A STUDY ON THE PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF COLLOCATION USED IN ADVERTISING HAIR CARE PRODUCTS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

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(A SUMMARY)

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. TRƯƠNG VIỄN

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 RATIONAL

Nowadays, together with the development of the society and the world, communicating is an essential part in our daily life. The need for different ways to exchange their thoughts, which may be made through language, signs, gestures, body, language, and so on. However, language proves to be the most effective means, for it is capable of conveying all what you want while the others might sometimes be impossible. Advertising is among the many ways conveying ideas in which language plays a very important role.

Whenever you speak or write something, you make words and sentences in such a way that it makes sense to the listener(s) or the reader(s) though you may not be aware of this. And this is the role of syntax – studying the structures of phrases and sentences. In addition, the role of pragmatics studying the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. George Yule assumes that in this three-part distinction- syntax, semantics and pragmatics – only pragmatics allows humans into the analysis [, p.4-5].

The advantage of studying language via pragmatic is that one can talk about people’s intended meanings, their assumption, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (for example, requests) that they are performing when they speak. The big disadvantage is that all these very human concepts are extremely difficult to analyze in a consistent and objective way. Thus, pragmatics is appealing because it’s about how people make sense of each other linguistically, but is can be a frustrating area of study because it requires us to make sense of people and what they have in mind.

“Collocation is the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing”. Advertising is crucial in our modern society. It is designed to promote the sale of a product or service …Since advertising is catchy and persuasive, advertisers tend to vary their ways and language so as to draw the attention of the potential consumers. This leads to the use of many different collocations in advertising the same product or service. For this reality it is very necessary this topic. This study attempts to study the syntactic and pragmatic features of collocations in advertising in English and Vietnamese so that the research will give out some consideration and propose methods in using those. And above all, the author of this research hopes to help Vietnamese learners of English understand better when translating and using products in advertising.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Collocation runs through the whole of the English language. No piece of natural spoken or written English is totally free of collocation. Choosing the right collocation will make the speech and writing more natural and more native – like. And study of syntactic and pragmatics features of collocations will be a contribution to the understanding and using collocation of the learners.

1.3 PURPOSES OF THE STUDY
The study is to find out the syntactic and pragmatic features of collocations used in advertising hair care products in English and Vietnamese to point out the similarities and differences between them.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

This study is intended
- To collect and systematize some theoretical background for the study of collocations.
- To analyze, synthesize, comment and illustrate the syntactic and pragmatic features of collocations with examples taken from written advertisements in English and Vietnamese.
- To show the similarities and differences in collocations used in advertising hair care products between these two languages, in terms of syntax and pragmatics.
- To make some suggestions on using collocations effectively for the English learners.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will seek answers to the following questions:
- What are the syntactic and pragmatic features of collocations of “hair” and “tóc” used in advertising hair care products in English and Vietnamese?
- What are the similarities and differences of these collocations in English and Vietnamese in terms of syntax and pragmatics?

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In this study, I will study collocations of “hair” used in advertising hair care products in written form collected from advertisements on mass of communication such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet etc. …both in English and Vietnamese and is limited in analyzing and discussing the syntactic and pragmatic features of these collocations.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

There are five chapters included in the thesis.

Chapter 1 consists of the rationale, the justification, the purposes, the objectives, the research questions, the scope of the study, some definitions of terms used in the thesis and organization of the study.

Chapter 2 is the theoretical background which includes the literature review, and some general features of syntactic and pragmatics of English and Vietnamese.

Chapter 3 is the one in which the methods of collecting analyzing data and describing data are presented.

Chapter 4 focuses on analyzing and discussing the syntactic and pragmatics features of collocation of the words “hair”, “tóc” and their proper adjectives and the equivalents based on the findings.

Chapter 5 is the conclusion of what has been found and discussed. It is the summary of syntactic and pragmatics features of collocations of “hair” and “tóc” in advertising in English and Vietnamese and the implication of the thesis.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 PREVIOUS STUDIES

A review of literature on previous studies relating to collocations and language of advertising is presented in this section.

Anna Braasch and Sussi Olsen (2005), in their paper “Formalised Representation of Collocations in a Danish Computational Lexical”,

English collocations have been studied and discussed in a variety of books. Collocations have been listed in such a way that they are called “word collocations” in Oxford Collocations Dictionary (2003).


In “The discourse of advertising” by Guy Cook (2003, 2nd edition), the author provided a framework for analysis of advertisements as a discursive genre. There have been some researches done into lague of advertising in Vietnamese. In “A Discussion Concerning Linguistic Units and Meaning in English Language Advertisements” (1993) Dinh Gia Hung and Ho Sy Thang Kiet discussed the features of English linguistic units and semantic meaning used in advertisements. A study of collocations in advertising in English and Vietnamese, (2006) Hoang Thi Bao Kim presents the semantic and syntactic features used in advertisements. Ms Bao Kim did research into syntactic and semantic features of the collocations of “skin” and “da” and had some findings on the similarities and differences in their using in English and Vietnamese as well as their frequency. In the research of Dao Tan Canh (2008), he finds down the syntactic and pragmatics features of collocation used in advertising of hair care products and skincare products in English and Vietnamese and give out some similarities and differences between them. Besides, from different views, some linguists approached advertising and advertising language, examining the linguistic usage on billboards and in advertisements, the correspondence between forms and contents as well as the influence of cultural factors such as: “Về ngôn ngữ trong quảng cáo” (Trần Đình Vinh, Nguyễn Đức Toàn, 1993), “Ngôn ngữ quảng cáo-phương pháp sao phường” (Nguyễn Đức Dân, 1994), “Về lập luận trong quảng cáo” (Mai Xuân Huy, 1999), “Quảng cáo và ngôn ngữ quảng cáo” (Lý Tùng Hiểu, 2004) etc…

2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Definitions of terms

2.2.1.1 Syntactic Features

“Syntactic features are the features involving the rules governing the structure of a language such as the form of words, the
structure of phrases, clauses and sentences, word order, collocation…”

2.2.1.2 Pragmatic Features

Pragmatic features are the features involving the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. The study of language via pragmatics is that one can talk about people’s intended meaning, their assumptions, their purposes or goals and kinds of actions that they are performing when they speak.

2.2.1.3 Collocation

In Oxford Collocations Dictionary (2003), collocation is defined as the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing or a particular combination of words used in this way.

“The term collocation refers to combinations of two lexical items each of which makes a distinct semantic contribution” (Stephan Grimly and Kurt – Michael Patrol, 2002)

Collocations are also labelled if they belong to a particular field of language such as law, medical. In advertising field, collocation are also takes an important part in convincing people to use products.

Figurative meaning and literal meaning of a word may share collocations

2.2.2 Collocations and Syntax

Collocation is the way words go together to produce natural pieces of language. And syntax concerns the combination of words into phrases and sentences. In other words, when discussing collocations we cannot help talking about common syntactic features like word, phrases, sentences…

Collocation is two or more words that often go together. These combinations just sound “right” to native English speakers, who use them all the time. On the other hand, other combinations may be unnatural and just sound wrong. For example, the fast train or fast food is natural English. They are right. However, in these examples, a fast shower or a fast meal “fast” adjective are wrong.

In Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2003), collocation is defined as the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing.

In Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar of Sylvia Chalker and Edmund Weiner, collocation is a type of syntagmatic relationship between words. According to Sylvia Chalker and Edmund Weiner, collocation includes of two types. They are grammatical collocation and lexical collocation. Grammatical collocation is the structure of a verb, it is obligatory an adjective… to go with a preposition

According to another author, there are several different types of collocation made from combinations of verb, noun, adjective etc…

2.2.2.1 Phrases

A phrase may be one or more words long. That is to say, it consists of at least a head word and optional modifiers. There are five phrase types in both English and Vietnamese; however, Noun Phrase (NP) and Adjective Phrase are the ones investigated in the thesis for
what is discussed within this paper is collocations of the word “hair”,
“tóc” and their adjectives and the equivalents.

a. The Noun Phrase
The noun phrase always consists of at least a noun which is
its center or head and optional modifiers

Premodifier(s) + Head Noun + Postmodifier(s)

(1) the beautiful pictures on the wall
(2) Tấc cả máy cuốn sách này

Premodifier(s) + Head Noun

(3) the first three months
(4) hai ly

Head Noun + Postmodifier(s)

(5) (the) baby crawling over the grass
(6) ly này

b. The Adjective Phrase
The adjective phrase contains a head adjective and optional
intensifier and complement in English

Intensifier + Head + Complement

(7) They are well aware of the dangers [*, p.56]
And in Vietnamese the adjective phrase consists of a head
adjective and optional modifiers

Modifier(s) + Head + modifier(s)

(8) Em này còn trẻ quá

2.2.2.2 Sentences

Generally, sentences are used as a means of exchanging ideas
in people’s communication. How to make sentences follows certain
grammatical rules of a particular though. Practically, countless of
sentences are made based on limited patterns.

Sentences are classified in many different ways depending on
different criteria. Regarding to types of verbs, according to Gerald
P.Delahunty and James J.Garvey (1994) there are 8 patterns while 20
patterns are described in Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary
(2006) and 7 patterns according to Randolph Quirk and Sidney
Greenbaum (1976). This difference is up to different points of view
of linguists. Besides, sentences can be divided into simple,
compound, complex and compound complex for their complexity or
declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamations in forms of
affirmative and negative in terms of their purpose of discourse.

Commonly, in Vietnamese sentences are categorized into
simple or complex based on the Subject – Predicate structure. That a
sentence is simple or complex based on the number of the subject –
predicate structures as the skeleton. The one consisting of one subject
– predicate structure is called simple and any other consisting of
more than one such structure is named complex.

a. Con có lăn lỏi bờ sông
b. Đất say đất cùng lần quay

(9) Trời say trời cũng đồ gái ai cười
(10) Vì trời mưa nên trần đầu bi hụy bỏ
In many cases, a sentence is simple although it contains more than one subject – predicate structure. These are simple sentences contain complex parts. These complex parts can be either basic sentence element like subject, predicate or other such as complement, object.

(11) Nước chảy mạnh làm trời cứu

(12) Cây mai này hoa nó đẹp quá

(13) Chúng ta thị dừa là chúng ta yêu nước

Sentences 11, 12, 13 are all simple but their main parts are complex. In sentence 11, the subject is made complex. In sentence 12, the sentence part made complex is the predicate. In sentence 13 both subject and predicate are subject - predicate structures. That is to say, not all sentences which contain more than one subject – predicate structure are complex. A sentence is considered complex on condition that it has more than one subject – predicate structure and these structures must be the skeleton of the sentence. Besides, we can identify complex sentences thank to coordinators và, rồi, hay, hoặc, còn, mà…… and subordinators vì, nếu, tuy, để……

(14) Anh ấy bỏ đi và căn phòng bỏ trống.

2.2.3 Collocations and Pragmatics

A collocation is the way words go together to produce natural pieces of language. And pragmatics concerns the contextual factors and the interaction with linguistic meaning in the interpretation of utterances however when we discuss collocations we cannot help talking about pragmatic features.

Pragmatics is the study of language use, and contrasted with the study of language structure. Pragmatics is the study of how contextual factors interact with linguistic meaning in the interpretation of utterances. Collocations are, in fact, words combining into phrases and sentences, collocations are also takes an important part in convincing people to use products.

Thus, they share all the features that pragmatics deals with such as negative politeness strategies, deixis, and implicatures.

2.2.3.1 Negative Politeness Strategies

Politeness, in an interaction, can then be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person’s face. However, we can use one of two strategies of politeness, negative or positive one. The choice of strategy is dependent on the speaker’s estimate of the threat to the addressee’s face. It is important to realize that Yule and others are only concerned with linguistic politeness, the use of language per se to communicate the attention to the face needs of coparticipants. In advertising, the producers use politeness strategies in subtle and nuanced expressions to impress to customers.
2.2.3.2 Deixis

Deixis is for one of the most basic things we do with utterances. It means ‘pointing’ or ‘deictic expression’. We use a deictic expression to indicate something in the immediate context. For example, when we notice a strange object and ask “What’s that?”, in this sentence “that” is a deictic expression. Besides, “person deixis” (‘me’, ‘you’), or “spatial deixis” (‘here’, ‘there’), or “temporal deixis” (‘now’, ‘then’) are used in context.

Deixis is clearly a form of referring that is tried to the speaker’s context, with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being ‘nearer speaker’ versus ‘away from speaker’. In English, the nearer speaker or proximal terms are ‘this’, ‘here’, ‘now’. The away from speaker or distal terms are ‘that’, ‘there’, ‘then’. In Vietnamese, the nearer speaker, the away from speaker are similar such ‘cái này’, ‘ở đây’, ‘bây giờ’, ‘cái kia’, ‘ở đó’, ‘sau dó’…

2.2.3.3 Implicature

The notion of implicature is both of conversational and conventional. Grice (1957, 1969, 1989) emphasized the conceptual relation between natural meaning in the external world and non-natural, linguistic meaning of utterances. He called this overarching dictum the co-operative principle and subdivided it into nine maxims of conversation classified into four categories: The Maxim of Relation, The Maxim of Quality, The Maxim of Quantity, and The Maxim of Manner.

2.2.4 Leech’s Politeness Maxims

Leech brought in a ‘Politeness Principle’ which defined politeness as forms of behaviour which allow us to co-exist in a harmonious manner. Therefore, his maxims are those of Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement and Sympathy. Conversatin governed by these maxims are more polite and thus encourage harmonious co-existence. To summarise, Leech was concerned with efficient and clear conversation as Grice, but also how the delivery of this conversation and how polite it is.

2.2.5 Collocations and their Classification

Most of the collocations can be called “word collocation”; that is, these are the precise words that combine with each other: small fortune cannot be changed to little fortune, even though small and little would seem to be synonymous.

There is another area of collocation that might be called “category collocation” where a word can combine with any word from a readily definable set. This set may be quite large, but its members are predictable, because they are all words for nationalities, or measurements of time for example three – minute / five – minute walk.

Collocations are also labelled if they belong to a particular field of language such law or medical or more specific usage restrictions such as in football or in journalism.

Both figurative and literal meanings of a word may share collocations. Figurative is a feature of English that when the meaning of a word is extended and used in a non-literal sense, the collocations
of the literal sense are often carried over. The collocations lose is
given, followed by literal meaning in the example: *She lost her way in the fog.* And by figurative meaning in the example: The project seems to have lost its way.

### 2.2.6 Characteristics of Advertising Language

Advertising Language is characterised by the following
features. In any given advertisement these features may appear or be largely absent, such is the great variety of advertising copy. However these features may be said to be typical of advertising in general. Even advertisements which do not use the traditional features to attract inform and persuade may be described as being in contrast to the traditional features.

### 2.2.7 Typical Features of Advertising Language Viewed from the Psychological Perspective

It is commonly accepted that language is among many important factors including images, sounds, colours...helping make a successful advertisement. In many cases, whether an advertisement is successful or not is decided by language.

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### CHAPTER 3

#### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study on the syntactic and pragmatics features of collocations of “hair”, “tóc” and their adjectives or the equivalents is to be carried out based on the collection, selection and analysis advertisements of hair care products in both English and Vietnamese. The study deals with collocation concepts. Using collocation in advertising depends on the syntactic pragmatic features. Advertisers and producers want to use suitable language to enhance the effects of products.

#### 3.1 METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

I carried out the collection and study on a wide variety of samples taken from different sources with the number of 200 hair care product advertisements in English and 200 ones in Vietnamese.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

- Descriptive, qualitative and quantitative approach is to be adopted in this study
- Samples of hair care products are collected and sorted into groups for the analysis of syntactic and pragmatic features.

#### 3.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Samples are taken from many different sources so as to eliminate the element of subjectivity in the findings of the study that results in a good conclusion and implication.

#### 3.4 STEPS IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS
4.1 COLLOCATIONS AND THEIR SYNTACTIC FEATURES
4.1.1 Adjectives Collocate with “hair”, “tóc”

As it can be seen from the classification of collocation, such parts of speech as adjectives, quantifiers, verbs, nouns and prepositions can combine with “hair”. With in this thesis as mentioned in the scope of the study, only collocations between the word “hair”, “tóc” and their adjectives and the equivalents are to be investigated.

4.1.1.1 Adjectives Collocate with “hair” in English.

According to Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greebaun (1976), adjectives are either attributive or predicative. They are attributive when they premodify nouns.

...Bring relief to thirsty hair with the Hydra TLC collection.
A special formulated milk that combines 2% pure, stabilized Vitamin C with other active ingredients. Apply daily to enjoy softer, smoother-looking hair.

And they are considered to be predicative when they function as subject complements or object complement.

Hair looks smoother, calmer, and healthier.

4.1.1.2 Adjectives and the Equivalents Collocate “tóc” in Vietnamese

Quite different from English adjectives, Vietnamese ones are never found standing in front of nouns. For instance, we say “tóc xanh mướt” not “xanh mướt tóc”.

Dove là một nhãn hiệu tre những đã sớm định vị trong thị trường chăm sóc sắc đẹp. Dùng dầu gội Dove bạn sẽ thấy tóc mềm mướt hơn từng ngày.

4.1.2 English Collocations of “hair” and their Functions in Sentence

Flexible collocations usually nivolve verbs and predicative adjectives. In such cases, the syntactic relations between the words in the collocations need to be considered in sentences.

4.1.2.1 English Noun Phrases and Collocations of “adjective + hair”

The noun phrases typically functions as subject, object, complement of sentences, and as complement in prepositional phases. Hence collocations of “adjective + hair” have the same functions.

Get naturally beautiful hair with Aussie® Hair Shampoo Products.

4.1.2.2 English Clause Patterns and Flexible Collocations of “hair”

Clause pattern 2: S + V + C
Clause pattern 5: S + V + O + C

4.1.3 Vietnamese Collocations of “tóc” and their Functions in Sentences
Collocation between a noun and an adjective in Vietnamese
to be studied in the unit of phrase or sentence

4.1.3.1 Vietnamese Noun Phrases and Collocations of “tóc + adjective”

The noun phrase can be the subject, predicate, object in a
clause or in a sentence. Therefore, every collocation of “tóc +
adjective” which is considered a noun phrase has the same function

Mái tóc óng mượt luôn là thước mà của bạn

4.1.3.2 Vietnamese Clause Patterns and Flexible Collocations of “tóc”

4.2 Collocations and their pragmatic features

4.2.1 Politeness Strategies

4.2.1.1 English Adjectives Collocate with “hair” and their Politeness Strategies

Based on the sense relations between the adjectives that collocate
with “hair”, we can group them all into seven. The level of
impression based on the collocation of adjective.

4.2.1.1.1 Using comparison to express to customers

Pantene Restoratives Shampoo and conditioner make your hair less
frizzy, more manageable, smoother and softer

4.2.1.1.2 Using images to impress to customers

… leave hair clean, silky soft and nurtured.

4.2.1.1.3 Using aspects of human body health to impress to customers

…. Bring relief to thirty hair with the Hydra TLC collection

4.2.1.4 Using aspects of lights to impress to customers.

Pantene designed to help give color-treated hair a new protective
outer layer, leaving hair shiny and vibrant

4.2.1.5 Using sounds and tones to impress to customers

Creany Formula with Gentle Conditioners reduces splits ends and
leave toned hair.

4.2.1.6 Using human beauty to impress to customers

Get naturally beautiful hair with Aussie® Hair Shampoo Products.

4.2.1.7 Using direction to impress to customers

L’oreal professionnel serie Expert Liss Extreme điều trị và nuôi dưỡng tóc, làm bóng thẳng tóc, mang lại một mái tóc óng mượt
không bị rối bởi gió.

4.2.1.2 English Adjectives Collocate with “hair” and their Negative Politeness Strategies.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUDING REMARK

The study on the syntactic and pragmatic features of collocation used in advertising hair care products in English and Vietnamese are presented clearly in each chapter. Below are the conclusions on similarities and differences of collocations used in advertising in the two languages.

Some differences in the syntactic and pragmatic features do exist in these collocations. Syntactically, English and Vietnamese have different systems of grammar, thus, there are some features in this language which cannot be found in the other. Within the study, those relating to adjectives. Adjectives in the Vietnamese language have the same functions as verbs in case they are direct predicates. This leads to the omission of some copular verbs when translation is done from English into Vietnamese. In addition, the number of Vietnamese adjectives used in comparative and superlative forms is less than that of the English ones. The origin of the two languages brings about differences in the formation as well as the combination of words. The English language experiences morphological changes. The grammatical relationships are expressed by means of inflections while Vietnamese uses function words or word order. Consequently, the majority of adjectives collocate with “tóc” are compounds and “reduplicative words” whereas there are more adjectives created by adding affixes including the participle adjectives to be found in these collocations of “hair”. This, in turn, has effect on the ways of using words to express certain ideas. In some cases, hardly any equivalents are found frizzled, thirsty, well-rested... or the meaning of an adjective or a compound adjective in English is conveyed by a fixed expression in Vietnamese silky/ óng à nhu tơ, velvety – smooth/ mượt mà nhu nhung or vise versa. Additionally, since no piece of language is free of collocations, and collocations between any nouns and its adjectives will share some same basically syntactic and semantic features, language learners can possibly make use of the findings in this thesis in their learning and using collocations effectively. The above implications can also be applied for different collocations of the same kind in other contexts. Normally, word collocations are unpredictable; however, the research somehow reveals some possible prediction for forming collocations; if a root word can collocate with a certain noun then its derivatives can, too. And any adjective formed by means of compounding or “reduplicating” possibly collocates with a particular noun once its primitive adjective does. Pragmatically, collocations in advertisements add functional aspects such as making comparison, arousing images, dealing with health, talking about lights and shines and this please a variety of consumers. In these advertisements, manufacturers and sellers employ different strategies to impress their consumers positively according to their needs or tastes. The tact maxim and deixis also help make advertisements attractive and convincing.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS
From the findings of the study, some pedagogical implications are presented.

- First, language teachers should realize the importance of collocations in their lessons. Many Vietnamese learners are weak in using collocations because they are not native speakers. In English lessons, teachers should provide learners with useful expressions that include collocations and show them how to use these expressions and collocations in contexts.

- Second, collocations related to hair and hair care play an important part in learners’ daily life, since learners are also consumers, and they usually spend time looking for hair care products for their daily lives. They should be showed how to read and evaluate collocations about hair care so that they find it easy to look for suitable hair care products for their benefits.

- Third, language teachers should be familiar with the language of advertisement so that they are able to read explicit and implicit meanings of advertisements. This will assist them and their learners to select and evaluate advertisement pragmatically for both academic and commercial purposes.

5.3. LIMITATION

The research into syntactic and pragmatic features of the collocation of “hair” and “tóc” was done and some findings on the similarities and differences in their using in English and Vietnamese as well as the frequency were presented in chapter 4. Due to the time constraint and the researcher’s knowledge and English proficiency, this research has still left much to be desired. Also, there are some unsolved matters that should be considered for further research.

5.4. FURTHER RESEARCH

This study may be further examined through the following topics so that collocations in advertising in both languages can be penetrated in a comprehensive and profound way.

1. Research into the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of the verb and noun collocate with “hair”
2. A study of the semantic features of collocations of hair, skin, eyes, lips and their adjectives

Hopefully, more interesting findings will be given about how people speaking English and Vietnamese combine words for their meanings.