	not	不
13	thanh toán, chi trả	payment / pay	支付
14	mục	item / section	项
15	công ty	company	公司
16	và	and	和、与、并
17	là	be	为
18	thông qua	through	通过
19	này	this	这
20	mà	relative particle	所、的

A comparison of the most frequently used terminology in Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts shows that both languages employ formal and standardized vocabulary to ensure legal precision and consistency. High-frequency lexical items include both **content words**, such as 合同 (contract), 协议 (agreement), and 条款 (clause), and **function words**, such as 的, 所, and 和. Content words express the substantive meaning of contractual provisions, whereas function words primarily serve grammatical and cohesive functions.

The main difference lies in the frequency and function of grammatical words. Chinese business contracts make more extensive use of formal function words, many of which originate from Classical Chinese (e.g., 本, 之, 所, 将, 根据, 按照). These expressions contribute to the formality, precision, and legal authority of the contract. In contrast, Vietnamese business contracts rely more on modern written language and contain fewer archaic or stylistically marked function words. This distinction should be taken into account when translating Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts to ensure both legal accuracy and natural expression.

1.3 Comparison of the Characteristics of Terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts employ a large number of specialized terms to ensure legal precision and commercial accuracy. A comparison of the terminology used in both languages reveals several common characteristics as well as notable differences.

First, **nouns** constitute the largest proportion of terminology in Chinese business contracts. These nouns mainly denote legal concepts, commercial entities, rights, obligations, goods, and business activities, such as 基金 (fund), 技术 (technology), 产品 (product), and 项目 (project). **Verbs** are also frequently used to describe contractual obligations and commercial transactions, including 提供 (provide), 制造 (manufacture), 交付 (deliver), 支付 (pay), and 收到 (receive).

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Another distinctive feature of Chinese business terminology is its strong **word-formation ability**. Many frequently used morphemes combine with other Chinese characters to form specialized contractual terms. Table 7 presents several representative examples.

Table 7: Productive Morphemes in Chinese Business Contract Terminology

Morpheme	Examples	English Meaning
期	日期、延期、船期、按期、保证期、有效期、保质期、交货期、履约期、工期、保修期	date, extension, shipping schedule, due date, warranty period, validity period, delivery period, contract period, etc.
证	单证、信用证、保证、公证、凭证、签证、身份证、房产证、许可证、合格证	document, letter of credit, guarantee, notarization, certificate, visa, ID card, property certificate, license, qualification certificate
费	服务费、仓储费、保险费、运费、检验费、仲裁费、律师费、管理费、税费、加工费、包装费	service fee, storage fee, insurance fee, freight, inspection fee, arbitration fee, attorney's fee, management fee, tax, processing fee, packaging fee

Similarly, an analysis of Vietnamese business contracts shows that **nouns** are also the dominant category of terminology, followed by **verbs**. Frequently occurring terms include the following.

Table 8: Representative Vietnamese Business Terminology

Vietnamese	Chinese	English
chuyển nhượng	转让	transfer
ủy quyền	授权	authorize
vi phạm thỏa thuận	违约	breach of contract
điều kiện	条件	condition
xác nhận	确认	confirmation
giá thành	成本	cost
chủ nợ	债权人	creditor
khách hàng	客户	customer
kỳ hạn cuối cùng	最后期限	final deadline
khoản nợ	债务	debt
quyết định	决定	decision
bàn giao	交付	hand over / deliver
công nhân viên	员工	employee
người sử dụng lao động	雇主	employer
thiết bị	设备	equipment
hàng hóa	货物	goods
đảm bảo	担保	guarantee
thanh toán	付款	payment
sản phẩm	产品	product
rủi ro	风险	risk
tiến độ	进度	progress
cung ứng	供应	supply
mục tiêu	目标	objective
chấm dứt	终止	terminate

From the examples above, it can be seen that the terminology in both Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts mainly consists of **legal terms** (e.g., 转让 / chuyển nhượng, 终止 / chấm dứt, 担保 / đảm bảo) and **commercial terms** (e.g., 成本 / giá thành, 债权人 / chủ nợ, 交付 / bàn giao). Although some of these terms are familiar in general business communication, many

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are highly specialized and occur primarily in legal and commercial contexts. Therefore, accurate translation requires not only linguistic competence but also sufficient knowledge of legal and business terminology to ensure precision and consistency.

Second, Extensive Use of Abstract Nouns

Another notable characteristic of Chinese business contract terminology is the frequent use of **abstract nouns**, especially those ending with the suffix 性, which express legal or commercial attributes rather than concrete objects. Most of these abstract nouns have direct or near-equivalent expressions in Vietnamese, usually translated by the structure "**tính + adjective/noun**" or a corresponding nominal expression. This facilitates the accurate transfer of abstract legal and commercial concepts between the two languages.

Table 9: Common Abstract Nouns in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

No.	Chinese	English	Vietnamese
1	强制性	mandatory nature	tính cưỡng chế
2	有效性	validity	tính có hiệu lực
3	常年性	continuity	tính thường niên
4	适用性	applicability	tính phù hợp / tính khả thi
5	实质性	substantive nature	tính thực chất
6	真实性	authenticity	tính chân thực
7	合法性	legality	tính hợp pháp
8	执行性	enforceability	khả năng thi hành
9	规范性	standardization	tính quy phạm
10	流动性	liquidity	tính thanh khoản
11	代表性	representativeness	tính đại diện
12	相关性	relevance	tính liên quan
13	准确性	accuracy	tính chính xác
14	及时性	timeliness	tính kịp thời
15	原则性	principled nature	tính nguyên tắc
16	阶段性	phased nature	tính giai đoạn
17	完整性	integrity	tính hoàn chỉnh
18	突发性	contingency	tính đột xuất
19	可能性	possibility	tính khả thi / khả năng
20	开放性	openness	tính cởi mở
21	普遍性	universality	tính phổ biến
22	选择性	selectivity	tính lựa chọn
23	补充性	supplementary nature	tính bổ sung
24	永久性	permanence	tính lâu dài
25	可靠性	reliability	tính tin cậy
26	客观性	objectivity	tính khách quan
27	稳定性	stability	tính ổn định

The examples in Table 8 demonstrate that Chinese business contracts make extensive use of abstract nouns to describe legal characteristics, commercial attributes, and contractual principles. Most of these terms have direct or semantically equivalent expressions in Vietnamese, typically formed with the pattern "**tính + adjective/noun.**" This similarity reflects the comparable conceptual systems employed in Chinese and Vietnamese legal discourse and facilitates the translation of abstract legal concepts. Nevertheless, translators should select Vietnamese equivalents according to the legal context to ensure both terminological accuracy and stylistic appropriateness.

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Third, Comparison of Frequently Used Verbs in Chinese and Vietnamese Business Contracts

Another important characteristic of business contract terminology is the extensive use of **performative and modal verbs**, which specify the rights, obligations, permissions, and prohibitions of the contracting parties. A comparison of the Chinese and Vietnamese corpora shows that both languages employ a high frequency of such verbs.

In Chinese business contracts, the most frequently used modal verbs include 应、应当、可以、不得、必须、不能、需要、可能、能、禁止、能够 and 应该. Among them, 应 is the most common and is usually translated into Vietnamese as **phải**, indicating a mandatory legal obligation.

Example 1: 买方或其船方代理应¹及时通知卖方。

*The Buyer or its shipping agent **shall** promptly notify the Seller.*

*Người mua hoặc đại lý vận chuyển của mình **phải** thông báo kịp thời cho người bán.*

Example 2: 采用自主支付的，甲方应²定期报告或告知乙方贷款资金支付情况。

*Where independent payment is adopted, Party A **shall** regularly report to or notify Party B of the status of the loan fund disbursement.*

*Nếu áp dụng hình thức tự thanh toán, Bên A **phải** thường xuyên báo cáo hoặc thông báo cho Bên B về tình hình giải ngân vốn vay.*

Similarly, Vietnamese business contracts also contain numerous action verbs and performative verbs that describe legal and commercial activities.

Table 10: Frequently Used Verbs in Vietnamese Business Contracts

Vietnamese	Chinese	English
chấp nhận	接受	accept
kiến nghị	建议	recommend
phê duyệt	批准	approve
ủy quyền	授权	authorize
mua	购买	purchase
hủy bỏ	撤销	cancel
thay đổi	更改	modify
lựa chọn	选择	select
xác nhận	确认	confirm
quyết định	决定	decide
giảm	减少	reduce
bàn giao	交付	deliver
thuê	雇佣	employ
thành lập	建立	establish
tăng	增加	increase
thông báo	通知	notify
đầu tư	投资	invest
quản lý	管理	manage
chi trả	支付	pay
cung cấp	提供	provide
bán	出售	sell

Vietnamese contracts also frequently employ performative verbs, such as cam kết (承诺), đồng ý (同意), tuyên bố (声明), chỉ thị (命令), cảnh cáo (警告), từ chối (拒绝), đề nghị / yêu cầu (请求), mời (邀请), and cấm (禁止), which explicitly express legal acts and contractual intentions.

Fourth, Comparison of Specialized Legal and Commercial Terminology

Both Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts make extensive use of specialized legal and commercial terminology to ensure precision and legal certainty.

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Table 11: Common Specialized Terminology in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Chinese	English	Vietnamese
信用证	letter of credit	thư tín dụng
不可抗力	force majeure	bất khả kháng
撤销	revoke / cancel	hủy bỏ
法定代表人	legal representative	người đại diện theo pháp luật
债权人	creditor	chủ nợ
保证人	guarantor	người bảo lãnh
合同签订地	place of contract signing	nơi ký kết hợp đồng
委托方	principal	bên ủy thác
验收工作	acceptance inspection	công tác nghiệm thu
约束力	binding force	hiệu lực ràng buộc
账簿	accounting book	sổ kế toán
著作权	copyright	quyền tác giả
债务	debt	khoản nợ
法律效力	legal validity	hiệu lực pháp lý
仲裁	arbitration	trọng tài
权利义务转让	transfer of rights and obligations	chuyển giao quyền và nghĩa vụ
违约金	liquidated damages	tiền phạt vi phạm hợp đồng
利率	interest rate	lãi suất
解除合同	terminate a contract	chấm dứt hợp đồng

Fifth, Common Translation Errors

Although Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts share many similarities in terminology, translators should pay close attention to **false equivalents** and literal translations, which may lead to inaccurate legal interpretation.

Table 12: Common Translation Errors

Chinese	Incorrect Translation	Correct Translation	English
担保	bảo đảm	đảm bảo / bảo lãnh*	guarantee / guaranty
图表	đồ biểu	biểu đồ	chart
见证	chứng kiến	chứng kiến	witness
例外	ngoại lệ	ngoại lệ	exception
生产	sinh sản	sản xuất	produce
取消 (合同)	thủ tiêu (hợp đồng)	hủy bỏ hợp đồng	cancel a contract
究竟	cứu cánh	cuối cùng	finally / ultimately
三个月	tam cá nguyệt	3 tháng	three months

The appropriate Vietnamese equivalent of 担保 depends on the legal context. When referring to a legal guarantee provided by a third party, **bảo lãnh is usually more accurate than **đảm bảo**.*

The comparison above demonstrates that Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts share many similarities in terms of lexical categories, stylistic formality, and the use of specialized legal and commercial terminology. Both languages rely heavily on nouns, modal verbs, performative verbs, and standardized expressions to ensure precision and legal certainty.

However, Chinese business contracts make more frequent use of formal function words and Classical Chinese expressions, resulting in a higher degree of linguistic formality. Moreover, translators should avoid literal translation of terminology and instead select equivalents that conform to the legal conventions and linguistic norms of the target language. Careful attention to terminological accuracy and stylistic appropriateness is therefore essential for producing high-quality Chinese–Vietnamese business contract translations.

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2. Comparison of Fixed Expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Fixed expressions are one of the most distinctive linguistic features of business contracts. They are conventionalized combinations of words that recur frequently in legal and commercial documents. Compared with ordinary language, these expressions are more standardized and contribute to precision, consistency, and legal certainty.

According to **Hu Shi Chuilian (2019)**, many Chinese fixed expressions have direct equivalents in Vietnamese business contracts. Representative examples are presented in **Table 13**.

Table 13: Common Fixed Expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese Business Contracts

Chinese	English	Vietnamese
长期合同	long-term contract	hợp đồng dài hạn
银行账号	bank account number	số tài khoản
付款方式	payment method	phương thức thanh toán
合同期满	upon expiry of the contract	đến hạn hợp đồng
自动生效	automatically take effect	tự động có hiệu lực
终止合同	terminate the contract	chấm dứt hợp đồng
提前支付	make payment in advance	thanh toán trước thời hạn
定期付款	periodic payment	thanh toán định kỳ
分期付款	installment payment	thanh toán theo đợt
货到付款	cash on delivery (COD)	thanh toán khi nhận hàng
仲裁机构	arbitration institution	cơ quan trọng tài
仲裁裁决	arbitral award	phán quyết trọng tài
责任有限公司	limited liability company	công ty trách nhiệm hữu hạn
股份有限公司	joint-stock company	công ty cổ phần
根据.....	pursuant to / according to	căn cứ vào...
在.....天内	within ... days	trong vòng ... ngày
应当承担.....责任	shall bear ... responsibility	phải chịu trách nhiệm...
双方一致同意	both parties agree that	hai bên thống nhất rằng
本合同自签订之日起生效	this contract shall take effect upon signing	hợp đồng này có hiệu lực kể từ ngày ký

Some expressions listed above may be replaced by synonymous expressions without changing the legal meaning. For example:

Table 14: Equivalent Fixed Expressions in Chinese Business Contracts

Preferred Expression	Equivalent Expression(s)	English
付款方式	付款方法	payment method
终止合同	解除合同、撤销合同	terminate the contract
订立合同	签订合同、签署合同	conclude / sign a contract

However, some Chinese fixed expressions do not have direct counterparts in Vietnamese. Their translation requires appropriate translation strategies rather than literal word-for-word translation.

Table 15: Chinese Fixed Expressions Requiring Translation Adaptation

Chinese	English	Vietnamese
合同的成立与生效	formation and effectiveness of the contract	xác lập và hiệu lực của hợp đồng
本合同所发生的或与本合同有关的一切争议	all disputes arising out of or in connection with this contract	tất cả các tranh chấp phát sinh từ hoặc liên quan đến hợp đồng này
条款和条件	terms and conditions	các điều khoản và điều kiện

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即使有任何相反协议	notwithstanding any contrary agreement	bất chấp mọi thỏa thuận trái ngược
在合同有效期间	during the term of this contract	trong thời gian hiệu lực của hợp đồng
协商不成时	if negotiations fail	khi thương lượng không thành
为确保本合同的履行	to ensure the performance of this contract	để bảo đảm việc thực hiện hợp đồng
应承担违约责任	shall bear liability for breach of contract	phải chịu trách nhiệm do vi phạm hợp đồng
可以提前终止合同	may terminate the contract in advance	có thể chấm dứt hợp đồng trước thời hạn
应及时通知另一方	shall promptly notify the other party	phải kịp thời thông báo cho bên còn lại
应按照本合同约定	shall act in accordance with this contract	phải theo quy định của hợp đồng

Example 1: 因执行本合同所发生的或与本合同有关的一切争议，双方应通过友好协商解决。

All disputes arising out of or in connection with the performance of this Contract shall be settled through friendly consultation between the Parties.

Mọi tranh chấp phát sinh từ hoặc liên quan đến việc thực hiện hợp đồng này sẽ được hai bên giải quyết thông qua thương lượng hữu nghị.

Example 2: 凡因执行本合同所发生的或与本合同有关的一切争议，双方应通过友好协商解决；如果协商不能解决，应提交北京中国国际经济贸易仲裁委员会仲裁。

Any dispute arising out of or in connection with this Contract shall first be settled through friendly consultation. If no settlement can be reached, the dispute shall be submitted to the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC), Beijing, for arbitration in accordance with its arbitration rules.

Mọi tranh chấp phát sinh từ hoặc liên quan đến việc thực hiện hợp đồng này trước hết sẽ được giải quyết bằng thương lượng hữu nghị. Nếu thương lượng không thành, tranh chấp sẽ được đưa ra Ủy ban Trọng tài Kinh tế và Thương mại Quốc tế Trung Quốc (CIETAC) tại Bắc Kinh để giải quyết theo Quy tắc Trọng tài của cơ quan này.

Example 3: 乙方应采取各种合理合法措施为甲方提供全面协调工作。

Party B shall take all reasonable and lawful measures to provide Party A with comprehensive coordination services.

Bên B phải áp dụng mọi biện pháp hợp lý và hợp pháp để hỗ trợ và phối hợp toàn diện với Bên A.

The comparison shows that Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts share a large number of equivalent fixed expressions because both legal systems employ standardized contractual language. Nevertheless, Chinese contracts contain more formulaic legal expressions derived from Classical Chinese and legal drafting conventions. Consequently, translators should avoid literal translation and instead adopt equivalent expressions that conform to Vietnamese legal writing practices while preserving the legal force and stylistic formality of the original text.

IV. SUMMARY OF TRANSLATION EXPERIENCE IN CHINESE–VIETNAMESE BUSINESS CONTRACTS

The comparative analysis of terminology and fixed expressions in Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts has provided valuable insights into the characteristics of legal and commercial language as well as their implications for translation practice. Through the translation of business contracts and the comparative study conducted in this thesis, several practical experiences can be summarized.

First, translators should fully understand the legal and commercial context before translation.

Business contracts are legally binding documents in which every word may affect the rights and obligations of the contracting parties. Unlike ordinary texts, contract language emphasizes legal precision, consistency, and formality. Therefore, translators should carefully study the background of the contract, identify its legal purpose, determine the relationship between the parties, and understand the commercial context before starting the translation. Reading parallel Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts is also an effective way to become familiar with the stylistic conventions and fixed expressions commonly used in each language.

Second, special attention should be paid to the translation of terminology.

The findings in Chapter 2 indicate that both Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts contain a large number of legal and commercial terms, many of which have standardized equivalents. Although a considerable number of terms correspond directly between the two languages, others require translators to distinguish subtle semantic differences according to the legal context. Literal translation should therefore be avoided whenever it may result in ambiguity or misunderstanding.

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For example, some Chinese legal terms have several possible Vietnamese equivalents depending on their function in the contract. Likewise, Vietnamese legal terminology should be translated according to its legal meaning rather than its dictionary meaning. Consequently, translators should consult legal dictionaries, professional glossaries, relevant legislation, and parallel contracts to ensure terminological consistency throughout the translation.

Third, fixed expressions should be translated functionally rather than literally.

One of the major findings of this study is that Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts share many equivalent fixed expressions, such as 根据....., 在.....天内, 本合同自签订之日起生效, and 双方一致同意. These expressions have become standardized contractual language and should normally be translated using their conventional equivalents instead of word-for-word translation.

However, not every Chinese fixed expression has a direct counterpart in Vietnamese. Certain expressions derived from Classical Chinese legal language require structural adjustment to conform to Vietnamese legal drafting conventions. Therefore, translators should focus on preserving the legal function and communicative purpose of the expression rather than reproducing its surface structure.

Fourth, translators should preserve the stylistic characteristics of business contracts.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that Chinese business contracts generally exhibit a higher degree of linguistic formality than Vietnamese contracts. Chinese contracts frequently employ Classical Chinese expressions, formal function words, and highly conventional sentence structures, whereas Vietnamese contracts tend to use more modern written language while maintaining legal precision.

Consequently, translators should not simply imitate the sentence structure of the source language. Instead, they should produce translations that comply with the legal drafting conventions of the target language while preserving the authority, precision, and solemnity of the original contract. Appropriate use of modal verbs such as 应, 应当, and shall/phải, together with standardized legal expressions, contributes significantly to translation quality.

Fifth, cohesion and logical relationships should be maintained throughout the translation.

Business contracts contain numerous logical connectors and discourse markers that express conditions, obligations, exceptions, causes, and consequences. These cohesive devices ensure the logical organization of contractual provisions and reduce the possibility of legal disputes.

During the translation process, translators should carefully identify these logical relationships and reproduce them accurately in the target language. Failure to translate conjunctions, conditional clauses, or reference expressions appropriately may alter the legal interpretation of contractual provisions. Therefore, maintaining discourse cohesion is as important as translating individual words and phrases correctly.

Sixth, translation quality depends on continuous revision and professional development.

During the initial stage of this research, several translation errors occurred because of insufficient understanding of legal terminology, fixed expressions, and contractual drafting conventions. Through repeated comparison with authentic Chinese and Vietnamese business contracts, consultation of legal reference materials, and careful revision, the quality and accuracy of the translations were gradually improved.

This experience demonstrates that business contract translation is not merely a process of linguistic conversion but also a professional activity requiring legal knowledge, commercial knowledge, intercultural awareness, and excellent bilingual competence. Careful proofreading and terminology verification are therefore indispensable steps before producing the final translation.

Finally, implications for future translation practice

The findings of this study suggest that translators of Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts should pay equal attention to terminology, fixed expressions, legal style, and discourse organization. Rather than translating individual words mechanically, translators should adopt a functional approach that considers legal equivalence, communicative purpose, and target-language conventions.

Although this thesis focuses primarily on terminology and fixed expressions, the results may also provide useful references for the translation of other legal and commercial documents. Future studies may further investigate syntactic differences, discourse structure, pragmatic features, and corpus-based approaches to improve the quality and standardization of Chinese–Vietnamese legal translation.

In conclusion, the comparative study conducted in this thesis confirms that terminology and fixed expressions constitute the linguistic foundation of Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts. A thorough understanding of their characteristics and translation

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principles will contribute not only to improving translation quality but also to promoting more effective legal and commercial communication between China and Vietnam.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Chinese–Vietnamese business contracts are characterized by a high degree of formality, precision, and standardization, reflecting the legal and commercial functions of contractual language. Through a comparative analysis of terminology and fixed expressions, this study has shown that the two languages share many common features, including the use of specialized legal and commercial terms, conventional fixed expressions, and standardized sentence patterns. At the same time, differences exist in lexical choices, stylistic conventions, and linguistic expression, which should be carefully considered in translation.

The findings suggest that the accurate translation of business contracts requires not only terminological equivalence but also an understanding of the legal context and the conventional use of fixed expressions in both languages. It is hoped that this study will provide a useful reference for Chinese–Vietnamese business contract translation and contribute to further research on legal and commercial translation.

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