MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
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A STUDY OF "UP"-"DOWN" IN ENGLISH
AND "LÊN" - "XUỐNG" IN VIETNAMESE: A
COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE

Subject area: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Code: 60.22.15

M.A. THESIS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
(SUMMARY)

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Đà Nẵng – 2011
The thesis has been completed at the College of Foreign Languages, Danang University.

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Examiner 1: ..............................................
Examiner 2: ..............................................

The thesis to be orally defended at Examining Committee.
Time:
Venue: Danang University

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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

Language is the most effective means of communication through which we convey our ideas, our thought and our desire. English is chosen as a main language to communicate with other people all over the world. However, it is not easy to learn and use English effectively and accurately, especially the meaning of prepositions.

The noticeable point that makes Vietnamese learners easily cope with difficulties to understand and translate is a group of prepositions “in- out, up -down” - a prepositional group of direction. It is not simple to understand these words by just relying on their literal meanings, their positions, or their functions. We together pay much attention to some examples below:

(1) I’m feeling up.
(2) I’m feeling down.
(3) Nề kinh tế nước ta đang tăng lên đáng kể
(4) Doanh thu của doanh nghiệp này giảm xuống nghiêm trọng

There is the fact that using prepositions in general, in particular using “up”-“down” in English (versus Vietnamese “lên” and “xuống”), is really a problem to Vietnamese learners. Trying the best to find the right answer for the difficulties so as to motivate teaching and learning effectively is one of the most necessities which Vietnamese teachers teaching English as well as linguistics take for granted. Investigating into “up” – “down” and “lên” – “xuống” in respect of cognitive processing and semantic structure under the light of conceptual metaphor is of great help for both linguistic study and language teaching methodology.
1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims of the study

- To investigate into the syntactic, semantic features of “up” - “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese relying on the conceptual metaphor

- To provide the Vietnamese learners of English with a better understanding about “up” – “down” and “lên” – “xuống” in the light of cognitive semantics

1.2.2. Objectives of the study

The study is intended to:

- Examine the syntactic and semantic features of “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese

- Explore the semantic features of “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese in the light of cognitive semantics

- Make a comparison to find the similarities and differences between “up” - “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese

- Give some suggestions for learning–teaching and translating prepositions “up” – “down” and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is to answer the following questions:

1. What are the syntactic features of “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese?

2. What are the semantic features of “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese?
3. What are the semantic features of “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese in the light of cognitive semantics?

4. What are the similarities and differences in syntactic, semantic characteristics of “up” - “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese?

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In this thesis we just focus on the meanings of “up” - “down” and “lên” – “xuống” which are understood by relying on the conceptual metaphor in the two languages in the hope of seeking the differences and similarities in “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese.

1.5. JUSTIFICATION

With the aim to describe on the syntactic, semantic features of “up” – “down”, the study provides Vietnamese learners of English with better mastering how to apply these prepositions in sensible ways, how to thoroughly understand, and how to translate exactly, effectively and naturally use in receptive and productive skills.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 3: Methodology of research

Chapter 4: Findings and discussions

Chapter 5: Conclusion, implications, limitation, suggestions for further study
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Prepositions have begun to attract the attention of many language researchers over the past few decades. As we know, Jackendoff [10] states “people seem never to have taken prepositions seriously. Downing and Locke [5] introduced 140 prepositions and discussed the prepositions and prepositional groups in details. In Vietnam, the issue of prepositions has been mentioned by Nguyễn Kim Thân [27], Nguyễn Đức Dân [21], and Đặng Ngọc Ngân [26].

Especially, Lakoff and Johnson [12] applied orientational metaphor which gave a concept a spatial orientation to explain a concept of “up –down, in –out, front –back, on –off, deep –shadow, central – peripheral”. The principles of cognitive linguistics are investigated by Vietnamese linguistics as Lý Toàn Thắng [28] and Nguyễn Lai [25] who also mentioned a group of directional words “up- down, in- out” and make an examination of the regularities of the groups of these words. In “Nghiên cứu giới thiệu định vị theo hướng ngữ dụng” [23] Trần Quang Hải mentioned pragmatic factors to express the spatial relationship and some solutions to overcome the difficulties in learning English.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Concepts of Prepositions in Natural Language
2.2.1.1 English Prepositions

In traditional studies, prepositions were usually defined and taken into consideration, but, it really seems not to be “treated” seriously. Jackendoff [10] blamed that people seem not to acknowledge that prepositions are really worth examining.

2.2.1.2. Vietnamese Prepositions

Nguyễn Kim Thân [27] affirms that “preposition” is a notional word (it belongs to group of relators) combining two words, two components that have a relationship of order. In addition, Diệp Quang Ban [19], Lý Toàn Thắng [28] and Nguyễn Lai [25] mentioned the words of movement in the relationship between building mechanism and original positions and the spatial meanings of the words “in –out, up –down”.

2.2.2. Orientational Prepositions and Classification

As mentioned in Cognitive English Grammar by Radden and Dirven [27] the spatial orientational prepositions are known as the prepositions: up –down, front –back, left –right, in –out, above –below. The English prepositions describing vertical and horizontal orientations are shown in the figure:

![Diagram of basic orientational prepositions of English](image)

*Figure 2.1. The basic orientational prepositions of English* (Adapted from Radden and Dirven [17])
2.2.3. Cognitive Linguistics and Semantics

Boers [1] claimed that cognitive linguistic theory considers a speaker's linguistic knowledge as an integrated part of cognition in general. In Vietnamese, Lý Toàn Thắng [28] affirms that cognitive linguistics carried out studying linguistics basing on the experiences and cognitions of human beings about the world objectively as well as their ways cognizing and conceptualizing everything in the world. [7], [12], [13] in English and [20], [25], [28]...in Vietnamese.

2.2.4. Conceptual Metaphors and Orientational Metaphors

In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain. CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (A) is CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (B), which is what is called a conceptual metaphor.

2.2.5. Mapping

A mapping is the systematic set of correspondences that exist between constituent elements of the source and the target domain. There are two main types of conceptual domains used in conceptual metaphors: Source domain is the conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions, while, target domain the conceptual domain that we try to understand.

2.2.6. Proto-scene for “Up” –“down”

We propose that the proto-scene for “up –down” is used to denote a relation in which the trajectory (TR) is directed towards the top of the landmark (LM). Thus, the LM is conceptually partitioned and construed as having a top and bottom. The TR is also conceptualized as being oriented; in this case, the asymmetry arises as a result of the direction in which the TR is directed.
3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The qualitative approach has been chosen to identify the linguistic characteristics of “up” – “down” in English and “lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese. Besides, a combination of the descriptive and contrastive methods were utilized to seek the qualitative information and to find out the similarities and differences of “up” – “down”, “lên” – “xuống”.

3.2. DATA COLLECTION

3.2.1. Sampling

The data used in the study were collected from English and Vietnamese short stories, poems, novels and newspapers where instances of prepositional phrases “up – down” and “lên” – “xuống” were used in literal meaning and in metaphorical contexts.

3.2.2. Procedures of data collection

3.3. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was also done for further contrastive information about the syntactic and semantic features of “up” – “down” and “lên” – “xuống” in the two languages. This was executed by juxtaposing cases of syntactic realizations of “up” – “down” and “lên” – “xuống” in different structures and semantic features both literal meanings and metaphorical meanings.

3.4. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY
Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF “UP” - “DOWN” IN ENGLISH AND “LÊN” - “XUONG” IN VIETNAMESE

4.1.1. Syntactic Features of “Up” - “down” in English

4.1.1.1. “Up” - “down” in Prepositional Phrases as Adverbial

“Up” –“down” are treated as an Adv because they have no function of its own as a typical preposition with a noun as object as in “rolled down the muddy road”. Similarly, “up” -“down” are mainly adverb of the verb in the sentence as an adverb answering where, when, how or to what degree about the verb without any object after it such as fall down, get up. Furthermore, “up” –“down” are also adverb or adjunct which has an adverbial function as in “up to now” as shown below.

S + V + Prep as Adverb + Ø

S +V + Prep+ prepositional phrase as Adverb

[Adv of Prep + Prep+ Adv] (adjunct), S + V
4.1.1.2. “Up” – “down” in Prepositional Phrases as Subject Complement

Subject complement is the one linked to a subject with the help of intensive verb or a linking verb and has a co-referential relation with the subject as in the sentence “you ‘re up stump”. It is able to generalize the case of the syntactic structure of “up” - “down” in prepositional phrases as Subject Complement as below.

\[
\begin{align*}
S + Be + &\text{Prep} + N \\
S + Be + &\text{Adj (with Prep)}
\end{align*}
\]

4.1.1.3. “Up”- “down” in Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs can be intransitive (not followed by a direct object) or transitive (followed by a direct object). Concretely, the phrasal verb “end up” constituted by the combination of the verb “end” and the particle “up” do not need to be followed by a noun. In other cases, the combination of the verb “lift” and Prep (particle) “up” to make the phrasal verb “lift up” with need the object after it as in “lifted up her voice”. Besides, when a phrasal verb has a direct object, the two parts of the verb can usually be separated as in “get my dancer up” or “lay me down” as examined in following structures.

\[
\begin{align*}
S +V + &\text{particle} \\
S +V + &\text{particle } + Od \\
S +V + &\text{Od } +\text{particle} \\
S +V + &\text{Pronoun } +\text{particle}
\end{align*}
\]
To be complicated, like many prepositions, “up” – “down” also combined with other words to make phrasal-prepositional verbs which consist of three parts: a base verb, an adverb particle and a preposition: V + particle + Prep as in “put up with” or “scoot on down”.

In general, prepositional verbs are defined as intransitive verbs that consist of a verb followed by a prepositional phrase. The prepositional phrase functions as a verb complement defined as a word or phrase that directly follows and completes the meaning of the verb. Meanwhile, phrasal verbs are defined as periphrastic intransitive or transitive verbs that consist of a verb followed by one or more prepositions functioning as a particle.

4.1.1.4. “Up” – “down” in Idiomatic Phrases

The prepositional phrases “up in arms” with the meaning of to plan for fight and “down in the dumps” using to speak about depression are mainly idiomatic expressions which cause some difficulties in understanding because of their figurative meanings.

4.1.2. Syntactic Functions of “Lên” – “xuống” in Vietnamese

4.1.2.1. “Lên” – “xuống” in Phrases as a Preposition

In Vietnamese, “lên”- “xuống” can be treated as prepositions following the main verbs and preceding a noun as direct object in these sentences as the verb “ngó” + prep “lên” and the verb “rót” + prep “xuống” create the meaning of direction for these verbs. This normally occurs in the following construction.
4.1.2.2. “Lên, xuống” in Phrases as an Adverbial

It is not as similar as the case of “lên”- “xuống” in phrases as a Prep, which we can not put an object after “lên” as an Adv. In “reo lên”, “lên” which has the function of an Adv can modify directly the verb “reo” without any object as shown in syntactical structure.

4.1.2.3. “Lên” – “xuống” in Phrases as a Transitive Verb or Intransitive Verb

“Lên” – “xuống” in “đến nơi”, “xuống đẩy” are intransitive verbs because they themselves stand individually without any objects, which are followed by an adverb denoting time, place…. Typically, it normally take the following syntactical structure:

4.1.2.4. “Lên”- “xuống” in Idiomatic Phrases

The meaning of the idiomatic phrases “lên voi xuống chó” or “lên bord xuống ruồng” is quite different from the meanings of each componential word in the idiomatic phrases.
4.2. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF “UP” – “DOWN” IN ENGLISH
AND “LÊN” – “XUỐNG” IN VIETNAMESE

4.2.1. Semantic Features of “up”

In general, preposition “up” expresses the following meanings.

*Table 4.1. The meanings of “up”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to or toward or situation at a higher point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toward a particular direction or in the interior of, as a region or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toward, or at a high or higher station, condition, or rank on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a good mood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2. Semantic Features of “down”

*Table 4.2. The meanings of “down”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DOWN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from a higher to a lower level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on a lower level than before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a good mood the depression or the low feeling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.3. Semantic Features of “lên”

*Table 4.3. The meanings of “lên”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LÊN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>move to a higher position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>move to a forward position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase of higher quality or quantity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.4. Semantic Features of “xuống”

*Table 4.4. The meanings of “xuống”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>move from higher to lower position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>move to lower place in the space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decrease of the quantity or quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF “UP” – “DOWN” IN PHRASES IN VIEW OF COGNITIVE SEMANTICS

4.3.1. “Up” – “down” denoting Psychological Senses

There are connections between our emotions, our feelings such as happiness, sadness, consciousness we can get the general metaphorical structure of the metaphorical images “happy is up, sad is down”, “conscious is up, unconscious is down” or “health and life are up, sickness and death are down”. We can analyse “happy is up, sad is down” like the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE DOMAIN</th>
<th>TARGET DOMAIN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>HAPPY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOWN</td>
<td>SAD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The psychology is up when the happiness, health or consciousness are up, however, it can be down when they are down. The senses can be symbolized in table 4.5 below.

*Table 4.5 “Up” and “down” denoting Psychological Senses*
### Psychological Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mood</th>
<th>Feel up, cheer up, lighten up ≈ X becomes more cheerful, happier</th>
<th>Feel down, weigh down ≈ X is depressed, in low spirits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health, life</td>
<td>Build up ≈ X develops or increases in stages or by degrees</td>
<td>Be down, drop down, put down ≈ X has a disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consciousness/unconsciousness</td>
<td>Get up, wake up ≈ X becomes awake or conscious</td>
<td>Lie down ≈ X places oneself at rest in a flat, horizontal, or recumbent position; in unconscious mood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.3.2. “Up” – “down” denoting Quantity Senses

The experiential basis of the very common “more is up, less is down” which is also metaphorical image can be understood by using the “up, down schema” indicating the choice of VERTICALITY as the source domain for the structuring of the target domain QUANTITY. The senses can be symbolized in table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6. “Up” and “down” denoting Quantity Senses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity Categories</th>
<th>Up denoting upwards movement with positive change</th>
<th>Down denoting downwards movement with negative change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More/Less Senses</td>
<td>Take up, put up, go up, pump up ≈ X increases the quantity</td>
<td>Slow down, quiet down, go down, pipe down ≈ X decreases the quantity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement/Worse</td>
<td>Dig up, dress up, touch up ≈ X improves or increases greater</td>
<td>Be down, break down ≈ X worsen or decreases quantity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.3. “Up” - “down” denoting Quality Senses

The concepts, such as VERTICALITY, serve as the source domain for target domains, such as goodness, badness, virtue or depravity as:

\[
\text{SOURCE DOMAIN} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{TARGET DOMAIN}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{UP} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{GOOD/ VIRTUE} \\
\text{DOWN} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{BAD/ DEPR AVITY}
\end{align*}
\]

The metaphorical image “good is up”, “virtue is up”, together with a metaphor that we discuss not only the good quality of people but also the good quality of things is very popular in daily language. On contrary, we discuss the bad quality of people or things by depending on the conceptual metaphor “bad is down”, “depravity is down as in 4.7.

Table 4.7. “Up” and “down” denoting Quality senses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Categories</th>
<th>Up denoting upwards movement with positive change</th>
<th>Down denoting downwards movement with negative change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good/ Bad Sense</td>
<td>Fix up, live up, look up ( \approx X ) is more well – being, prosperous in the society</td>
<td>Business down ( \approx X ) is less well – being, prosperous in the society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtue/ Depravity Senses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4. “Up” – “down” denoting Social Senses
The notion “having control of force, being subject to control of force” is set by the social criteria and people’s criteria. When we are at the height of the power in the society, it means that we have responsibility for controlling works or the other people. However, we are also controlled when we are at the lower position in the society as understood by applying the up, down scheme:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{SOURCE DOMAIN} & \rightarrow \text{TARGET DOMAIN} \\
\text{UP} & \rightarrow \text{HIGH STATUS, HAVING CONTROL OF FORCE} \\
\text{DOWN} & \rightarrow \text{LOW STATUS, BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL OF FORCE}
\end{align*}
\]

In short, we suggest that due to an independently motivated experiential association between control and being vertically elevated. The senses can be symbolized in the table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8. “Up” and “down” denoting Social Senses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Senses</th>
<th>Quality Categories</th>
<th>Up denoting upwards movement with positive change</th>
<th>Down denoting downwards movement with negative change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High / low status</td>
<td>Climb up ( \approx ) X has higher power in social hierarchy</td>
<td>Step down, bring down ( \approx ) X has lower power in social hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having control of force / being subject to control of force</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF “LÊN” – “XUỐNG” IN VIETNAMESE IN VIEW OF THE COGNITIVE SEMANTICS

4.4.1. “Lên” – “xuống” denoting Senses of Status

The word “lên” implies the movement to the high space, and the word “xuống” is understood conversely. Therefore, “lên” – “xuống” can be
used to denote the movement or change from the low status to the higher status in the society. The good, high status/ bad, low status are the target domains which are understood from the source domains “lên” – “xuông”.

4.4.2. “Lên” – “xuông” denoting Capability Senses

“Lên” – “xuông” not only indicate the meanings of movement but also figuratively denote the meanings of capability. We easily find out other phrases denoting the capability senses such as: giới lên, học lên bàn, học xuống bàn ……

4.4.3. “Lên” – “xuông” denoting Appearance Senses

With the expression, “lên” indicates the positive value, which helps us to know: “đẹp lên: become prettier, make the appearance more beautiful”, meanwhile, “xuông sắc” may imply “look less pretty or make the appearance less beautiful” due to “xuông” indicates the negative value. It is common to see many other phrases denoting the appearance senses: lên cân, béo lên, xuống cân……

4.4.4. “Lên” – “xuông” denoting Senses of Mood

Together with “up” – “down”, “lên” is a metaphor for happiness, joyful (upbeat, things are looking up, on the upside) while “xuông” is a metaphor for sadness, disappointment (he’s looking down, there was a downturn, and she’s down about her job). It is popular to see other phrases to denote this factor such as phân khởi lên, phân chán lên, suy sụp xuống…. …

4.4.5. “Lên” – “xuông” denoting Social - cultural Senses

The phrases “lên rìng”, “xuông bién” are set by the physical space: jungle is higher place which is orented “lên” and river or sea is lower place which has the downward orientation. Meanwhile, “lên tính”,
“xuống xà, xuống huyện” are also an orientation in space which is considered as highly appropriated positions in the society (as in the social hierarchy), therefore, “lên tinh” may imply that he has a higher position in a society due to the conceptual metaphor in social –cultural space. Moreover, the use of “lên” –“xuống” denoting the concepts “lên nhà trên”, “xuống bếp”, “xuống nhà dưới” which are known as “nhà trên” has the orientation of a better, more polite, luxurious place than “nhà dưới”, therefore, when we want to emphasize a better, higher position, “lên” is used to to infer the meaning and “xuống” infers the a worse, lower one. To some extent, to orient the movement of footballers in the ground in which the footballers of the home team move to the half of the ground of the host team, we use “lên bóng”, “đón lên”, meanwhile, the ball passes the ground of the home team, “xuống biên”, “thoát xuống” are used to show the movement of the ball.

4.4.6. “Lên” – “xuống” denoting Anthropocentric Senses

The people are treated as cognitive map in space because their verticality is the same the verticality of the earth, therefore, the concept “lên” has the orientation of “head” and “xuống” has the orientation of “foot”. When orienting the directions (North, South, East, and West) in the world, we also choose some different ways.

The senses of “lên” –“xuống” in Vietnamese in view of cognitive semantics can be symbolized in the table 4.9 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>“Lên” denoting upwards movement with positive change</th>
<th>“Xuống” denoting downwards movement with negative change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 4.9. “Lên” and “xuống” denoting Categories
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senses of Status</th>
<th>Lên voi ≈ X moves up the elephant (in the expression “lên voi xuống chó”), khá lên ≈ X gets wealthier nóng lên ≈ X posits higher status</th>
<th>Xuống chó ≈ X moves down the dog áp xuống ≈ X is more difficult vắng xuống, đấy xuống ≈ X posit lower status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capability Senses</td>
<td>Lên chân ≈ X improves competence/ expertise, Học lên hân, khá lên ≈ X improves in study</td>
<td>Xuống sức ≈ X diminishes competence/ expertise Học xuống hân, xuống hạng ≈ X worsens in study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance Senses</td>
<td>Đẹp lên ≈ X becomes prettier, lên cân, béo lên ≈ X gains weigh</td>
<td>Xuống sắc ≈ X looks less pretty), xuống cân ≈ X loses weigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses of Mood</td>
<td>Vui lên, cười lên ≈ X becomes happier Tức lên ≈ X gets angry, đổ lên ≈ X is hot –temper</td>
<td>Xiju xuống, sầm xuống ≈ X becomes sorrowful Nén giần xuống ≈ X restrains one’s anger, xuống nước, xuống tay, lắng xuống ≈ X gets less angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-cultural Senses</td>
<td>Lên bóng, dön lên≈ X moves the ball up Lên nhà trên ≈ X goes up the main room (living room) Lên chiều Trên, lên tinh ≈ X posits a more respected place</td>
<td>Xuống biên, thoát xuống ≈ X moves the ball down Xuống nhà dưới ≈ X goes down the outhouse (kitchen) Xuống chiều dưới, xuống huyện ≈ X posits a less respected place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropocentric Senses</td>
<td>Lên trên đầu ≈ X moves up the head Lên Hà Nội ≈ X goes up Hà Nội (psychologically)</td>
<td>Xuống dưới chân ≈ X moves up the foot Xuống Hà Nội ≈ X goes up Hà Nội (psychologically)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5. “UP” – “DOWN” DENOTING NEGATIVE MEANINGS IN ENGLISH (VERSUS “LÊN” – “XUỐNG” IN VIETNAMESE)

It is normal to know that “up” (lên) codes the positive meanings of the phrase in which physical elevation is associated with more quantity, higher status…. meanwhile, we experience positions described by “down” (xuống) as being negative meanings precisely because they correlate with less quantity, lower status…. However, we find really exciting to find out a reverse process of “up” (lên) denoting negative meanings such as “hard up” and “fed up with” and “down” (xuống) denoting positive meanings such as calm down, wash down, lay down…. In Vietnamese, the use of “lên” denoting the negative meaning and “xuống” expressing the positive meaning is rather plentiful as found in “dâng lên”, “đau nhói lên”, “Ứ lên”, “lên” expresses the negative meaning and “xuống” in “lắng xuống” denoting the positive meaning.

4.6. DISCUSSION

4.6.1. Similarities

Both groups of words have the functions of adverbial, preposition, idiom, and verb in sentences. When they are combined with verbs, they are transitive or intransitive verb phrases.

These prepositions and their adverbial particles such as “up” – “down” and “lên” – “xuống” are mapped into many concepts such as psychology, status, mood, society, etc …. in different ways in English as well as in Vietnamese as mentioned in the table 4.12.
Table 4.12. The Similarities of the Categories of “Up” –“down” and “Lên” –“xuống”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Up</th>
<th>Lên</th>
<th>Down</th>
<th>Xuống</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senses of Happiness/</td>
<td>Feel up,</td>
<td>Vui lên, suông lên,</td>
<td>Feel down</td>
<td>Xiju xuống, sảm xuống</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>Lighten up, Cheer up</td>
<td>phán chan lên</td>
<td>Weigh down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses of Intensity/</td>
<td>Build up</td>
<td>Khoe lên, mạnh lên</td>
<td>Drop down</td>
<td>Yếu xuống, đau xuống</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses of More/Less</td>
<td>Take up,</td>
<td>Tăng lên, lên tiếng</td>
<td>Slow down, Go down,</td>
<td>Giảm xuống</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Put up, Pump up,</td>
<td></td>
<td>Come down, Pipe down,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go up, Speak up</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put down, Turn down,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiet down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses of Improvement</td>
<td>Dig up,</td>
<td>Khá lên, Giỏi lên(known</td>
<td>Be down</td>
<td>Xưởng hạng, Xưởng sắc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/Worse</td>
<td>Dress up, Make up</td>
<td>ledge) Đẹp lên, Xinh lên</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Touch up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses of Status</td>
<td>Climb up</td>
<td>Lên chức</td>
<td>Step down</td>
<td>Xưởng chức</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nóng lên</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vằng xuống</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6.2. Differences

Firstly, although “up” –“down” in English have the function as Subject Complement in a sentence, “lên” –“xuống” in Vietnamese are not able to follow Subject to modify it as Subject Complement.

Secondly, in phrasal verbs, when verbs are followed by “up” –“down” and one or more than one prepositions, they are usually called phrasal - prepositional verbs, idiomatic phrases with different meanings of each word such as: put up with, fed up with, come down with. However, in Vietnamese, when “lên” –“xuống” which combine with other words can
be either the stems (the verbs) or complements in the verb phrases such as: *chạy xuống đác* (xuống: complement (preposition)), *xuống đác* (xuống: stem (verb)).

Thirdly, in English “up” –“down” only following the verbs are called either prepositions or spatical particles such as *go up* not *up go*, yet, in Vietnamese despite the fact that “lên” –“xuống” can converse the order in the phrase such as *di lên, lên di*, the syntactic feature and the semantic feature differently change.

Semantically, we find that using “up” –“down” in English to infer the completion /depletion senses show the meaning “the increase is complete / the decrease is finished”. However, this point can not be discovered in using “lên” –“xuống” to express this sense.

Moreover, we are not able to omit “up –down” in the phrases which are used to code the upward / downward movements as well as the positive / negative meanings. Meanwhile, “lên” –“xuống” can be omitted in the phrases without changing the meaning of the phrases, but we can understand the upward / downward movements as well as the positive / negative meanings.

Vietnamese have profound knowledge to orient the upward / downward movement in the football ground with using the concept “lên” –“xuống” such as *lên bóng, đòn lên, xuống biên*…. Meanwhile, we find it really uncommon for English to use the concept “up” –“down” to do this.

In the verb phrase “béo lên”, “lên” has the function of improving the body. Together with this sense, “béo lên” in Vietnamese can translate into English “gain weight” without “up” in this phrase.
The last thing we would like to mention is that in Vietnamese, the anthropocentricity is highly appreciated in directing the space “lên” – “xuống.”

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

Syntactically, “up” –“down” in English and “lên” –“xuống” in Vietnamese have the functions as prepositions and as adverbial or verbs in the phrases. “Up” “-down” were also considered as particles in the phrasal verbs in English and “lên” –“xuống” could play the roles of the main verbs in the phrasal verbs. Moreover, the distinctions in syntactic features show that “up” –“down” could modify the subject in the sentence, yet, we found no evidence for the modification of “lên” –“xuống” for the subject in Vietnamese.

In the light of semantic features, it is common for “up” –“lên” to orient the upward movement as well as code the positive meaning in the sense of cognitive semantics. Conversely, “down” –“xuống” were used to direct the downward movement and the negative meaning. In some cases, “up” –“lên” could imply the negative value while the positive value was coded by “down –xuống”.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

The analysis of the semantics of “up” –“down” in English and “lên” –“xuống” in Vietnamese may be useful for teachers, learners and translators in which they can orient themselves in language learning, teaching and translating.
Despite social-cultural differences, in both English and Vietnamese happiness and sadness, correlate physically with up-down orientation. In order to facilitate the comprehension of the aforementioned idiomatic expressions, the teacher should lead the students to the discovery of the conceptual metaphors *happiness is up/sadness is down*, high status is up/low status is down… coding such figurative usages.

In a pedagogical context, it may be useful to draw learners' attention to those aspects of a preposition's spatial sense that are especially relevant for its metaphorization processes.

**5.3. LIMITATION**

The terms used in this study are not uniform and precise enough for readers to follow easily. Then, different terms used by Vietnamese linguists are really difficult to offer an equivalent in English because there are not one-to-one correspondence between English and Vietnamese terms. Therefore, we have great difficulty in dealing with Vietnamese terminology.

**5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

We would like to propose these aspects of cognitive semantics involving prepositions of movement:

- A study of the pragmatic features of "up"-"down" in English and "lên" - "xuống" in Vietnamese
- A study of "front"-"back" in English and "trước " - "sau" in Vietnamese in the light of cognitive semantics perspective