In this study, for the purpose of proposing an Interpretation and Translation Process Model, an experiment was conducted to collect and analyze Vietnamese-Japanese interpretation and translation data. “Theory of Sense” introduced by Seleskovitch (1968, 1978), “Complexity Theory” by Larsen-Freeman, Cameron (2008) and “Speech Production” by Levelt (1999a) are referred as the theoretical bases for the Interpretation and Translation Process Model proposed in this thesis. The proposed model is a dynamic process model consisted of numerous linguistic and non-linguistic factors at each stage. Under varying conditions, these factors reshape the process and yield different interpretation or translation results. Supposing that this process is similar to the speech production process, the model acknowledges that there shall be obstacles at phonological, morphological, syntactic, and pragmatic levels at any time during the process, and that consequently the interpreter or translator shall have to find relevant solutions. One such solution can be “Explicitation” which is a strategy used to clarify related information to avoid misunderstanding or lighten the burden imposed on listeners or readers caused by sociocultural and/or linguistic differences during the interpretation/translation process. “Explicitation” is commonly used in interpretation and translation, and is regarded as an unavoidable phenomenon by many researchers, including Blum-Kulka. Since the strategy is a natural consequence of the entire interpretation and translation process, the present study focuses on “Explicitation”. This thesis attempts to analyze its characteristics and verify the validity of the assumptions made in the proposed Interpretation and Translation Process Model.

Six participants cooperated as interpreters and translators in an experiment in which they were requested to interpret in a moderately difficult business setting or translate a non-technical business document prepared by the author. As a result of data collection
and analysis, 17 types of “Explicitation” strategy were identified. These were subcategorized from three perspectives; “Strategy necessity,” “Level of use,” and “Target of use”. Regarding “Strategy necessity”, the 17 types were divided into “Obligatory strategies” and “Optional strategies.” “Level of use” was differentiated in terms of “Vocabulary level of use,” “Grammatical level of use,” and “Conversational level of use”. Regarding “Target of use,” the 17 types of “Explicitation” strategy were divided into two categories: “For meaning clarification” and “For naturalness of target language.” The percentage of each type of “Explicitation” strategy used during the interpretation and translation process as well as the percentage of each subcategory were calculated. Furthermore, a comparison of the “Explicitation” strategies that were used was made between translation and interpretation, between the translation or interpretation direction (Vietnamese to Japanese and vice versa), and among the interpreters/translators.

Findings indicated that, in addition to having several common characteristics in the use of “Explicitation” strategy, there exists obvious gaps between the different translation forms, interpretation/translation direction, and among interpreters/translators. This result implies that, any changes in any factors related to the interpretation/translation process can result in major differences in the use of “Explicitation” strategy and, in turn, in the whole interpretation/translation process. This is strong evidence that the interpretation/translation process is indeed “Dynamic” and “Complex”. Moreover, an additional survey was conducted to investigate interpreter/translator awareness of their use of the “Explicitation” strategy during the interpretation/translation process. It was demonstrated that, whether interpreters/translators were aware of the necessity of the strategy and the extent to which they knew how to use the relevant strategy considerably affected the usage of the strategy and, in consequence, influenced the overall interpretation/translation process.

In addition, a questionnaire was implemented to investigate the effectiveness of “Explicitation” strategies. Sixty people participated in the survey and were divided into three groups according to their linguistic background: Vietnamese who do not know any Japanese (20 people), Japanese who do not know any Vietnamese (20 people), Vietnamese who are highly proficient in both Vietnamese and Japanese (20 people). These people were required to assess the degree of effectiveness of “Explicitation” strategies used by the interpreters/translators in specific situations
according to a 5-point Likert scale. Results showed that in most cases, “Explicitation” strategies can bring about neutral or positive impact, which helps listeners or readers understand the message more easily. This result also provides some important suggestions to interpreters and translators when using “Explicitation” strategies, and useful lessons that help educators/trainers when introducing these strategies to students majoring in interpretation/translation especially that between Japanese and Vietnamese.

The present study, therefore, not only introduces a dynamic process model of interpretation/translation, and explains some of the fundamental features of this process, but also recognizes the significance of “Explicitation” strategies in the interpretation/translation process. The result of this research can be applied broadly to interpreter/translator training, especially one that involves Vietnamese. There are, however, some limits of the study which need to be pointed out. First, the size of the data sample was restricted. Second, the situation setup for collecting interpretation/translation data was limited to cases where no difficult technical terminology were involved, which might restrict the applicability of the present findings to other situations where difficult technical terminology is used. Third, the interpreters/translators who cooperated in this study where all Vietnamese, thus, the generalizability of the current results to other languages is yet to be confirmed. Despite such limitations, this study has made a considerable contribution in exploring the use of “Explicitation” strategies in the interpretation/translation process and empirically showing its effectiveness and influence on the dynamic process.