

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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***A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF
SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF DRUGS
IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE***

Field : THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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***MASTER THESIS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

English like other foreign languages is very complicated for Vietnamese learners, especially Vietnamese learners in the field of medicine. Along with the development of global economy, especially since Vietnam joined WTO, medicine in Vietnam has developed drastically, many types of medicine have imported from different countries into Vietnam market in general and Quang Nam market in particular. It is very difficult for Vietnamese learners of medicine to classify, distinguish and understand clearly instructions for use of these drugs in different languages, especially in English.

It is obvious that IUDs(IUDs) are very diversified, complex and it is difficult for Vietnamese learners of medicine to understand the language used in them. In IUDs, various structures such as modal expressions, conditional sentences, imperatives and so forth with a lot of semantic functions are used. Therefore, I decide to conduct my thesis with the title “**A Discourse Analysis of Syntactic and Semantic Features of IUDs in English and Vietnamese**” to help Vietnamese learners master and understand clearly the linguistic features used in them.

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims

This study aims at examining the layout, the syntactic and semantic features of “instructions for use of drugs” in English and Vietnamese at discourse level to find out the similarities and differences in the mentioned linguistic aspects. The findings of the study, then, will help Vietnamese learners and teachers of English and medicine in teaching, learning and translating English as foreign language.

1.2.2. Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To examine the layout, the syntactic and semantic features of “instructions for use of drugs” in English and Vietnamese at discourse level.
- To find out similarities and differences of “instructions for use of drugs” used in English and Vietnamese in terms of layout, syntactic, semantic features at discourse level.
- To suggest some implications of the findings for the teaching and learning of English as foreign language.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The discourse analysis of syntactic and semantic features of “instructions for use of drugs” in English and Vietnamese will be a significant task contributing to Vietnamese learners' and teachers' awareness of the effective and appropriate using of words and sentences. Some areas of similarities and differences together with the implications of the study will be certainly helpful for Vietnamese learners of English and medicine.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this paper, I attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are syntactic and semantic features of IUDsin English and Vietnamese at discourse level?
2. What are similarities and differences of IUDsin terms of layout, syntactic, semantic features in the two languages at discourse level?
3. What are the implications for teaching and learning of English as foreign language concerning the language use of instructions of drugs?

1.5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Due to the limitation of time and resources, the focus of the study is mainly on the contrastive analysis of IUDssold at Viet Nam market in terms of layout, syntactic and semantic features between English and Vietnamese. The semantics in this study is understood as the one that encompasses the semantic notions like modality meanings and those related to the pragmatic aspects like speech act functions realized by different syntactic realizations.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis is designed in five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature review and Theoretical background

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES RELATED TO THE STUDY

So far, discourse analysis has been an interesting topic which attracts the interest and concern of many linguists and researchers such as Harris (1952), Austin (1962), Hymes (1964), Searle (1969), Brown and Yule (1983), Hatch (1992), Halliday and Hassan (1976), Nunan (1993), and Cook (1998), etc. Also, there have been a number of researches related to speech acts in English such as Austin (1962), Searle (1969). In Vietnam, discourse analysis and speech acts have drawn much attention of many researchers: Nguyen Hoa (2000), Tran Ngoc Them (1985), Nguyen Duc Dan (1998), Nguyen Thien Giap (2000), Do Huu Chau (2002), and Diep Quang Ban (2003).

Moreover, some researches related to the language of drug instructions have been studied such as Wolf, Davis, Shrank, Rapp, Connor, Clayman, Parker (2007). And especially, in Vietnam, in 2010, there was one thesis related to the medicine studied by Nguyen Thi Hong Minh "A Discourse Analysis of Medicine Advertisements in English and Vietnamese".

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Discourse Analysis

2.2.1.1. Definition of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is defined in many ways, for example, According to Brown and Yule (1983), "Discourse analysis is the study of language in use with the reference to the social and psychological factors that influence communication".

2.2.1.2. Discourse versus text

In fact, they is a difference between the terms "discourse" and "text" as follows: "Discourse: A continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit, such as a sermon, argument, joke or narrative." [7, p.25] "Text: A piece of naturally occurring spoken, written, or signed discourse identified for purposes of analysis. It is often a language unit with a definable communicative function, such as a conversation, a poster." [7, p.72]

2.2.2. Speech act

2.2.2.1. Definition of Speech act

Austin (1962) proposed the speech act the act that one does in saying something. It is an utterance as a functional unit in communication. A speech act consists of three components: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act.

2.2.2.2. Illocutionary force

The illocutionary force (the illocutionary act) is the making of an act in uttering a sentence, by virtue of the conventional force associated with it (or with its explicit performative paraphrase). And illocutionary force was classified into five classes according Austin (1962) and Searle (1975)

2.2.2.3. Directive

According to Searle (1969), directives are illocutionary acts with the point of illocutionary being to put the hearer into an obliged situation of performing a future act, with the direction of fit being to make the reality fit the speaker's words, with its expressed psychological state being the speaker's desire and the propositional content being the future act of the hearer. Directive includes acts of requesting, ordering, forbidding, warning, advising, suggesting, insisting, recommending, cautioning, and so on.

2.2.2.4. *Speech act conditionals*

Speech act conditionals are utterances which have the apparent structure of conditionals but function semantically as speech acts.

2.2.3. **Modal auxiliaries**

According to Alexander (1992), the common modal verbs which share the same grammatical characteristics are: can – could / may – might / will – would / shall – should / must and ought to. Verbs which share some of the grammatical characteristics of modals are: need, dare, used to. [1, p.207]

2.2.4. **Modality**

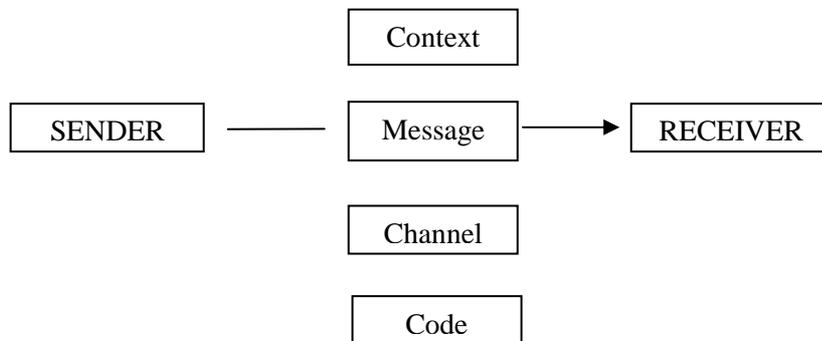
Modality is a category of meaning. Palmer (1986) considers modality as semantic information associated with the speaker's attitude or opinion about what is said. Modality can be expressed by modal finites, modal adjuncts ...

2.2.5. **Definition of drug**

Drug is defined that "drug is a substance used as a medicine or used in a medicine". [13, p.471] or a drug is "a chemical substance used in the treatment, cure, prevention, or diagnosis of disease or used to otherwise enhance physical or mental well-being". [199]

2.2.6. **A descriptive framework for study**

My study bases on the two theories of Jakobson in semiotics of semantics and Grice in pragmatics.



Dimensions

2.2.7. **Layout of IUDs**

According to [200, p.8], an instruction for use of drug includes the following parts: (1) Name of the medicine; (2) Composition, formula for a smallest unit; (3) Pharmaceutical form; (4) Packaging size or presentation form; (5) Indications; (6) Dosage and method, route of administration; (7) Contraindications; (8) Special Warnings and Precautions for use; (9) Pregnancy and Lactation; (10) Effects on ability to drive and use machines; (11) Interactions (with other medicines and other forms of interaction); (12) Adverse reactions; (13) Overdose; (14) Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties; (15) Storage; (16) Self-life; and (17) Name and address of individuals, organizations responsible for the medicinal product.

2.3. SUMMARY

This chapter has provided the literature review with the influential accounts of the famous writers of the field and the theoretical basis for the study in which the key notions in discourse analysis, speech acts such as discourse analysis, discourse versus text, speech acts, illocutionary force, directive, modality and speech act conditionals are discussed. Additionally, some important issues which are considered to be relevant to the topic of our study such as definition of drug, layout of IUDs are also dealt with. In the next chapter, we will describe the design and the methods for the study.

CHAPTER 3 METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was carried out with the combination of many methods such as descriptive method, quantitative and qualitative methods, contrastive method, analytic method and inductive method.

3.2. PROCEDURES

Firstly, collecting 140 samples of IUDs in English (70 samples) and Vietnamese (70 samples) from drugstores, pharmaceuticals of hospitals and internets. Secondly, picking out samples. Thirdly, describing and analyzing the samples. Next, finding out the similarities and differences of IUDs between two languages in terms of syntactic and semantic features, then draw out some conclusions. Lastly, discussing and pointing out some suggestions for the teaching and learning of English as foreign language in Vietnam.

3.3. DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLES

Based on some criteria such as the layout, the length of samples, sources, types, dates, etc ... we only selected 140 samples for both languages, of which 70 EIUDs with the average length from 1000 to 2000 words and 70 VIUDs with the average length from 500 to 1000 words, all IUDs are written texts published from 2001 to 2010.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION

The samples were selected based on five considerations: the layout, the length of samples, sources, types and dates. Firstly, in regard to the layout, selected samples were designed with the clear layout and the adequacy of all sections. It is easy for researchers to describe, analyze. Secondly, the samples had the similar length of samples to have the relatively exact study results. However, due to the difference of the average length between two languages, we selected 70 EIUDs with the average length from 1000 to 2000 words and 70 VIUDs with the average length from 500 to 1000 words. Thirdly, in terms of sources, the data for this thesis are mainly collected from drugstores, pharmaceuticals of hospitals and internets because it is easy to find with a high accuracy. Fourthly, the text type to be analyzed was the EIUDs and VIUDs. The choice of this type is due to their importance, complexity and differences in both languages. Finally, these data were written from 2001 to 2010 so that they are not out-of-date. In sum, the criteria above are useful for the purpose of analysis.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, IUDs selected for the analysis are in the form of written texts in drugstores, pharmaceuticals of hospitals and internets. 140 samples of two languages are collected for analysis. These IUDs include different forms of drug such as tablets, capsules, solution, etc... Then, EIUDs are analysed in terms of their layout, syntactic features and semantic features at discourse level and the same action for VIUDs. And the analysis results of the EIUDs and VIUDs will be compared and contrasted to find out the similarities and differences between two language and draw a final conclusion.

3.6. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In this thesis, two criteria of reliability and validity of the study have been made from collecting, analyzing data to giving the research results. Firstly, all of the IUDs collected from drugstores, pharmaceuticals of hospitals, internets are a reliable source of data. These instructions for use are of the popular medicines manufactured by companies in USA, UK, Australia and Vietnam. So, the quality of the data is quite reliable. Secondly, the study uses checklists and statistics in terms of frequencies of occurrence in percentages of syntactic and semantic features at discourse level of EIUDs and VIUDs, which sets up reliable bases for making a comparison of these features in order to find out the similarities and differences between two languages. Finally, the research results provide the theoretical background for discourse research and make a contribution to the learning, teaching of English.

3.7. SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have presented the research methods, procedures, description of samples, data collection and a discussion of data analysis, in which a combination of the descriptive method, qualitative and quantitative methods, the contrastive method, the analytic method and inductive method were employed. Also, specific steps by which we have collected, analysed the data, were presented, which served as the guiding steps for the presentation and discussing of the results in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. LAYOUT OF EIUDs AND VIUDs

4.1.1. Name of the Medicine

4.1.2. Composition

4.1.3. Pharmaceutical form

4.1.4. Presentation

4.1.5. Indications**4.1.6. Dosage and Method of Administration****4.1.7. Contraindications****4.1.8. Special Warnings and Precautions for use****4.1.9. Pregnancy and Lactation****4.1.10. Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines****4.1.11. Adverse Reactions****4.1.12. Interactions****4.1.13. Overdose****4.1.14. Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties****4.1.15. Storage****4.1.16. Self-life****4.1.17. Name and address of individuals, organizations responsible for the medicinal product****4.1.18. Comparison of EIUDs and VIUDs in terms of Layout****4.1.18.1. Similarities**

Firstly, both EIUDs and VIUDs have the Layout with 17 main sections, of which 13 obligatory sections ((1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (11), (12), (15), (16), (17)) and 4 optional sections ((9), (10), (13), (14)). Secondly, special warnings/ notes such as “*Prescription drug*” or “*Rx*”, “*Read the instruction thoroughly before use*”, “*Consult physician for further information*”, “*Do not use the expired drugs*”, “*Keep out of reach of children*” in English and “*Thuốc bán theo đơn*”, “*Để xa tầm tay của trẻ em*”, “*Đọc kỹ hướng dẫn sử dụng trước khi dùng*”, “*Nếu cần thêm thông tin xin hỏi ý kiến bác sĩ hoặc dược sĩ*”, “*Thông báo cho bác sĩ những tác dụng bất lợi gặp phải khi sử dụng thuốc*”, “*Không dùng thuốc đã quá hạn*”, etc in Vietnamese occur frequently in IUDs of both languages in the position where we can identify the most easily (the first or last position of IUDs) and these warnings are always printed bold, highlighted and clear or in capital letters in both languages. Finally, sections in EIUDs and VIUDs can be integrated together.

4.1.18.2. Differences

Apart from such similarities, the layout of IUDs has the following differences:

Firstly, in the collected IUDs samples, EIUDs are longer than in VIUDs with a lot of information instructed and explained very carefully, clearly, and in details. The longest EIUD sample is 1987 words and the longest VIUD sample is 874 words; especially many sections in EIUDs are longer than VIUDs such as Special Warnings and Precautions for Use, Adverse Reactions, Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties, etc, for example, the section of Adverse Reactions in EIUDs is presented according to specific levels (important, possible, very common, common, uncommon, rare).

Secondly, the frequency of occurrence of sections in EIUDs is higher than in VIUDs, for example, Pregnancy and Lactation, Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines and Overdose.

Finally, the position of sections in EIUDs is different from in VIUDs. In English, the order of sections is often arranged as follows: Name of the Medicine, Indications, Contraindications, Special warnings and precautions for use, Interactions, Pregnancy and Lactation, Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines, Dosage and Administration, Overdose, Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties, Side Effects, Storage, Self-life, Composition, Pharmaceutical forms, Presentation and Name and Address of organizations, individuals responsible for the medicinal product. Whereas, the order of sections in Vietnamese as follows: Name of the Medicine, Composition, Pharmaceutical form, Presentation, Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties, Indications, Dosage and Method of Administration, Contraindications, Special Warnings and Precautions for use, Pregnancy and Lactation, Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines, Adverse Reactions, Interactions, Overdose, Self-life, Storage and Name and address of individuals, organizations responsible for the medicinal product. Specially, the section of Self-life in EIUDs is usually integrated in the Storage with the utterances like “*Do not use the medicine after the expiry date which is printed on the carton. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month*”, meanwhile, the Self-life in VIUDs is usually presented separately with the content like “*24 tháng kể từ ngày sản xuất*”.

4.2. SYNTACTIC FEATURES IN EIUDs AND VIUDs**4.2.1. Modal Expressions**

Most linguistic studies of modal expressions begin and end with an analysis of the modals although the modals are syntactically distinct from modal expressions. [27, p.25]

In EIUDs, two modal verbs are used commonly are may and should. Its equivalent of “may” in Vietnamese language is “có thể” and “should”, “shouldn’t” in Vietnamese language is “nên”, “không nên” which are found in VIUDs.

Apart from the frequent appearance of modal expressions with “may” and “should” in English and “có thể”, “nên” in Vietnamese, other modal verbs sometimes also occur such as “can”, “will”, “must”, “need” in English and “phải”, “sẽ”, “cần” in Vietnamese.

Table 4.3. Frequency of occurrence of modal expressions of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

Modal expressions	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate
With “may”/ “có thể”	789	41.6%	385	51.2%
With “should”/ “nên”	462	24.3%	181	24.1%
With “can”	243	12.8%	0	0%
With “will”/ “sẽ”	154	8.1%	13	1.7%
With “must”/ “phải”	65	3.4%	51	6.8%
With “need”/ “cần”	186	9.8%	122	16.2%
Total	1899	100%	752	100%

4.2.2. Conditional Sentences

In IUDs, Type 1, also called real conditional sentences are normally found. And the construction of real conditional sentences in English can be realized by two following forms: *If + present + modal* (1) and *If + should/present + imperative* (2)

In Vietnamese, the most common structure of conditional sentences found in VIUDs is *Nếu ...thì...*,

Table 4.4. Conditional sentences of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

Conditional sentences	Occurrence	Rate
ENGLISH	1014	89.5%
VIETNAMESE	119	10.5%
Total	1133	100%

4.2.3. Passive Voice

Passive voice structure can be realized in the syntactic form with an agent and without an agent. In English, the passive voice is formed by the following constructions:

Subject _{passive} + Verb _{passive} (be/get + PP) + Optional Agent (by-Phrase)
Subject _{passive} + modal verb + V _{passive} (be + PP)

And in VIUDs, passive sentences are realized by the following construction: *Goal + được + Vtransitive*

Table 4.5. Passive voice in EIUDs and VIUDs

Passive voice	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate
With Agent	83	9.5%	2	0.5%
Without Agent	794	90.5%	387	99.5%
Total	877	100%	389	100%

4.2.4. Imperatives

Imperative sentences occur mostly in IUDs in order to perform the function of direct instructions, warnings for patients, users.

In EIUDs, imperatives are examined to occur commonly with the main forms as follows:

- Affirmative form: (Base form of the verb) (1)
- Negative short form: Do not + V (Base form) (2)

In Vietnamese, the common structures often used in imperatives are:

- Affirmative imperative: Hãy/Phải + Verb
- Negative imperative: Đừng/Không + Verb

Table 4.6. Imperatives in EIUDs and VIUDs

Imperatives	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate
Affirmative	543	59.9%	319	56.3%
Negative	364	40.1%	248	43.7%
Total	907	100%	567	100%

4.2.5. Simple Sentences

The purpose of use of too many simple sentences in IUDs is to help readers, users of medicines be easy to understand the information in IUDs. Most of simple sentences in IUDs happen with the structure: *Subject + verb + complement*

Table 4.7. Simple sentences of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

Simple sentences	Occurrence	Rate
ENGLISH	1456	67.6%
VIETNAMESE	697	32.4%
Total	2153	100%

Table 4.8. Frequency of occurrence of syntactic features of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

Languages \ Syntactic features	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate
Modal expressions	1899	30.9%	752	29.8%
Conditional sentences	1014	16.5%	119	4.7%
Passive voices	877	14.2%	389	15.4%
Imperatives	907	14.7%	567	22.5%
Simple sentences	1456	23.7%	697	27.6%
Total	6153	100%	2524	100%

4.2.6. Comparison of EIUDs and VIUDs in terms of syntactic features

4.2.6.1. Similarities

In terms of the syntactic features, there are many similarities between EIUDs and VIUDs. Firstly, both two languages have a strong tendency in using syntactic features such as modal expressions, conditional sentences, passive voices, imperatives and simple sentences. Next, modal expressions make up the highest percentage in comparison with other syntactic features both in English and in Vietnamese, 30.9% in English and 29.8% in Vietnamese, of which modal expressions with “*may*”/ “*có thể*” occurred the most commonly in

both languages and modal expressions with “*should*”/ “*nên*” occupy a similar percentage with 24.3% in English and 24.1% in Vietnamese. Moreover, with regard to passive voices, passive voices have the similar percentages compared to other sentence types in both languages with 14.2% in English and 15.4% in Vietnamese. And in both languages, passive voices with agent occupy the modest percentage with the rate of 9.5% in English and 0.5% in Vietnamese respectively. In terms of imperatives, there is the similar tendency between affirmative imperatives and negative imperatives in English and Vietnamese with the percentages of 59.9% and 40.1% for EIUDs, 56.3% and 43.7% for VIUDs. Most of imperatives in collected samples in both languages were found in the form of affirmative imperatives and negative imperatives without subjects. Lastly, most of conditional sentences in IUDs were found with the absence of “*then*” in English and “*thì*” in Vietnamese.

4.2.6.2. Differences

Apart from the similarities mentioned above, there are certain differences between EIUDs and VIUDs in the quantitative information. First of all, the frequency of occurrence of all of syntactic categories examined in English is higher than in Vietnamese as represented in Figure 4.4. In terms of modal expressions, English samples were found to occur more frequently than the Vietnamese ones (1899 versus 752) and the proportion of each kind of modal expressions have a large difference, that is, modal expressions with “*must*” make up the modest rate in English (3.4%) while modal expressions with “*sẽ*” occupy the lowest proportion in Vietnamese. Besides, as regards the conditional sentences, the rate of conditional sentences in EIUDs is much higher than in VIUDs with the proportion of 89.5% versus 10.5% as found in Figure 4.2 of Table 4.4. The percentage of conditional sentences compared to other features has a distinct difference between two languages (16.5% versus 4.7%). On passive voices, passive voices with agent are much lower than ones without agent. In English, the rate is 90.5% and 9.5%, the rate is 99.5% and 0.5% in Vietnamese. Finally, the percentage of imperatives compared to other syntactic features of VIUDs is higher than of EIUDs with the rate of 22.5% versus 14.7%.

4.3. SEMANTIC FEATURES IN EIUDs AND VIUDs

4.3.1. Speech act

4.3.1.1. Directive

As we all know, *directive* is an utterance used to try to get the hearer to do something. Quirk et al (1985) said that “directives are primarily used to instruct somebody to do something”. (28, p.804) In IUDs, functions of directive such as warning, advising, cautioning always occur.

a. Warning

In IUDs, warning expressions often occur in special warnings and precautions for use, contraindications, side effects, pregnancy and lactation, effects on ability to drive and use machines of IUDs with the structure of imperatives, statements with the implicit performative and we can recognize the illocutionary act of these utterances by the performative signs such modal auxiliaries as *will, can, may,...* in English and *sẽ, có thể,...* in Vietnamese. Functions of warning in IUDs are to alert users of drugs unsafety, unexpected reactions for use.

b. Advising

In IUDs, *advising* often occurs with the structure of modal expressions accompanied by modal verbs such as *should, shouldn't, need, needn't ...* in English and *nên, không nên, cần, phải, đừng, tốt nhất nên ...* in Vietnamese; conditional structures and imperatives.

4.3.1.2. Speech act conditionals

In IUDs, speech act conditionals with the function as advice were found to occur with a high frequency. Most of conditional sentences are found in Type 1, also called real conditional sentences with the structure *If-clause* (also called subordinate clause, or conditional clause) + *main clause* (also consequence clause). Of which, if-clause is an adverbial clause, a dependent clause that typically modifies its main clause. Therefore, a major semantic difference between if-clause and main clause in speech act conditionals is that the information in if-clause (subordinate clause) is often placed in the background with respect to the main clause (superordinate clause). There is a semantic inequality between if-clause and main clause.

Table 4.9. Semantic functions of speech act conditionals of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

		If-clause	Main clause
English	(1) If + present +	Condition to be satisfied	Likely outcome Will: prediction,

	modal		certainty or near-certainty, warning Can/could: possibility, less certainty, advice May/might: possibility, uncertainty, warning Should: necessity, almost certainty, advice Must: necessity, certainty, advice
	(2) If + modal/present + imperative	Condition to be satisfied If + modal makes the condition more doubtful, more polite than If + present	Advice, warning, suggestion, recommendation, request
Vietnamese	If + present/modal + imperative	Condition to be satisfied If + modal makes the condition more polite than If + present	Advice, warning, recommendation, request

Table 4.10. Speech acts of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

Speech acts \ Languages	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate
Directives	2086	68.2%	926	88.6%
Speech act conditionals	971	31.8%	119	11.4%
Total	3057	100%	1045	100%

4.3.2. Modality

Modality is a semantic term used to refer to the meaning of the modals. We can summarize the meanings of the modals in Table 4.11 as follows:

Table 4.11. Meanings of modal words of IUDs in English and Vietnamese

No.	English	Vietnamese	Meanings	
			Semantics	Pragmatics
1	May	Có thể	Possibility, uncertainty	Warning
2	Should	Nên	Necessity, almost certainty	Advice, suggestion
3	Can	Có thể	Possibility, ability, more certainty than “may”	Warning, suggestion, advice
4	Will	Sẽ	Prediction, certainty or near-	Warning, advice

			certainty	
5	Must	Phải	Necessity; Obligation, certainty	Advice, suggestion
6	Need	Cần	Necessity; Obligation, more certainty than “should”	Advice

4.3.3. Voice

In fact, medical manufacturers use a high tendency of passive voice in IUDs with the different purposes:

Firstly, the passive voice is used when the receiver of the action is more important than the actor. For IUDs, patients, medical takers are more important than manufacturers because they themselves use, take medicines and medicines affects directly to their human bodies and human lives.

Secondly, the passive voice may be used to avoid specifying the agent of an action. Agent is a doer who performs the action indicated by the verb. Therefore, manufacturers do not wish to commit themselves to actions, opinions, they do not want to impose the responsibility on them.

Thirdly, the names of medicinal products are repeated many times to warn, remind readers of using the drugs accurately, safely.

Fourthly, the passive voice is useful for emphasis in order to create the attention for readers of important information in IUDs in order to help them follow the instructions carefully.

Fifthly, the use of passive voice combined with modal verbs makes the utterances more polite, more lightly. The combination use with the modals will bring about a lot of different meanings such as passive voice with “*should*” in English or “*nên*” in Vietnamese for advice, with “*may*” in English or “*có thể*” in Vietnamese for warning.

Finally, the use of passive voice allows writers to organize stretches of discourse by placing figures other than the agent in subject position.

4.3.4. Comparison of EIUDs and VIUDs in terms of semantic features

4.3.4.1. Similarities

In general, manufacturers have a strong tendency in using speech acts, modality, passive voice with a lot of semantic functions in both languages. In terms of speech acts, directives (particularly warning and advising) and speech act conditionals are found to use a lot in both languages with the meanings of advice, warning. Moreover, directives have a higher percentage in both languages with the rate of 68.2% versus 31.8% in English and 88.6% versus 11.4% in Vietnamese. In addition, in both EIUDs and VIUDs, expressions for warning and advising often occur a lot with statements with the non-explicit performative, utterances without performative verbs and statements with modal verbs such as “*may*”/ “*có thể*” and “*should*”/ “*nên*”, “*need*”/ “*cần*”, “*must*”/ “*phải*”. Finally, modal words with the meaning of “*possibility*” are occurred more than ones with the meaning of “*necessity*” and “*prediction*” in both languages.

4.3.4.2. Differences

Beside the similarities represented above, there are some differences in terms of semantic features as follows:

Firstly, in EIUDs semantic features studied in the thesis are much higher than in VIUDs. For speech acts, English is nearly 3 times higher than Vietnamese (3057 versus 1045). Specially, the frequency of occurrence of speech act conditionals in EIUDs is much higher than VIUDs, over 8 times in comparison with VIUDs (971 versus 119). For modality, modal words that express the basic modality of “*necessity*”, “*possibility*” and “*prediction*” in EIUDs make up the higher frequency than in VIUDs. Of which, the meaning category of “*prediction*” is lower than “*necessity*” and “*possibility*”.

Besides, the percentage of directives compared to speech act conditionals in EIUDs is lower than one in VIUDs with the ratio of 68.2% versus 88.6%. Meanwhile, the percentage of speech act conditionals in EIUDs occupies a stronger tendency than in VIUDs with the proportion of 31.8% versus 11.4%.

Lastly, passive voice with various semantic functions is used with a higher frequency in EIUDs than in VIUDs.

4.4. SUMMARY

This chapter presents and discusses the findings from the data analysis in terms of the layout, syntactic features and semantic features of IUDs in English and Vietnamese as well as points out the similarities and differences of IUDs in two languages. Most important findings in the comparison of EIUDs and VIUDs will be summarized in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

The findings presented below are drawn from the major differences and similarities of IUDs in English and Vietnamese.

In terms of the layout, EIUDs and VIUDs have a similar structure. Both EIUDs and VIUDs have the Layout with 17 main sections, including (1) Name of the Medicine, (2) Composition, (3) Pharmaceutical form, (4) Presentation, (5) Indications, (6) Dosage and Method of Administration, (7) Contraindications, (8) Special Warnings and Precautions for use, (9) (Pregnancy and Lactation), (10) (Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines), (11) Adverse Reactions, (12) Interactions, (13) (Overdose), (14) (Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties), (15) Storage, (16) Self-life and (17) Name and address of individuals, organizations responsible for the medicinal product, of which 13 obligatory sections and 4 optional sections. However, apart from such similarities, the layout of IUDs has the great differences. Firstly, EIUDs are longer than in VIUDs, especially sections such as Special Warnings and Precautions for Use, Adverse Reactions, Pharmacodynamic and Pharmacokinetic properties, etc. Secondly, the frequency of occurrence of sections in EIUDs is higher than in VIUDs such as Pregnancy and Lactation, Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines and Overdose. Finally, the position of sections in EIUDs is different from one in VIUDs.

With regard to syntactic features, there are many similarities between EIUDs and VIUDs. Firstly, both two languages have a strong tendency in using syntactic features such as modal expressions, conditional sentences, passive voices, imperatives and simple sentences. Next, modal expressions and simple sentences make up the higher percentage in comparison with other syntactic features both in English and in Vietnamese, 30.9% in English and 29.8% in Vietnamese for modal expressions, 23.7% in English and 27.6% in Vietnamese for simple sentences. Moreover, with regard to passive voices, passive voices have the similar percentages compared to other sentence types in both languages with 14.29% in English and 15.4% in Vietnamese and passive voices with agent occupy the modest percentage with the rate of 9.5% in English and 0.5% in Vietnamese. In addition, in terms of imperatives, there is the similar tendency between affirmative imperatives and negative imperatives in English and Vietnamese with the percentages of 59.9% and 40.1% for EIUDs, 56.3% and 43.7% for VIUDs. Most of imperatives in collected samples in both languages are found in the form of affirmative imperatives and negative imperatives without subjects. Lastly, most of conditional sentences in IUDs don't use "then" in English and "thì" in Vietnamese. Beside such similarities, there are certain differences between EIUDs and VIUDs. First of all, the frequency of occurrence of all of syntactic features examined in English is higher than in Vietnamese. Especially, as regards the conditional sentences, the rate of conditional sentences in EIUDs is much higher than in VIUDs with the proportion of 89.5% versus 10.5%. The percentage of conditional sentences compared to other features has a distinct difference between two languages (16.5% versus 4.7%). However, the percentage of imperatives compared to other syntactic features of VIUDs is higher than of EIUDs with the rate of 22.5% versus 14.7%.

Finally, as for semantic features, the findings show that EIUDs and VIUDs have some similar tendencies. In general, manufacturers have a strong tendency in using speech acts, modality and passive voice with a lot of semantic functions in both languages. In terms of speech acts, directives (particularly warning and advising) and speech act conditionals are found to use a lot in both languages with the meanings of advice, warning. Moreover, directives have a higher percentage in both languages with the rate of 68.2% versus 31.8% in English and 88.6% versus 11.4% in Vietnamese. In addition, in both EIUDs and VIUDs, expressions for warning and advising often occur a lot with statements with the non-explicit performative, utterances without performative verbs and statements with modal verbs such as "may"/ "có thể" and

“*should*”/ “*nên*”, “*need*”/ “*cần*”, “*must*”/ “*phải*”. Finally, modal words with the meaning of “*possibility*” are occurred more than ones with the meaning of “*necessity*” and “*prediction*” in both languages. However, there are some differences in terms of semantic features as follows: Firstly, in EIUDs semantic features studied in the thesis are much higher than in VIUDs. For speech acts, English is nearly 3 times higher than Vietnamese (3057 versus 1045). Specially, the frequency of occurrence of speech act conditionals in EIUDs is much higher than VIUDs, over 8 times in comparison with VIUDs (971 versus 119). For modality, modal words that express the basic modality of “*necessity*”, “*possibility*” and “*prediction*” in EIUDs make up the higher frequency than in VIUDs. Of which, the meaning category of “*prediction*” is lower than “*necessity*” and “*possibility*”.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

With the investigation to find out the typical discourse features and the similarities and differences between EIUDs and VIUDs, we do hope this thesis is useful for teachers, learners, translators of English, especially in teachers and learners in medicine and pharmacy.

Firstly, to researchers, the findings of the study will probably be a useful resource for anyone who has a passion for studying language, especially language of instruction and language of medicine. In fact, there are not many linguists/researchers who have studied the language of medicines, particularly language of instructions for use of drug at discourse level. Therefore, this research hopefully will support a lot for students majoring the English language or language researchers related to medical topics.

Secondly, to teachers and learners, the typical discourse features of EIUDs and VIUDs as well as the similarities and differences between two languages can make a considerable contribution to the teaching and learning English for specific purposes, especially English for Medicine and Pharmacy. The thesis will be the basis for teachers in teaching how to write the instructions for use of drugs. It is the layout that provides a standard frame to develop the writing. Meanwhile, syntactic features and semantic features at discourse level will help teachers and learners have an exact and deep understanding of the way of using words and writing sentences in instructions for use of drugs, help them write the instructions for use of drugs with the right structures and effective content. Thus, the learners should be introduced the standard frame with some basic knowledge of grammar and structures before writing. They also need to practice their writing skills.

Thirdly, for translators and medical manufacturers, this study will be of much benefit to them. The result of the study will supply the most important and detailed information of instructions for use of drugs such as how many sections are often included in IUDs, which parts are obligatory, which parts are optional; what kinds of sentence types are often used in IUDs ... Therefore, translators can translate the instructions for use of drugs from English to Vietnamese and vice versa accurately with standard language and medical manufacturers can draft a good instruction for use for their medical products. So, translators and medical manufacturers should master and expand their knowledge so as to translate and draft well.

Finally, to medical takers, instructions for use of drugs are very complex, long with many parts. Medical takers should read carefully the information in IUDs, especially parts of indications, contraindication, warnings and precautions for use, dosage and pay attention to key messages of safe use so that they can use the drugs effectively and safely.

5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to the limitation of time, this thesis only focuses on examining the layout, the syntactic and semantic features of instructions for use of drugs in English and Vietnamese at discourse level without mentioning other discourse features such as lexical features, cohesive devices, conversation analysis, etc.

Moreover, although the researcher has compared and found out similarities and differences of the layout, the syntactic features and semantic features at discourse level between EIUDs and VIUDs, but the author has not explained the similarities and differences in the discourse features in EIUDs and VIUDs based on the cultural differences of two languages.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis is an attempt to make a discourse analysis of IUDs in English and Vietnamese in terms of the layout, syntactic features and semantic features. Additionally, we also have made a comparison to point out the similarities and differences between two languages. I assume that there are still some other interesting aspects for further investigation as follows.

1. An investigation into stylistic devices of instructions for use of drugs in English and Vietnamese.

2. An investigation into culture influences of English and Vietnamese instructions for use of drugs.
3. A study on speech act conditionals in English and Vietnamese.