

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
UNIVERSITY OF DANANG**

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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO WORDS AND  
EXPRESSIONS DESCRIBING THE FIGURE OF  
A PERSON IN VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH  
EQUIVALENTS**

**Field : THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 RATIONALE

In daily life as well as literary work when mentioning any person, the writer usually describes his character from general to specific details. This is the most important factor because it is said that “judge a man by his looks”.

Using words for describing the figure plays an important role in expressing the ideas, the feelings of the writer and the suitability with the property of character. This is a tool to create the impressive colors by language, which is easy to recognize in linguistic elements in making sentences.

Describing the figure of a person, we have a lot of details to present such as age, face, hair, height, and body type and each of the details has its own profound and lively value at aimed embedding in the reader's or hearer's memory.

However, how can we achieve our purpose in using our descriptive words and expressions of figure? Because there is a diversity of words for describing body, it is our duty that we should know how to choose quintessential words.

As we know, in English there are words indicating different levels of a person who has a lot of flesh on his/her body such as “chubby”, “buxom”, “tubby”, “well-built”, “dumpy”, as well as different levels of a person having very little flesh on his/her body like “lanky”, “slender”, “spare”, “streamlined” or expressions like “as thin as a lath/ rail/ rake/ thread-paper... In Vietnamese, we also have a number of words and expressions describing a person who are fat like “vạm vỡ”, “mũm mĩm như trẻ con”, “đầy đà”, “phục

phịch”, “to như thùng phi”... and a lot of words are used to mention the person who are thin such as “nhỏ gầy”, “thanh khiết”, “gầy gò gior cả xương”, “cao nhểng gầy đét”, “thấp bé”, “mảnh khảnh”, “gầy như con mắt”, “gầy như cái que”.

Take this example, Charles Dickens describes Oliver Twist as **a corpulent man**, which means that the character **Oliver Twist** lives on the orphan exploit. Anyone who reads Kieu's story by Nguyen Du knows the character “Tú Bà”, who is described as a buxom woman (đầy đà). It has a negative meaning.

As we know, both “slim” and “skinny” mean “thin”, but have different levels. “Slim” has a positive meaning while “skinny” has a negative meaning. When we talk someone with “slim” feature, it means that we compliment her on her beautiful body whereas with “skinny” feature, it means that we decry her as a very thin body.

As a whole, if we study on a one-sided surface, these words can't depict inner feelings, personalities of a person. However, it would be deficient if we ignored the description of the figure because they not only have the effect on outstanding the appearance of a person but also express the writers' intention.

With the necessary points, I decide to take words and expressions used to describe the figure of a person as the topic of research with the consideration of semantic and syntactic features in Vietnamese and English equivalents.

### 1.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

One of the word types that both the writer and speaker should pay attention to when he/she wants to characterize any person or character is *Words and expressions describing the figure of a person*.

In this situation, we hope this thesis will provide a useful reference for learners of English and Vietnamese.

### 1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research paper primarily concentrates on exploring the semantic and syntactic meanings of words indicating the **body form of a person** to make clear the similarities and differences in Vietnamese and English

### 1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

*Aims:* This study aims to supply some interestingly popular words and expressions in their writing of description and their semantic roles as well as their syntactic features to Vietnamese learners of English.

*Objectives:* With this general view, we would try to:

- Explain the semantic features of words for describing the figure of a person in Vietnamese and English.
- Provide the different ways of using descriptive words, expressions of the figure in Vietnamese and English.
- Put forward some implications on the teaching and learning of English in general, and on the effective use of these words and carefulness in translation.
- Help Vietnamese learners of English know how to select descriptive words of the figure suitably in their writing and love their own language, their own culture.

### 1.5 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The study is to seek answers to the following questions:

1. What are the syntactic and semantic features of words, expressions for describing the figure of a person in Vietnamese and English equivalents?

2. What are the similarities and differences in the syntactic and semantic features of descriptive words, expressions of the figure?

3. What are the implications on teaching and learning words describing the figure of a person in Vietnamese and English translation?

### 1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The content of this study is organized into five chapters as showed below:

**Chapter 1:** concentrates on the reason why we choose the topic, the justification for the study that expresses the importance of the problem, the statement of the scope of the review, aims and objectives, and research questions.

**Chapter 2:** lays the foundation of the study. Besides, it includes definition and six tenets of semantics and cognition.

**Chapter 3:** is concerned with the research design and methodology of the study including data collection and analysis.

**Chapter 4:** discuss the semantic features, show the statistical table about the three categories of meaning in description of a person's figure, show the ways of translating expressions between Vietnamese and English. Then, we interpret and discuss the findings/results of the research.

**Chapter 5:** summarizes major findings and results, and opens directions to others to study further.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL

#### BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES RELATED TO THE PROBLEM

The thesis by Nguyen Thi Hiep [8] mentioned the grammatical and semantic features of English and Vietnamese Human Body Part (HBP) Idioms and presented the differences and similarities in grammatical and semantic features of English and Vietnamese. However, she didn't analyze them in the cognitive aspect. Nguyen Huynh Thanh Ngoc [12] discuss the similarities and the differences in cognition in using body-part terms in locating in English and Vietnamese. However, he didn't focus on counting all the body-part terms up in both languages. Nguyen Ngoc Vu [31] presented some notion metonymy in the proverbs that contain part "head", "face" and "eyes". Nguyen Thi Van Dong [24] focused on the relationship between language and culture through English and Vietnamese proverbs having body- part words with the aim of helping the foreigners learn Vietnamese. Tran Thi Minh [26] analyzed the similarities and differences of transferring meaning of words in Vietnamese and English. Ly Lan [25] mentioned some differences and similarities in using parts of human body that are referents to love in English and Vietnamese.

#### 2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

##### 2.2.1 Approaches to Meaning of Words

*"Linguistics is a discipline that analyzes, describes, and explains phenomena through representations of symbolic, rule-governed formulas"* [5] (W. Frawley, 1992).

#### 2.2.2 Cognitive Semantics

##### 2.2.2.1 Definition of Cognition

Peter Gardenfors gave **two definitions of cognition**. One is broad and the other is a narrow definition.

##### 2.2.2.2 Tenets of Cognitive Semantics

There are Six Tenets of Cognitive Semantics

#### 2.2.3 Cognitive Closure

#### 2.2.4 Culture And Language

##### 2.2.4.1 Definition of Culture

It was defined from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: "Culture can be defined as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation. Culture has been called "the way of life for an entire society". As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, norms of behavior such as law and morality, and systems of belief as well as the art."

##### 2.2.4.2 Basic Characteristics and Functions of Culture

##### 2.2.4.3 Cross-Culture

##### 2.2.4.4 The Relationship between Culture and Language

#### 2.2.5. Cognitive Grammar

#### 2.2.6. Translation And Translation Equivalence

##### 2.2.6.1 The Notion of Translation

##### 2.2.6.2 Equivalence in Translation

#### 2.2.7 Syntactic Features

##### 2.2.7.1 Adjectives in Vietnamese

*a, Types of Adjectives*

**Table 4.1 Types of adjectives in Vietnamese**

Types of Adjectives	Definition	Examples
Qualitative Adjective	To define the qualities of a person or a thing	Tốt, xấu, đẹp,
Adjective of shape	To identify the shape of a thing or a person	tròn, mập, béo, ốm, khẳng khiu, gầy, còm nhom.
Colour Adjective	To identify color	Sáng trắng, (ngâm) đen trắng, nâu.
Adjectives of size	To show the size	Cao, thấp, dài, ngắn, rộng, hẹp, to, nhỏ, khổng lồ, tí hon, mỏng, dày .

*b, The Function of Adjectives*

The main functions of adjectives are *attributive* and *predicative*.

*c, The Structure of Adjective Compounds*

An Adjective compound in Vietnamese can be combined by the following ways:

- an adjective and an adjective: like “xinh đẹp”, “to lớn”, “cao lớn”, “to béo”, “béo tròn”, “gầy còm” ...

- reduplicating with the root word like “đen đen”, “trắng trắng”, “mập mập”, “phục phục”, “ú ù”, “múp míp”, “còm nhom” ...

**2.2.7.2 Adjectives in English**

*a, Types of adjectives*

**Table 4.2 Types of Adjectives in English**

Types of Adjectives	Definition	Examples
Qualitative Adjective	To define the qualities of a person or a thing	Big, fat, strong, small, tiny, thin, tall, large, short, new, beautiful, old, pretty.
Colour Adjective	To identify color	Black, blue, brown, cream, green, grey, orange, pink, red, white.
Emphasizing Adjective	To show strong feeling	Absolute, complete, true, positive, real, true.
Post determiner	To make the reference more precise	Particular, only, next, additional, other, main, specific.

*b, The Functions of Adjectives*

The main functions of adjectives are *attributive* and *predicative*.

*c, Other Ways of Comparing Things*

If we want to say that a person or thing has the same quality as the others, we can use the structure “as ...as”, prepositional phrase beginning with “like” after link verbs and “the same as”.

*d, Indicating Different Amounts of a Quality*

Words like “very, really, rather, slightly...” are used to emphasize adjectives

### CHAPTER 3

#### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

##### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, we use descriptive and qualitative methods.

##### 3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is carried out on the basis of the qualitative method and contrastive analysis.

###### **The steps will be involved:**

First of all, some basic theoretical concepts relating to syntactic aspects in English are proposed with numerous reference books and dictionaries used for analysis.

Secondly, we present general semantic features and make a statistical table that shows the positive, neutral and negative meaning of English and Vietnamese descriptive words of a person's figure.

Thirdly, a combined descriptive and qualitative approach are employed to analyze and describe the collected data for finding out the linguistic features of the words and expressions describing the figure of a person from literary works written by native authors. We show the ways of translating expressions and give comments and evaluations on words that describes figure of a person between English and Vietnamese.

Finally, we analyze words and expressions depicting figure of a person so that we can draw some useful conclusions in teaching and learning English and Vietnamese.

##### 3.3 DATA COLLECTION

We carry out the study with about one hundred examples collected from various sources such as dictionaries, internet,

magazines, novels, and short stories by different English and Vietnamese authors that help build up the corpus for the research.

##### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis consists of the six steps.

Step 1: To assemble data of words indicating the height and body form from some typical dictionaries.

Step 2: To present quality of each group of words so that the reader can understand the writer's intention.

Step 3: To find out semantic characteristics of words denoting levels of height, a fat body, and a thin body in English.

Step 4: To provide the description of words indicating levels of height, a fat body, and a thin body in Vietnamese.

Step 5: To discover similarities and differences in concept and cognition between two languages.

Step 6: To draw conclusions on semantic, and cultural characteristics between two languages.

##### 3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Our data collection is mainly based on documents collected from reliable sources in English and Vietnamese which leads to objective findings. Since the results of the research are based on the analysis of data collected, the examples chosen are carefully read and selected so as to ensure a satisfying reliability of the research.

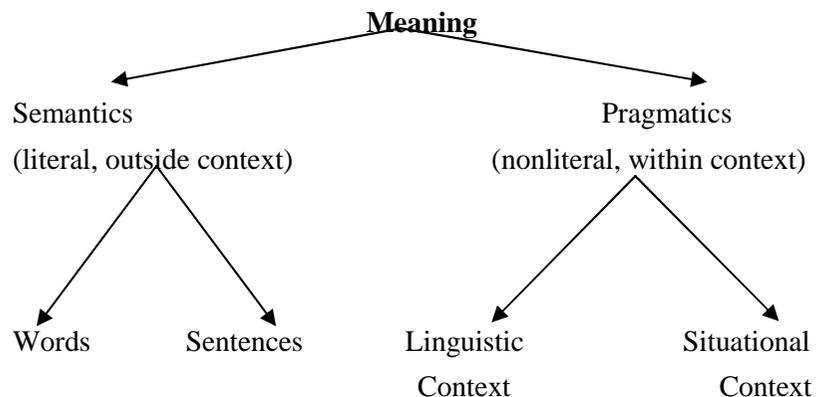
##### 3.6 SUMMARY

As for the findings and discussions, the following chapter will deal with them in detail.

**CHAPTER 4  
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.1. SEMANTIC FEATURES**

**4.1.1 General Semantic Features**



*Figure 4.1 Types of Meanings and Contexts (source: [27, p.32])*

**4.1.2 Linguistic Devices for Describing the Figure of a Person.**

**4.1.2.1 Words Indicating the Form of a Person**

*Table 4.3 Words indicating form of a person*

Height	Body type	
	Fat	Thin
<b>1. Tall:</b>		
1.1 Slightly-built	1. Chubby	1. Scrawny
1.2 Lanky	2. Buxom	2. Skinny
1.3 Gangling	3. Portly	3. Lean
1.4 Beefy	4. Solid	4. Spare
1.5 Tall	5. Well-built = beefy	5. Gaunt
1.6 A long-legged	6. Corpulent	6. Thin and gaunt
<b>2. Medium</b>	7. Bulky	7. Small and
2.1 middle- height		

<b>3. Short</b>	8. Gross	skinny
3.1 Dumpy	9. Obese / Fleshy	8. Slender
3.2 Podgy	10. Overweight	9. Slight
3.3 Pudgy	11. Stout	10. Slim
3.4 Squat	12. Plump	11. Thin
3.5 Tubby / chubby / stocky	13. Porky= large bu	12. Trim
3.6 Thickset	14. Huge	13. Streamlined
3.7 Chunky	15. Fat	14. Swelte
3.8 Tiny	16. Big-muscled	15. Delicately-featured
3.9 Tiny little	17. Mighty	16. Curvy
3.10 delicate-looking	18. Large	17. Bony
	19. Heavy	

**4.1.2.2 Quality**

In the term of subjective, we divide the descriptive words of the figure into three groups: neutral, positive and negative.

*a. Showing the neutral meaning.*

When we describe someone who is fat or rounded or has very little flesh on his body in a neutral way, we can use the words like: **Big, broad, bulky, chunky, corpulent, fleshy, heavy, plump, stocky, stout, thick-set , and thin.**

(1) Viktor Krum was **thin**, dark, and sallow-skinned, with a large curved nose and thick black eyebrows.[43, p.39]

*b. Showing the positive meaning*

**Beefy, buxom, chubby, cuddly, portly, solid, tubby, well-built, lean, slender, slim, slight, spare, and trim** are words that we use when we like the person we are describing and think their shape is quite attractive.

(3) Instead, I was ivory-skinned, without even the excuse of blue eyes or red hair, despite the constant sunshine, I had always been **slender**, but soft somehow, obviously not athlete.[38, p.2] *c, Showing the negative meaning*

**Dumpy, fat, flabby, gross, obese, overweight, podgy, pudgy, squat, bony, scrawny,** and **skinny** are considered impolite and should not be used when speaking to the person you are describing, or to someone who knows and likes them.

(7) A small and **skinny** wizard, completely bald but with a mustache to rival Uncle Veron’s, wearing robes of pure gold to match the stadium, strode out onto the field. [43, p.105]

**Table 4.4 The quality of words describing the figure of a person**

Words	Neutral meaning	Positive meaning	Negative meaning
1. Big	x		
2. Bulky	x		
3. Corpulent	x		
4. Fleshy	x		
5. Heavy	x		
6. Plump	x		
7. Stocky	x		
8. Stout	x		
9. Thickset	x		
10. Thin	x		
11. Beefy		x	
12. Chubby		x	
13. Portly		x	

14. Solid		x	
15. Tubby		x	
16. Well-built		x	
17. Lean		x	
18. Slim		x	
19. Slender		x	
20. Slight		x	
21. Spare		x	
22. Trim		x	
23. Willowy		x	
24. Dumpy			x
25. Fat			x
26. Flabby			x
27. Overweight			x
28. Podgy			x
29. Pudgy			x
30. Squat			x
31. Bony			x
32. Scrawny			x
33. Skinny			x

**4.1.3 Semantic Characteristics of WEDFP in Vietnamese**

**4.1.3.1 Semantic Features of WEDLHP**

- (13) Em tôi là thằng Riêng, kém tôi hai tuổi nhưng ngay hồi đó nó đã **cao** to hơn tôi. [50, p.10]
- (14) Thằng Riêng cũng đỡ vắt vả hơn. Đạo này nó **cao dênh dằng**, chân tay đen đúa và càng lảm lì. [50, p.11]

- (15) Im lặng. Con người bí ẩn đứng dậy, dáng **cao lớn như một nhà thể thao**, đi đến trước mặt tôi. [50, p.39]
- (16) Hình ảnh anh biến mất, chỉ còn lại thằng Riêng **cao lớn với bộ ngực vòng nữ đến muốn bứt cả nút áo**. [50, p.60]
- 4.1.3.2 Semantic Features of WEDFB**
- (32) Mỗi một tiếng rít lại theo một tiếng gằn nghe ghê hết cả da thịt. Người đàn bà nghiêng răng, quắc mắt, rút guốc phang Bính chẳng từ mặt mũi, Bính giằng không ra. Người đàn bà **to béo** khỏe hơn nhiều. [46]  
Béo như bò mộng (rất béo, béo tròn căng tựa như bò mộng) [32, p.143]  
Béo như bò sứt cạp (béo và sồ sề quá mức, phình ra)[32, p.143]
- (33) Sau khi sinh, chị ấy **béo như bò sứt cạp**. [32, p.143]  
Béo như con cun cút (béo tròn và lẳn người, ví như hình con cun cút) [32, p.143]
- (34) Mới đi thoát li mấy tháng mà cô ta đã **béo như con cun cút**.
- (35) Mày **béo như trâu trương** mà cũng kêu ốm à? [32, p.143]

#### 4.1.3.3 Semantic Features of WEDTB

- (56) Mới có nửa tháng thiếu vắng anh mà sao tôi thấy dài kinh khủng. Tôi mừng tượng ra anh lúc này chắc **còm nhom**, râu ria dử dần nhưng miệng cười vẫn tươi, cặp mắt sâu vẫn tỏa ánh ấm áp quan thuộc. [50, p.48]
- (57) Vạn ngỡ ngang vì cô bé ngày xưa **còm nhom** giờ lại phổng phao đẹp vậy. Ánh mắt của cô ta lúng liếng, đôi má đỏ hồng hồng. [48, p.4]  
Còm nhom ( quá gầy còm) [32, p.436]  
Còm nhom còm nhom (chỉ mức độ nhẵn mạnh) [32, p.436]

- (58) “Thằng bé **còm nhom còm nhom** quá thể.” [32, p.436]
- 4.1.4 Semantic Characteristics of WEDFP in English**
- 4.1.4.1 Semantic Features of WEDLHP**
- (77) She was quite a child , perhaps seven or eight years old, **slightly built**, with a pale, small-featured face, and a redundancy of hair falling in curls to her waist. [34, p.87]  
**Lanky** means ungracefully thin and rawboned
- (78) The last was **lanky, less bulky**, with untidy, bronze-colored hair. [38, p.4]  
**Gangling** or **long-legged** means awkwardly tall and spindly; lank and loosely built.
- (79) There was **a long-legged young man** with a very little empty donkey-cart. [35, p.133]
- (80) Right in the middle of the picture was Ron, **tall and gangling**, with his pet rat, Scabbers, on his shoulder and his arm around his little sister, Ginny. [42, p.9]
- 4.1.4.2 Semantic Features of WEDFB**
- (86) Of the three boys, one was **big — muscled** like a serious weight lifter, with dark, curly hair. [38, p.4]  
If we describe someone as **corpulent, fat, portly** or **stout** we mean they are fat.
- (87) Professors McGonagall and Flitwick had just entered the pub with a flurry of snowflakes, shortly followed by Hagrid, who was deep in conversation with **a portly man** in a lime-green bowler hat and a pinstriped cloak — Cornelius Fudge, Minister of Magic. [42, p.201]
- (88) He was led beneath a low archwa, and up a dirty court, into this dispensary of summary. It was a small pavedyard into which

they turned; and here they encountered a **stout man** with a bunch of whiskers on his face, and a bunch of keys on his hand

[36, p.58]

#### 4.1.4.3 Semantic Features of WEDTB

- (95) Piers was a **scrawny boy** with a face like a rat. He was usually the one who held people's arms behind their backs while Dudley hit them. [40, p.23]
- (96) He was high-shouldered and **bony**; dressed in decent black with a white wisp of a neckcloth. [35, p.163]
- (97) Mr Fang was a **lean, long-backed**, stiff-necked, **middle-sized man**, with no great quantity of hair, and what he had, growing on the back and sides of his head. His face was stern and much flushed. [36, p.60]

## 4.2 DISCUSSIONS

### 4.2.1 Similarities

The first point is that we have a series of the agreeing words indicating the figure.

- (109) - She pointed at the last and youngest of her sons. He was **tall, thin, and gangling**, with freckles, big hands and feet, and a long nose. [39, p.93]  
 (Bà chỉ vào đứa con trai nhỏ nhất của mình. Nó **cao, gầy, lóng ngóng**, mặc đầy tàn nhan, bàn tay bàn chân to bè, và mũi thì dài sọc.)

**Table 4.5 Vietnamese and English equivalents**

English	Vietnamese
Fat	Mập, múp, phì, phì nộn, béo, béo bệu, đầy đà.
Obese	Mập, phì nộn.
Stout, Corpulent	Mập, núng nính, phì nộn, đầy đà. béo múp míp, núng nính, phì
Plump	Múp, béo múp míp, núng nính, phì.
Lean, Thin,	Gầy, gầy gò, lẳng khảnh, gầy guộc, lẳng
Emaciated	khảnh, mảnh dẻ, gầy đét, gầy nhom.
Skinny	Gầy guộc, khảnh khiu, ốm nhom, ốm o
Tall	Cao
Gangling	Cao, gầy và nhìn lóng ngóng

The second point is that, in English, to emphasize the quality that adjectives describe, we use a submodifier like “very”, “rather”. In Vietnamese, we can use reduplicative form to increase or reduce the meaning

**Table 4.6 Some common Vietnamese and English equivalents of submodifier to increase or reduce the meaning.**

English	Vietnamese
Very lean	Khô đét
Very thin	Gầy tong teo
Very large	To lù xù
Very fat	Béo chùn chụt
Very tall	Cao lênh khênh
Rather skinny	Ốm cà tong cà teo

(113) Harry, though still **rather** small and **skinny** for his age, had grown a few inches over the last year. [41, p.6]

(Mặc dù vẫn **ốm cà tong cà teo** và nhỏ con so với tuổi của mình, nhưng so với năm ngoái thì Harry có cao hơn được mấy phân.)

The last point is that some descriptive objects in English and Vietnamese have the same characteristics.

**Table 4.7 Characteristics of object compared in Vietnamese and English**

Words	Object compared in English	Object compared in Vietnamese
Gầy	+ a lath, rail, rake + thread-paper + whipping –post	+ con máng + cái que + xác ve
Béo	+ fat as a pig	+ con heo (ụ ịt)

- as thin as a lath ( gầy như que củi)

- as fat as a pig ( mập như heo)

#### 4.2.2 Differences

##### 4.2.2.1 Differences in concept between Vietnamese and English

What is beauty? Beauty depends on the cultures and period of time. In other word, there is no common denominator for evaluating physical beauty. However, there are some certain elements making common criteria and they are acceptable. .

In the Western culture, beauty is synonymous with **skinny** whereas in many parts of Asia, being **fat** is considered beautiful. This could be understood in the case of Stone Age man, as a fat person

would have a much better chance of surviving a famine. The Vietnamese believed that the figure could express the personality, the life of a person. The saying goes that :

“Miệng cười môi đỏ trái hồng

Răng đều hạt bắp là hàng phu nhân”

##### 4.2.2.2 Differences in the cognition

Each community lives in different environment. Therefore, some objects such as “ hạt mít”, “chim cú”, “trâu”, “voi”, “cây sào”, “cò”, “nằm” are found in the description of the figure of a person in Vietnamese.

(114) Không!”cán bộ cá” không xấu xí đâu! Một cô bé **mũm mĩm tròn như hạt mít** vội cướp lời dân một cách láu lỉnh. (Tạp chí Văn nghệ quân đội, số 9- 1962) [32, p.1711]

(115) Bỏ áo trong quần thì nhìn Chi thấy giống như cái hột gà, ở chính giữa thân người phồng ra, **tròn vo như chữ o, không eo** không éch gì hết, không thua gì mấy ông tây già bụng bự trong phim. [46]

(116) Chi cũng còn nhớ hồi học cấp một, đồng phục con gái là mặc váy. Lúc đó Chi **ú ù, múp míp như cái nằm rom** chưa nở bung dù nên cái váy xòe ra càng làm cho Chi giống như cái nằm biết đi. [46]

**Table 4.6 Some special meanings of words indicating the figure of a person in Vietnamese**

<b>Béo</b>	Như con cun cú
	Như ông Di Lặc
	Như trâu trương
	Như bò sút cạp
	Như bò mộng

<b>Tròn</b>	Như hạt mít
<b>Gầy</b>	Như ống sậy
	Như con sếu
	Như con nhái bén
	Như con cò hương
	Như mai
<b>Cao</b>	Như cây sào
	Lớn như ông hộ pháp
	Như hạc thờ

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 REVIEW OF THE STUDY

In this study, the semantic features of words indicating the figure of a person have been presented in qualitative method and contrastive analysis.

Syntactically, adjectives in English and Vietnamese are mainly used to modify the noun and have the functions to represent the quality, color, size, shape, sound, level and size of things or phenomena. However, adjectives in Vietnamese are more complex.

Semantically, from analyzing the examples taken from literary works and newspapers, we can come to the conclusion that both languages have the agreement of using words describing the figure of a person. When we talk about a person who has a lot of flesh, phrases in Vietnamese have the same translation as those in English such as “mập”,/ “fat”, “đầy đà”, / “obese”, “phì” / “stout” ...

Moreover, there is a relative equivalent among the objects compared between two languages.

However, there are some differences of using descriptive words and phrases between two languages. Words denoting the figure of a person in Vietnamese are more abundant. Basing on the way of choosing words to describe, we can recognize the attitude or feeling of the writer or speaker. In sum, the study has provided learners of English with detailed description on words and phrases describing the figure of a person in comparison with those in Vietnamese at least basically. Although the result is still relative and not as satisfactory as we have expected, we hope to help Vietnamese learners of English as well as foreign learners of Vietnamese to

improve their translative skill, acquire knowledge of the traditional culture and history of the people who speak that language as their native language and overcome some problems they can encounter when learning and studying a language.

## **5.2 IMPLICATIONS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

This study hopefully encourages learners to consider contexts where words occur so that they can identify the most appropriate meaning of a word. A word is actually comprehensible if it is put in its specific contexts, without which word would be hardly adequately and flexible. In fact, words must be observed in real context, not on the understanding of the basic definition in the dictionaries.

During the process of learning a foreigner language, the fact that learners often impose the use of their mother tongue on that of the target language is very popular. So they often make errors. The teacher must point out all of the similarities and differences between the two languages concerning the problems under discussion.

Moreover, theory must be accompanied by practice. That is the way to successful foreign language learning. Besides, learners must keep in their mind these cases, no more confusion and mistakes can be encountered from the learners. Many exercises relating to these words must be provided so that learners can have more opportunities to practice.

We hope that this thesis on the semantic features of Vietnamese and English words expressing the figure of a person might provide teachers and learners of Vietnamese and English a useful document to deal with the difficulties when describing a character, or a person whom you know. Not only do we present the semantic features of descriptive words in English and Vietnamese,

but also we give a clear and fully explanation of culture of some phrases.

## **5.3 LIMITATIONS**

Due to the limited time and sources of material relating to the problem under investigation, this research can not avoid certain limitations.

First, the terms used are not enough and Vietnamese terms are really different to give an equivalent in English because there are some differences in meaning. Second, the author of the thesis has much difficulty in dealing with problems about culture, we could only talk about the difference in culture when using the languages in generally, not compare Vietnamese and English culture.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

- Semantic and pragmatic meaning of words indicating the face of a person.