

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
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**VÕ THỊ MỸ PHƯƠNG**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO  
WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS DENOTING  
THE CONCEPT OF “TRUTHFULNESS”  
IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

**Field : THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
Code : 60.22.15**

**MASTER THESIS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
(A SUMMARY)**

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**Danang, 2011**

The study has been completed at  
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The thesis was defended to the Examining Committee at  
University of Danang

Time : September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Venue: Quang Trung University

The thesis is accessible for the purpose of reference at:

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. RATIONALE

Language is universally acknowledged as the most powerful and vital means of communication. However, to get the best communication effectiveness, communicators are required an ability of using language during the process of communication. There is no doubt to say that the matter of choosing words in communication, in both English and Vietnamese, becomes more and more important, especially, when we would like to mention sensitive problems about which we usually talk in our daily life communication like one's personality in general and a person's quality of being truthful in particular. As a result, "*An Investigation into Words and Expressions Denoting the Concept of "Truthfulness" in English and Vietnamese*" is hoped to be of some theoretical and practical value for both linguistic study and language teaching methodology.

### 1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 1.2.1. Aims

This thesis aims to study the syntactic and semantic features of English and Vietnamese words and expressions denoting the concept of "truthfulness" (WsEsT). It also finds out and explains the similarities and differences between the two languages so as to have a new look at the diversity in the meanings of WsEsT in both languages.

#### 1.2.2. Objectives

- Listing and classifying English and Vietnamese WsEsT

- Investigating the syntactic and semantic characteristics of most commonly used English and Vietnamese WsEsT
- Finding out and explaining the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese WsEsT
- Suggesting some ideas for teaching, learning and translating English and Vietnamese WsEsT

### 1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Because of the limitation of time and the ability of our own, in this thesis we just mainly focus on the syntactic and semantic features of some commonly used adjectives and fixed adjective phrases denoting the concept of "truthfulness" (AsFAPsT) in people's personalities in English and Vietnamese. Moreover, the relevant data are mainly taken from the 24 English and Vietnamese stories and novels.

### 1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the syntactic and semantic features of English and Vietnamese WsEsT?
2. What are the main similarities and differences of the syntactic and semantic features between English and Vietnamese WsEsT?
3. What are the implications for teaching, learning and translation of English and Vietnamese WsEsT?

### 1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

**CHAPTER 2**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**  
**AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

**2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Up to now, the problem of WsEsT is, as far as we know, just mentioned in some dictionaries.

In English, Hornby [6] deals with words and expressions like other dictionary editors and the meanings of words are made easier to understand with examples illustrated at the same time. Especially, the dictionary by Sinclair [19] is a quite good one which gives a wide range of words with clear explanations of their meanings as well as with a lot of synonyms and antonyms.

In Vietnamese, Hoàng Phê [40] makes some important contribution to provide the learners with a variety of everyday Vietnamese words and expressions containing a lot of WsEsT. Sometimes in the book, examples are given to make the meanings of words clearer. Nguyễn Như Ý [48] also shares the same way of edition but with much more words and expressions which are investigated.

However, with a careful analysis of the works mentioned, it is obvious that the linguists chiefly focus on listing out and explaining a number of synonyms and antonyms or finding out the equivalents of WsEsT as well as other words and expressions; whereas, the semantic and syntactic aspects of English and Vietnamese WsEsT are still a virgin land. Therefore, a study on this field is hoped to bring about some contribution both to the theory and

the appropriate use of English and Vietnamese WsEsT and to the translation work as well.

**2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

**2.2.1. Sense Relations**

**2.2.1.1. Semantic Fields**

“A semantic field is a set of interrelated senses based on a conceptual field or spectrum.” [5, p.125]

“Words can be grouped either thematically or ideographically. [5, p.128]

**2.2.1.2. Synonyms**

“Synonyms are actually words of the same parts of speech which have similar meaning, but not identical meanings. They may share a similar denotational or connotational meaning. They can differ from each another in terms of denotation and connotation”. [5]

**2.2.1.3. Antonyms**

“Words that are opposite in meanings are called antonyms. It is interesting to note that the basic property of two words that are antonyms is that they share all but *one* semantic property.” [5, p.81]

**2.2.2. Metaphor**

“Metaphor is the transference of meaning (name) from one object to another based on similarity between these two objects, i.e. we call one object by the name of another because we compare these objects and find some common features between them.” [5, p.105]

**2.2.3. Language and Culture**

**2.2.3.1. Concept of Culture**

Nguyễn Quang [15, p.3] states that culture is as “a shared background (e.g. national, ethic, religion) resulting from a common language and communication style, customs, beliefs, attitudes and value.”

### 2.2.3.2. *The Relation of Culture and Language*

Language and culture are closely integrated and interdependent during their whole development processes.

### 2.2.4. **English and Vietnamese Adjectives**

#### 2.2.4.1. *Characteristics of Adjectives in English*

##### a. *Syntactic Functions of Adjectives in English*

According to Quirk and Greenbaum [16, p.115], the major syntactic functions of adjectives are *attributive* and *predicative*.

Adjectives can sometimes be *postpositive*, i.e. they can sometimes follow the item they modify.

##### b. *Syntactic Sub-classification of Adjectives in English*

According to Quirk and Greenbaum [16, p.121], adjectives can be subclassified into 3 groups according to their syntactic roles:

- Attributive only
- Predicative only
- Both attributive and predicative

##### c. *Semantic Sub-classification of Adjectives in English*

According to Quirk and Greenbaum [16, p.124], adjectives are subclassified into:

- Stative/ dynamic
- Gradable/ non-gradable

- Inherent/ non-inherent

### 2.2.4.2. *Characteristics of Adjectives in Vietnamese*

#### a. *Syntactic Functions of Adjectives in Vietnamese*

According to Diep Quang Ban [27], Vietnamese adjectives often function as elements in the sentence. They can:

- follow some kinds of adverbs such as: adverbs of time, adverbs of identity and similarity, adverbs of gradability, adverbs of polarity, adverbs of usuality.

- precede some adverbs: *lắm, quá, cực kì, tuyệt, rồi*.

- go before adverbs of direction: *ra, lên, đi, lại*.

Adjectives of quantity can combine with nouns which function as complement: *nhiều, lắm, ít, đông, đầy, vắng, thưa*.

Adjectives of measurement can come before measurement complement.

#### b. *Classification of Adjectives in Vietnamese*

Diep Quang Ban [27] divides Vietnamese adjectives into two classes, *adjectives of quality* and *adjectives of relation* basing on the quality and relation denoted by the adjectives. Besides, basing on gradability, he also divides them into two groups: *gradable* and *non-gradable adjectives*.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### 3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative, quantitative analysis and description are the main approaches adopted in this study.

Samples are collected, selected and categorized into groups for the analysis of syntactic features and semantic features.

The descriptive and contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese WsEsT is conducted to find out the similarities and differences in syntactic and semantic features.

The data collected are quantitatively analyzed to draw the conclusion of the frequency of WsEsT.

### **3.2. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

In order to gain success in investigating WsEsT in English and Vietnamese, we follow the procedures such as collecting, classifying, comparing and analyzing the data.

- The relevant documents, books, theses and researches are selected and read as much as possible. Then from those, we select the most suitable ones for the basic theoretical background.

- We find out the syntactic and semantic features of WsEsT by using reliable and convincing examples.

- We point out the frequency of those words and expressions through summaries in tables.

- After that, the data are qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed to find out the similarities and differences of WsEsT in English and Vietnamese.

- After the conclusion, we suggest some solutions for teaching, learning and translating English and Vietnamese WsEsT. Besides, the limitations which will show the path for the following researchers are also mentioned in the thesis. Certainly, we find it necessary to make some suggestions for further studies.

### **3.3. DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION AND SAMPLES**

#### **3.3.1. Description of Population**

There is a wide range of population who can benefit from the results of this study such as: native English and Vietnamese speakers; learners of English and Vietnamese as foreign languages; translators, linguists and researchers interested in working with words and expressions in general and WsEsT in particular.

#### **3.3.2. Description of Samples**

The work is carried out with 1505 samples of English and Vietnamese WsEsT which are mainly taken from published novels and stories and from the internet as well.

### **3.4. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **3.4.1. Data Collection**

Firstly, we look for and select a large number of WsEsT from the dictionaries to make sure that we can avoid missing some of them when finding their occurrence in the literature works we read.

Secondly, the collection of books and related materials on grammar, syntax, semantics, culture is done to hold up the chapter 2.

#### **3.4.2. Data Analysis**

After finishing the collection of data from both languages, we start working with them by analyzing and classifying them in order to meet the need of analysis.

Syntactically, the analysis and classification are mainly based on the formations and the functions of adjectives and adjective fixed phrases as attributive or predicative. Moreover, we also try to discover some special characteristics of these words and expressions so that we can find out the similarities and differences in syntactic features of WsEsT.

Semantically, the classification is carried out on the basis of the degrees of the quality of being truthful expressed by WsEsT in both languages. The similarities and differences in semantic features of WsEsT in English and Vietnamese are also pointed out.

From the results of the analysis, we also suggest some effective ways for language users in teaching and learning WsEsT.

### 3.5. INSTRUMENTS FOR ANALYSIS

By observing and investigating the occurrence of WsEsT in some literature works, we collect, synthesize, analyze and classify them qualitatively. Then the description method is used to explore their syntactic and semantic features. Tables are the instruments for contrastive analysis, generalization, systematization and comparison.

### 3.6. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In terms of reliability, the data for this study, as mentioned above, is mainly collected from dictionaries, websites and examples are extracted from novels and stories in both languages in literary works. In addition, any information quoted in this study is exactly the same as the original materials with clear references of its author(s), the name of publishers, the time and place of publication as well as the page numbers where the information is extracted. Therefore, both the data and the background for the study are reliable.

In terms of validity, this study meets all required criteria. In order to make the corpus of the study, all English and Vietnamese WsEsT are drawn from literature works, dictionaries and other sources. And the number of WsEsT analyzed in this study is not a small number. Therefore, they are truly representative of population. Moreover, the collected WsEsT are always compared with the results from the theoretical background to ensure the quality of the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF WsEsT IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

##### 4.1.1. Syntactic Features of AsFAPsT in English

##### 4.1.1.1. Formations of AsT in English

According to Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaun [16], words in English may also be formed in different ways such as *affixation, conversion, or compounding*. So, the English adjectives denoting the concept of truthfulness (EAsT) found in the corpus are classified as primitive, affixing, and compounding ones.

*Table 4.1 Formations of AsT in English*

Adjectives			
Singles	Derivatives		Compounds
	Prefixing	Suffixing	
bluff, blunt, candid, cunning, devious, direct, fair, false, frank, genuine, honest, just, naïve, open,	dishonest, insincere, unaffected, unfair, unjust	affected, artful, artificial, artless, crafty, deceitful, designing, fraudulent, guileless, hypocritical, lying, mischievous,	forthright, open-hearted, outspoken, straightforward, true-hearted, underhand, upright

sincere, sly, wily		scheming, shifty, tricky, truthful	
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#### 4.1.1.2. Syntactic Functions and Positions of AsFAPsT in English

##### a. Syntactic Functions of AsFAPsT in English

Also according to Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum [16, p.115], the major syntactic functions of adjectives are attributive and predicative.

##### Table 4.2 Syntactic Functions of AsFAPsT in English

(i: attributive; ii: predicative; iii: both)

Adjectives	i	ii	iii
artificial, designing, devious, open-hearted, true-hearted, underhand, wily, man-to-man	+	-	-
insincere, unfair, above board, as straight as an arrow, as straight as a die, as good as one's word, too clever by half, as slippery as an eel	-	+	-
affected, artful, artless, bluff, blunt, candid, crafty, cunning, deceitful, direct, dishonest, fair, false, forthright, frank, fraudulent, genuine, guileless, honest, hypocritical, just, lying, mischievous, naïve, open, outspoken, scheming, shifty, sincere, sly, straightforward, tricky, truthful, unaffected, unjust, upright	-	-	+

##### b. Positions of AsT in English

Basing on John Eastwood's point of view [3] and also according to McIntosh [13], we find that EAsT in the corpus can appear at some positions as follows:

- [1] Adj + noun
- [2] Linking V (be/ seem/ look...) + adj
- [3] Adv of degree + adj
- [4] Adj + *enough* (adv)
- [5] Adj + prep phrase
- [6] Question words (How/ What...) + adj
- [7] Indefinite pronoun (ending in *-body, -one, -thing, -where*) + adj

#### 4.1.2. Syntactic Features of AsFAPsT in Vietnamese

##### 4.1.2.1. Formations of AsT in Vietnamese

According to Đỗ Hữu Châu [31], the main ways to create new words in Vietnamese are *compounding, reduplicating* and *conversion*. So AsT in Vietnamese can be primitives, derivatives, compounds or reduplicative words.

##### Table 4.3 Formations of AsT in Vietnamese

(i: single; ii: derivative; iii: compound; iv: reduplicative word)

Adjectives	i	ii	iii	iv
đều, gian, ngay, thẳng, thật, xảo	+	-	-	-
sở khanh	-	+	-	-
ba hoa, bịp bợm, cáo già, chân chất, chân thành, chân thật, chân tình, chất phác, chí tình, chó đũa, công minh, cục mịch, cương trực, dối trá, đều cáng, đều giả, giả dối, giả tạo, giả trá, gian ác, gian dối, gian hùng, gian manh, gian tà, gian xảo, giáo hoạt, lấu cá, lọc lừa, ma mãnh, ngay thẳng, quái quỷ, quỷ quyết, ranh ma, ranh mãnh, sai ngoa, sòng phẳng, thành khẩn, thành tâm, thành thật, thẳng thắn, thẳng thừng, thẳng tính, thật bụng, thật lòng, thật tâm, thật tình, thủ	-	-	+	-

đoạn, tinh ma, tinh quái, tinh ranh, tráo trở, trung hậu, trung thực, xảo quyệt, xảo trá, xỏ lá				
láu lỉnh, lém lỉnh, thật thà	-	-	-	+

#### 4.1.2.2. Syntactic Functions and Positions of AsFAPsT in Vietnamese

##### a. Syntactic Functions of AsFAPsT in Vietnamese

Vietnamese AsT can be also either attributive or predicative.

**Table 4.4 Syntactic Functions of AsFAPsT in Vietnamese**

(i: attributive; ii: predicative; iii: both)

Adjectives	i	ii	iii
ba hoa, bịp bợm, cáo già, chân chất, cương trực, giả tạo, gian ác, gian tà, thành khẩn, xảo, xỏ lá, ba que xỏ lá, già trái non hột	+	-	-
chí tình, công minh, cục mịch, giả trá, gian dối, gian manh, láu lỉnh, ngay, sai ngoa, thẳng tính, thật, thật bụng, thật tình, tinh ranh, thẳng mực tàu, thẳng (như) ruột ngựa, thật (thà) như đếm, ngang bằng sỏ ngay, ba hoa chích chòe, ba hoa thiên địa, ba hoa thiên tướng, quang minh chính đại, tiền hậu bất nhất, xanh vỏ đỏ lòng, lấu cá lấu tôm	-	+	-
chân thành, chân thật, chân tình, chất phác, chó đều, dối trá, đều, đều cáng, đều giả, giả dối, gian, gian hùng, gian xảo, giáo hoạt, lấu cá, lém lỉnh, lọc lừa, ma mãnh, ngay thẳng, quái quỷ, quỷ quyệt, ranh ma, ranh mãnh, sòng phẳng, sỏ khanh, thành tâm, thành thật, thẳng, thẳng thắn, thẳng thừng, thật lòng, thật thà, thật tâm, thủ đoạn, tinh ma, tinh quái, tráo trở, trung hậu, trung thực, xảo quyệt, xảo trá, chân chỉ hạt bột	-	-	+

##### b. Positions of AsT in Vietnamese

The positions of Vietnamese adjectives denoting the concept of “truthfulness” (VAsT) in the thesis are investigated basing on Diệp Quang Ban’s point of view. [27], [28]

- [1] Noun (phrase) + adj
- [2] Adverb of time/ identity and similarity/degree/ polarity/ frequency/modality/indicating the changes in characteristics+adj
- [3] Adj + adv of degree (*quá, lắm*)/ the adv *rồi*
- [4] Verb + adj
- [5] Adj + verb

#### 4.1.3. Similarities and Differences in Syntactic Features of AsFAPsT in English and Vietnamese

##### 4.1.3.1. Similarities

• Both English and Vietnamese AsT are considered to be either attributive or predicative. And the adjectives which can be both attributive and predicative in the corpus occupy the greatest number in two languages. Besides, most of fixed adjective phrases function as predicates.

• Most of the AsT in both English and Vietnamese are gradable ones, so they are premodified by adverbs of degree such as *very, extremely, absolutely, ...rất, quá*.

##### 4.1.3.2. Differences

• In term of word formation, Vietnamese experiences no “morphological changes”. Most of the adjectives appearing in the corpus are compounds. Whereas, more than half the number of AsT in the corpus are derivatives which are formed by adding an affix to the root word. Besides, no English reduplicative adjective is found in the corpus.

• When talking about the positions of AsT, we can see some differences as the following:

- Vietnamese adjectives never stand in front of nouns while English ones always appear before nouns.

- Besides coming after an adverb of degree, VAsT also occur before them, but this case is not right for adjectives in English.

- Except for linking verbs, EAsT never go with an ordinary verb; whereas, Vietnamese ones can appear before or after a verb to modify it.

**4.2. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF WsEsT IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

**4.2.1. Semantic Features of AsFAPsT in English**

Basing on the theory of semantic fields, we divide the adjectives and fixed adjective phrases denoting the concept of “truthfulness” (AsFAPsT) in the corpus into five groups thematically according to different levels of “the quality of being truthful”.

**Table 4.6 Semantic Fields of AsFAPsT in English**

(*i*: the level of being very truthful; *ii*: the level of being averagely truthful; *iii*: the level of being a little untruthful; *iv*: the level of being averagely untruthful; *v*: the level of being very untruthful)

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>
<i>i</i>	bluff, forthright, open-hearted, outspoken, sincere, as straight as an arrow, as straight as a die
<i>ii</i>	artless, blunt, candid, direct, fair, frank, genuine, guileless, honest, just, naïve, open, straightforward, truthful, unaffected, upright, above board, man-to-man, as good as one’s word
<i>iii</i>	affected, mischievous, shifty, tricky, too clever by half

<i>iv</i>	artificial, deceitful, devious, dishonest, false, fraudulent, hypocritical, insincere, lying, scheming, underhand, unfair, unjust, as slippery as an eel
<i>v</i>	artful, crafty, cunning, designing, sly, wily

**4.2.1.1. Semantic Features of English AsFAPsT in the 1<sup>st</sup> Lexical Set**

The first lexical set is of the ones which have the same feature of “**very truthful**”. They are *bluff, forthright, open-hearted, outspoken, sincere, as straight as an arrow, as straight as a die*.

(4.52) *Though a broker by profession, he was **bluff**, military, and hearty.* [57, p.148]

**4.2.1.2. Semantic Features of English AsFAPsT in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lexical Set**

The second lexical set includes *artless, blunt, candid, direct, fair, frank, genuine, guileless, honest, just, naïve, open, straightforward, truthful, unaffected, upright, above board, man-to-man, as good as one’s word* that share the feature of “**averagely truthful**”.

(4.60) *Ginger Ted was a **blunt** man. He had no hesitation in saying what we should all like to when we receive unwelcome invitations.* [57, p.244]

**4.2.1.3. Semantic Features of English AsFAPsT in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lexical Set**

*Affected, mischievous, shifty, tricky* and *too clever by half* are put into the third lexical set in which the feature of “**a little untruthful**” is shared.

(4.94) *His many admirers describe him as clever, his enemies as **too clever by half**.* [19]

#### 4.2.1.4. Semantic Features of English AsFAPsT in the 4<sup>th</sup>

##### Lexical Set

The fourth lexical set consists of such adjectives and fixed adjective phrases as *artificial, deceitful, deceptive, devious, dishonest, false, fraudulent, hypocritical, insincere, lying, scheming, underhand, unfair, unjust, as slippery as an eel*. And they share the same feature of “**averagely untruthful**”.

(4.96) “I am not **deceitful**: if I were, I should say I loved you; but I declare I do not love you.” [54, p.62]

#### 4.2.1.5. Semantic Features of English AsFAPsT in the 5<sup>th</sup>

##### Lexical Set

The fifth lexical set comprises *artful, crafty, cunning, designing, sly, wily* which share the same feature of “**very untruthful**”.

(4.112) “Oh, Captain Butler, what a **crafty** wretch you are!” she cried, smiling. “Appealing to a mother’s pride! I can read you like a book.” [58, p.533]

#### 4.2.2. Semantic Features of AsFAPsT in Vietnamese

Similarly, all the Vietnamese AsFAPsT are also classified into five lexical sets following the degrees from “the level of being very truthful” to “the level of being very untruthful”.

**Table 4.18 Semantic Fields of AsFAPsT in Vietnamese**

(*i*: the level of being very truthful; *ii*: the level of being averagely truthful; *iii*: the level of being a little untruthful; *iv*: the level of being averagely untruthful; *v*: the level of being very untruthful)

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>
<i>i</i>	chân thành, chân tình, thành tâm, thật lòng, thật tâm, chí tình, thật thà, thật (thà) như đếm, chân chỉ hạt bột, chất phác, cục mịch, cương trực, thẳng thắn, thẳng thừng, thẳng mực tàu, thẳng (như) ruột ngựa, ngang bằng sỏ ngay, thành khẩn
<i>ii</i>	chân chất, chân thật, thật tình, thật, thành thật, ngay, ngay thẳng, thẳng, thẳng tính, công minh, sòng phẳng, trung hậu, trung thực, quang minh chính đại
<i>iii</i>	ba hoa, ba hoa chích chòe, ba hoa thiên địa, ba hoa thiên tướng, lấu cá, lấu cá lấu tôm, lấu linh, lém linh, ma mãnh, ranh ma, ranh mãnh, tinh ma, tinh quái, tinh ranh
<i>iv</i>	đôi trá, giả dối, giả tạo, giả trá, gian, gian ác, gian dối, gian tà, sai ngoa, sỏ khanh, già trái non hột, tiền hậu bất nhất, xanh vỏ đỏ lòng
<i>v</i>	bịp bợm, cáo già, chó đều, đều, đều cáng, đều giả, gian hùng, gian manh, gian xảo, giảo hoạt, lọc lừa, quái quỷ, quỷ quyệt, thủ đoạn, tráo trở, xảo, xảo quyệt, xảo trá, xỏ lá, ba que xỏ lá

#### 4.2.2.1. Semantic Features of Vietnamese AsFAPsT in the 1<sup>st</sup> Lexical Set

18 adjectives and fixed adjective phrases collected from the corpus are put into the first lexical set, at the grade of being “**very truthful**”. They are *chân thành, chân tình, thành tâm, thật lòng, thật tâm, chí tình, thật thà, thật (thà) như đếm, chân chỉ hạt bột, chất phác, cục mịch, cương trực, thẳng thắn, thẳng thừng, thẳng mực tàu, thẳng (như) ruột ngựa, ngang bằng số ngay, thành khẩn*.

#### 4.2.2.2. Semantic Features of Vietnamese AsFAPsT in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lexical Set

The second lexical set is “**averagely truthful**”.

This group comprises the adjectives *chân chất, chân thật, công minh, ngay, ngay thẳng, sòng phẳng, thành thật, thẳng, thẳng tính, thật, thật tình, thuần hậu, trung hậu, trung thực, quang minh chính đại*.

#### 4.2.2.3. Semantic Features of Vietnamese AsFAPsT in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lexical Set

The third lexical set includes such adjectives and fixed adjective phrases as *ba hoa, lấu cá, lấu linh, lém linh, ma mãnh, ranh ma, ranh mãnh, tinh ma, tinh quái, tinh ranh, ba hoa chích chòe, ba hoa thiên địa, ba hoa thiên tướng, lấu cá lấu tôm*. And they share the same feature of “**a little untruthful**”.

#### 4.2.2.4. Semantic Features of Vietnamese AsFAPsT in the 4<sup>th</sup> Lexical Set

The fourth lexical set contains *dối trá, giả dối, giả tạo, giả trá, gian, gian ác, gian dối, gian tà, sai ngoa, sỏ Khanh, giả trái non hột, tiền hậu bất nhất, xanh vỏ đỏ lòng* which have the feature of “**averagely untruthful**” in common.

#### 4.2.2.5. Semantic Features of Vietnamese AsFAPsT in the 5<sup>th</sup> Lexical Set

The fifth lexical set consists of *bịp bợm, cáo già, chó đếu, đếu, đếu cáng, đếu giả, gian hùng, gian manh, gian xảo, giảo hoạt, lọc lừa, quái quỷ, quỷ quyết, thủ đoạn, tráo trở, xảo, xảo quyết, xảo trá, xỏ lá, ba que xỏ lá* which share the same feature of “**very untruthful**”.

**Table 4.31 A Summary of the Frequency of English and Vietnamese AsFAPsT in the Corpus**

(*i*: the level of being very truthful; *ii*: the level of being averagely truthful; *iii*: the level of being a little untruthful; *iv*: the level of being averagely untruthful; *v*: the level of being very untruthful)

Lexical Sets	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage
<i>i</i>	97	10.50%	174	29.95%
<i>ii</i>	528	57.14%	228	39.24%
<i>iii</i>	40	04.33%	39	06.70%
<i>iv</i>	137	14.83%	74	12.75%
<i>v</i>	122	13.20%	66	11.36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>100 %</b>

#### 4.2.3. Similarities and Differences in Semantic Features of AsFAPsT in English and Vietnamese

##### 4.2.3.1. Similarities

Firstly, both English and Vietnamese people use a large number of AsFAPsT which are divided into five groups following five grades of the quality of being truthful. The number as well as the rate of AsFAPsT in group 2 (at the level of being averagely truthful) is the highest in both English and Vietnamese. At the same time, the

lowest rate also belongs to the same group, group three in both languages.

Secondly, most of the adjectives are gradable in both languages. It means we can combine an adverb of degree such as *extremely, very, absolutely, rather, ...* in English or *rất, khá, hơi, quá, lắm, ...* in Vietnamese with these adjectives to increase or decrease the grades of a person's quality of being truthful.

Thirdly, English people can use a lot of adjectives to describe a person's quality of being truthful without considerable differences in their meanings. This also exists in Vietnamese. For instance, *forthright, frank* and *straightforward* in English are nearly the same in use, and *ranh ma, tinh ma, tinh quái* and *tinh ranh* can be optionally used in Vietnamese.

Finally, an adjective denoting the concept of "truthfulness" in this language may have more than one equivalent in the other. And sometimes its equivalents do not belong to the same level as they are classified in the thesis.

#### **4.2.3.2. Differences**

The difference is in the distributions of AsFAPsT in the corpus. In English, the first group comprising the AsFAPsT in the first lexical set is put into the fourth position when considering the rate of each group in the corpus from high to low; whereas, the rate of the first group in Vietnamese is just lower than the group which is at the top in frequency.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1. CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, evaluating a person's personality in general and one's quality of being truthful in particular is a very important matter in communication. Therefore, it is necessary for people to be careful in using language. And this thesis is done to make a modest contribution to the use of WsEsT in both English and Vietnamese.

Generally, all the research questions have been basically answered by means of the theoretical background and the analysis of the data.

What are the syntactic and semantic features of English and Vietnamese WsEsT? The explanation for the syntactic features emerged from the analysis and comment on the formations, the functions and the positions of AsFAPsT in phrases and sentences. The semantic features of these adjectives are discussed basing on the theory of semantic fields.

What are the main similarities and differences of the syntactic and semantic features between English and Vietnamese WsEsT? With regard to the syntactic features, AsFAPsT can be either attributive or predicative in both languages. Besides, the findings reveal some semantic similarities as well. All the adjectives in both English and Vietnamese can be classified into five lexical sets following the degrees of the quality of being truthful.

Nevertheless, some differences in syntactic and semantic features do exist in these adjectives. Syntactically, English and Vietnamese have different systems of grammar; thus, there are some features in this language which cannot be found in the other. The origin of the two languages brings about differences in the formation as well as the combination of words. The English language experiences morphological changes. The grammatical relationships are expressed by means of inflections while Vietnamese uses function words and word order. Consequently, the majority of adjectives in Vietnamese are compounds whereas there are more adjectives created by adding affixes in English. Semantically, the differences are expressed in the ways people choose words to use. Thus, there are some differences in the distributions of AsFAPsT in both languages.

## **5.2. IMPLICATIONS**

This thesis is done in the hope that some syntactic and semantic features of AsFAPsT are revealed. And the findings of the thesis will modestly contribute to the understanding of the language learners about the use of these adjectives in denoting a person's quality of being truthful. Besides, translators whose jobs are related will possibly find it useful.

When using the adjectives, language learners should pay attention to the ways of forming new words in the both languages. Using a word created by adding an affix or compounding some words to form a new one will make the language more natural.

Additionally, since no piece of language is free of collocations, therefore language learners can possibly make use of

the findings in this thesis when using adjectives, for example to put adjectives into their right positions in phrases or sentences.

## **5.3. LIMITATION**

The research into syntactic and semantic features of WsEsT was done and some findings on the similarities and differences in their using in English and Vietnamese as well as the frequency were written up in chapter 4. However, some mistakes in the process of doing this research are unavoidable. Besides, because of the limitation of time and our own ability, we just take a certain number of novels and stories to make the corpus. So, it is undeniable that the study cannot cover all AsFAPsT used by people in both languages. Moreover, the classification of the adjectives in the thesis is relative. Some adjectives belong to this group, but they may be also put in another one in some situations. Furthermore, there are some unsolved matters that should be considered for further researches.

## **5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Some following further researches into WsEsT in both languages should be carried out in order to have an overall look at the problem:

- An investigation into the pragmatic features of adjectives denoting the concept of “truthfulness”.
- A study of the linguistic features of nouns, verbs and adverbs denoting the concept of “truthfulness”.
- A research into the linguistic features of idioms denoting the concept of “truthfulness”.

Hopefully, more interesting findings will be given about how people speaking English and Vietnamese use words and expressions denoting the concept of “truthfulness”.