In these times of globalization, multilingualism and multiculturalism which we live in, Translation is a vital instrument for the preservation of national languages as well as national identities. As a superior bilingual mediated communication process, Translation calls for a wide domain of skills and competencies both interlingual and intercultural. In this sense, deepening in the almost unknown world of Translation as an important component within the development of the communicative competence, beyond its linguistic perspective, becomes a task of paramount importance. Through this exhaustive research, the authors offer a wide source of knowledge on the different elements involved when learning and grasping a new language and culture, specifically those encompassed in colloquial culture-rooted expressions channeled into developing the translation-communicative competence in PhD and Master Degree professionals of the VLIR-IUC-UO Program so as to improve their future performance and interaction with native speakers of the English Language in non-academic settings.

Key words: Translation, communicative competence, Intercultural learning, VLIR-IUC-UO Program.
Introduction:
Translation is a superior bilingual mediated communication process. The fact that languages cannot be separated from their social and cultural contexts of use is widely recognized nowadays. In recent times, intercultural language learning has been highlighted as one of the foremost important objectives of language acquisition, the term “intercultural” implying a back-and-forth movement across languages and cultures, an understanding of one’s own language and culture in relation to a second one. Translation as an activity has always existed; throughout centuries it has gone along with the need to communicate with people who speak different languages. Translation provides access to ideas and experiences that would otherwise be incomprehensible for human beings. Probably, that is how translation made its way through the world of foreign languages teaching and learning. According to different teaching methods popular in particular periods, there used to be times of its great popularity as well as times of its complete ignorance and even prohibition. However, several supporters of the inclusion of translation have recently started a debate of re-examining the role of translation in foreign language education. In some settings and under certain conditions, translators participate more actively in the communication process, producing written texts in which forms and words are manipulated to extend further understanding across cultures. As a result the new term of ‘communicative’ translation has been introduced. House (2009) defines communicative translation as translation converted to pedagogical purposes in which learners are embedded in communicative situations relevant to them. This means that students meet real communicative needs and they perform real communicative acts in dissimilar contexts. This practical value of Translation within the process of communication can be applied to the particular case of the students of the VLIR-IUC Program in the Universidad de Oriente. The VLIR-IUC Program (Flemish Interuniversity Council) is an international collaboration program directed to provide economic support to the academic endeavors of developing countries, Cuba has had the help of this project since 2001, when the Universidad Central de las Villas (UCLV) first entered this program. In 2012, Universidad de Oriente was granted the collaboration funds of the VLIR-IUC Program for a period of 12 years. Within the program, nine projects were accepted, including faculty members and staff from almost every area of the university. As a result of this program, many professors and researchers will travel to Belgium or other countries for academic purposes (research scholarships, recycling scholarships, and others). Most of these professors do not have the proper level in English to be able to engage in such tasks in a foreign country. Some members would even have to defend their PhD. thesis in English in Belgian universities. Furthermore, those professors will actually live in Belgium for a period (be it one, two or three months) which involves not only dealing with the academic environment but also living within a foreign culture and thus interacting with its constituents. As part of the program, a project was developed to teach English to the PhD. students and team members that are to travel to Belgium at some point. This particular group of students is the focus of this paper as they will need intensive training in English and after a revision of the syllabus design and curriculum of the courses delivered to those students, it was determined that their knowledge regarding colloquial cultural lexical elements that lead to culture-based communication-translation mistakes is indeed quite limited. Studies focusing on spoken discourse within multilingual workplace settings have been valuable to the understanding of how non-native speakers of a language interact and engage with native speakers and negotiate meaning to increase communicative effectiveness. Since translation requires the use of most language skills, students can also improve their language skills through the study of translation. Using different instructional types and materials will improve the language skills of the students. Duff (1994) states that “...The goal of translation is more likely to provide learning opportunities in the process of creating translations as final products in order to develop language awareness. Translation activities should be used in the English classroom, and they should be supported by communicative, natural learning methods”. Translation competence plays a foremost role in the achievement of an optimal communicative competence. In the VLIR-IUC-UO classroom, although a natural
environment for learning a foreign language, there are conditions apparently unattached to the teaching-learning process itself that somehow hamper the effective cross-cultural communication. Since the process of learning another language in an academic environment is always limited by such factors as time and the amount of content to be taught, students must learn to study and deepen into the new language on their own, along with the use of available aids and tools to assist them in communicating with people from cultural and linguistic backgrounds different to their own.

In spite of the well-designed syllabus, students from the VLIR-IUC UO, especially the ones in the advanced levels two and three, have shown to lack a sound background on lexical culture-rooted aspects related to slangy or colloquial contexts of communication. Since these students will eventually display language skills, to be put into practice in the most diverse contexts of communication, it is compulsory to be acquainted with an informal nonstandard vocabulary that will prevail in non-academic or informal spaces. The VLIR-IUC-UO foreign language classroom is deprived of enough time to offer students a wide spectrum of knowledge on every field of language. The focus of the profiles is mostly on the academic context, and although they do handle cultural issues outside the academic world, time is certainly not enough (See The role of colloquial culture-rooted elements in the enhancement of a successful cross-cultural communication for VLIR-IUC-UO students, Lilia Sanz Gámez, 2014_Annex 1). Informal interviews with both students and professors of the VLIR-IUC-UO courses have corroborated this assertion (See The role of colloquial culture-rooted elements in the enhancement of a successful cross-cultural communication for VLIR-IUC-UO students, Lilia Sanz Gámez, 2014_Annex 2 and 3).

Taking into account the aforementioned, the insufficient emphasis on colloquial lexical elements that may lead to culture-based mistakes and impede a successful cross-cultural communication, was established as the research problem. In accordance with the problem detected, the author determined the enhancement of VLIR-IUC-UO students’ communicative competence as the objective of the research. Throughout the development of this research, the following theoretical methods and approaches were applied:

- **Historical-logical method** was used in the analysis of the antecedents and tendencies of translation-communicative competence worldwide.
- **Analysis-synthesis**, in the study of theoretical and literary sources.
- **Statistic-mathematical method** was used in the analysis of the diagnosis’ results within the data provided by the survey.
- **Deductive-inductive**, in the analysis of the elements taken from the consulted bibliography.
- **Hermeneutic** approach for the interpretation of the analyzed material.

Among the empirical research techniques:
- **Documentary checking** provided the required information on the current state of the object, according to diverse authors that have worked on the issue as well as their results.
- **Observation**, within the process of diagnosing the state of the object.
- **Surveys** conducted to post-graduate students from the advanced levels of the VLIR-IUC-UO Program, used to diagnose the problem and to substantiate the proposal.

The practical contribution of this research is a glossary of situational cultural-rooted colloquial lexical elements that lead to culture-based communication mistakes in order to enhance the VLIR-IUC-UO ESL students’ communicative performance in non-academic environments.

**Development:**

The VLIR-IUC-UO classroom as a setting to enhance cross-cultural understanding and communication: An approach to culture-rooted expressions and their actual need in the Program.

In previous stages, the problem was diagnosed through a survey conducted to the level two and three students from the VLIR-IUC-UO Program. Along with the interviews to professors enrolled in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language in the VLIR-IUC-UO classroom, the technique of survey produced that even though vocabulary related to the new and unknown culture that these students are eventually going to face was included in the syllabus, it was poorly emphasized or deepened into in both the classroom and the self-study activity. The survey was applied to a sample of 17 students. The results held that 13 out of 17...
students had poor knowledge on the topic, what represents the 76.4% of the individuals that were part of the survey; while 4 said to have no knowledge on the cultural elements more than those present in an academic setting, which represents the 23.6% of the sample of study. Students from the VLIR-IUC UO, especially the ones in the advanced levels two and three, strongly considered non-academic vocabulary as an aspect of paramount importance to get to speak the target language in a fluent and natural way. In general, they conceded great relevance to the use of colloquial culture-rooted elements as a way to successfully foster and enhance cross-cultural communication in the most diverse contexts of communication.

Brief characterization of the profiles two and three of the VLIR-IUC-UO Program.
The profile two for students of the VLIR-IUC-UO Program comprises several topics and thematic fields that are closely-related to the purpose of their pieces of research or academic activity. With a total of 6 weeks and 60 hours of classes, the students' process of learning English as a foreign language is not merely relegated to hours devoted to face-to-face classes. In fact, 4 out of the 10 hours assigned per week (6 contact hours: 4 for Speaking and 2 for Writing, and 4 hours for study) to train students on “Giving clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples” (SEE The role of colloquial culture-rooted elements in the enhancement of a successful cross-cultural communication for VLIR-IUC-UO students, Lilia Sanz Gámez, 2014 PROFILE 2), are allotted to be spent “out of the classroom”. The topics of the syllabus for Profile two students encompass a great amount of day-to-day, down-to-earth knowledge. Such a topic as Cross-cultural communication, specifically “Cultural Dealing”, is allocated to be taught in the very first week of the course. In this four-hour class, students are faced with communicative functions such as:

- Describing elements of cultural dealing from a personal situation
- Placing personal situation in a previously provided diagram of cultural dealing (problem-solving task)
- Generalizing the situation: Give opinions on the matter
- Reflections on the topic

In the second week, students are meant to cope with another topic closely related to culture and identity: culture shock. In this particular case, they are supposed to master functions such as:

- Talking about moving abroad
- Expressing emotions
- Describing cultural expectations
- Giving advice

As it has been previously stated, culture does constitute a topic in the syllabus of the VLIR-IUC-UO Program. The flaw in this sense is the lack of deepening and enrichment of the topic, since it is one of the most relevant factors to be familiar with when getting to know a language. Culture is merely described in terms of a topic to be acquainted with, that means they do not make extensive use of lexical aspects, which once in the foreign culture will help them deal and cross-communicate effectively. In this sense, colloquial vocabulary is not exploited.

As it is illustrated, students are not fully trained to deal with typical situations in non-academic contexts of communication involving slangy or colloquial culture-rooted vocabulary; what it is the same, they are not likely to successfully cope with elements apart from those attached to their field of interest and/or research.

In the case of the Profile three, VLIR-IUC-UO students are assigned 12 weeks of classes with a total of 12 hours a week, 8 hours for Speaking and Writing, and 4 hours for tandem work (Writing). Their final objective is to be able to: “Express themselves fluently and spontaneously for social and professional purposes, Formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate their contribution skilfully to those of other speakers, Deliver detailed and extended descriptions and presentations of complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion” (SEE The role of colloquial culture-rooted elements in the enhancement of a successful cross-cultural communication for VLIR-IUC-UO students, Lilia Sanz Gámez, 2014, PROFILE 3).

Level three students are allotted to deal with topics related to culture in the first and third week respectively, as it is illustrated above:

**Week 1: The world we live in**.
Identifying and describing problems; coming up with solutions.
Making complaints and giving advice.
Describing cultural expectations.
Comparing customs from different countries.

Week 3: “The respect for cultural diversity”.
Asking for and agreeing/disagreeing with opinions.
Describing positive and negative features.
Asking for explanations.
Giving a talk, opinions and recommendations.

As the CEFR descriptor for the independent user level B1 (the VLIR-IUC-UO Language Program is in correspondence with CEFR descriptors) states: by this point, students should be able to “understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc., deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken, produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest, describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans”.

In other words, students must be fully aware of the surrounding culture and environment and the role they play in the process of learning a language closely linked to reality and consciousness; that means they have to be prepared to deal with the expectations of modern society in its different spectrums and contexts, which demands a great deal of knowledge and cultural background on the most varied and slangy aspects. That is why it is advisable to implement the use of the glossary in advanced levels of the VLIR-IUC-UO Program so as to accurately master points related to the language level they are supposed to achieve.

Cultural errors that interfere in a successful cross-cultural communication

One of the universal truths of translation is that people involved in the communication process often find that there is no equivalence in the way the two languages (the source and the target language) see and understand the world (Berber Irakien de Raiko, Diana (1998). With the increasing cultural globalization setting, cultures are irrevocably mingled, and therefore share some common environments and traits. However, this does not imply a compulsory transfer of elements related to their language and cultural backgrounds, which still remain to be alien in a desperate attempt not to be absorbed by world’s gigantic mass media networks and ruling economies.

The foremost skill at the time of speaking a foreign language, is indeed, to possess a sound general culture, ranging from the most trivial aspects of day-to-day life to the most hackneyed topics of highly-formal language, as well as sufficient knowledge on the culture of the country where the language is spoken, in order to understand those allusions in the discourse that are not explained because of the daily nature and simplicity of the meaning, but that are deeply rooted in the culture and identity of its English-speaking people.

The following table shows some common cultural mistakes that threaten an accurate cross-cultural communication. As it is illustrated, non-native English-speaking students (such as those from the VLIR-IUC-UO Program) once faced with them, will not be likely to find a suitable meaning unless they have mastered lexical structures or vocabulary related to familiar nonstandard contexts of communication; since apparently these particular structures are not attached to a sphere of the new life they are led to be acquainted with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINAL</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m going for a Big Mac.</td>
<td>Voy a ensuciar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayday mayday! &quot;¡Primero de mayo, primero de mayo!</td>
<td>Rómpete una pierna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary is a wet blanket.</td>
<td>Mary es un mantel mojado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our teacher is a bad egg.</td>
<td>Nuestra profesora es un huevo podrido.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give me a doggy bag.</td>
<td>Dame una bolsa de comida para perro.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undoubtedly, the mistakes above illustrated (Berber Irakien de Raiko, Diana (1998) showed the evident lack of knowledge on the current popular cultures, and mainly of youth slang. As an illustration, the second example is an interesting pattern of ethnocentrism mixed with lack of cultural...
knowledge of Anglophone, and absolute lack of consideration related to the context. In the case of the last example, the lack of knowledge on the culture as such and its most trivial and simple traits, such as the fact that, when in certain restaurants, at the end of the meal you are provided with a plastic bag or one from any kind to take the leftovers home, hinders a successful cross-cultural communication.

However, cultural errors when transferring words from a target into a source language are not as trivial and comical as the ones previously illustrated. There have been many dreadful consequences due to the lack of an optimum communicative-Translation competence, particularly in the aspects related to culture traits.

The glossary as a tool to be implemented in the foreign language class

A glossary is not a general dictionary that gathers all sorts of terms from different fields. Although they share some common traits such as the presentation of terms and concepts, as well as their definition and meaning, mostly arranged in an alphabetic form; a glossary presents a non-exhaustive catalog of words related to a specific discipline, field of research, activity, and theme of knowledge, with its definition and/or observations, sometimes in a quite simple way.

In the case of a scholar course, a glossary constitutes a valuable tool that can be used by the students in case of doubts, or as an investigative activity. In the first case, the professor can adopt one or several existing glossaries or one made by himself. By doing this, the professor is granting the students a list of common terms used in his subject, as well as the abbreviations and other terms of common use. As an investigative activity, glossaries allow students to focus their attention on the terminological and conceptual issues that might appear in the field that it is being subjected to study. In this case, the student is the one that will make the glossary, with certain parameters established by the teacher. It is possible to combine the two options. That is to say, a general glossary might be used by the teacher, which contains the basic terms of the course with their definitions and might be simple, and at the same time, he can create a more specialized one with definitions more thoroughly elaborated.

Review of the different sources consulted for the selection of the colloquial cultural expressions included in the glossary

When actively engaging and interacting in a completely alien culture and environment, several phrases can come to light and leave foreign language learners dumbfounded and speechless. That is why, it is compulsory to embrace a wide vocabulary to be able to deal successfully with any kind of situation and setting. Since VLIR-IUC-UO students are meant to deepen mostly into their research field or related spheres, their lexicon is quite limited when it comes to facing and coping with life in a non-academic setting.

Large numbers of colloquial lexical culture-rooted elements that may lead to culture-based mistakes can be found in several sources. In order to develop a glossary comprising these elements for ensuring VLIR-IUC-UO students’ accurate communicative performance, some steps were followed to compile this list. The first step was precisely to quest for different written sources where non-easily understandable colloquial elements closely linked to the native culture were included so as to compile them. The next step was to examine thoroughly some slang and colloquial dictionaries, along with some other sources comprising a large number of these lexical culture-rooted elements proper to non-academic settings, and finally selecting three of them as the most far-reaching in terms of included vocabulary.

a) Dictionaries of slang and colloquialisms

Taking into account the objective of the research, being the enhancement of VLIR-IUC-UO students’ communicative competence, more precisely their future engaging in non-academic cross-cultural environments, some different dictionaries of slang and colloquialisms were the first sources to be reviewed for the selection of the colloquial lexical culture-rooted elements, since they were directly linked to the contexts of communication where the VLIR-IUC-UO students were, by all odds, meant to interact in, once in Belgium. Since one of the VLIR-IUC-UO students’ foremost aim is that of accurately understanding and grasping the new culture they are fostered in and its different perspectives, by gaining fluency and proficiency in non-academic highly-formal language, some written sources were
thoroughly examined. Such sources encompassed a wide variety of commonly used phrases in daily informal settings and ranged in date of editions from 1988 to 2007; most of them were issued in recent dates, which means they are quite updated on the new trends of language.

Three out of the seven reviewed dictionaries—*The Random House Thesaurus of Slang* (Esther Lewin & Albert E. Lewin, 1988), *The NTC's Dictionary of American Slang and Colloquial Expression* (Richard A. Spears, 2000), and *The McGraw-Hill's Essential American Slang Dictionary* (Richard A. Spears, 2007)—were chosen as the main sources colloquial culture-rooted expressions, based on factors such as:

- their availability (on-line dictionaries)
- the frequency of use of the colloquial non-academic expressions
- the inclusion of information related to the variant of English that these culture-rooted expressions belong to, such as 'British', 'American', etc.
- their publication ranged from 1988 to 2007, most of them belonging to the new century.

b) **Magazines and newspapers**

Since the VLIR-IUC-UO students are expected to cope with both spoken and written discourse successfully, some important sources of day-to-day life were taken into account. Those are the cases of native magazines and newspapers, whose plain, down-to-earth, even colloquial language will represent quite a challenge at the time of dealing with a language not fully developed. Such magazines and newspapers ranged from Flanders Today publications (FT 2009, February 11 and FT 2015, June 5) to on-line issues of some articles belonging to the same well-known magazine. In these magazines, some culture-rooted expressions were encountered and therefore selected as vivid examples of their contextualization.

c) **Other sources**

Other written sources were further reviewed to enrich the compilation of culture-rooted expressions. Such sources encompassed mostly vocabulary teaching books, on-line forums and chat lines, and web-site glossaries designed by ESL students experiencing the influence of cultural barriers in a cross-cultural communication.

- *Street Talk Book* (David Burke, 2001)
- *El Inglés Prohibido* (Glenn Darragh, 2001)
- “Interesting Things for ESL Students,” (Charles Kelly and Laurence Kelly, 1998)

The examination of these additional sources revealed really worthy culture-rooted expressions. Some of them were already covered in the previously reviewed dictionaries of slang and colloquialisms. However, some ESL students’ websites along with other written publications in forums shed some light on the broad world of cross-cultural communication and understanding.

**Organization of the proposed glossary:**

Before organizing the compilation of culture-rooted expressions selected in the research work, a painstakingly thorough review on how slang and colloquial dictionaries along with vocabulary teaching books and on-line glossaries organize their entries, was carried out so as to provide a pattern of organization to the proposed glossary. The dictionaries selected for further review take dissimilar approaches to the presentation slang and colloquial expressions. In the majority of them, non-academic culture-rooted expressions are organized according to the main words they contain: verbs, nouns, adjectives; as in the case of *The Random House Thesaurus of Slang* (1988). Other sources are arranged taken into account situational topics. For example, in the *Street Talk Book* (1992), slangy and colloquial expressions are shown through clearly contextualized examples presenting both likely contexts and situations where these lexical elements can be used. Some other reviewed sources merely arranged the entries by means of alphabetizing all the terms. In the cases of *NTC's Dictionary of American Slang and Colloquial Expressions* (2000), entries are not added randomly or in an arbitrary order, on the contrary, they are provided in a strictly alphabetized list ranging from A to Z. After an extensive review of dissimilar sources of different types, it was concluded that colloquial and slangy culture-rooted expressions can be organized in different ways. Since when interacting and engaging in an alien culture, words used in different contexts and situations are likely to be overlapped or simply utilized indifferently (for example, either in a coffee shop, or a restaurant a person can ask the waiter to give him a doggy bag), the author came to the conclusion that it was more advisable to
arrange the colloquial culture-rooted expressions in terms of alphabetical order. In order to prevent presenting a massive list of colloquial culture-rooted expressions likely to come up in non-academic settings to the VLIR-IUC-UO students, the present collection of these slangy and colloquial expressions was reduced to more manageable proportions, easily to use both in the classroom and during their self-study activity, keeping thus the glossary short and simple. In this way, VLIR-IUC-UO students will not feel either overwhelmed or unsettled by a long list of such lexical elements.

CONCLUSIONS:
Undoubtedly, Translation is embedded in the communicative process of a foreign language. It is a lively process in which the target language acquisition takes place. In the case of ESL students who work with Language1 and Language2 simultaneously, they must be aware of differences between the two languages so they are likely to avoid the mistakes caused by negative Language1 transfer.

The fluency and proficiency of VLIR-UIC-UO students in non-academic alien environments is acquired partly by using properly colloquial cultural-rooted expressions. As a result, they need a special attention on this part of the vocabulary. VLIR-UIC-UO students have a poor knowledge on colloquialisms and slangy terms used in different contexts in the country where, eventually, they will have to go to study in; however, they are willing to enhance their non-academic vocabulary. Since slang and colloquialism dictionaries and English textbooks may be likely to be quite overwhelming and unpractical, the glossary is provided. In this sense, not only it would be an effective teaching aid for the professors of VLIR-UIC-UO Program, but also a didactic material for independent study. Through the use of this tool and the systematic practice of colloquial and slangy culture-rooted expressions inside and outside the classroom, students can properly develop a communicative-translation competence and ensure a successful cross-cultural communication.

Bibliography: