

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
UNIVERSITY OF DANANG

VŨ THỊ HOÀI VÂN

**A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MISSION
 STATEMENTS OF AMERICAN AND
 VIETNAMESE UNIVERSITIES
 (ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE)**

Field : THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Code : 60.22.15

**M.A. THESIS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
 (A SUMMARY)**

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lư Quý Khương

Danang, 2011

This thesis has been completed at
 UNIVERSITY OF DANANG

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lư Quý Khương

Examiner 1: Dr. Ngũ Thiện Hùng

Examiner 2: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ngô Đình Phương

This thesis was defended at the Examination Council for the M.A.
 thesis, University of Danang.

Time : 28th, 29th and 30th September, 2011

Venue: Quang Trung University

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

In the last few decades, the world has seen an explosion of information and revolution of high technology. Setting up a website is very necessary for any organization wishing to introduce themselves to the outside world. Also, almost universities have built up strategies of their development announced in their websites in which they can present their specific features learners with the hope of attracting learners to their universities.

Like most countries in the world, Vietnamese education has focused much on Educational Quality Accreditation in recent years. This quality assurance process impels universities to satisfy crucial requirements. Certainly, a mission statement (MS) is the first requirement that universities usually present in their introductory section to their universities. It reflects the strategies goals and development directions of the universities in the short as well as long term.

However, not all universities or colleges in Vietnam are interested in proclamation of their own missions even though some of them are not only old but also well-known.

For those mentioned above, the research “*A Discourse Analysis of Mission Statements of American and Vietnamese Universities (English versus Vietnamese)*” is chosen with the hope that the study makes a certain contribution to clarifying discourse features of American university mission statements (AUMSs) and Vietnamese university mission statements (VUMSs) which are useful for the teaching and learning of English writing skills relating to this type of discourse as well as for those, especially Vietnamese, who take in charge of writing MSs in English for their own universities.

1.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Awareness of linguistic features of university mission statements (UMSs) will not only help students know clearly about the linguistic features of UMSs discourse and teachers apply more effective methods to teaching writing skills but also those who are interested in this field will probably write concise and striking MSs in English for their universities.

1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. Aims

This study aims at analyzing the discourse of AUMSs and VUMSs in order to find out the features of the layout, grammar, lexis, cohesive devices used in this type of discourse.

1.3.2. Objectives

- describe and identify the layout features of AUMSs and VUMSs.
- investigate and describe syntactic features, lexical features and cohesive devices used in this type of discourse.
- find out and explain the similarities and differences between AUMSs and VUMSs.
- suggest some implications for Vietnamese learners of English as well as university administrators in attempting to apply these linguistic features in their work.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the typical discourse characteristics of AUMSs and VUMSs in terms of their layout, syntactic features, lexical features, cohesive features?
- What are similarities and differences between AUMSs and VUMSs in terms of their layout, syntactic features, lexical features, cohesive features?

1.5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study primarily focuses on the four aspects namely layout, syntax, lexis and cohesion of AUMSs and VUMSs. Moreover, linguistic features of these UMSs are examined in detail instead of their contents.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: *Introduction*

Chapter 2: *Literature Review and Theoretical Background*

Chapter 3: *Methods and Procedures*

Chapter 4: *Findings and Discussions*

Chapter 5: *Conclusion and Implications*

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. OVERVIEW

2.2. PREVIOUS STUDIES RELATED TO THE RESEARCH

Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and contexts in which it is used. There have been studies dealing with a wide range of its subfields such as coherence, cohesion, context, conversation analysis, and so on. Many linguists, Brown and Yule [3], Cook [8], Halliday and Hasan [17], Johnstone [23], McCarthy [27], Nunan [30], Yule [41] ... have made great contributions to the field though their publications focus on one or another aspect of discourse analysis theory.

In Vietnam, a number of linguists have made great contributions to the study of discourse analysis such as Trần Ngọc Thêm [50], Nguyễn Thị Việt Thanh [49], Nguyễn Thiện Giáp [46], Diệp Quang Ban [45] and Nguyễn Hòa [29].

Besides, there are some practical studies related to the topic such as Bùi Thị Ngọc Anh [4], Bùi Thị Thu Hà [5], and Hà Ngọc Công [16].

2.3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Some fundamental theoretical knowledge related to discourse analysis, text, cohesive devices is presented in different books and studies by linguists and researchers both in English [3], [7], [8], [17], [20], [21], [27], [30], [33], [40], and in Vietnamese [29], [45], [50]. Here are the main points which are presented in this part:

2.3.1. Discourse and Discourse Analysis

2.3.1.1. Concepts of Discourse

2.3.1.2. Features of Discourse

2.3.2. Text

2.3.2.1. Concepts of Text

2.3.2.2. Features of Text

2.3.3. Cohesion and Coherence in Discourse

2.3.3.1. Cohesion

2.3.3.2. Coherence

2.3.4. University Mission Statements

2.3.4.1. Definition of UMSs

Wikipedia cites: an MS: *is a formal, short, written statement of the purpose of a company or organization. The MS should guide the actions of the organization, spell out its overall goal, provide a sense of direction, and guide decision-making. It provides “the framework or context within which the company's strategies are formulated.”*[22]. Basically, educational MSs contain information about the educational establishment, but in a nutshell. *“This should include what the college or school does, its achievements and who attends. Educational MSs focus on today.”* [57].

2.3.4.2. Functions of UMSs

A school mission statement “*can help you decide if what they offer and the way they provide it lines up with your educational goals.*”[58].

2.3.4.3. Contents of UMSs

Wikipedia cites: all effective MSs have in common critical components. Touch [65] gives *Purpose, Business and Value* in an MS.

Certainly, an educational MS also abides by the above-mentioned components of an MS. Also, it should be a brief, but informative statement about what the school has been doing over years and who is involved; and it should also be inspirational to prospective students, so school’s core values and philosophy existing in your statement is crucial. [60].

2.3.4.4. Length of UMSs

In some cases, an MS is relatively brief and uncomplicated. At other times, an MS may be longer and somewhat more detailed.

2.3.4.5. Mission statements vs. Vision Statements

A great estimate for making the determination between vision and MSs is dividing those organizational goals and objectives between the attainable (MS) versus those that are not yet attainable (vision statements). However, MSs and vision statements may be showcased as power-packed drivers in a company culture when they are done right. Sometimes the two terms are used interchangeably; of course, the vision statement must be connected to the MS.

2.4. SUMMARY

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1. OVERVIEW

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Together with the combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches, a number of methods as descriptive, analytic, comparative are guidelines in conducting the research to achieve the set goals of the thesis.

3.3. DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION AND SAMPLES

The 200 UMSs are downloaded from hundreds of websites of American and Vietnamese universities on the Internet. Most of the data chosen have the average length of from 80 to 120 words.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION

The data are collected from hundreds of American universities’ websites and those of Vietnam’s on the Internet by using Google search, Yahoo search with techniques of searching, copying, downloading, etc, as well as by the computer tools for storing, printing, accessing and backing up: Microsoft Words, Microsoft Excels, Adobe Reader, etc.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

The data will firstly be investigated and divided into different groups of layout relying on their length and content. Next, the UMSs will be analyzed in terms of their layout, lexical features, syntactic structure and cohesive devices. Finally, similarities and differences will be presented from the results of the comparison between AUMSs and VUMSs.

3.6. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.7. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. OVERVIEW

4.2. DISCOURSE FEATURES OF AUMSs

4.2.1. Layout of AUMSs

4.2.1.1. General Layout

AUMSs are surveyed and grouped into three main groups in which *group 1* (42 instances), *group 2* (44 instances) and *group 3* (14 instances).

a. Group 1

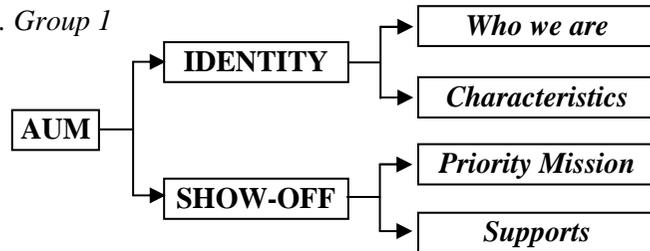


Figure 4.1. The Layout of AUMSs – Group 1

b. Group 2

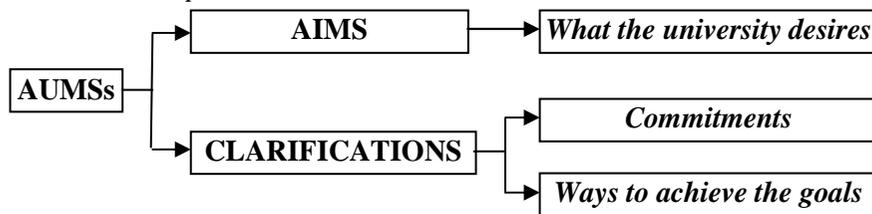


Figure 4.2. The Layout of AUMSs – Group 2

c. Group 3

Group 3 does not present its mission in a fixed layout and takes the lowest rate of instances (14) of AUMSs. Particularly, only 5 AUMSs directly present their priority duties by *infinitives*. Two other AUMSs start with their history while 7 ones start with background before defining the purposes for their MSs; hence, they are considered unpopular cases of AUMSs and not discussed in detail.

4.2.1.2. Specific Contents

a. Group 1 (42%): has two main sections

➤ **IDENTITY:** consists of some certain facts: *the names of universities, the types of universities, the system which universities belong to and the place universities locate.*

The contents are organized in the order: *names – types of universities – university system – location.* The order of *university system* and *types of universities* is interchangeable while *names* and *location* seems usually to exist at the beginning and the end. Moreover, not every part of the **IDENTITY** exists; certain parts: *university system* and *location* may be omitted meanwhile *names* and *types of university* are usually presented.

➤ **SHOW-OFF:** As shown in the layout, the priority mission is presented first; that is, the aims they pursue to achieve; then followed by the different factors supporting their priority mission such as the faculty, the students, the staff, the programmes, the services and the efforts in order to convince readers of the reality and feasibility of their mission.

Moreover, these elements of the *supports* part are not set in an unchangeable order; they may head in this UMS, but in other UMS, they may be found in the middle or at the end.

b. Group 2 (44%)

➤ **AIMS:** Always, *our mission is ..., the mission of (university) is ...* or *(university)'s mission is ...* appears at the beginning to open their proclamations of the aims that they desire to achieve. The **AIMS** of universities are directly cited, which makes their proclamations informative and inspirational to prospective students.

Right after the **AIMS**, the *commitments* is suggested to persuade their audience to feel secure about the attainable merits during their studying. Then, universities offer actions or activities they are going to do to accomplish their aims. Those are *ways to achieve the goals.*

In a word, the **AIMS** exists at the beginning of MSs accounting for 100% of samples. The **CLARIFICATION** consists of two parts

Commitments and *Ways to achieve the goals* with an interchangeable order and almost follow the AIMS.

Table 4.3. Frequency of Elements in AUMSs – Group 2

| Elements | Aims | Clarifications | |
|------------|------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | <i>Commitments</i> | <i>Ways to achieve the goals</i> |
| Occurrence | 44 | 17 | 32 |
| % | 100% | 38.6% | 72.7% |

4.2.2. Lexical Features of AUMSs

4.2.2.1. Educational Terms

In analyzing AUMSs, educational terms are focused because they are typical in the field of education. These words appear in various parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, participles, etc. Moreover, the density of these educational terms is quite heavy in every part of AUMSs.

There are 1570 instances of educational terms denoting subareas: *academic centers*, *trainees/ trainers*, *degrees/academic levels*, *activities of education* and *curriculum/programs*.

Table 4.4. Educational Terms in AUMSs

| Educational Terms | Occurrence | % |
|---|-------------|------------|
| <i>denoting academic center</i> | 501 | 31.9 |
| <i>denoting trainees/ trainers</i> | 224 | 14.2 |
| <i>denoting degrees and academic levels</i> | 329 | 21.0 |
| <i>denoting activities of education</i> | 398 | 25.4 |
| <i>denoting curriculum/programs</i> | 118 | 7.5 |
| Total | 1570 | 100 |

4.2.2.2. Impressive Expressions

In AUMSs, impressive expressions are commonly found in the forms of the superlatives, the adverbs of intensifying, and triggering words to show off their capability and potential ambitions. The

impressive expressions occur frequently with 55 instances in the superlatives, 47 instances of adverbs of intensifying and 381 instances as triggering words. Moreover, these expressions not only make AUMSs look professional and interesting to read but also propagate the most typical information of universities to stimulate learners' belief in their training quality.

4.2.3. Syntactic Features of AUMSs

4.2.3.1. Voice

In this study, 33 sentences in passive voice are found from 354 sentences of the data, and thus passive sentences only make up 9.4%. It seems that the passive voice is avoided in AUMSs because administrators may give learners an entirely active position to select and join themselves into an advanced campus. Meanwhile, the active sentences making up 90.6% outnumber the passive ones and this is likely the intention of writers because active voice is more direct, powerful and succinct.

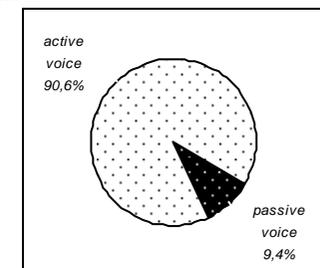


Figure 4.3. Active and Passive voice in AUMSs

4.2.3.2. Sentence Types

AUMSs comprise many sentence types in their own discourse: simple, complex, compound and compound-complex sentences.

The simple sentences surveyed in this analysis are most preferred (48.3%) because they can make AUMSs straightforward and understandable.

Besides simple sentences, complex sentences are also fairly used (35%) to build up the flow of the discourse and make the readers hardly stop reading what is going on and what will be committed next.

Although compound and compound-complex sentences account for a modest rate (9% and 7.7%), their appearance may bring diversity in sentence structure as well as formality of AUMSs.

Table 4.5. Distribution of Sentence Types in AUMSs

| Sentence Types | Number of Sentences | % |
|------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Simple | 171 | 48.3 |
| Complex | 124 | 35.0 |
| Compound | 32 | 9.0 |
| Compound-Complex | 27 | 7.7 |
| Total | 354 | 100 |

4.2.4. Cohesive Devices in AUMSs

4.2.4.1. Reference

Obviously, *personal reference* is found in AUMSs in two categories: *personal pronouns* and *possessive adjectives*; and it outnumbers the *demonstrative* and *comparative references* with 506 instances (64%). Moreover, *possessive adjectives* are the most commonly used and occupy 43% while no possessive pronouns are found in AUMSs.

Besides, *demonstrative determiners* “*this, that, these, those*” and *demonstrative adverbs* “*here, there, now, then*” are also used (29.5%) to establish the relationships between sentences. Meanwhile, *comparative reference* in AUMSs accounts for the lowest percentage among the others with 6.5%. However, *particular comparative* as *higher, more, most, highest, oldest* are more commonly used (48

instances) than *general comparative* as *same* (4 instances) in AUMSs and shown as in table 4.6.

Table 4.6. Reference in AUMSs

| Types of Reference | | Occurrence | Rate |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Personal | <i>Personal pronoun</i> | 166 | 21% |
| | <i>Possessive adjective</i> | 340 | 43% |
| | Total | 506 | 64% |
| Demonstrative | <i>Determiner</i> | 226 | 28.5% |
| | <i>Adverb</i> | 8 | 1.0% |
| | Total | 234 | 29.5% |
| Comparative | <i>General</i> | 4 | 0.5% |
| | <i>Particular</i> | 48 | 6.0% |
| | Total | 52 | 6.5% |
| Total of Reference: | | 792 | 100% |

4.2.4.2. Repetition

Repetition appears frequently in AUMSs and most of the words repeated are nouns. In addition, the single words are repeated the most frequently though sometimes there are changes in the form of the word, usually in part of speech. Sometimes, the head items exactly repeated twice or three times are the same part of speech (either nouns or verbs); however, in other cases, the original words are changed a little in form, from nouns to adjectives or from nouns to verbs and vice versa.

4.2.4.3. Parallelism

Parallelism is found in nearly all of AUMSs at many levels: words, phrases and sentences, of which parallelism at phrase levels are the most common in AUMSs. Besides, at lower levels of parallel, word balancing with word appears popularly: adjectives with adjectives, nouns with nouns and verbs with verbs. Meanwhile,

although minority of AUMSs contains parallelism at sentence levels, it creates a fair value of emphasizing the similarity and equating the significance of the parts.

4.3. DISCOURSE FEATURES OF VUMSs

4.3.1. Layout of VUMSs

4.3.1.1. General Layout

a. Group 1 (33%)

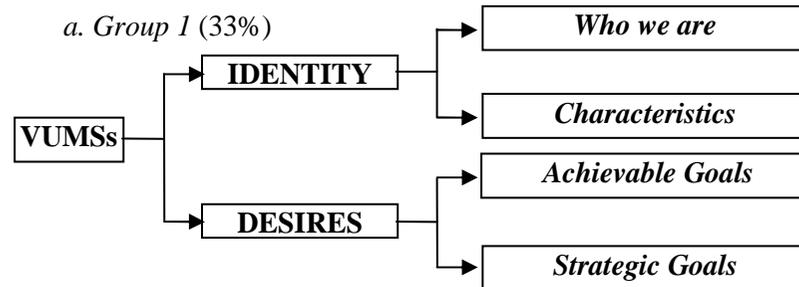


Figure 4.4. The Layout of VUMSs – Group 1

b. Group 2 (41%)

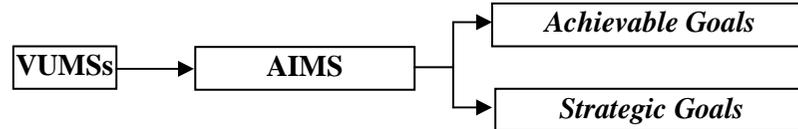


Figure 4.5. The Layout of VUMSs – Group 2

c. Group 3

The rests of VUMSs are either presented by their priority duty directly in the form of verb: *infinitives* (12 instances) or started with a motto, an educational philosophy (4 instances) or given by a legal promulgation of a certain decree (10 instances). These are multiform but take up the lowest rate, so they are listed instead of being drawn out their discourse structures and being discussed in detail.

4.3.1.2. Specific Contents

a. Group 1

➤ **IDENTITY:** tells the audience who the universities are by giving the *names of universities*, *the university level*, and *the types of*

universities. The universities are recognized as centers, institutions, or foundations of training and educating. These VUMSs usually start with the *names of universities* which may tell us their specialities and the places where they locate. Usually, the *names of universities* are followed by the *university level* and *types of universities*; however, these two elements do not always exist at the same time.

Table 4.8. Frequency of Elements in the Identity Section of VUMSs

| <i>Elements</i> | <i>Names of Universities</i> | <i>University Level</i> | <i>Types of Universities</i> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Occurrence | 33 | 17 | 12 |
| % | 100% | 51.5% | 36.3% |

➤ **DESIRES:** may express the indispensable focus of universities through *achievable goals* and *strategic goals*. In fact, the *achievable goals* have exerted themselves to attain are enormously significant when they all serve the purposes of development of national education. Their contributions not only are their *strategic goals* for which they yearn but also draw up the orientation of their development in the future.

b. Group 2 (41%)

VUMSs almost announce their missions forcefully by phrases “*Sứ mạng của trường (...)*...”, “*Trường (...) có sứ mạng...*” at the beginning to open their UMSs in order to muscuarly describe their **AIMS** which contains the overall goals, sense of direction and decision-making.

Similarly, *achievable goals* galvanize the universities to attain defined objectives. However, their greater aspirations urge them to rise up a wider sphere in which they can have more opportunities to prove their worth and to make a valuable contribution not only to their training specialties, to educational system but also to national prosperity. It is called *strategic goals* in general.

It is unforeseen that the contents of strategic goals seem to be influenced by factors of political regime, national policies in Vietnam.

4.3.2. Lexical Features of VUMSs

4.3.2.1. Educational Terms

The occurrence of educational terms is quite popular in every VUMS and these make VUMSs sound more professional and more persuasive to readers. There are 1020 items of educational terms found in VUMSs and they are also in various parts of speech denoting subareas: *academic center/ educational system, trainees/ trainers, degrees/academic levels, and activities of education.*

Table 4.9. Educational Terms in VUMSs

| Educational Terms | Occurrence | % |
|--|-------------|------------|
| <i>denoting academic center/educational system</i> | 401 | 39.4 |
| <i>denoting trainees/ trainers</i> | 82 | 8.0 |
| <i>denoting degrees and academic levels</i> | 182 | 17.8 |
| <i>denoting activities of education</i> | 355 | 34.8 |
| Total | 1020 | 100 |

4.3.2.2. Impressive Expressions

In order to strike readers as well as make VUMSs more formal, academic, straightforward and steadfast, many impressive expressions that are in various parts of speech are commonly used in VUMSs. In addition, triggering words are preferred to highlight the purpose of making a strong impact on and appealing the attention of readers to VUMSs. Hopefully, such impressive expressions may be a good source of vocabulary for writing skills on purpose of convincing, exaggerating or emphasizing importance of events.

4.3.3. Syntactic Features of VUMSs

4.3.3.1. Voice

In 190 sentences in total of 100 VUMSs, there are 31 sentences in passive voice expressed by the word “*được*” accounting for 16.4% while the rate of active sentences is higher (83.6%) in VUMSs. That is, these sentences seem to give the university an active role in training and education.

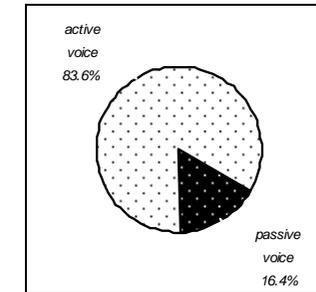


Figure 4.6 Active and Passive Voice in VUMSs

4.3.3.2. Sentences Types

Vietnamese sentences are categorized into three types: simple sentences, complex sentences and compound sentences. [43].

Table 4.10. Distribution of Sentence Types in VUMSs

| Sentence Types | Number of Sentences | % |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------|
| Simple | 128 | 67.4 |
| Complex | 32 | 16.8 |
| Compound | 30 | 15.8 |
| Total | 190 | 100 |

The result shows the frequency of simple sentences in VUMSs is much higher (67.4%) than that of complex and compound ones (16.8% and 15.8%). Meanwhile, compound and complex sentences are modestly used but they create a variety of sentences to make VUMSs interesting and lively.

4.3.4. Cohesive Devices in VUMSs

4.3.4.1. Reference

With regard to reference, while only one possessive adjective “*của mình*” appears for 3 times, personal pronouns “*họ*”, “*nó*”, “*chúng*”, “*tôi*”, “*tớ*”... and possessive pronouns are hardly found in 100 VUMSs, except only 2 instances of personal pronoun “*chúng tôi*”, “*mình*”. In addition, demonstrative reference appears modestly while comparative reference in VUMSs is utilized with a relatively high percentage (65.3%).

However, only 52 reference are found in VUMSs, this number asserts that reference is not the major cohesive device in VUMSs.

Table 4.11. Reference in VUMSs

| Types of Reference | | Occurrence | Rate |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Personal | <i>Personal pronoun</i> | 2 | 4.1% |
| | <i>Possessive adjective</i> | 3 | 6.1% |
| | Total | 5 | 10.2% |
| Demonstrative | <i>Determiner</i> | 9 | 18.4% |
| | <i>Adverb</i> | 3 | 6.1% |
| | Total | 12 | 24.5% |
| Comparative | <i>General</i> | 19 | 38.8% |
| | <i>Particular</i> | 13 | 26.5% |
| | Total | 32 | 65.3% |
| Total of Reference: | | 52 | 100% |

4.3.4.2. Repetition

Repetition serves the purposes of emphasizing important information and of making strong impression to carry its audience with one and VUMSs are successful to attain the purposes. What is more, repetition of words and phrases are mainly used in VUMSs, among which nouns and noun phrases are the major head items.

4.3.4.3. Parallelism

Parallelism is commonly used in VUMSs, and parallelism at phrase level comes out most regularly. While verb phrases in parallel structure occur throughout in every VUMS, parallelism of noun phrases and adjective phrases are limited to several VUMSs. Furthermore, parallel structure at sentence level makes a deep impression on readers even though this type occurs irregularly in VUMSs.

4.4. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AUMSs AND VUMSs

4.4.1. In Terms of Layout Features

Both AUMSs and VUMSs are various in layouts, but they may be formatted into two main groups and the variants take the lowest percentage. For group 1, both AUMSs and VUMSs start their proclamations with the **IDENTITY** and then followed by particular traits. Similarly, group 2 strongly introduces their mission by their **AIMS** with the phrases which are equivalent in English and Vietnamese such as *The mission of university...*, *Our mission is...*, *University's mission is...* / *Sứ mệnh của trường đại học ...*, *Trường có sứ mệnh là...* The rests usually start directly either by their duties or by their historical background.

Besides, differences in layout between AUMSs and VUMSs are also discovered. Firstly, in group 1 of AUMSs the **IDENTITY** section exposes more information than the one of VUMSs. That is, the **IDENTITY** of AUMSs includes four elements which are *names*, *system*, *types* and *locations of universities* instead of 3 elements: *names*, *level* and *types of universities* in VUMSs. However, although locations of universities in VUMSs are not mentioned, this information may be often found right in the names of Vietnamese Universities with their speciality. In the **SHOW-OFF**, the evidences

of ensuring the qualities of training and the benefits that have a great value to grab learners' attention are given. Meanwhile, in the **DESIRES** section of VUMSs clearly brings forth *achievable* and *strategic goals* of their universities.

For group 2, AUMSs list out their aims, their commitments, and their actions to obtain the final goals by suggesting interdependent factors such as *programmes, faculty, teachers, students...* that make major contributions of universities to civilization. Meanwhile, *achievable* and *strategic goals* are still suggested in **AIMS** of VUMSs, which have the basis in common with the **DESIRES** section in group 1. Exceptionally, the future orientation of universities partly reveals as well as factors of developing policies of Vietnam are delicately inserted in VUMSs. This makes VUMSs unique and distinctive.

4.4.2. In Terms of Lexical Features

Firstly, educational terms are commonly utilized in both AUMSs and VUMSs to denote *academic center, trainees/trainers, educational activities, degrees/levels or curriculum/programs*. Similarly, educational terms denoting *academic center* in AUMSs and VUMSs both reach the highest percentage, thereby determining the reputation of their universities in educational system. Otherwise, the result of this study reveals that educational terms in AUMSs seem predominant in a number of occurrences over the ones in VUMSs (1570 vs. 1020). Moreover, while educational terms denoting *programs/curriculum* in AUMSs account for the lowest percentage (7.5%), those in VUMSs are hardly found.

Also, impressive expressions are used in both UMSs and in the form of the superlatives, adverbs of intensifying and triggering words, in which triggering words are preferred in both languages with the purpose of showing-off themselves. Yet, in AUMSs the

impressive expressions with intensifiers such as *very, much, really, extremely, quite...* are commonly found while they are seldom used in VUMSs. Moreover, the comparatives and superlatives are modestly used in VUMSs (13 instances). In contrast, they are in favour in AUMSs (48 instances).

4.4.3. In Terms of Syntactic Features

In terms of voice, active sentences are preferred in both AUMSs and VUMSs and account for the very high percentage of 90.6% and 83.6% respectively because they may strongly reveal the assignments and aspiration of universities than passive ones. Remarkably, VUMSs use more passive voice than AUMSs (16.4% vs. 9.4%).

With regard to sentence types, simple sentences predominate over other kinds of sentences with 48% in AUMSs and 67.4% in VUMSs. Although complex sentences do not occupy the highest percentage, they are quite popular in AUMSs with 35% while they are more modestly used in VUMSs (16.8%). Moreover, compound-complex sentences are absent in VUMSs while in AUMSs they exist despite limited quantity.

4.4.4. In Terms of Cohesive Devices

Reference, repetition and parallelism commonly found in both AUMSs and VUMSs are the three effective cohesive devices to build up unity of this discourse. First of all, *personal, demonstrative and comparative references* are effectively used. Next, key words or phrases are naturally repeated to stress preeminent information and indicate a strong feeling in both UMSs. *Nouns and noun phrases* are the major head items repeated in both languages. Finally, parallelism is throughout found in AUMSs and VUMSs and *parallel structures at phrase level*, especially *verb phrases*, is most frequently used in both languages.

Nevertheless, reference is one of the most typical cohesive devices in AUMSs and predominant in numbers of 792 instances versus merely 52 instances found in VUMSs. Among these, *personal reference* makes up the highest percentage with 64% in AUMSs while the one in VUMSs accounts for the least percentage with 10.2%. In addition, *comparative reference* in VUMSs is preferred with a much higher percentage than one in AUMSs (65.3% vs. 6.5%). Also, the repetition of words in AUMSs is different from one in VUMSs in terms of alteration in the form of words (usually in part of speech or verb agreement). Then, though parallelism at phrase level occurs most often in VUMSs, noun phrases and adjective phrases in parallelism are relatively limited instead of variety of phrases in AUMSs while verb phrases are preferred because they are more effective and stronger to declare their missions.

4.4. SUMMARY

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. OVERVIEW

5.2. CONCLUSION

Discourse analysis deal with how language is used beyond the sentence level. Aiming at investigating some typical features of AUMSs and VUMSs, I set up major goals for the thesis: investigating and finding out the similarities and differences between AUMSs and VUMSs in terms of *layout, lexical features, syntactic features, and cohesive devices*.

In terms of the layout features, both AUMSs and VUMSs are divided into 3 groups, of which the two main groups are discussed in detail with subdivisions in each UMS. For group 1, both AUMSs and VUMSs start their proclamations by **IDENTITY** consisting of two subparts: *who we are* and *characteristics*; meanwhile, AUMSs and

VUMSs in group 2 powerfully announce their vital missions through their **AIMS** including their desires and pursuits to achieve the final goals. The last group, occupying the smallest percentage, states directly their missions by their duties and their historical background. In detail, AUMSs give much important information about their universities in **SHOW-OFF** and **CLARIFICATION** by their *priority missions*, their *supports* to achieve these goals, or their *commitments* as well as *ways to achieve the goals*. On the other hand, both groups in VUMSs show the *achievable goals* and *strategic goals* in their **DESIRES** and **AIMS**. Moreover, these two kinds of goals are widespread to present in almost VUMSs and bring politic factors of Vietnam constituting the exceptional features for VUMSs with them.

As regards the lexical features, educational terms and impressive expressions are concerned and play a significant role to serve the purposes of both demonstrating the expertness of universities and catching the audience's attention. Both educational terms and impressive expressions are various in part-of-speech. However, educational terms in AUMSs are more preferred than ones in VUMSs (1570 occurrences vs. 1020). Besides, structures of comparatives and superlatives are more commonly used in AUMSs than in VUMSs (48 vs. 13 instances).

With regard to syntactic structures, active voice is used more often than passive voice in both languages but it is quite surprising that VUMSs use more passive constructions than AUMSs (16% vs. 9.4%) though they are found through the only word “*điều*”. Also, sentences in AUMSs are found in four types: simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex whereas compound-complex is not found in Vietnamese. However, both in AUMSs and VUMSs, simple sentences predominate over the other kinds.

Finally, *reference*, *parallelism* and *repetition* are main cohesive devices which are analyzed one after another. While personal reference appears most frequently in AUMSs, comparative reference is preferred in VUMSs with a higher rate. In addition, repetition of key words or phrases is widespread used in both languages though there is a trend of changing in part-of-speech in AUMSs. Also, parallelism often happens at the phrase level, especially verbs phrases.

5.3. IMPLICATIONS

It is our hope that this thesis makes a benefit for not only those within the school (teachers and students) but also those outside who are interested in writing their own MSs in English and Vietnamese for their universities.

Firstly, this study is necessary to call students' awareness of the importance of mastering linguistic features at the discourse level. It is much easier for students to understand a piece of writing which has a certain layout because each genre of discourse has its own layout. Moreover, the layout may provide us with a frame to develop our writing in a natural and proper way. Besides, discovering discourse of UMSs may help students enrich their knowledge, grammar rules and vocabulary in this field as well as take notice of similarities and differences between AUMSs and VUMSs.

Secondly, UMSs may be a new kind of discourse, thus it may be considered a good source for English teaching materials that is suitable for colleges specialized in English. Nevertheless, this form of writing requires teachers not only general knowledge but also deeply understanding of the discourse structure, grammatical features, lexical features and cohesive devices of UMSs. Hence, introducing fully the typical discourse features of AUMSs and

VUMSs is very necessary for both teachers and students in teaching and learning process.

Thirdly, this is more significant for those who intend to write their UMSs in English because most of the universities in Vietnamese do not have English versions of UMSs on their own websites as well as in their legal documents. Though UMS is a quite new section in their background information about their universities, it is being inquired to fulfill the process of Educational Quality Accreditation in recent years in Vietnam. Moreover, through their UMSs, the universities would like to show their commitment as well as their efforts to increase their training serving quality to the community.

5.4. LIMITATIONS

Due to the shortage of time, reference materials and the limited knowledge of the researcher, the study can only examine some certain characteristics of AUMSs and VUMSs such as the layout, lexical, syntactic features and cohesive devices, so it cannot cover all interesting domains.

5.5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

For the sake of making further investigation into MSs, I would like to offer some suggestions for further research:

1. An investigation into Vision Statements of American and Vietnamese Universities.
2. An investigation into culture influences on AUMSs and VUMSs.
3. An investigation into pragmatic features of AUMSs and VUMSs.