

VƯƠNG HỮU VĨNH

**A STUDY ON LINGUISTIC MEANS FOR
REALIZING SATIRE IN AMERICAN NOVEL,
WITH REFERENCE TO VIETNAMESE**

Subject area: English Language
Code : 60.22.15

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

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. NGUYEN XUAN THOM. Ph. D

Da Nang – 2010

**CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION**

1.1. RATIONALE

Over the centuries, literature has been living within our life. It reflects different part of culture not only in mental life but also in physical one. Therefore, it is obliged subjects in any kinds of school.

Literature is an indispensable part of language and it is the most useful device to clearly show the beauty of a language. To be successful or to reach perfection in a work, the writer has to use a variety of linguistic means and therefore it becomes difficult and challenging for students.

One of the most useful literature techniques is satire which is used in a big amount of works from the past to present. One of the linguistic means for realizing satire is irony. Once employing irony, writers create a kind of shared understanding between them and the readers who both recognize that what is written is different from what is meant. It is a linguistic mean causing many difficulties to learners to understand English and Vietnamese literature by virtue of the opposite meanings compared with its environment. Let us consider the following examples in *Vanity Fair* by Thackeray and *Cánh Đồng Bất Tận* by Nguyễn Ngọc Tư :

(1). *“Her tags and earrings twinkled, and her big eyes rolled about. She was doing nothing with perfect contentment, and thinking herself charming.”*

[23, p. 190]

(2). *“Và những chân tóc trên đầu chị cũng đang tụ máu. Người ta đã lòn tay, ngoay chúng, để kéo chị lê lét hết một quãng đường xóm, trước khi dừng chân một chút ở nhà máy chà gạo. Họ giăng ném, họ quăng quật chị trên cái nền vương vãi trấu... Cuộc vui hẳn sẽ dài, nếu không có một ý tưởng mới nảy ra trong cơn phẫn khích.”*

[40, p. 156]

The words underlined above are satirical. In (1), the speaker clearly does not mean “charming” - one of the adjectives employed to describe beauty. What he is implying is “uncharming” or “ungraceful” and the cue helping us to decode the satire is “thinking herself”. Similarly in (2), the word “cuộc vui” is, of course, satirical noun. The action of ruthlessly beating a woman in any situations cannot be “cuộc vui”. On the contrary, it must be regarded as “Cuộc hành hung” or “Vụ đánh đập dã man”.

From the examples above, we can say that it is implicit meaning or more precisely negative sense that underlines the root of the problem. Satire appears in English and Vietnamese literature with a high frequency. It leaves the readers to ponder on what is meant through good assessments. Although this is an interesting thing, it is an uneasy task for readers especially for Vietnamese learners of English to identify and understand it.

During a long time for observation and research, I have found out that in American literature, satire is also used as a strong weapon in a variety of fields. As mentioned, most of the readers enjoy satirical literary works. But how can we do to help the learners understand satirical works easily and profoundly is a big thing. “How are linguistic means used to realize satire in literature in general and in “Babbitt” in particular?”, “What are the similarities and differences between linguistic means for realizing satire in English and Vietnamese in terms of Irony?” and “How can satire be identified in terms of language?” are always the questions urging me to choose “*A study on linguistic means for realizing satire in American novel, with reference to Vietnamese*” as a topic of the study to get an insight into satire in two typical American and Vietnamese novels.

Hopefully, the findings of the study will help learners of English get over the problems and have effective methods in their learning, identify linguistic means for realizing satire used in English and Vietnamese literature, understand its lexical, semantic features and cognitive effects, and use them properly. I also hope that, the learners will be provided some linguistic means to acquire

the beauty of any works and the ways of analyzing satirical works successfully.

1.2. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

To some extent, the research may become a valuable contribution to the usage of satire in general and irony in particular in teaching and learning of English literature.

The study will provide Vietnamese learners of English with means of expressing satire so that they will have opportunities to understand this linguistic mean clearly and profoundly. Moreover, the results of the study also provide them with valuable experience of how to evaluate the beauty of any American works through its linguistic means, and then they will be able to get better result in their studies.

1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1. Aims

This study aims at helping Vietnamese learners of English increase their awareness of satire through investigating linguistic means for realizing satire in the work of “Babbitt”. From that, they will be able to master the way of using satire and analyze any literary works which satire are used. Furthermore, they can clearly understand the important role of satire to the success of the works such as “Babbitt” by Sinclair Lewis, and *Số Đỏ* by Vũ Trọng Phụng on the basis of which I do research on the similarities and differences in expressing satire in American and Vietnamese literature.

1.3.2. Objectives

With the main purposes mentioned above, firstly, the research is intended to systematically describe the full description of satire used in “Babbitt” by Lewis and “*Số Đỏ*” by Vũ Trọng Phụng. Secondly, the study will concentrate on the unique styles of Lewis and Vũ Trọng Phụng. Thirdly, this will help the readers identify satire in literary works, and give some suggestions and implications for teaching and learning American and Vietnamese literature.

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Due to limit of time and ability, I just confine my survey on a certain amount of works (one in English and one in Vietnamese) with linguistic means for realizing satire and the one main device that I focus on is Irony.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research tries to answer the following questions:

1. How are linguistic means used to realize satire in “Babbitt”?
2. What are the similarities and differences between linguistic means for realizing satire in English and Vietnamese in terms of Irony?
3. How can satire be identified in terms of language?

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Research Design And Prodedure

Chapter 4: Discussion And Findings

Chapter 5: Conclusion And Implications

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES RELATED TO THE TOPIC

To satire, the first use in English language is in 1509 in Barclay's prologue to *The Ship of Fools* then in “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel

To irony, Culter [7] examines the ironic aspect of ironic utterances. According to her, the speaker produces this kind of utterance by superimposing a certain intonation contour which signals to his hearers that the utterance is intended to be ironic.

In Vietnamese, there are some works dealing with this field of the following authors: Đinh Trọng Lạc [27], Đinh Lựu [26], Cao Xuân Hạo [25]

The concern of linguistic means is clearly shown by a lot of researchers done by Vietnamese scholars recently: Huỳnh Thị Hoài [31], Nguyễn Hoàng Phương Thảo, Phạm Thị Kim Sa with their papers related to linguistic features of irony in English and Vietnamese.

However, none of the foreign and Vietnamese linguistics mentioned above show the readers a specific linguistic mean for realizing satire in a particular work.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. The Satire

2.2.1.1. The definition of satire

According to Paul Simpson, “Satire is a genre of literature whose goal is not only to point out a social vice but to make it clear that this vice is intolerable”. [21, p.112]

2.2.1.2. The origin of the satire

Most of the satirical theories are based on Paul Simpson, Quintero and Quintilian.

The word satire comes from Latin *satura lanx* and means "medley, dish of colourful fruits" - it was held by Quintilian to be a "wholly Roman phenomenon" (*satura tota nostra est*).

2.2.1.3. Satirical uptake

A model for satirical uptake

The task of a programme in universal pragmatics is, according to Habermas, to identify and reconstruct universal conditions of possible understanding; to account, in other words, for the general presuppositions of communicative action.

Validity claims and satirical uptake

In "canonical" satire, if we can accept for the moment this hypothetical category, the identification by the satirist of two ironic spaces encoded in prime and dialectic, and the assumption that the guarantee of sincerity has been suspended, leads to further inferences about the status of the claims of both truth and appropriateness.

2.2.1.4. Irony

Irony (from the Ancient Greek εἰρωνεία *eirōneía*, meaning hypocrisy, deception, or feigned ignorance) is a situation, literary technique, or rhetorical device, in which there is an incongruity, discordance, or unintended connection with truth, that goes strikingly beyond the most simple and evident meaning of words or actions.

2.2.2. Related concepts: style, stylistics, belles – letter styles, emotive prose

2.2.2.1. Style and stylistics

According to Galperin [24, p.9] , almost all linguists agree that the term style can be applied to the following fields of study :

- 1 . The aesthetic function of language
- 2 . The expressive means in language
- 3 . Synonymous ways of rendering one and the same idea
- 4 . Emotional colouring in language

5 . A system of special devices called stylistic devices

6 . The splitting of the literary language into separated subsystems called styles

7 . The interpretation between language and thought

8 . The individual manner of an author in making use of language

2.2.2.2. Belles - letter styles

Belles-lettres is a term that is used to describe a category of writing. Literally, belles - letter is a French phrase meaning beautiful or fine writing.

In conclusion, the belles - letters style must have the following linguistic features:

- 1 . Be imaginative but genuine, achieved by means of purely linguistic devices.
- 2 . Use words in contextual and commonly having more than one meaning
- 3 . Use a vocabulary through which the author's personal evaluation of things and phenomena will be affected.
- 4 . Reveal a peculiar individual choice of vocabulary and syntax
- 5 . Introduce the typical features of colloquial language to different degrees in the sub styles.

2.2.2.3. Emotive prose

Emotive prose features the combination of the literary variant of the language, both in words and in syntax, with the colloquial variant. But the colloquial language in the belles- letters style is not a simple reproduction of the natural speech, it has undergone changes introduced by the writer and has been made " literature- like"

2.2.2.3. Author Sinclair Lewis (1885-1951)

Sinclair Lewis was born in February 7, 1885, in Sauk Centre, Minnesota, USA. Lewis's father remarried within a year of Emma Kermott Lewis's death in 1891. Lewis was an awkward youth

overshadowed by his more attractive, popular older brother. He attended Yale University where he made the acquaintance of Upton Sinclair and contributed to the college literary magazine. In 1951, he was heavily addicted to alcohol and died in Rome at the age of 66.

2.2.4. The novel of Babbitt

2.2.4.1. The summary of "Babbitt"

This novel is the work of American writer, Sinclair Lewis, and was published in (the year) 1922.

The story's protagonist is a small town businessman by the name of George Babbitt.

George Babbitt is also a most avid proponent of his town and considers it the best little city in the world.

Zenith is the town of reference and the scope of George Babbitt's aspirations.

In the end, however, George Babbitt, in a very vague sense, is able to realize that the town he terms as "the greatest" is not the whole of existence-its just that George is never able to fully act upon this realization.

2.2.5. Author Vũ Trọng Phụng

Vũ Trọng Phụng (October 20, 1912 - October 13, 1939) was a popular Vietnamese author and journalist, who is considered to be one of the most influential figures of the Vietnamese literature in the 20th century. Vũ Trọng Phụng's native village is Hào village, Mỹ Hào district, Hưng Yên province, yet he was born, grew up, and died in Hà Nội. The fact that his father died of tuberculosis when he was only 7 months old resulted in Vũ Trọng Phụng's being brought up mainly by his mother. After finishing primary school, sixteen-year-old Vũ Trọng Phụng was forced to stop schooling and earn his own livings. He was one of the most excellent writer in the period of 1930 - 1945. In spite of a short life, Vũ Trọng Phụng has contributed to the modern literature a lot of valuable works with different genres in which novels and reports are prominent. His outstanding novels are *Giông tố* (1936), *Số Đỏ* (1936), *Vỡ Đê* (1936), *Trúng số Độc Đắc* (1938) and his remarkable reports are *Cạm Bẫy Người* (1933), *Kĩ Nghệ Lấy Tây* (1934), *Cơm Thầy Cơm Cô* (1936).

2.2.6. The summary of Số Đỏ

Số Đỏ - first published in Hà Nội newspaper, is a famous realistic and satirical novel by Vũ Trọng Phụng. A comic farce set in late-colonial Vietnam, in Hanoi, *Số Đỏ* traces the meteoric rise of ball-boy Xuân. He loses his job for peeking at changing tennis players, but is taken under the wing of Ms. Phó Đoan and Mr. and Mrs. Văn Minh, and finds his footing as fashion tailor, tennis professor, medical student, poet, and national hero. Xuân is not particularly bright, but he is aided by luck and a way with words picked up in a stint advertising venereal disease medicines. With the help from Ms. Phó Đoan, Mr. and Mrs. Văn Minh as well as the members in this family, Red – Haired Xuân is intentionally or intentionally respected as a Dr. Xuân, society reformer, tennis professor, ect. Therefore, Miss Tuyết (Văn Minh's younger sister) falls in love with him. His highest glory comes when he is chosen to compete with a tennis champion from Xiêm La (Thailand). Thanks to the competition, he becomes a savior of the country, and is respected as a great man... and Mr. Cố Hồng (Văn Minh's father) declares to marry his daughter to him.

Số Đỏ has disclosed the swindle and ridiculous nature of the colonial middle - class society. That society is, in fact ridiculous, base, rascal but it looks luxurious, civilized, progressive with the evidence of the strange meteoric rise of Red – Haired Xuân.

CHAPTER 3
METHOD AND PROCEDURE

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

Quantitative and qualitative methods are both used in this research.

3.2. RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCEDURE

1. Collecting and classifying data by reading the novel in depth and width to clearly understand the whole novel, the linguistic means used. Also, at this stage, the number of sentences using ironies is taken.

2. Investigating the frequency of occurrence of irony in *Babbitt* and *Số Đỏ*. Taking the examples in the previous step and classifying them into lexical, semantic and pragmatic features.

3. Analyzing data: Point out the used irony in different aspects in particular and under the satirical value in general which lead to the success of the two novels.

4. Making comparison between the use of irony for realizing satire in American and Vietnamese literature.

5. Listing the ways of identifying satire in general.

6. Putting forward some implications for the teaching and learning of literature.

3.3. DESCRIPTION OF DATA

The work is carried out with 997 sentences containing irony in the American novel (*Babbitt* by Sinclair Lewis) and 589 sentences containing irony in Vietnamese novel (*Số Đỏ* by Vũ Trọng Phụng). In addition, for a full theoretical description in literature review, some examples are taken from linguistic books written by English and Vietnamese linguists.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

All the data in English and in Vietnamese are taken from the two novels mentioned in 3.3.

All utterances containing irony in English and in Vietnamese will be listed out and analyzed in terms of lexicology and semantics.

In lexical aspects, irony is examined and analyzed in nouns, verbs and adjectives. The others as adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions ect. are not mentioned.

In semantic aspects, the analysis is carried out on the basis of typical features of Irony in English and in Vietnamese.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. IRONY IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE

4.1.1. The frequency of occurrence of Irony in “Babbitt”

The study of about 7445 sentences arranged on 345 double pages of the novel shows that there are 997 ironic cases. So that the percentages of irony are about 13.39% of the total sentences. The relatively frequency of the irony is presented in table 4.1

Table 4. 1. Relatively frequency of Irony in “Babbitt”

Total sentences	Raw numbers	Percentages
7445	997	13.39 %

The ironic cases in the novel studied are in different parts of speech. However, only three main parts of speech are taken in consideration. They are adjectives; noun and verb which are thought to play the most important role to show the meanings of in words, phrases, sentences and context needed for the study. The others as adverbs, prepositions, articles, conjunctions ... are not mentioned in this study.

The three main parts of speech with relatively frequency of expressive means embodying the irony is provided in table 4.2

Table 4. 2. Relatively frequency of Expressive means embodying the Irony in “Babbitt”

Expressive means	Raw numbers	Percentages
Noun	238	23,87 %

Adjectives	625	62,69 %
Verb	134	13,44 %
Total	997	100

On average, there are nearly 130 ironies per 1000 sentences. Among 997 ironies, 625 are adjectives, accounting for around 62,69%, nouns with a smaller number of 238 cases (around 23,87%) and verbs with 134 cases accounting for the least number of 13,44%.

It seems that the ironic adjective is used most frequent in the novel with the highest percentage among the parts of speech surveyed. It’s on of the ironic case that is easy for the readers to recognize:

4.1.2. The frequency of occurrence of Irony in Số Đỏ

The study of about 3990 sentences arranged on 243 pages of the novel shows that there are 589 ironic cases. So that the percentages of ironies are about 14.76% of the total sentences. The relatively frequency of the irony is presented in table 4.3

Table 4. 3. Relatively frequency of Irony in Số Đỏ

Total sentences	Raw numbers	Percentages
3990	589	14,76 %

To make it convenient for contrastive analysis between English and Vietnamese, the three main parts of speech (adjective, noun and verb) are taken in consideration.

The three main parts of speech with relatively frequency of expressive means embodying the irony is provided in table 4.4

Table 4.4. Relatively frequency of Expressive means embodying the Irony in Số Đỏ

Expressive means	Raw numbers	Percentages
Noun	179	30,39 %
Adjectives	278	47,20 %
Verb	132	22,41 %
Total	589	100

On average, there are nearly 140 ironies per 1000 sentences. Among 589 ironies, 278 are adjectives, accounting for around 47,20%, nouns with a smaller number of 179 cases (around 30,39%) and verbs with 132 cases accounting for the least number of 22,41%.

4.2. A CONTASTIVE NANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC MEANS TO EXPRESS IRONY IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

4.2.1. The lexical features of expressive means embodying ironies

The ironies are sometimes easy to identify but sometimes they are difficult to understand. Therefore, the readers have to read the novel carefully and understand the context clearly so as to elicit the ironical implication of the author. Let take this example to illustrate that the ironies in these cases are not difficult to identify:

Example 4.1: When Verona and Ted were gone and Tinka upstairs, Babbitt groaned to his wife: “Nice family, I must say! I don’t pretend to be any baa-lamb, and maybe I’m a little cross-grained at breakfast sometimes, but the way they go on ab-jab-jabbering, I simply can’t stand it. I swear, I feel like going off some place where I can get a little peace. I do think after a man’s spent his lifetime trying to give his kids a chance and a decent education, it’s pretty discouraging to hear them all the time scrapping like a bunch of hyenas and never—and never—Curious; here in the paper it says—Never silent for one mom—Seen the morning paper yet?”

[13, p.19]

The novel opens with a description of the city of Zenith in all of its grandeur and the first chapters of the novel are for Zenith and Babbitt’s family with a lot of arguments among the members in his family as well as Babbitt personality and appearance. In the disagreement of allowing Verona using the car and illustrated that Verona did not know about the car but Babbitt say: “my **good woman**”. Clearly, good must not be Babbitt’s compliment about his daughter, it means *unintelligent* or *bad*.

Another argument with his wife, he shows his dissatisfaction about his family and his life, he wants to go to somewhere to find a little “peace”. Yet, he says that: “*Nice family, I must say!*”. It is obvious that the word nice he uses here means something different. It means *bad* or *terrible*.

In Số Đỏ, as mentioned above, the central figure is Red - Haired Xuân. He is the oddest and most irrational in actions. The others are also satired in their actions:

Example 4.2: “Đêm ấy, khi mọi người đi ngủ thì trong phòng người ốm chỉ có Xuân Tóc Đỏ và cô Tuyết sẵn sóc mọi việc mà thôi. Đến chính ông Hai cũng ngủ mê ngủ mệt ở một cái trường kỳ gần đấy, vì ông đã hơi yên tâm là cụ tổ sẽ được **manh khỏe** đến nơi rồi. Tuyết đã lấy chữ hiểu ra làm có để cùng thức với Xuân. Hai bên tuy không nói chuyện với nhau song bốn con mắt đã đủ nói giỏi hơn hai cái mồm.”

[44, p. 86].

All the members in the family really want their grandfather/ father to be died sooner so that they have a chance to show off themselves: Mr. Tú Tân has a chance to use his cameras that he has prepares for a long time, Ms Văn Minh has a chance to wear the modern mourning clothes, Mr. TYPN has an opportunity to show off his design...ect. All of them are hurry to see the death of their grandfather/ father so that the writer bitterly uses the word “*manh khỏe*” which means that “*sắp chết*”.

In deceitfully trying to save their grandfather/ father from the serious illness, they invite two mountebanks at the same time, they even think about special “medicine” from Saint. That Đền Bia “saint medicine” which make from mud and buffalo shit. The special

“medicine” mentioned is depicted “*công hiệu*”. But in fact, it kills people. Therefore, the word “*công hiệu*” means “*độc hại*” or “*nguy hiểm*”.

4.2.2. Semantic features of expressive means embodying ironies

The novel of Babbitt is the one that satires American business and George Babbitt is a symbol. And, in *Số Đỏ*, Vũ Trọng Phụng satires Vietnamese temporary society and Red – Haired Xuân is a symbol. Both Babbitt and Red – Haired Xuân are uneducated but always act as the people who full of civilization. Therefore, in the two novels, the words **civilization** or *ideal citizen* and “*văn minh*” or “*tân tiến*” which are typical of irony on quality of people/ thing are used repeatedly.

Example 4.3: “Our Ideal Citizen—I picture him first and foremost as being busier than a bird-dog, not wasting a lot of good time in day-dreaming or going to sassiety teas or kicking about things that are none of his business, but putting the zip into some store or profession or art. At night he lights up a good cigar, and climbs into the little old ‘bus, and maybe cusses the carburetor, and shoots out home. He mows the lawn, or sneaks in some practice putting, and then he’s ready for dinner. After dinner he tells the kiddies a story, or takes the family to the movies, or plays a few fists of bridge, or reads the evening paper, and a chapter or two of some good lively Western novel if he has a taste for literature, and maybe the folks next-door drop in and they sit and visit about their friends and the topics of the day.”

[13, p. 159-160]

There is no doubt for the ironical use of civilization. At the surface level, civilization means well organized socially with a very developed culture and way of life; having customs that are fair and morally acceptable or polite and reasonable. However, we cannot see these meanings in the novel. The fact is that Lewis wants to satire what is called civilization in America and the civilized people. What they say, though totally contrast with what they do. Through the context, we can interpret the deep meanings of civilized as immortal, impartial or cruel.

Example 4.4: “ Nhưng ông Phán mọc sừng vội nháy mắt xua tay ra hiệu kín thì nó lại thôi. Người ta xúm quanh Xuân hỏi han nó về cuộc hành trình, về tin tức đến Bia, cũng có vẻ vô vập nó như nó là một vị hoàng tử. Nhất là Tuyết, sau khi thấy anh ruột tiến cử vắng mặt Xuân là sinh viên trường thuốc, thì cứ đứng đờ ra mà nhìn Xuân bằng cặp mắt rất ngây thơ”.

[44, p.80]

Red – Haired Xuân in example 29 is the central character in Vũ Trọng Phụng’s novel - *Số Đỏ*, at the beginning of the novel, Xuân appears as a deceitful and uneducated fellow, a scoundrel. Skillfully, the author highlights his bad nature through the word “*hoàng tử*”. This irony on social status creates different words in readers’ minds as “*kẻ vô học*” or “*kẻ côn đồ*” in stead of *hoàng tử*.

4.2.3. Effect achieved by the Irony

It is obvious that, with the success of using irony, Sinclair Lewis and Vũ Trọng Phụng have put in readers’ minds the deep perception about the things focused in the two novels. The novels used for evidences are both social criticism about which are religion, business, civilization, morality, virtue are concerned. Coincidentally, the novels used make the readers curious about their basic contents.

The word **Babbitt** means “a self satisfied person who conforms readily to conventional middle class ideas and ideals, especially of business and material success. In another way, we can say that Babbitt is a narrow-minded and complacent member of the middle class.

Example 4.5: “Take your factory job, if you want to. Don’t be scared of the family. No, nor all of Zenith. Nor of yourself, the way I’ve been. Go ahead, old man! The world is yours!”

[13, p. 343]

By reading the title of the novel *Số Đỏ*, the promotion or dumb luck in society or in business or in some important things always appears in readers’ minds. This word is used for someone who has a low position in a society or someone who has nothing to become a person who has everything through a dumb luck.

Through the novel, the readers are aware of the main character in the novel – Red – Haired Xuân. He lives like an uncared – for child in the town environment. He is fatherless and motherless from the young age. He was feeded by his uncle at 9 and then he was casted out because of peeping his aunt while she was having a bath. From that, he wandered the streets and did different kinds of work for meals. And, his dumb luck helped him to become một vĩ nhân; sinh viên trường thuốc; nhà cải cách xã hội; anh hùng cứu quốc.... All of these illustrate for the title of the novel – Số Đố.

Trough the main character, Vũ Trọng Phụng wants to criticize, satirize evil and corruptive feudal society. It is obvious that Red – Haired Xuân is the big size caricature on which exposes the corruption of the society. That caricature will be significant whenever society is deceitful, tricky and the sentence that repeated as “*bồi tiêm*” counts is about 1872 times clearly shows us about this: “*Biết rồi!khổ lắm! nói mãi!*”

4.4. THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF USING IRONY IN AMERICAN LITERATURE AND VIETNAMESE LITERATURE

4.4.1. Similarities

Firstly, irony can occur in word forms such as adjectives, nouns and verbs with the similar percentage of occurrences.

Secondly, both English and Vietnamese authors tend to use irony for the following topics: quality of people/ things, careers, standardization, peace and social status. Among these topics “quality of people/ things” is most frequently used in both English and Vietnamese. To infer the ironic meanings, the readers have to base on the socio-cultural background knowledge.

Thirdly, the authors’ biographies, the societies they are facing with and their attitudes towards those are really important to infer the ironic meanings of words or phrases or sentences and even paragraphs.

4.4.2. Differences

Lexically, the occurrence of ironic nouns in English is more than in Vietnamese. It seems that American authors create more ironic effects on nouns.

In the semantic aspect, the frequency of occurrences of irony in most semantic features in English and Vietnamese is different. In Vietnamese irony, we do not discover any irony on standardization.

And in the cognitive effect, to understand the irony in American literature, the readers have to base on a larger context than the irony in Vietnamese.

4.5. WAYS FOR IDENTIFYING SATIRE IN GENERAL

As mentioned, to clearly understand the satirical works, the readers have to have the background knowledge of the works that they are reading so that they can interpret the deep meanings or authors’ implications. In other words, it is not easy to identify satire in any words. To help the readers be a bit easier to identify satire in any satirical works, the following ways are possibly used:

Firstly, it is important for the readers to clearly understand what satire is.

Secondly, they have to master the linguistic means for realizing satire. Beside irony which is the strongest weapon of doing satire, there are a lot of devices that require them to be aware of such as: travesty, burlesque, parody, farce, invective, sarcasm, malapropism and so on

Thirdly, the readers have to understand the societies that the authors facing with. This is also very important because by understanding this, the readers have the background for the satire that the authors tend to.

Fourthly, it can not be dined that Authors’ attitudes towards the societies or the things that mentioned in the works play an important part in identifying satire. They object to or oppose them, of course, but in what fields. In another words, the readers have to recognize

author's target that may help to read the works to understand what the authors are writing about.

Last but not least, the readers have to practice doing satirical exercises and read as many satirical works as possible.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSION

This study is carried out to investigate into linguistic means for realizing satire in American novel in general and in *Babbitt* in particular with reference to the novel of *Số Đỏ*. The American novel is by Sinclair Lewis and the Vietnamese one is by Vũ Trọng Phụng. It has mainly focused on irony - one of the strongest devices of satire which are the most frequently and distinctively used in the two novels.

As a study of stylistics, the study mentioned some of the prior researches of distinguished scholars in the field as well as the relevant theories invented by those in the Literature Review. Besides, the lives of the two writers as well as the summaries of the two novels used to substantiate the theories are also presented in order to provide readers with first and general impression.

To carry out this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods used to make the study a deep descriptive and contrastive analysis.

Basing on the data collected from two novels, the expressive means embodying the Irony are analyzed according to their lexical features, semantic features and their frequency based on Galperin's theory with the aim of finding the most satisfactory answers to the research questions of the study.

Dealing with 997 ironic cases in English and 589 ironic ones in Vietnamese, the study shows that the frequency of occurrences of irony in nouns, adjectives and verbs is similar in turn. To understand irony in literary works, the readers have to base themselves on the socio-cultural background knowledge that the authors are facing with.

The study also found out some differences between irony in English and in Vietnamese such as ironic nouns in English are more than in Vietnamese; there are no irony on standardization in Vietnamese and

to understand the irony in English, the readers have to base on the larger context.

In conclusion, to identify satire in any literary works and get to know authors' implications are a big challenge to English learners. With the finding and discussions, I do hope that this study will contribute a very small part to the learners of English in identify satire in general and irony in particular in literary works to get better results.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING LITERATURE IN TERMS OF IRONY.

5.2.1. Implications for teaching literature

Firstly, since irony is based on an incongruousness between what is stated and what is really meant, the connection between surface meaning and deep meaning seems to be suitable. Therefore, if we can help English learners understand the concept of irony in literature, it is possible for them to connect the concept to their understanding of meanings (both surface and deep meanings) of ironic words/ phrases, sentences or even paragraphs. Accordingly, their understanding and interpretations of irony will be less challenging.

Secondly, Irony not only occurs in lexical factors but also in semantic and many different ones in which culture is an important element. . Therefore, teachers should supply the learners the background knowledge and cultural connections established between the authors and readers so that the learner's irony understanding can be less challenging.

Finally, teachers should assign different kinds of exercises of irony which relate to lexical features, semantic features or any kinds of it depending on the levels of fluency of English learners and require students practice doing those as much as possible. The details can be followed as:

- Before classes, teachers can help learners to prepare the lesson they are going to learn by providing them with some helpful hints as the situations or main paragraphs that irony used and ask them to find out themselves.

- During classroom period, teachers may organize learners in pairs or groups to discuss and exchange ideas of the findings that they made at home so as to raise their involvement in the work.
- At the post - teaching stage, it is advised that teachers should give students tasks for self-analysis in the form of composition, or ask them to make the contrastive analysis between the works will be studied to any works that they like . This one can be done in English and Vietnamese or English and English according to their favorite works to make them study more deeply into the work.

5.2.2. Implications for learning literature

Firstly, learners have to master what satire is. If the concept about satire and irony is understood wrongly, then the interpretation of it will be in the wrong way.

Secondly, the readers have to understand the societies that the authors living, the social culture so that they can interpret the satire or irony correctly.

Thirdly, learners should master features of irony not only in English but also in Vietnamese as to understand it clearly to support for their skills of learning language. Finally, learners have to read any works that satire is used and do as many ironic exercises as possible to get the profound understanding of it follow the saying "*practice makes perfect*".

5.3. LIMITATIONS

I have do my best to invest in my study but mistakes and inadequacies are unavoidable because I do not have time enough as well as relevant materials to provide more sufficient and thorough focus on irony.

As mention in the scope of the study, Irony is a large subject covering a large range of linguistic areas. However, I just focus on irony used in two novels with lexical features, semantic features and cognitive effects, other functions have not been discovered in this study.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

For further study, I would like carry out a more detailed analysis including the follows:

- Effects of irony in the novels of Babbitt and Số Đỏ produced by hyperbole, sarcasm, understatement
- All satirical devices such as humor, fun, parody, simile ect. used in the two novels.
- A comparison between satirical American literature and satirical Vietnamese literature.
- Ways of translating satirical literary works