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# AN INVESTIGATION INTO ENGLISH LEXICAL DEVICES DENOTING NEGATION VERSUS VIETNAMESE EQUIVALENTS

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# CHAPTER 1
## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 RATIONALE

Negation is one of the aspects of language which often causes problems to language learners. English negation is often complicated and diverse in form, and differences exist in English and Vietnamese in terms of how negation is manifested. This presents problems to language learners in their attempt to understand the relationship between the meaning of negation on the one hand, and the lexical representation of negation, on the other.

For the above reasons, "An Investigation into English Lexical Devices Denoting Negation versus Vietnamese Equivalents " is made in attempt to clarify the ways that express the conception of negation in English and Vietnamese equivalents.

### 1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

#### 1.2.1. Aims of the Study

The study is aimed at:

- Identifying the lexical devices denoting negation in English and their Vietnamese equivalents.

- Finding out the similarities and differences in the way two languages indicate negation by means of lexical devices

- Contributing to teaching and learning of English.

#### 1.2.2. Objectives of the Study

The study is expected:

- Identify and describe the lexical devices denoting negation English and their Vietnamese equivalents.

- Find out the syntactic and semantic features of these devices in denoting negation.

- Identify the most common type of lexical devices denoting negation in English and their Vietnamese equivalents.

### 1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For the aims and objectives above, the following research questions are set :

1.What are the syntactic features of lexical devices denoting negation in English and Their Vietnamese equivalents ?

2.What are the semantic features of lexical devices denoting negation in English and Their Vietnamese equivalents ?

3.What are the similarities and differences of English lexical devices and Vietnamese counterparts in expressing negation?

### 1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Although Negation can be studied at all levels of language (morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics etc.), this thesis investigates lexical devices denoting Negation, mainly on the levels of syntax and semantics.

### 1.5. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis consists of five chapters:

Chapter 1, the Introduction.

Chapter 2 presents a review of previous studies related to the investigation, and some theoretical background

Chapter 3, the Methods and Procedure of the study.

Chapter 4, Findings of syntactic and semantic features of lexical devices denoting negation in English versus their Vietnamese equivalents

Chapter 5, the Conclusion of the study.

# CHAPTER 2
# LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL
# BACKGROUND

## 2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1.1 Prior Studies of Foreign Linguists on Negation

The study of negative form has been a major theme in modern linguistics Up to now, there have been many influential studies including Jesperson (1917) Klima (1964), Baker (1970), Ladusaw (1979), Horn (1989) …

### 2.1.2 Prior Studies of Vietnamese Linguists on Negation

Negation is also mentioned by many Vietnamese linguists such as Nguyễn Hiến Lê (1963), Nguyễn Kim Thản (1964, 1972), Hoàng Trọng Phiến (1980), Diệp Quang Ban (1998), Nguyễn Đức Dân (1987), Cao Xuân Hạo (1998) …

## 2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.2.1 Definition of Negation

Negation is a means of negating the truth value of a positive sentence, a linguistic universal . While, in 'The Oxford Companion to the English Language, 1987', negation is defined as a grammatical term for the process that results in changing a positive (affirmative) sentence or clause into negative one : from *They came* to *They did not come*. This is sometimes known as a contrast in polarity. According to Jespersen [15], negation can perform though directly negative sentences containing complete negations (nuclear negators) like *not, no, never* or incomplete negations ( semi-negations) as *hardly, scarcely, little, few* ; Nexal negations like NOT followed by auxiliary verbs to negate the whole sentence;

### 2.2.2 Focus of Negation

In describing a negative clause, according to Quirk et al [22, p.382]. it is important to identify not only the scope of negation, but also the information focus. The focus in a negative clause may be the subject, the main verb, the object, the complement, the adjunct or any word or phrase under the contrastive stress.

### 2.2.3 The Scope of Negation

The scope of nation is the part of the meaning that is negated. According to Eagleson [7, p.86] that part of a sentence or clause that is controlled by *not* or other negative words is called the scope of negation. There is thus a contrast between the following sentences :

(7) I definitely did<u>n't speak to him</u> (It's definite that I did not)

(8) I did<u>n't definitely speak to him</u> (It's not definite that I did)

### 2.2.4 Relative Scope of Negation

#### 2.2.4.1 *Relative Scope of Negation and Adjuncts in Clause Structure*

Adjuncts in negative sentences may or may not be under the effect of a negator and thus the meaning of a sentence may change depending on the position of an adjunct. We can consider the relative scope of negation and an adjunct as follows:

(25) Liz intentionally didn't delete the back up file

(*adjunct has scope over negative*)

(26) Liz didn't intentionally delete the back up file    [11, p.793]

(*negative has scope over adjunct*)

#### 2.2.4.2 *Relative Scope of Negation and Quantifiers*

Quantifiers are words that are used to state quantity or amount of something such as *much, many, very, a lot, a little*, *a few...* without stating the actually number. The issue of relative also arises when negation combines with quantification. Consider, for example:

(27) He has<u>n't</u> got <u>many</u> friends. (negative has scope over quantifier)

(28) <u>Many</u> people did<u>n't</u> attend the meetings. (quantifier has scope over negative )    [11, p.975]

**2.2.4.3** *The scope of negation and negative modal auxiliaries*

The negation of modal auxiliaries, as Quirk et al. [22, p.383] observes, requires some attention, in that here the scope of negation may include the meaning of the auxiliary  itself (auxiliary negation) or may not include it (main verb negation)

**2.2.5 Lexical Items and Definition of Lexical devices**

Lexical items are single words or words that are grouped in a language's lexicon. Examples are "cat", "traffic light", "take care of", "by-the-way", and Lexical items are those which can be generally understood to convey a single meaning. Lexical items are generally word classes including  quantifier, noun, proform, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, particle. Lexical devices are ways by which lexical items denote their lexical meaning and their grammatical feature in a language.

**2.2.5.1** *The Notion of Meaning*

Richards and Ogden [19, p.222] offer a view of word meaning in their position, that is 'what a language expresses about the world we live in or any possible or imaginary world'. Crystal, thought that meaning is studied by means of a detailed analysis of words and sentences in a specific context.

**2.2.5.2** *Word Meaning*

According to the theory there is no direct link between symbol and referent, between language and the world- the link is via though or references the concepts of our minds. Here, a discussion of denotational versus connotational Meaning is to be given.

**2.2.5.3** *Denotational  versus Connotational Meaning*

In the study of meaning, the denotational meaning and connotational meaning cannot be overlooked. These meanings are considered by Asher [1, p.2154] as follows : denotative meaning may be regarded as the 'central' meaning or 'core' meaning of a lexical item, and connotation meaning is the additional meaning that a word or phrase has beyond its central meaning.

**2.2.5.4** *Sense Relations*

To identify the exact meaning of a word one may need to consider another semantic phenomenon called meaning (sense) relation, which consist of *synonymy, antonymy, polysemy* and *homonymy*.As Kreidler [16, p.46] describes, 'What a word means depends in part on its associations with other words, the relational aspect'.

**2.2.6 Word**

**2.2.6.1** *The Notion of  Word*

Fromkin describes words as meaningful linguistic units that can be combined to form phrases and sentences. Here, it is clear that When a speaker hears a word in his language, he has an immediate association with a particular meaning.' [10, p. 86]

**2.2.6.2** *Negative Words*

Negative words such as *not, never, hardly*, etc. which express the negative meaning. English nuclear negative words are of different syntactic classes: determiners (*no, neither, not*), pronouns (*nothing, nobody, no one, none, neither*), adverbs (*never, no, none, nowhere, neither,  nor*). Semantically, most of the negators express total negation (*never, not, nothing, nobody*, etc.) while some express either negative or near-negative meaning depending on the context. These

words are called semi-negative words, broad negative words, or near negatives (*hardly, scarcely, barely, little ...*) [4, p.25]

**2.2.6.3 *The Negative and Non-assertive Words***

a) *Assertive and Non-assertive Words*

b) *Non-assertive Words in the Negative*

English non-assertive are of different syntactic classes such as determiners, pronouns, adverbs as listed in the table below.

*Table 2.1 : English assertive and non-assertive items*

| Syntactic class | Assertive | Non-assertive |
|---|---|---|
| Determiner | *Some* *Either (one or the other)* | *Any* *Either* |
| Pronoun | *Some* *Either (one or the other)* *Something* *Somebody/ someone* | *Any* *Either* *Anything* *Anybody/ anyone* |
| Process adverb | *Somehow* | *In any way* |
| Place adverb | *Somewhere* | *Anywhere* |
| Time adverb | *Sometimes* *Still* | *Ever/ any time* *Any more/ longer* |
| Extent adverb | *To some extent* | *At all* |
| Intensifier | *Somewhat* | *Any (the)* |
| Additive adverb | *As well/too* | *either* |

## CHAPTER 3
## METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

### 3.2 RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Several steps are employed in this thesis, including the data collection and corpus building, data sorting and finally data analysis. These phases of the investigation process are as below :

### 3.2.1 Data Collection and Corpus Building

The study is carried out over 500 examples collected form different data sources. The collection ensure that the data including variants in each language which in turn ensures objective findings.

### 3.2.2 Data analysis :

The study is carried out as follows :

- Collecting lexical devices expressing negation from books, newspapers in both English and Vietnamese.

- Analyzing and systematizing lexical devices denoting negation to find out the similarities and differences in the usage of negative forms in two languages.

### 3.4 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Besides the abstract, acknowledgement, table of contents, the paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1, the introduction. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background leading to the study of lexical devices denoting negation; Chapter 3, The Methods and Procedure of the study. Chapter 4, the discussion on and findings. Chapter 5, the conclusion of the study – summarizes the main points in the study and provides implications for learning and teaching English.

# CHAPTER 4

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

## 4.1 SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH NUCLEAR NEGATORS AND VIETNAMESE EQUIVALENTS

### 4.1.1 Semantic and Syntactic Features of English Nuclear Negators

In English there are a great number of means used to make a sentence negative. These means, which are called nuclear negators, are of different syntactic classes with different grammatical functions: determiners (*no, neither*), pronouns (*nothing, nobody*), adverbs (*nowhere, never*) .semantically, negative structures with nuclear negators are equivalent to those with non-assertive forms. Below is a list of most commonly used English nuclear negators.

*Table 4.1 : English nuclear negators* [22, p.376]

| Syntactic class | Nuclear negators | Non-assertives |
|---|---|---|
| **Determiner** | *No* <br> *Neither* | = *(not) any* <br> = *(not) either* |
| **Pronoun** | *Nothing* <br> *Nobody, no one* <br> *None (of)* <br> *Neither (of)* <br> *Nowhere* | = *(not) anything* <br> = *not anyone* <br> = *(not) any (of)* <br> = *(not) either (of)* <br> = *(not) anywhere* |
| **Adverb** | *No* <br> *None (the)* <br> *Never* <br> *Nowhere* | = *(not) any* <br> = *(not) any (the)* <br> = *(not) ever* <br> = *(not) anywhere* |
| **Adverb/ predeterminer** | *Not* | |

**4.1.1.1** *Negative Determiners: No, Neither*

a) *NO*

No as indefinite determiner, and according to Swan [23, p.331] *no* means almost the same as *not a* or *not any*, but is used instead of these at the beginning of a sentence and in other positions when the speaker wants to make the negative meaning emphatic.

(29) <u>*No* rain</u> fell that year.                    [25, p.57]

(*Không có* mưa rơi vào năm đó)

Some *no*-combinations can function as adjunct of time, purpose.

(46) *At no time* did the company break the law.

*Chưa lần nào* công ty phạm luật cả

b) *NEITHER*

*Neither* as indefinite determiner ,and its Vietnamese equivalents are *không... nào, cả hai đều không*. Combinations with *neither* can act as subject, object, complement in a sentence and make it negative.

(50)*Neither* answer is correct                    [12, p.788]

**4.1.1.2** *Negative Pronouns*

English negative pronoun like *nothing, nobody, none, neither …* can be used on their own or in combination with other items to make a sentence negative by acting as subject, object, or complement .

a) *NOTHING*

*Nothing* as indefinite pronoun is used to indicate that no subjects, events or ideas are present.

(53) There is *nothing* much/else in the fridge.                    [12, p.780]

*Nothing* followed by *apart from/ but/ except/ other than* + noun is used to emphasize that what is expressed by the noun after *but, except,* etc.

(57) I could do <u>nothing but</u> sit there and hope                    [24, p.125]

b) NOBODY, NO ONE, NO-ONE

*Nobody or no one* can be used alone or followed by *but/except/ besides/ apart from* + pronoun or noun group, or *else* . Nobody and its combinations can function as subject, object in a sentence.

(62) *Nobody* was at home.                    [12, p.785]

(63) There is *no one* else to talk.                [24, p.161]

c) *NEITHER*

*Neither* as indefinite pronoun, its Vietnamese equivalents are *không... nào, cả hai... đều không* . *Neither* and its combinations can function as subject, object, complement in a sentence.

(66) *Neither* of keys worked.                [24, p.152]

d) *NONE*

*None* as indefinite pronoun can be used alone or followed by of pronoun or noun group. Its Vietnamese equivalents are *không có...nào, tất cả... đều không. None* and its combinations can function as subject, object, complement in sentence.

(69) I planted hundreds of seeds but *none* has come up.    [12, p.787]

e) *NOWHERE*

*Nowhere* as indefinite pronoun, its Vietnamese equivalents are *không nơi nào,chổ nào/ đâu cả* . *Nowhere* and its combinations can be used as subject, object in a sentence.

(72) There was *nowhere* to go  (Không có nơi nào để đi cả) [5, p.983]

**4.1.1.3 *Negative Adverbs***

a) *NO*

*No* as negative adverb can be used before a comparative adjective to indicate that something has either exactly the quality or amount mentioned, or less of it, but certainly not more.

(80) There's *no more* bread.

= There *isn't any more* bread                [23, p.331]

Combinations with *no* as adverb as described above can be used in a sentence as adjunct of time, subject complement, subject .

b) *NONE*

*None* followed by *too* + adjective or adverb (*none too big, none too hard*) is a fairly formal expression used to negate an adjective or adverb. Its Vietnamese equivalent is *Không* + Adj or adverb + *lắm/ cho lắm*

(84) We are *none too sure* what we are arguing about. =

We are <u>unsure</u> what we are arguing about.            [5, p.975]

c) *NOWHERE*

*Nowhere*  used as indefinite adverb of place means 'not at or to any place, at or to no place'. Their Vietnamese equivalents  are normally divided into two parts : one (negators *không, chẳng, chưa*) is placed before the verb and the other (combinations with non-assertive words *nơi nào cả, đâu cả*) is after it.

(87) I have seen them <u>nowhere</u>.    (Tôi *chẳng* gặp họ *đâu cả*)

- *Nowhere* may be followed by *else* (= not anywhere else)

d) *NEVER*

*Never* as Adverb of frequency (= not ever) is used to say that something was not or will not ever be the case.. Its Vietnamese equivalents are word groups as *không bao giờ, chẳng bao giờ,chưa bao giờ, chưa từng, không hề ...*

(90)    I had *never* been to this big town before.

(Trước đây tôi *chưa bao giờ* đến thi trấn này) [4, p.210]

e) *NOT*

*Not* is the most important negator. *Not* are rendered  into Vietnamese with the means as *không, chưa, chẳng, chả. Not* is used not only to negate the predicator of a sentence but also to make other

sentence elements negative in certain circumstances. *Not* can be used before quantifiers such as *a, one, a single one, many, much, another, a little, a few, half, enough, every, all, more than, the least, the most*.

(97)    *Not many* people have their own airplanes

(*Không phải nhiều* người có máy bay riêng)                [8, p.18]

**4.1.2 Nuclear Negators in English and Vietnamese Equivalents**

English nuclear negators and their combinations are rendered into Vietnamese by resorting to the following means: negators like *không , chẳng , chưa, cả*; non-assertive words like *ai, gì, nào*, etc., the nuclear negators and their combinations can be divided into three main groups: negative subject, negative object and negative adjunct.

**4.1.2.1** *English Negative Subject and Vietnamese Equivalents*

English negative subject can be realized by *No* + noun group (*no student*), negative pronoun (*nothing, nobody, none*)  and *not* + noun group or pronoun (*not a book, not all students, not everyone...*)

(104 )    Not everyone enjoys skiing.

Không phải mọi người đều thích trượt tuyết                [9, p.182]

**4.1.2.2** *English Negative Object or Complement and Vietnamese Equivalents*

English negative objects and complements are rendered into Vietnamese almost in the same way, that is, their Vietnamese counterparts, which consists of two parts- the negator *chẳng, không* and the rest *nào, gì* - are separated by the verb: the negator before and the rest after it.

(107) I heard <u>*no* girl</u> crying in the room                [29, p.63]

Tôi <u>*chẳng*</u> nghe thấy <u>cô gái *nào*</u> khóc trong phòng cả

**4.1.2.3** *English Negative Adjunct and Vietnamese Equivalents*

English negative adjuncts are realized by prepositional phrase containing negative determiners or negative adverbs and their combinations (*never, not once, never in my life*). Their equivalents in Vietnamese are normally divided into two parts : negators (*không, chẳng, chưa*) and the other after it (combinations with non- assertive words *nơi nào, đâu cả, trường hợp nào,bao giờ, lần nào …*)

(110)    I saw him *nowhere*

Tôi *chẳng* thấy anh ấy *đâu cả*                [29, p.33]

**4.2 SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH SEMI- NEGATIVE WORDS AND VIETNAMESE EQUIVALENTS**

In English, there are other words which are negative in meaning but not in appearance  they are called semi negative or near negative words. These words are of  different syntactic classes : determiners (*little, few*), adverbs (*hardly, scarcely*), adjectives (*rare*).

*Table 4.6 : English semi-negative words.*

| Syntactic class | Semi- negative words |
|---|---|
| **Adverb** | *Seldom*<br>*Rarely*<br>*Scarcely*<br>*Barely*<br>*Hardly*<br>*Little*<br>*Only* |
| **Determiner** | *Little*<br>*Few* |
| **Adjective** | *Rare, only, few* |

Syntactic and semantic feature of the above mentioned semi-negative words in Table 4.6 are discussed below.

### 4.2.1 Seldom and Rarely

*Seldom* and *rarely* are used as adverb of frequency (= *not often, only occasionally*). Their Vietnamese counterparts are: *Hiếm khi, ít khi, ít, chẳng mấy khi, hầu như không bao giờ, họa hoằn, năm thì mười họa*

(116) I have *seldom/ rarely* seen such brutality          [31, p.1555]

Tôi *hiếm khi* thấy một hành động hung bạo đến thế

### 4.2.2 Scarcely

*Scarcely* meaning only just, almost not, or not at all .Their Vietnamese counterparts are *hầu như không/ khó mà/ khó có thể* .

(122) There were *scarcely* a hundred people present          [31, p.128]

*Hầu như không* đến quá một trăm người có mặt

### 4.2.3 Barely

*Barely* is used to indicate that what being said is just true or is only just the case. it is used in the same way as *scarcely* or *hardly*.

(124) We *barely* had time to catch the train          [31, p.111]

Chúng tôi *chỉ vừa đủ* thời gian để bắt kịp chuyến tàu

### 4.2.4 Little

As determiner, *little* is used before a non-count noun to indicate that there is only a small amount of some thing or almost at all, often when it is not enough. Its Vietnamese equivalents are *ít, chẳng/ không bao nhiêu, không mấy*

(127) I had *very little* time for reading          [31, p.979]

Tôi có *rất ít* thời giờ để đọc

### 4.2.5 Few

*Few* can be used as determiner, adjective or pronoun to refer to a small number of things, people, places … especially when the number is smaller than expected. It therefore is used with plural count nouns and has such Vietnamese counterparts as *ít, một số ít,*

*chẳng bao nhiêu, không mấy* … it can be modified by intensifiers *very, so, too*.

### 4.2.6 Hardly

*Hardly* can used to negate the predicator of a sentence. It means that what being said is only true, not quite true, almost not true or only true with difficulty [22, p.534]. Its Vietnamese equivalent are *hầu như không, khó mà, khó có thể* .

(137)     He *hardly* ever eats any meat

Anh ấy *hầu như không* hề anh một chút thịt nào          [25, p.45]

### 4.2.7 Rare

*Rare* as adjective can be used attributively or predicatively. To mean that something is not common (= scarcely) or is not done or does not happen very often (=infrequent, unusual). Its Vietnamese equivalents are : *hiếm, hiếm thấy, hiếm có, hiếm khi*

(151) It is extremely *rare* for the weather in April to be this hot

Thật *hiếm khi* thời tiết tháng tư oi bức đến thế này.     [12, p.963]

### 4.2.8 Only

*Only* can be used as determiner or adverb meaning '*no more than*' or '*no other than*'. Its Vietnamese equivalents are *chỉ, chỉ có, duy chỉ có, không có hơn.*

(153) I was the *only* one smoking          [4, p.100]

Tôi là người *duy nhất* hút thuốc lá

## 4.3 SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH IMPLIED NEGATIVES AND VIETNAMESE EQUIVALENTS

In addition to the negators and semi-negators which have been discussed so far in English there are other words which have inherent negative meaning though positive in form. These words include closed-system items (*without, against, but* …) and open classes

(*unhappy, careless, fail* …) and are of different syntactic classes: noun (*disorder*), verb (*dislike*), adjective (*unhappily*), etc,.

**4.3.1 Some Closed-System Items with Negative Meaning :**

**4.3.1.1** *Without*

*Without,* Its Vietnamese eqqivalents are *không, chẳng có, mà không có, thiếu,* can be used as preposition followed by a noun group or as subordinator followed by an *ing*-form

(167) Thousands are *without* work

Hàng ngàn người đang *không có* việc làm. [4, p.1678]

**4.3.1.2** *But*

But can be used as adverb meaning *only*. Its Vietnamese counterparts are *chỉ, chỉ là, chỉ cần...But* can be used as conjunction after a negative statement to denote negative meaning . Its Vietnamese counterparts are *mà không, mà chẳng*

(172) There is not one of us *but* wished to help you. [31, p.207]

Không có ai trong chúng tôi *lại không* muốn giúp đỡ anh

**4.3.1.3** *But for* (Preposition)

*But for* plus a noun group is used in conditional sentences to introduce the only factor that causes a particular thing not to happen or not to be completely true (= without). It can be rendered into Vietnamese as *nếu không có, nếu không vì, nếu không nhờ có ...*

(174) *But for* the rain we would have had a nice holiday

(= If it hadn't been for the rain …)

*Nếu không vì* trận mưa ấy thì chúng tôi đã có một ngày nghỉ tuyệt vời rồi. [12, p.153]

**4.3.1.4** *Unless* (conjunction)

*Unless* is used as a subordinator to introduce an adverbial clause of condition which introduces the only circumstances in which an

event will not take place. Its Vietnamese counterparts are *nếu...không, trừ phi.*

(177) You can't play football this evening *unless* you do your homework.

Con không được phép chơi bóng đá chiều nay *nếu* con *không/ trừ phi* con làm xong bài tập về nhà. [12, p.1305]

**4.3.1.5** *Unlike* (Preposition)

*Unlike* followed by a noun group can be used as subject complement (*meaning different from, not like*) or disjunct (meaning *in contrast to*) Its Vietnamese counterparts are *không giống, khác với, trái ngược với*. Unlike can be used in the scope of a negative word.

(179)Her latest novel is quite *unlike* her early work. [12, p.1305]

Tiểu thuyết mới nhất của bà hoàn toàn *không giống/ khác với* sáng tác trước đây.

**4.3.1.6** *Otherwise, or else, or*

*Otherwise* can be used as conjunct to say what the result or consequence would be if the previously mentioned situation, fact, idea, etc. was untrue or was not the case [5, p.1018] Its Vietnamese counterparts are *nếu không, không thì, bằng không*.

(183) We must be back before midnight *otherwise /or else* we will be locked out. (Chúng ta phải về nhà trước nửa đêm *nếu không/ bằng không* chúng ta sẽ bị khoá ở ngoài) [23, p.506]

**4.3.1.7** *Lest*

*Lest* is used to introduce a finite negative adverbial clause of purpose to say what an action is intended to prevent (= *for fear that, in order that…not*) [22, p.752]. In Vietnamese counterparts to lest are *e rằng, sợ rằng, để không/ khỏi*.

(184) He disguised himself *lest* he be recognized [12, p.676]

Hắn cải trang *để khỏi* bị nhận ra

**4.3.1.8 *Instead of, Rather than*** (preposition)

According to Eastwood [8, p.18] *instead of* (= *in place of* ) and *rather than* have a negative meaning '*but not*'. and their Vietnamese equivalents are *thay vì, hơn là, còn hơn (là),không phải (là).*

(188) I drink tea *rather than* coffee. (= I drink tea, not coffee)

(Tôi uống trà *chứ không phải* cà phê)                    [8, p.18]

**4.3.1.9 *Far from***

*Far from* can be also be used before a noun group, an adjective to mean 'not at all', 'certainly not'.Its Vietnamese equivalents can be *đừng mong, còn lâu mới, còn khuya mới, không/chẳng... chút nào*

(190)The problem is *far from* easy                    [12, p.421]

Vấn đề này *chẳng* dễ *chút nào*.

**4.3.1.10 *Out of***

*Out of* followed by a noun group means 'lacking something'. Its Vietnamese equivalents are *hết, thiếu, không có, không còn...*

(191)    We are *out of* tea.

Chúng ta *hết* trà (= chúng ta *không còn* trà nữa)          [12, p.821]

**4.3.1.11 *Beyond*** (preposition)

*Beyond* is often used as subject complement or sometimes as adjunct. Its Vietnamese counterparts are *không thể ... nữa, vượt quá,*

(193) The bicycle is *beyond* repair                    [12, p.103]

Chiếc xe đạp ấy *không thể* sửa chữa được *nữa*.

**4.3.2 Some Open Class Items with Negative Meaning :**

**4.3.2.1 *Negative Words with Negative Affixes (Prefixes and Suffixes)***

In English there is a large group of affixes used as *Not/ No* .They are negative affixes. The most common negative prefixes are *un-, in/*

*il-/ im-/ ir-, dis-, non-, no-, -a /an-*. There are two negative suffixes – *less* and *–free*. Their Vietnamese equivalents include negative combining forms which are used almost in the same way as English negative prefixes : *bất, vô, khiếm , khuyết, miễn , thất, phi, mất, hết, thiếu,* etc. and negators *không, chẳng.* for example :

- *Un*attractive: *không* hấp dẫn;  *im*polite : *mất/ bất* lịch sự, *vô* lễ, *thiếu* lịch sự; *il*logical : *không/phi/ thiếu* lô gich; *ir*responsible : *thiếu* trách nhiệm;; *dis*like: *không* thích; *non*-stick: *không* dính;  *No* fly area: khu vực *cấm* bay; *Anomalous: bất / dị* thường; duty-*free*: *miễn* thuế.

**4.3.2.2 *Other Words with Negative in Meaning***

According to Jespersen [14, p.43] the following words are often looked upon by native speaker as negative: *fail, avoid, stop, prevent, deny, lack, absent, forget, exclude,* etc., and they are equivalent to the negation of their opposites: fail = not succeed; lack = not have; etc.

The following is a list of some negative structures with implied negatives and their Vietnamese equivalents.

*Table 4.7 : negative structure with implied negative*

| Some implied Negatives | Vietnamese Equivalents |
|---|---|
| S + *lack* + O | S + *không có* + O |
| S + *lose* + O | S + *không tìm thấy* + O |
| S + *exclude* + O | S + *không bao gồm* + O |
| S + *forget* + to-V / V-ing | S + *quên không* + làm gì |
| S + *prevent*…from… + O | S + *ngăn không cho* + O làm … |
| S + *doubt* + O/ that clause | S + *không tin* |
| S + be + *absent* | S + *không có mặt* |
| S + *deny* + O | S + *bác bỏ/ không công nhận* |
| S + *refuse* + O | S + *từ chối/ không chấp nhận* |
| S + *fail* +O/ to-V | S + *Không/ đạt, thành công* |

To sum up, the expression of negation through lexical devices in English and Vietnamese is very diverse. Both English and Vietnamese negative structures are formed by means of various negators, of which the most important in English is *not* and the most common in Vietnamese is *không*, both of which function mainly as clausal negative particles. Structures expressing absolute negation with negator plus non- assertive words are common in both English and Vietnamese. The focus of negation is normally put within the scope of negation. When the negation is focused on the a particular part of the sentence, the rest can be understood in a positive sense. Despite some similarities, English and Vietnamese greatly differ in the construction of negative sentence. The major differences between negative structures of the two languages in some aspects such as negative words and their positions are set in the sentence. The table below summarizes some English negative forms and their Vietnamese equivalents.

*Table 4.8: Summary of some English Negative forms and their Vietnamese equivalents*

| ENGLISH NEGATIVES | VIETNAMESE EQUIVALENTS |
|---|---|
| **Not and Not-combinations** | |
| Not + num + N | *Không đến/ tới + num + N* |
| Not + a/one + N | *Chẳng/ không có + một + N + nào* |
| Not + many/much + N | *Chẳng/ không có + nhiều + N* |
| Not + all + N | *Không phải + tất cả + N + (đều)* |
| Not + more than/ less + num + N | *Không + nhiều hơn/ ít hơn + num + N* |
| Not + another + N | *Không + một + N + nào khác* |
| Not + a few/ a little + N | *Không + ít + N* |
| Not + haft + N | *Không + đến một nữa + N* |

| | |
|---|---|
| Not + the least + N | *Không/ chưa + hề có + N + nào* |
| Not + every + N | *Không phải + mọi/ tất cả + N +(đều)* |
| Not + even + N | *Ngay cả/ thậm chí + N + cũng không* |
| **No and No-combinations** | |
| No + N (count, noncount) | *Không/ chẳng có + N + nào* |
| No + Adj + N | *Không/ chẳng có + N + Adj + nào* |
| No + more + N | *Không/ chẳng có + N + nào + hơn/ thêm* |
| No + num + N | *Không/ chẳng (có) + num + N + (nào)* |
| No + more than + num + N | *Không/ chẳng có hơn + num + N* |
| No + other + N | *Không/ chẳng (có) + N + nào/gì + khác* |
| No + N₁ + other than + N₂ | *Không/ có + N₁+ nào khác ngoại trừ + N₂* |
| No + longer | *Không còn ... nữa* |
| No + way | *Không đời nào/ đừng hòng/ còn lâu* |
| Neither + (of) N/ pronoun | *Chẳng/ không + N/ pronoun + nào* |
| Nothing | *Không có gì* |
| Nothing + much | *Chẳng/ không có nhiều* |
| Nothing + else | *Chẳng/ không có gì khác (nữa)* |
| Nothing + Adj | *Chẳng/ không có gì + Adj* |
| Nothing + like + N | *không có gì + bằng/ giống như + N* |
| Nothing + as Adj as | *Chẳng/ không có gì + Adj + bằng* |
| Nothing + but/ else but/ except+ N | *Không có gì (khác) + ngoại trừ + N* |
| Nobody/ No one/ No-one | *Không có ai/ người nào/ kẻ nào* |
| Nobody/ No one + else | *Không có ai/ người nào + khác (nữa)* |
| Nobody + but/ besides/ except + N | *Không có ai/ người nào + ngoại trừ + N* |
| None + (of) N/ pronoun | *Tất cả + N/ pronoun + đều không* |
| None + but + N | *Chẳng/ không có ai/ gì + ngoại trừ + N* |
| None + too + Adj | *Chẳng/ không + Adj + lắm/ cho lắm* |
| None + the + comparative Adj | *Không + Adj + chút / tí nào/ gì + cả* |

| None + other than + pro. name | *Không ai khác mà chính + proper name* |
|---|---|
| Nowhere (else) | *Chẳng/ không + nơi nào/ ở đâu (khác)* |
| Never | *Không bao giờ* |
| **Semi – Negative words** | |
| Seldom, Rarely | *Hiếm khi/ ít khi/ chẳng mấy khi/ họa hoằn* |
| scarcely | *Chỉ vừa/ khó mà/ hầu như không* |
| Barely | *Chỉ vẻn vẹn/ chỉ vừa đủ/ cực ít* |
| Little | *Ít/ chẳng bao nhiêu/ không mấy* |
| Few | *Rất ít/ chẳng bao nhiêu/ không mấy* |
| hardly | *Hầu như không/ khó mà/ khó có thể* |
| Rare | *Hiếm/ hiếm thấy/ hiếm có/ hiếm khi* |
| Only | *Chỉ/ chỉ có/ duy chỉ có* |
| **Implied Negative words** | |
| Without | *Không/ chẳng, mà không, chẳng có ...* |
| But | *Chỉ, chỉ là, chỉ cần* |
| But for/ Only for | *Nếu không vì, nếu không nhờ có* |
| Unless | *Nếu…không, trừ phi* |
| Unlike | *Không giống, khác với, trái ngược với* |
| Otherwise, or else, or | *Nếu không (thì), không thì, bằng không* |
| Lest | *E rằng, sợ rằng, để không/ khỏi* |
| Instead of, rather than | *Thay vì, hơn là, còn hơn(là)* |
| Far from | *Đừng mong, , không/chẳng... chút nào* |
| Out of | *Hết, thiếu, không có, không còn* |
| beyond | *Không thể ... nữa, vượt quá, vượt ra ngoài* |

# CHAPTER 5
## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 CONCLUSION

The ultimate goal of this study was to show semantic and syntactic features of English lexical devices denoting negation and their Vietnamese equivalents. Therefore, the first thing that we need to do in Chapter 1 was to present the rationale of the study and state what the study is aimed at. Also, the research questions, scope of the study and methods of the study are included.

Chapter 2 of the paper has provided a review of related previous studies, the Chapter has attempted to investigate the concepts relating to negation as well as theories concerning word and word meaning .

Chapter 3 is designed to describe the methods and procedures of the paper, Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research where the semantic and syntactic features of the negative items are in focus. Since this is an investigation into English lexical devices denoting negation. The investigation presents details semantic and syntactic features of the lexical negatives in the comparison between the two languages. The investigation focuses on describing nuclear negators as *no, not, never* or semi- negatives like *hardly, scarcely, seldom, little*, and implied negatives like *without, unless, absent, lack, deny…*and their equivalents in Vietnamese. We can see both English and Vietnamese negative structure are formed by means of various negators, of which the most important in English is *not* and the most common in Vietnamese is *không*. In both languages the scope of negation in a sentence is normally the part extending from the negator to the end of the sentence.

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## 5.2 IMPLICATIONS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

This study may be provide a list of interpretations of negative words and their combinations in sentence structure. Besides, The paper partly showing out the negators in syntactic and semantic features in English and their Vietnamese equivalents can help Vietnamese learners of English exploit more syntactic features of the negative items and avoid mistakes, It contributes as a useful data to teachers as well as learners in English language teaching and learning.

## 5.3 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This thesis has made an investigation into English lexical devices denoting negation. There is no denying that this paper cannot cover all lexical negatives as well as their semantic and syntactic features, which may be lie in the limitation of time, reference books and the many constraints faced by the researcher. For the reasons, there are some other aspects that have not been dealt with within this framework : Pragmatic Features and Cultural features of lexical negatives in Idioms and Proverbs.