

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
UNIVERSITY OF DANANG

NGUYỄN HẢI NHUNG

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF
INVERSION IN ENGLISH AND
VIETNAMESE LITERATURE**

M.A. THESIS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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**CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION**

1.1. RATIONALE

Literature always plays an essential role in most people's spirit life. Though the explosion of information and the revolution of high technology, especially the internet, for a few recent decades have given us various kinds of entertainments, literature still one of the oldest and most favorite ways of entertaining, learning and experiencing life. Besides, every literary works reflect authors' talents, one of that is the way they use the language to express their ideas and to impress the readers. There are many ways the writers have been using to make the language become such a valuable and flexible means of transferring the ideas. Sometimes, a simple way of forming a sentence or a bit strange order of words can make the ideas become so impressive and unforgettable – inversion is one of those ways which create great effects for literary works.

Inversion, as it may seem, is simply a reversal of what is considered the normal or usual order of the constituent parts. In fact, to English learners, it is not easy to understand and use inversion correctly. Inversion is used a lot in English as well as Vietnamese literature, especially in poetry. Many writers prefer to use it as both a grammatical structure and literary device because it is able to make readers come to the same idea with new ways of approaching, so that things will seem to be new and more impressive. Moreover, in order to use inversion in their works, the authors must take into account the skill of using the language, how to organize and develop their writing. They must choose the right sentences and ideas to apply this stylistic device that it will promote the best effect, otherwise the sentences will be so tangled and difficult for the readers to understand what the authors want to reveal.

One strong motivation for my choice is the fact that the use of inversion in literature has a great appeal to most of readers. Right when readers look at a phrase or sentence in which there is a strange order of words (or a group of words), they will think that there must be something special about this point that the author wants them to notice. Therefore, inversion somehow immediately draws readers' attention to the exact point that the writer emphasizes. Another interesting thing about inversion is that there are grammatical rules for reversing words for phrases, but many writers also create their own ways which often give stronger effect for being unexpected.

For this reason, I would like to carry out my research on the topic "AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF INVERSION IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE LITERATURE". This thesis is conducted with the hope that the research result will provide certain linguistically useful practical knowledge for teachers and learners of English especially students majoring in literature as well as those who are interested in this field.

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims

This research aims at analyzing some syntactic features and exploring some pragmatic features of inversion in English and Vietnamese literature in order to have a good insight into inversion.

Syntactically, the study tries to focus on the patterns of inversion in poetry both languages.

Pragmatically, the study attempts to point out the motivations of employing inversion both in English and in Vietnamese literature.

1.2.2. Objectives

With the above-mentioned purposes, this study is intended to:

- describe, classify, and analyze inversion in terms of syntax and pragmatics in both English and Vietnamese literature.

- point out the syntactic and pragmatic similarities and differences between the uses of inversion in both languages.

- find out the problems facing English-Vietnamese literature researchers in understanding inversion structures in literature (particularly in poetry).

- put forward some suggestions concerning the translation of inversion in English and Vietnamese literature.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Theoretically, this can help the language researchers and learners understand more the use of inversion in poetry written by some poets from the 19th century to contemporary time. The result of the study could partly contribute to the discovery of those poets' style of composing.

Practically, the result of the study could be used in the teaching and learning of literature at schools and universities. As for teachers, this study will be a good reference of the use of inversion. As for students, they will have better understanding of those inversion employed in the analyzed works and will be able to capture the implications of the works. As for translators, they will be more aware of similarities and differences in translating the inverted structures.

1.4. THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The use of inversion in literature is so diversified that it is really difficult to cover all of them. In addition to analyzing the use of inversion, the researcher also explains the meaning and implication of the works, making it take more time to analyzing each work.

Due to the scope of a master thesis, as well as the limitations of the researcher's knowledge, the study is conducted in the following scope:

- Only literary works of the writers living in 19th 20th and 21st century are studied.
- Only poetical works are studied.
- Only some typical poems are chosen to be analyzed.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are typical uses of inversion in English and Vietnamese literature?
2. What are the similarities and differences of the use of typical inversion in English and Vietnamese literature?
3. What are some suggestions for translating inversion in poetry?

1.6. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis is designed in five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS STUDY

Inversion, a syntactical stylistic device, has a great expressive value. It has so far been an interesting topic for study all over the world. In fact, inversion has been dealt with by many famous linguists in both English and Vietnamese such as: Galperin [17], Wales [37], Peter Culicover and Levine [10], etc. These authors have made great contributions to the background theory of this research.

Also, inversion has drawn the attention of some Vietnamese researchers. Nguyen Thi Quynh Hoa [26], for example, did a research on functions of English inversion structures. However, in this thesis she only studied the functions of inversion structures not the stylistic features and not in English and Vietnamese literature.

Generally speaking, most of the studies in both English and Vietnamese are only investigations into the functions of inversion structures. It has not been explored and studied in depth in terms of syntax and pragmatics. Up to now, there has not been a systematic and thorough investigation into the typical syntactic and pragmatic

features of inversion in both English and Vietnamese, especially in poetry, which leaves room for me to do this research.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Stylistics

Galperin, in his book “Stylistics” [17] defines that:

Stylistics is a branch of general linguistics, which deals with the following two interdependent tasks:

a) studies the totality of special linguistic means (stylistic devices and expressive means) which secure the desirable effect of the utterance;

b) studies certain types of texts "discourse" which due to the choice and arrangement of the language are distinguished by the pragmatic aspect of communication (functional styles).

2.2.2. Inversion

2.2.2.1. Inversion as Part of Stylistics

Galperin in his book “Stylistics” makes a very clear definition of stylistic inversion is that:

Unlike grammatical inversion, stylistic inversion does not change the structural meaning of the sentence, that is, the change in the juxtaposition of the members of the sentence does not indicate structural meaning but has some superstructural function. Stylistic inversion aims at attaching logical stress or additional emotion coloring to the surface meaning of the utterance. Therefore a specific intonation pattern is the inevitable satellite of inversion. [17, p. 203]

In the book entitled “Phong cách học Tiếng Việt” (Vietnamese Stylistics), Đinh Trọng Lạc and Nguyễn Thái Hòa state that [63, p.240], “*Trong trường hợp đảo vị trí thành phần câu mà nội dung thông báo không thay đổi, ta có phép đảo ngữ tu từ.*” (When the reversal of the normal orders of constituents of a sentence does not affect the basic content of the utterance, it is called stylistic inversion.)

In “99 phương tiện và biện pháp tu từ Tiếng Việt” (99 Vietnamese rhetorical devices) Đinh Trọng Lạc [60, p.111 - 115] stated that “Đảo ngữ là hiện tượng vi phạm có chủ định trật tự chuẩn mực của các đơn vị lời nói nhằm mục đích tách ra một thành tố nghĩa – cảm xúc nào đó” (*Inversion is the phenomena of violating the standard order of speech elements with the aim to separate a certain meaning or emotion element*).

2.2.2.2. Classification of Inversion

Stylistic inversion may be of various types. According to Galperin [17, p. 204 - 205], the following patterns of stylistic inversion are most frequently met in both English prose and English poetry:

Table 2.1: Most frequently met patterns of English stylistic inversion:

| | Patterns of English stylistic inversion | Examples |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | The object is placed at the beginning of the sentence | “ <i>Talent</i> Mr Micawber has.” (Dickens) |
| 2 | The attribute is placed after the word it modifies | With fingers <i>weary and worn</i>” (Thomas Hood) |
| 3 | a) The predicate is placed before the subject b) The predicative stands before the link-verb and both are placed before the subject | a) “ <i>A good generous prayer</i> it was.” (Mark Twain) b) “ <i>Rude am I</i> in my speech” (Shakespeare) |
| 4 | The adverbial modifier is placed at the beginning of the sentence | “My dearest daughter, <i>at your feet</i> I fall.” (Dryden) |
| 5 | Both modifier and predicate stand before the subject | “In went Mr. Pickwick.” (Dickens) |

According to Đinh Trọng Lạc [61, p. 111- 116], Cù Đình Tú [74, p. 331- 348], and Nguyễn Thái Hòa [57, p. 240 - 243], the most frequently met patterns of Vietnamese stylistic inversion are:

Table 2.2: Most frequently met patterns of Vietnamese stylistic inversion

| | Patterns of Vietnamese stylistic inversion | Examples |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | The object is placed at the beginning of the sentence | “Trần thế em nay chán nữa rồi.” (Tản Đà) |
| 2 | The attribute is placed before the word it modifies | “Những hồng đào môi son ngày ấy, ...” (Trịnh Công Sơn) |
| 3 | The predicate is placed before the subject | a) “Đâm toạc chân mây đá mấy hòn” (Hồ Xuân Hương) |
| 4 | The adverbial modifier is placed at the beginning of the sentence | “Cho cuộc đời, cho tổ quốc thương yêu, ta đã làm gì và được bao nhiêu?” (Tố Hữu) |
| 5 | Both modifier and predicate stand before the subject | “Lom khom dưới núi tiêu vài chú” (Bà Huyện Thanh Quan) |

2.2.2.3. Inversion and Poetry

Galperin, in his book “Stylistics” states that:

Inversion as a stylistic device is always sense-motivated. There is a tendency to account for inversion in poetry by rhythmical considerations. This may sometimes be true, but really talented poets will never sacrifice sense for form and in the majority of cases inversion in poetry is called forth by considerations of content rather than rhythm. [17, p. 203 - 205]

2.2.3. English Poetry

2.2.3.1. Meter in English Poetry

In poetry, the **meter** (or **metre**) is the basic rhythmic structure of a verse or lines in verse. Many traditional verse forms prescribe a

specific verse meter, or a certain set of meters alternating in a particular order.

Feet

Iambic pentameter, the most common meter in English poetry, is a sequence of five *iambic feet* or *iamb*s, each consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one ("da-DUM") :

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|-------|-----|----------|-------|------|-----|-------|
| So | long | as | men | can | breathe, | Or | eyes | can | see, |
| So | long | lives | this, | and | this | gives | life | to | thee. |
| da | DUM | da | DUM | da | DUM | Da | DUM | da | DUM |

Caesurae

Another component of a verse's meter is the caesurae (literally, *cuts*), which are not pauses but compulsory word boundaries which occur after a particular syllabic position in every line of a poem.

Meter in Modern English

Most English meter is classified according to the same system as Classical meter with an important difference. The most common characteristic feet of English verse are the iamb in two syllables and the anapest in three.

Frequently-used meters

The most frequently encountered meter of English verse is the iambic pentameter, in which the metrical norm is five iambic feet per line, though metrical substitution is common and rhythmic variations practically inexhaustible.

2.2.3.2. Rhyme in English Poetry

Perfect rhymes

A rhyme in the strict sense is also called a perfect rhyme. Examples are *sight* and *flight*, *deign* and *gain*, *madness* and *sadness*.

Half rhyme or Slant rhyme

Sometimes called **sprung**, **near rhyme**, **oblique rhyme**, **off rhyme** or **imperfect rhyme**, is consonance on the final consonants of the words involved. Many half/slant rhymes are also eye rhymes.

General rhymes

In the general sense, *rhyme* can refer to various kinds of phonetic similarity between words, and to the use of such similar-sounding words in organizing verse. Rhymes in this general sense are classified according to the degree and manner of the phonetic similarity

Eye rhyme

Though not strictly rhymes, eye rhymes or sight rhymes refer to similarity in spelling but not in sound, as with *cough*, *bough*, or *love*, *move*.

Mind rhyme

'Mind Rhyme is a kind of substitution rhyme similar to rhyming slang, but it is less generally codified and is "heard" only when generated by a specific verse context.

2.2.4. Tang Poetry (Thơ Đường) in Vietnam

Tang poetry has many forms, in which the 7-8 form (thất ngôn bát cú, eight lines, seven words per line) is considered the standard form.

2.2.4.1. Tone rule

If the second word of the first line has flat tone, the whole poem will follow the "*the rule of Flat tone*" (luật bằng); if it has sharp tone then the whole poem will follow "the rule of sharp tone" (luật trắc). In a line, the second and sixth word must have the same tone, and different from that of the fourth word.

2.2.4.2. "Đối" rule

In Tang poetry, the meanings of the third and fourth lines must be parallel (đối), so are that of the fifth and sixth lines. "Đối" are usually understood as the contrast of the meanings and the parallel of the employed structures and words type.

2.2.4.3. "Niêm" rule

Lines in a poem are called "niêm" when the second words of these lines have the same tone (bằng or trắc)

2.2.4.4. Rhyme rule

In a standard Tang poem, the first, second, fourth, sixth and eighth lines must have the same rhymes.

2.2.5. Lục Bát Poetry

Lục bát is a traditional Vietnamese verse form that is deeply tied to the soul of Vietnamese culture and people. "Lục bát" is Sino-Vietnamese for "six eight", referring to the alternating lines of six and eight syllables. It will always begin with a six-syllable line and end with an eight-syllable one. [59]

2.2.5.1. Tone rule

In poetry, the six tones of Vietnamese language are divided based on their falling and rising nature into two categories: bằng (flat) and trắc (sharp or non-flat).

2.2.5.2. Rhyme rule

There are two kinds of rhymes in Vietnamese poetry. The first one is called vần giàu (rich rhymes) and the second one is called vần nghèo (poor rhymes).

2.2.6. Vietnamese Free poetry Movement

The Vietnamese "free poetry" movement may have started from the poems translated from French by Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, such as "*La Cigale et la Fourmi*" [59]. Poetry with no prosody, no rule, no limits on the number of words in the line, no line limits, appears to have been more adapted to a mass audience.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1. RESEARCH METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.3. POPULATION AND SAMPLES

3.4. INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

3.5. DATA COLLECTION

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

3.7. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. THE USE OF INVERSION IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN POETRY

4.1.1. Emily Dickinson

4.1.1.1. Emily Dickinson's Biography

4.1.1.2. The Use of Inversion in Emily Dickinson's Poetry

Inversion in Emily Dickinson's poetry, still, is used to achieve emphasis. For example, in "Chartless" [11] she writes:

I NEVER saw a moor,

I never saw the sea;

| |
|--|
| (1) Yet know I/ how the heather looks, |
|--|

| |
|---------------|
| Predicate + S |
|---------------|

And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,

Nor visited in Heaven;

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| (2) Yet certain am I/ of the spot |
|-----------------------------------|

| |
|---------------|
| Predicate + S |
|---------------|

As if the chart were given. [11]

Dickinson did not title her poems "Chartless", some editors did this for this poems and for some others. Her work was also edited harshly by the editors of the first editions. The speaker (much like Dickinson herself) seems to have been a bit of a home body. But her imagination is so, so powerful, that she can see the ocean in her mind just as vividly as if she had been there.

The second stanza suggests the same thing about God. She is certain that heaven is there - just as if she had the correct chart in her hand. Only by putting the word "yet" at the beginning of the lines and repeating it twice would still create a strong impression on how sure she was. However, in these lines, she wants to call attention to

the swiftness of her knowledge and the power of her certainty. Therefore, instead of saying "Yet I know" and "Yet I am certain" she reverses the usual order and shifts the emphasis to the more important words.

4.1.2. The Use of Inversion of Some Other Poets

4.2. THE USE OF INVERSION IN POEMS COMPOSED UNDER THE RULES OF TANG POETRY

4.2.1. Bà Huyện Thanh Quan

4.2.1.1. Bà Huyện Thanh Quan's biography

4.2.1.2. The Use of Inversion in Bà Huyện Thanh Quan's Poetry

There are many factors in the formation of her famous style, which are the spirit of nobility, the elegance in the every word she used, the intelligent usage of words in describing scenery, etc. Inversion is also one of those factors.

It was not only one of her favorite poetical devices but also an outstanding mark in her way of arranging words. Inversion appears in most of her poems, brings different effects to the feelings of the readers/listeners. In the poem *Cảnh thu* [67], she wrote:

Thấp thoáng non tiên lác đác mưa

Khen ai khéo vẽ cảnh tiêu sơ

Xanh um cỏ thụ tròn xoe tán,

Trắng xoá Tràng giang phẳng lặng tờ

The inversion patterns in the first, third and fourth lines of the stanza are:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (28) <i>Thấp thoáng/ non tiên</i> | <i>lác đác/ mưa</i> |
| Predicate(verb-only predicate) + S | Predicate (verb-only predicate) + S |

By putting the verb-only predicates before the subjects, the poet wanted the readers to focus on the "scenery description". This verse, without inversion, would be: "*Non tiên thấp thoáng mưa lác đác*" which would not create any curiosity or impression. "*Thấp thoáng*"

put at the beginning of the line makes the listeners/readers wonder what is waiting ahead. The poet makes us feel like we are together with her on the journey to the mountain. Firstly, we see the mountain looming from far away; as we come closer, we feel the rain spattering down on our heads. The word "lác đác" (spatter) put in front of "mưa" (rain) in the verse not only creates the image of a small and very light rain on the mountain but also creates the feeling of the slightly coldness in the autumn. The verse "*Xanh um cỏ thụ tròn xoe tán*" can be understood in normal arrangement as "*Cỏ thụ có tán tròn xoe, xanh um*", "*Cỏ thụ xanh um có tán tròn xoe*" or "*Cỏ thụ xanh um, tán tròn xoe*". Thus, the inversion structure of this line can be analyzed as two sentences

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| (29) Xanh um/ cỏ thụ | tròn xoe/ tán, |
| Predicate (attribute predicate) + S | Predicate (attribute predicate) + S |

Or one sentence with "xanh um" plays the role of attribute either for the subject "cỏ thụ" or the object "tán".

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Xanh um/ cỏ thụ tròn xoe tán, |
| Attribute + Y |

| |
|--|
| (30) Trắng xoá/ Tràng giang phẳng lặng (như) tờ. |
| Attribute + Y |

Besides the purposes of emphasizing on the scenery description, other reasons for the poet to apply inversion in these both lines were the rule of "Đối" and the rule of "Vần" (tò-thơ-ngợ). These rules, together with the fact that inversion was one of Bà Huyện Thanh Quan favorite poetical devices, played important roles in her motivation to employ inversion in her poetry.

4.2.2. Hồ Xuân Hương

4.2.2.1. Hồ Xuân Hương's Biography

4.2.2.2. The Use of Inversion in Hồ Xuân Hương's Poetry

The poem “**Chửa hoang**” [58] – talking about women committing that kind of sin, about their sacrifice; criticizing the men who ran away from his responsibility, leaving the women suffer from the public criticism – does not only show her bravery in publicly defending for those women but also again, shows her fond of using inversion to emphasize on the ideas.

The poem starts with the woman's blaming herself for being so easy and too trustful: (50) “Cả nê cho nên hóa dở dang,” [58]. Then she put a question to the man that partly made that happen:

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| (51) Nỗi niềm/ có thấy hỡi chàng? |
| Object + X |

This question does not need to be answered, that is her words of reproach for the man she loved and trusted. Without the inversion, the verse would be “Chàng có thấy nỗi niềm hỡi chàng?” There were many other ways to invert this question, it could be “*Chàng, hỡi chàng có thấy nỗi niềm?*” or “*Hỡi chàng chàng có thấy nỗi niềm?*” or “*Nỗi niềm hỡi chàng chàng có thấy?*” However, she decided to invert the question by putting the word “Nỗi niềm” at the beginning, then the verb “thấy” and finally the subject “chàng” at the end of the verse because of two reasons: the rule of finding rhymes (strictly according to prosody): “dang – chàng”, and the aim of emphasizing on the hollow in the woman's heart as well as her misery as an abandoned unwed mother.

4.2.3. Inversion in Some Other Poems Written under the Rules of Đường Poetry

4.3. INVERSION IN “THE TALE OF KIỀU” BY NGUYỄN DU

4.3.1. Nguyễn Du's Biography

4.3.2. The Tale of Kiều

4.3.3. The Use of Inversion in The tale of Kiều

Due to the influence of the concept of visual arts in the times of the poet, Nguyễn Du usually employed "scenery description" style in his poems. Below is a typical line of that style of the poet which amazes the readers/listeners throughout the work - simple scenery (a branch of pear-tree), accentuated at certain points (some white flowers) - gently sketched but irresistible.

| |
|--|
| (82) Cảnh lê trắng điểm// một vài bông hoa, 42 |
| Modifier + Predicate + S |

Without the inversion, the line would be “Một vài bông hoa điểm trắng cảnh lê” in which the white color of those scattered little flowers would not stand out among the green color of the tree and creating that beautiful sketched point, which can be seen in the line with the inversion. Not only did Nguyễn Du put the predicate “cảnh lê trắng điểm” before the subject “một vài bông hoa” to but he also inverted the adverbial modifier “trắng” and the predicator “điểm” to let us focus on the color, making it stand out among the scenery.

4.4. THE USE OF INVERSION OF SOME MODERN POETS

Though not writing their poems under any certain rules of any certain poetry style, modern poets still have to make their lines satisfy the demand of rhyming. Therefore, inversion is still used in modern poetry both for the sake of emphasis and rhymes.

For example, in the poem “**Đất nước**” [65], Nguyễn Đình Thi employed inversion in his verses for both emphasizing and rhyming:

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| Từ những năm đau thương chiến đấu |
| (112) Đã ngồi lên nét /mặt quê hương |
| Predicate + S |

Từ góc mía bờ tre hồn hậu

| |
|---------------------------------------|
| (113) Đã bật lên/ những tiếng cảm hờn |
| Predicate + S |

4.5. SUMMARY OF THE TYPICAL USE OF INVERSION IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE POETRY

4.5.1. Syntactic Features of Inversion in English and in Vietnamese Poetry

Basing on the analysis of sample data including 200 inversion examples extracted from famous English and Vietnamese poems. The results show that inversion takes different forms, and can be represented in different ways: *Predicate + Subject; Modifier + Predicate + Subject; Adverbial Modifier + X; Object + X; Attribute + Y (in Vietnamese) and Y + Attribute (in English), S + quantifier and Operator + X.*

4.5.1.1. Predicate + Subject

a, In English Poetry

- (1) *Yet know I how the heather looks,*
 (2) *Yet certain am I of the spot* (Chartless [11])

b, In Vietnamese Poetry

- (28) *Thấp/ thoáng/ non/ tiên/ lác/ đác/ mưa,*
 T B T B
 (29) *Xanh/ um/ cỏ/ thụ/ tròn/ xoe/ tán,*
 B T B T (Cảnh thu [67])

In (28), the normal arrangement of the verse would be “Non tiên thấp thoáng mưa lác đác” which would violate the tone rule and “niêm” rule of Tang poetry.

4.5.1.2. Modifier + Predicate + Subject (or Predicate + Modifier + Subject)

a, In English Poetry

Emily Dickinson employed inversion in this following verse for the purposes of both emphasizing and meeting the demand of rhyme

(the normal arrangement would be “Its name was One Pleiad” which would not satisfy the rhyme “name – same”)

- (9) *One Pleiad was its name,*
 And when I was not heeding
 It wandered from the same. (I had a Guinea Golden [11])

b, In Vietnamese Poetry

While this inversion pattern is not very frequently used in English poetry, it is at high frequency in Vietnamese poetry. Bà Huyện Thanh Quan employed this kind of inversion with the same aims of following the rules of tone, “đối”, “niêm” and rhyme:

- (35) *Lom khom dưới núi tiêu vài chú*
 (36) *Lác đác bên sông chợ mấy nhà.*
 (37) *Nhớ nước đau lòng con quốc quốc,*
 (38) *Thương nhà mỗi miệng cái gia gia*
 (Bước tới Đèo Ngang [67])

4.5.1.3. Adverbial Modifier + X

This pattern of stylistic inversion can be found a lot in both English and Vietnamese poetry.

a, In English Poetry

This type of inversion is also used for calling the readers’ attention:

- (4) *Or Babblers -- entertain* [11]
 b, In Vietnamese Poetry

This inversion pattern was employed frequently in Hồ Xuân Hương poetry for call readers’ attention to the sounds, images or features of things.

- (58) *Lắt lẻo cành thông con gió thốc*
 (59) *Đằm đũa lá liều giọt sương gieo* (Đèo Ba Dội [58])

4.5.1.4. Object + X

This stylistic inversion pattern was also used at high frequency in both English and Vietnamese poetry.

a, In English Poetry

(7) *Heavenly Hurt, it gives us—*

(There's a certain slant of light [11])

b, In Vietnamese Poetry

Apart from the purposes of drawing the readers' attention to the objects, poets writing poem under poetry rule of Tang and Luc bat also employed this inversion to meet the requirements of tones, rhymes, *đối*, and *niêm*.

(42) *Thạch nhũ, trần bì, sao để lại,* (Bà lang khóc chồng [67])**4.5.1.5. Attribute + Y (in Vietnamese) and Y + Attribute (in English)***a, In English Poetry*(20) *With fingers weary and worn,*(21) *With eyelids heavy and red,*

(The Song of the Shirt - Thomas Hood in [93])

b, In Vietnamese Poetry(40) *Ngọt bùi, thiếp nhớ mùi cam thảo,**Cay đắng, chàng ơi, vị quế chi* Bà lang khóc chồng [58])**4.5.1.6. S + quantifier***a, In English Poetry*

This inversion pattern cannot be found in English poetry.

b, In Vietnamese Poetry(35) Lom khom dưới núi *tiều vài chú*(36) Lác đác bên sông *chợ mấy nhà.*

(Qua đèo Ngang – Bà Huyện Thanh Quan [67])

4.5.1.7. Operator + X*a, In English Poetry*(14) *Were I with thee,* (Wild Night! Wild Night! [11])*b, In Vietnamese Poetry*

This pattern of inversion cannot be found in Vietnamese poetry since Vietnamese is an analytic language (the function of Operator does not exist).

4.5.1.8. Summary**4.5.2. Pragmatic Features of Inversion in English and Vietnamese Poetry****4.5.2.1. Showing Certainty, Confirmation, Determination**(1) *Yet know I how the heather looks,* (Chartless [11])(114) *Đã tan tác những bóng thù hắc ám* (Ta đi tới [65])**4.5.2.2. Showing Wishes**(14) *Were I with thee,* (Wild Night! Wild Night! [11])(79) *Cành đa xin chị nhắc lên chơi*

(Đêm thu buồn lắm chị Hằng ơi [48])

4.5.2.3. Showing Hesitation(15) And be one traveler, *long I stood* (The road not taken [84])(105) *Tàn ngần đứng suốt giờ lâu,* 273 (Kiều [51])**4.5.2.4. Drawing Readers' Attention**(17) *Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,*

(The snow storm [84])

(119) *Ngoài thêm rơi cái lá đa,*

(Đêm Côn Sơn [89])

4.5.2.5. Emphasizing on the Description(10) *Hurries a timid leaf.*

(These are the days when Birds come back [11])

4.5.2.6. Emphasizing on the Sounds(69) *Rúc rích thân cha con chuột nhắt* (Vô âm nữ [58])**4.5.2.7. Emphasizing on the Quantity**(6) *Twice have I stood a beggar*

(I never lost as much but twice [11])

(18) *Ten thousand saw I/ at a glance,*

(The Daffodils [80])

(35) Lom khom dưới núi *tiều vài chú*

(Qua đèo Ngang [67])

4.5.2.8. Summary

We can be easily seen from the analysis that it is very hard to gain a clear-cut distinction of pragmatic features. English and

Vietnamese politicians tend to use parallel structures to confirm, emphasize, highlight, ... a certain issue and make a great impression on the audience. However, the effects of inversion in Vietnamese poetry are more diverse since inversion has become a favorite device or even a habit of arranging language in poetry of many poets.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

So far, the typical use of English and Vietnamese stylistic inversion in poetry has been examined. First, the development of the study will be summarized. Then in the summary of the findings, this chapter will deal with some of the noted similarities and differences of inversion Vietnamese and English, American poetry. Next, some implications for understanding and translation will be put forward. At the end of this chapter, some limitations will be mentioned and some suggestions for further research will be presented.

5.1. CONCLUSION

5.1.1. Summary of the Findings

It is obvious that, inversion dominates in both English and Vietnamese poetry in order to meet the aims of poetry rules emphasis and style.

Some similarities and differences of inversion in English and Vietnamese poetry in term of syntactic and pragmatics will be presented in the next part.

5.1.1.1. Similarities

a. Syntactic Similarities

As can be seen from table 2.3 both English and Vietnamese inversions have many patterns in common.

Secondly, in terms of frequency of occurrence, inversion pattern among most frequently used ones are “Predicate +S”, “Adverbial modifier +X” and “Object+ X”.

b. Pragmatic Similarities

Both English and Vietnamese poetry frequently use inversion with the same purposes of satisfying the demands of rhymes and for the sake of emphasis.

5.1.1.2. Differences

a. Syntactic Differences

Syntactically, there are also some differences between English inversion and Vietnamese equivalent as follows:

Firstly, Vietnamese inversion expressions in “Modifier + Predicate + Subject” pattern are at high frequency while in English poetry, rare inversion in this kind of pattern are found.

Secondly, the pattern “S + quantifier” is sometimes used in Vietnamese poetry while it never appears in English.

Thirdly, there is also no inversion in the form of “Operator + X” in Vietnamese poetry compared with their English equivalents since Vietnamese is an analytic language.

b. Pragmatic Differences

Pragmatically, Vietnamese poets seem to be so interested in inversion. They employ inversion in their poems more frequently than English and American poets do. Therefore, the effects of inversion are more diverse in Vietnamese poetry.

In addition to employing inversion for the sake of emphasis and rhyming, some Vietnamese poets also use this device as a habit in arranging words or to form their unique style in writing poetry.

5.1.2. Summary

In summary, even though there are a lot of similarities and differences in term of syntax and pragmatics in English and in Vietnamese poetry, the functions of inversion are almost analogous in the two languages. In poetry, they have the same purposes: to emphasize and to meet the demand of poetry rules.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR INVERSION TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE

5.2.1. Problematic Situation in Inversion Translation

The reality of translation shows that, a large number of Vietnamese translators, when translating inversion, often resort to their mother tongue to interpret English inversion without paying attention to the differences in syntactic features between the two languages. Moreover, most of the words or syntactic structures of the source language have no one-to-one correspondences in the target language. As a result, syntactic mistakes in translation are unavoidable. At the same time, besides the purport of meaning, there is some additional information involving pragmatic features and different contexts, all of which are great obstacles to effective and impressive translation of English inversion structures. Therefore, in order to understand and to use inversion correctly and effectively, translators should first equip themselves with a rich and well-rounded knowledge in relation to inversion.

An example of translating Vietnamese poems containing inversion into English is the translating of Hồ Xuân Hương's poems by John Balaban. In his book "Spring Essence" [2], most inversion patterns were put back in the normal arrangement in the translated poems, some examples of this are:

What's all this wailing on our ears?

(Văng vẳng tai nghe tiếng khóc gì) [1, p.71]

Your funeral cries just hurt our ears.

(Văng vẳng tai nghe tiếng khóc chồng) [2, p.69]

He will carry it with a hundred years

But I must bear the burden now.

(Cái tội trăm năm chàng chịu cả

Chỉ tình một khối thiếp xin mang) [1, p.53]

The translator, though managed to keep the meaning of the verses, could not reflect Hồ Xuân Hương's talent in using the

language. Reading these translated lines, readers cannot recognize her unique style as well as her specific attitudes, emotions towards each issue in each poem. It is really challenging for any translators in both conveying Hồ Xuân Hương's ideas and keeping the "taste" of her poetry.

5.2.2. Suggestions for Inversion Translation

It seems that translators may encounter many difficulties in the process of translating inversion from English into Vietnamese, and vice versa. In order to help Vietnamese translators study and use inversion effectively, I would like to put forward some suggestions for inversion translation.

Firstly, in translating the inverted structures, Vietnamese learners and translators should be aware of the similarities and differences between the two languages. Without sufficient awareness of these similarities and differences, they are likely to use Vietnamese structures to express inversion in English, and vice versa.

Secondly, simply being bilingual does not qualify someone to translate. Translation is not only a mechanical process of converting one sentence in language A into the same sentence in language B. Rather, it is a complex art in which parallel structures, thoughts and idioms that have no obvious counterparts from tongue to tongue, or words that have several meanings must be transformed in such a way that the message is clearly and accurately expressed to the readers. In some cases, the technical concepts may be expressed using common lay terms with slightly different meanings. In such cases, the translators may misunderstand the concepts and choose inappropriate terms to express them in the target language

Finally, with an insight into inversion as well as its similarities and differences in English and Vietnamese, translators will be provided with an effective tool to translate inversion structures and get over the barrier of cross-cultural misunderstandings of the two languages.

5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although great efforts have been made, this research paper certainly cannot avoid shortcomings and still leaves much to be desired. The topic under investigation may not have been thoroughly analyzed as it should have been due to the lack of time.

In addition, the materials supporting the thesis are rather limited, especially those written in Vietnamese, which makes a challenge for the researcher to reach a much more convincing conclusion. Moreover, there are a lot of interesting and famous examples of inversion in other genres such as prose, drama but the researcher cannot study them all. This research paper concentrates only on inversion in English and Vietnamese poetry.

Finally, the limited personal ability of the researcher can also accounts for another constraint of the research. For these limitations, I would highly appreciate any comments from teachers, friends and all those who are interested in this thesis in order to make it more convincing and useful.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES

- ❖ Investigations into linguistic features of *inversion* used in newspapers, magazines.
- ❖ Investigations into semantic features of *inversion* in English and Vietnamese poetry.