

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
UNIVERSITY OF DANANG

NGUYỄN LÊ THỰC NHÃ

HOW TO DELIVER BAD NEWS  
IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE

Field study : THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

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Supervisor: TRƯƠNG BẠCH LÊ, Ph. D.

Examiner 1: NGUYỄN THỊ QUỲNH HOA, Ph. D.

Examiner 2: NGUYỄN QUANG NGOẠN, Ph. D.

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- Library of the College of Foreign Languages, University of Danang
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Sharing bad news is part of everyday life. Bad news is not limited to death alone. It may be bad news from the doctor, telling one their disease is terminal. It may be bad news from the corporation or business, or factory informing one about an upcoming layoff which will include the person being informed. It may be the bad news that a child is failing in school, or news about an accident. It may be anything that upsets your emotions in a drastic way.

No one enjoys delivering bad news, but at one time or another, people will be faced with the unpleasant task of having to deliver bad news. Bad-news messages must be delivered carefully, with the ultimate goal being acceptance of the message by those to whom it is directed.

Different cultures have different values, especially in communication. Each culture has its own rules in communication, so learners of a foreign language should master these rules so that they can avoid communication breakdowns or cultural shocks. Delivering bad news is such a sensitive task. How to deliver bad news naturally requires learners much knowledge of the language. Above are the main reasons that motivate me to carry out this research paper, “*How to Deliver Bad News in English and Vietnamese*”. We do hope that the study will provide both English and Vietnamese learners with useful knowledge to improve their communicative competence.

#### 1.2 PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed at providing learners of English with syntactic and pragmatic features of delivering bad news. Then the similarities and differences are pointed out.

#### 1.3 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

#### 1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study deals with the description and analysis of the syntactic and pragmatic features of the languages used to deliver bad news in spoken discourse in English and Vietnamese. Bad news in this study refers to real bad news based on the context in which it appears. This study does not mention bad news as “good news” in many cases. The situations which are studied in this thesis are limited to family, school and business life. This study does not include non-verbal forms such as gestures or facial expressions either.

#### 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the syntactic features of the language used to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese?
- 2) What are the pragmatic features of the language used to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese?
- 3) What are the syntactic and pragmatic similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese in delivering bad news?

#### 1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The research paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1, “**Introduction**”, includes the rationale, purposes of the study, justification for the study, research questions, scope of the study and organization of the study. The Definition of “bad news” is also in this chapter.

Chapter 2, “ **Literature review**”, consists of review of prior research and related theoretical background knowledge.

Chapter 3, “ **Method and Procedure**”, presents the aims and objectives, research design and methodology, selection of sample as well as data collection, data analysis and reliability and validity.

Chapter 4, “ **Discussions of Findings**” , looks into the syntactic and pragmatic features of the language used to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese. Then the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese will be withdrawn.

Chapter 5, “**Conclusions and Implication**”, summarizes the development of the study as well as the findings of the study and works out the implications for the teaching and learning of delivering bad news in English and in Vietnamese. Some limitations of the study are pointed out and suggestions for further research are provided in this chapter.

## **1.7 DEFINITION OF “BAD NEWS”**

## **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES**

There have been a great deal of studies on speech acts. These includes apologies, complaints, compliments, invitations, requests, refusals.etc

Austin, J. L. (1962), *How to Do Things with Words*, [9] , Yule, G. (1996), *Pragmatics* [38] and Nguyễn Đức Dân (1998), *Ngữ dụng học- Tập 1* [4] talk about speech acts and mention locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts and makes distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

Brown, P. and Levinson, S. (1990) and Nguyễn Quang (2004) discussed the politeness strategies.

Some recent cross-lingual studies did a research into speech acts such as Tran Thi My Linh (2006), “*A Vietnamese-English cross-cultural study of the use of hedging before giving bad news*” [33], Truong Thi Phuong Trang (2001), “*A Study on Politeness Strategies in Disagreement*” [34], Truong Thi Anh Tuyet (2003), “*A Study on Cross-Cultural Pragmatics Failure of Invitation in English versus Vietnamese*” [35], Le Thi Bang Tam (2006), “*A Study of English and Vietnamese Negative Comments*” [24].

It can be seen that each author mentions certain aspects of speech acts, such as syntactic, semantic or pragmatic features of disagreements, invitations, negative comments...

In this thesis, both syntactic and pragmatic features of delivering bad news will be described and analyzed. A contrastive analysis between English and Vietnamese in delivering bad news is also carried out to

provide learners with specific knowledge, which can help better their communication competence.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.2.1 Syntactic Structure**

### **2.2.2 Speech act Theory**

#### **2.2.2.1 Speech Acts**

The theory of speech acts has been paid much attention on. There have been a lot of theorists studying this matter such as Austin (1962), Grice (1975), Hymes (1964), Levinson (1983), Brown and Yule (1983), Searle (1975).etc.

Austin [9] points out that in issuing an utterance, a speaker can perform three acts simultaneously: *Locutionary act*, *Illocutionary act*, *Perlocutionary act*

In “ How to do things with words” , Austin [9] classified speech acts into five categories: Verdictives, Exercitives, Commissives, Behavitives, and Expositives.

Searle (1976) [29] and Yules (1996) [41] states that the five kinds of speech acts are: Assertives or Representatives, Declaratives, Expressives, Commissives and Directives:

Bach and Harnish (1984) [10] classified speech acts into four categories: Constatives, Directives, Commissives and Acknowledgements.

From the classification of speech acts made by Searle and Yule, it can be seen that delivering bad news relates to Representatives speech acts. They consist of assertions, reports, conclusions, description etc. Delivering bad news means informing or announcing someone about something bad. It belongs to reporting acts.

### **2.2.2.2 Direct and Indirect Speech Act**

Searle [29] said that a speaker using a direct speech act wants to communicate the literal meaning that the words conventionally express; there is a direct relationship between the form and the function. On the other hand, he explained that people can also communicate a different meaning from the apparent surface meaning by using indirect speech act.

Jenny Thomas [32] discussed the four points of indirectness:

1. *Intentional indirectness*
2. *Indirectness is costly and risky*
3. *Assumption of rationality*
4. *The principle of Expressibility*

### **2.2.3 Conversational Implicature**

Grice [20] outlined an approach to what he termed conversational implicature .The conversational implicature is a message that is not found in the plain sense of the sentence. The speaker implies it. The hearer is able to infer this message in the utterance by appealing to the rules governing successful conversational interaction.

### **2.2.4 Cooperative Principles**

Paul Grice [20] proposes that in ordinary conversation, speakers and hearers share a cooperative principle. Speakers shape their utterances to be understood by hearers. The principle can be explained by four underlying rules or maxims. They are the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner.

## 2.2.5 Politeness Theory

### 2.2.5.1 Face

Face is something that can be lost, maintained or enhanced and must be constantly attended to in interaction. There are two aspects to this self image.

- *Positive face:*

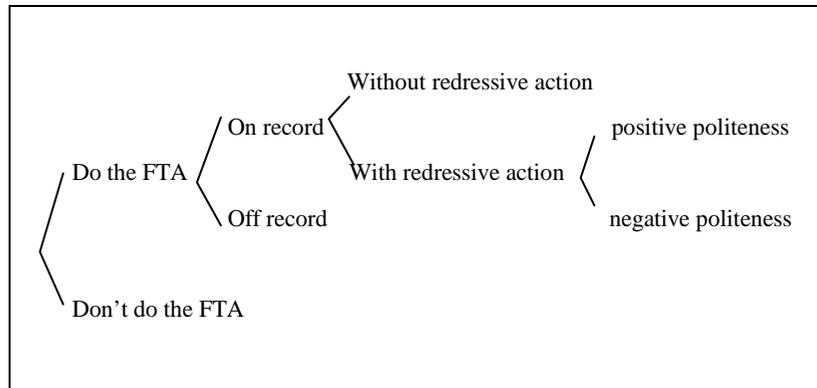
- *Negative face:*

### 2.2.5.2 Face Threatening Acts (FTAs)

According to Brown and Levinson [12], a face threatening act is an act that inherently damages the face of the addressee or the speaker by acting in opposition to the wants and desires of the other.

### 2.2.5.3 Politeness Strategies for Doing FTA

In communication Ss tend to avoid FTAs, and they employ certain strategies to minimize the threat. Brown and Levinson [12,p19] made it clearer in Figure 1.



**Figure 2.1 Possible Strategies for Doing FTAs**

### 2.2.5.4 Politeness Strategies

#### a. Bald-on Record

These provide no effort by Ss to reduce the impact of the FTA's. Ss will most likely shock the person to whom they are speaking to, embarrass them, or make them feel a bit uncomfortable.

#### b. Positive Politeness

**Positive politeness** is oriented toward the positive face of H. Positive politeness minimizes the threatening action by reassuring the H that he or she is valued by the S, that somehow the S wants what the H wants, or that they are members of the same-in-group.

#### c. Negative Politeness

**Negative politeness strategies** are oriented towards the hearer's negative face and emphasize avoidance of imposition on the hearer. These strategies presume that the speaker will be imposing on the listener and there is a higher potential for awkwardness or embarrassment than in bald on record strategies and positive politeness strategies.

#### d. Off-record

Off-record strategies means indirect ones. If S does not want to say something directly, he can do it off-record.

### 2.2.5.5 Factors Influencing the Choice of Strategies

Brown and Levinson [12] also point out three sociological factors which speakers should take into consideration when deciding whether and how to use the various strategies in real life situations: Social distance between parties (symmetric relation) , Power relations between parties (a symmetric relation) , The absolute ranking of the threat of the FTA.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### 3.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

##### 3.1.1 Aims of the Study

The study is aimed at finding the possible similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese in delivering bad news.

##### 3.1.2 Objectives of the Study

- Identify the syntactic and pragmatics features of how to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese.
- Find out the possible similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese in delivering bad news.
- Suggest some implications for the teaching and learning of how to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHOD

The study makes use of the following methods: contrastive, qualitative and quantitative analysis.

#### 3.3 SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

About 200 samples for each language are chosen to be analyzed in the study. The source of data is mainly collected from extracts of conversations in English and Vietnamese short stories, novels and films

#### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION

##### 3.4.1 Data Collection from Document Reviews

As mentioned above, the data were collected from stories, novels, films as well as on the TV and the Internet in English and Vietnamese.

##### 3.4.2 Data Collection from the Survey Questionnaire

The data were collected by means of a standard questionnaire called discourse completion test (DCT). It was used by Blum-Kulka,

House and Kasper (1989) in their Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project (CCSARP) [11]. The questionnaire is designed with ten situations as follows:

**What do you say to deliver bad news verbally in the following situations?**

Situation 1: *You want to inform about the death of the hearer's relative .*

Situation 2: *You want to inform about an accident in which the hearer's relative was badly injured:*

Situation 3: *You want to inform that the hearer/ the hearer 's relative has got a serious disease.*

Situation 4: *You want to inform about the hearer's / the hearer 's relative's loss of money or precious property ( car/ motorbike/ ...)*

Situation 5: *You want to inform about the hearer's / the hearer 's relative's failure in applying for a job*

Situation 6: *You want to inform that the hearer's relative has been arrested for a crime.*

Situation 7: *You want to inform that the hearer/ the hearer 's relative has been tricked into buying a fake thing .*

Situation 8: *You want to inform that the hearer/ the hearer's relative has failed an examination.*

Situation 9: *You want to inform that the hearer/ the hearer 's relative has been fired*

Situation 10: *You want to inform about the marriage break-up of the hearer's relative*

Each respondent was expected to give 60 utterances. As the questionnaire were delivered to 30 speakers of Vietnamese and 30 people from English speaking countries, we expect to have about

1800 utterances for each language. Together with 200 utterances collected from books, novels and films, the utterances to be analyzed may reach 2000 utterances for each language.

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

The utterances which are used to deliver bad news are analyzed and classified to find out syntactic and pragmatic features.

### **3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF DELIVERING BAD NEWS IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE**

##### **4.1.1 Phrasal Structures**

###### **4.1.1.1. Noun phrases**

- a. English noun phrases
- b. Vietnamese noun phrases

###### **4.1.1.2 Prepositional Phrases**

###### **4.1.1.3 Verb Phrases**

- a. English verb phrases
- b. Vietnamese verb phrases

###### **4.1.1.2. Adjective Phrases**

- a. English Adjective phrases
- b. Vietnamese Adjective phrases

##### **4.1.2 Sentential Structures**

###### **4.1.2.1 Statement**

- a. English statement
- b. Vietnamese statement

###### **4.1.2.2 Negation**

- a. English negation
- b. Vietnamese negation

###### **4.1.2.3 Question**

- a. English question
- b. Vietnamese question

###### **4.1.2.4 Existential Sentences**

- a. English Existential sentences
- b. Vietnamese Existential sentences

###### **4.1.2.5 Conditional Structure**

- a. English Conditional structure
- b. Vietnamese Conditional structure

###### **4.1.2.6 Passive Voice Structure**

- a. English Passive voice structure
- b. Vietnamese Passive voice structure

##### **4.1.3 Clausal Structure**

###### **4.1.3.1 English Clauses of Reason**

###### **4.1.3.2 Vietnamese Clauses of Reason**

#### **4.1.4 Discussion of the Similarities and Differences in the Syntactic Features of Delivering Bad News in English and in Vietnamese**

##### **4.1.4.1 Similarities in the Syntactic Features of Delivering Bad News in English and in Vietnamese**

In both languages such structures as noun phrases, adjective phrases, verb phrases, statement, negation, questions, existential sentences, conditional structures, passive voice structures and clauses of reason are used to convey bad news.

As for phrasal structures, most phrases have equivalent structures in both languages. They may be a one-element phrase or may contain premodifier or/and postmodifier.

As for statement, bad news in the form of performative verbs is used in both English and Vietnamese. Besides, such typical types of sentences as SV, SVO, SVC, SVA, SVOO, SVOA have been found.

Equivalent structures in negation, questions, existential sentences, conditional structures, passive voice structures and clauses of reason are also used in the two languages.

#### ***4.1.4.2 Differences in the Syntactic Features of Delivering Bad News in English and in Vietnamese***

Firstly, in Vietnamese no preposition phrases have been found while in English such phrases are used.

Secondly, Vietnamese makes full use of modal particles (rồi, lắm, đây...) to express modality whereas in English such types of word do not exist.

Thirdly, in verb phrases, Verb-ing forms can only be found in English, not in Vietnamese because words in Vietnamese don't change their forms under any circumstances.

Fourthly, in statement the type SVOC has only been found in Vietnamese samples. Moreover, the big difference between the sentence types of the two languages is that in English sentences the verbs act as the predicate and they are indispensable. In Vietnamese, the predicate of a sentence may be an adjective or a noun.

Fifthly, negation in English has been found with more structures than in Vietnamese. Such structures as TOO...TO, LITTLE, FEW are hardly found in our Vietnamese corpus.

Another difference is bad news can be implied through English Wh-questions whereas in Vietnamese they are not used. Alternative questions are found in our Vietnamese corpus, but not in English one.

Last but not least, in English an inversion may exist in conditional structures. Meanwhile, such structures can not be inversed in Vietnamese.

## **4.2 PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF DELIVERING BAD NEWS IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE**

### **4.2.1 Bald-on Record**

### **4.2.2 Positive Politeness**

**4.2.2.1 Noticing/ Attending to H (interests, wants, needs, goods)**

**4.2.2.2 Exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy with H)**

**4.2.2.3 Using in-group identity markers**

**4.2.2.4 Avoiding disagreement**

**4.2.2.5 Presupposing/ raising/ asserting common ground**

**4.2.2.6 Asserting or Presupposing S's Knowledge of and Concern for H's wants**

**4.2.2.7 Including both S and H in the Activity**

### **4.2.3 Negative Politeness**

**4.2.3.1 Being Conventionally Indirect**

**4.2.3.2 Hedging**

*a. Quality Hedges*

*b. Relevance Hedges*

**4.2.3.3 Being Pessimistic**

**4.2.3.4 Minimizing the Imposition**

**4.2.3.5 Giving deference**

#### 4.2.3.6 Apologizing

#### 4.2.3.7 Impersonalizing S and H

#### 4.2.3.8 Nominalizing

### 4.2.4 Off-record

#### 4.2.4.1 Giving Association Clues

#### 4.2.4.2 Understating

#### 4.2.4.3 Being Ironic

#### 4.2.4.4 Using Rhetorical Questions

### 4.2.5 Result and Discussion on Survey Questionnaire

## 4.2.6 Discussion of the Similarities and Differences in the Pragmatic Features of Delivering Bad News in English and in Vietnamese

### 4.2.6.1 Similarities in the Pragmatic Features of Delivering Bad News in English and in Vietnamese

Both languages apply bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record strategies.

Bald-on record strategies are popular both in English and Vietnamese when S has to convey the news in emergency.

With reference to *positive politeness strategies*, some sub-strategies are adapted in the two languages. Most English and Vietnamese Ss notice H's interest or wants when delivering bad news. Hedges referred to H's condition such as health, reputation or finance are mentioned before bad news is given. Besides, emphasis words are also used to exaggerate the news in the two languages. Both English and Vietnamese employ *in-group identity markers* such as *terms of address or generic names or proper names as well as slang or jargon* to show the common ground between S and H. The merging of "I" and "you" into "we" appears in both English and

Vietnamese. This pronoun, which may be used to refer to H only, can reduce the distance between S and H. Moreover it can carry the meaning of inclusive "we" to indicate that S and H belong to one group, thus can reduce the FTA of bad news delivery. Another similarity is that cajolers "you know, you see" and Vietnamese equivalents "Anh/chị biết không, Anh /chị thấy đấy..." and negative questions have the functions of supposing/ asserting common ground between S and H. What is more, S may assert his knowledge and show concern for H's wants through negative questions and expressions like "I know, I'm aware that, Tôi biết..."

As for *negative politeness strategies*, both English and Vietnamese adapt hedges such as "It seems, People say that, It is said that... (Hình như, Người ta nói là, Người ta đồn là...)" to minimize the exactness of the utterance or hedges to show S's regret such as "I'm afraid, It's a pity, Tôi e là, Tôi rất tiếc...". Moreover, S can show his uncertainty of the utterance by using "Perhaps" in English and "Chắc, Có lẽ" in Vietnamese, or S can use "just" (*chỉ*) to minimize the imposition so that H's negative face can be saved.

When H is of higher social status than S, such honorifics as "Sir, Madam, Mr." and equivalents in Vietnamese as "Ông, bà, Ngài, Anh, Chị..." are used to address before bad news to make the utterance more formal and to show that S give deference to defuse FTA. S can also express his reluctance or regret when conveying bad news by using such expressions as "I'm sorry, I regret to inform you that, I take it as a regret to inform you that..." in English and "Tôi xin lỗi, Tôi rất tiếc phải báo cho anh biết là..." Ss of both languages can also minimize the FTA by avoiding the pronoun I and You by

omitting performative verbs, or pluralizing the you and I pronouns, or addressing terms as you avoidance, or using point of view distancing.

With reference to off record strategies, both English and Vietnamese Ss can deliver bad news indirectly by giving association clues and Hs have to infer the news. Another strategy that is employed in both languages is using understating expressions like “sort of, hardly, khó...”. Rhetorical questions can also be used to convey bad news indirectly in English and Vietnamese.

#### ***4.2.6.2 Differences in the Pragmatic Features of Delivering Bad News in English and in Vietnamese***

Although the two languages have a lot of similarities, differences seem to appear in sub-strategies.

As for Positive politeness strategies, English Ss may avoid disagreement by using “kind of, sort of” to make his opinion safely vague, but in Vietnamese this strategy can hardly be found.

To presuppose/ raise/ assert common ground, the merging of “I” and “you” into inclusive “we” is used in both languages, but just in Vietnamese this kind of merging is used with possessive adjectives (as in “Em Thu nhà mình” ) to refer to H’s relative. One distinctive feature of the Vietnamese language is that the possessive adjective may be omitted when S wants to imply that S considers H’s relative his.

With respect to negative politeness strategies, “being conventionally indirect” appears in English only. It can be expressed by “I’m wondering if, I was wondering if, I wondered if ...”. In our Vietnamese corpus such expressions do not exist. Besides, In English apologizing strategy is used very often in delivering bad news whereas in Vietnamese it is used less frequently. Moreover English

Ss often show their reluctance when doing such an FTA as delivering bad news by hedges “ I hate to tell you this but, I hate to break to you this way but...”. These hedges are not found in Vietnamese. Another difference is that when English Ss want to impersonalize S and H in conveying bad news, they can use passive voice structures or use point of view distancing (switching the tense form present into past). Moreover, nominalizing is popular in English to make the utterance more formal; therefore it is employed in delivering bad news. Meanwhile, in Vietnamese such strategy does not exist. The difference also appears in the use of pronoun. Vietnamese Ss may replace the pronoun “I” and “you” with the indefinite “Người ta”. In English, there is equivalent indefinite pronoun “One”, but it is not found in our corpus.

In terms of off-record strategies, English Ss are often not ironic when delivering bad news, but Vietnamese Ss are. They sometimes deliver bad news with irony when the relationship between the S and H is not good and S wants to ridicule H.

### **4.3 FREQUENCY OF ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAYS OF DELIVERING BAD NEWS**

#### **4.3.1. Frequency of English and Vietnamese Ways of Delivering Bad News in Syntactic Categories**

**Table 4.3 Frequency of English and Vietnamese Ways of Delivering Bad News in Syntactic Categories**

		English		Vietnamese	
		Occurrence	Percentage (%)	Occurrence	Percentage (%)
Phrasal structures	Noun phrase	64	3.20	49	2.45
	Verb phrase	19	0.95	77	3.85
	Adj phrase	33	1.65	20	1.00
	Prepositional phrase	1	0.05	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>117</b>	<b>5.85</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>7.30</b>
Sentential structures	Statement	935	46.75	944	47.20
	Negation	268	13.40	239	11.95
	Question	147	7.35	115	5.75
	Existential sentences	98	4.90	75	3.75
	Passive voice structures	375	18.75	401	20.05
	Conditional structure	27	1.35	35	1.75
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>1850</b>	<b>92.50</b>	<b>1809</b>	<b>90.45</b>
Clausal structures	Clauses of reason	33	1.65	45	2.25
<b>Total</b>		<b>2000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100</b>

**4.3.2 Frequency of English and Vietnamese Ways of Delivering Bad News in Pragmatic Categories**

**Table 4.4 Frequency of English and Vietnamese Ways of Delivering Bad News in Pragmatic Categories**

Strategies	Sub-strategies	English		Vietnamese	
		Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage
<b>Bald-on record</b>		<b>408</b>	<b>20.40</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>18.80</b>
<b>Positive politeness</b>	Noticing/Attending to H	115	5.75	159	7.95
	Exaggerating (interest/approval/sympathy with H)	47	2.35	46	2.30
	Using in-group identity markers	120	6.00	245	12.25
	Avoiding disagreement	2	0.10	0	0
	Presupposing/Raising/Asserting common ground	157	7.85	270	13.50
	Asserting/Presupposing s' knowledge of and concern for H's want	3	0.15	7	0.35

	Including both S and H in the activity	85	4.25	157	7.85
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>26.45</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>44.20</b>
<b>Negative politeness</b>	Being conventionally indirect	17	0.85	0	0
	Hedging	350	17.50	185	9.25
	Being pessimistic	18	0.90	33	1.65
	Minimizing the imposition	7	0.35	5	0.25
	Giving deference	102	5.10	78	3.90
	Apologizing	278	13.90	140	7.00
	Impersonalizing S and H	187	9.35	170	8.50
	Norminalizing	15	0.75	0	0
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>48.70</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>30.55</b>
<b>Off-record</b>	Giving association clues	25	1.25	47	2.35
	Understating	6	0.30	3	0.15
	Being ironic	0	0	4	0.20
	Using rhetoric questions	58	2.90	75	3.75
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>6.45</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>2000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100</b>

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the aim of this research is to find out some similarities and differences in the syntactic and pragmatic features of how people deliver bad news in English and Vietnamese, so this study has been developed as follows:

Related research and theoretical background have been looked into carefully before the outline of the research is designed.

This research is done under both qualitative and quantitative methods, so the data were taken from different sources such as from document review, from questionnaire and from films or internet. Then all the data were investigated and put into categories. A contrastive analysis was done to withdraw the similarities and differences of the two languages in syntactic aspects. Then the samples were categorized based on politeness strategies to show the similarities and differences in the ways English Ss and Vietnamese Ss convey bad news. Frequency of each category was also counted to make the findings clearer. Some findings have been drawn out and will be summarized in the next part.

### 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

1) What are the syntactic features of the language used to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese?

2) What are the pragmatic features of the language used to deliver bad news in English and in Vietnamese?

3) What are the syntactic and pragmatic similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese in delivering bad news?

### 5.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

From the findings of the study, it is hoped that the study will contribute to improving the teaching and learning of English in Vietnam.

This study points out the syntactic features of the language people use to deliver bad news in English and Vietnamese. Different structures are shown through examples cited from books, films and real life, which make the study more reliable. Learners can know that in urgent cases both languages employ phrases to convey bad news. English Ss prefer to use noun phrases while Vietnamese Ss prefer verb phrases. In real life communication, delivering bad news, to some extent, is an FTA. Through different strategies analyzed in this study, learners can have a general knowledge of which ones are used for certain situations. Especially, learners should bear in mind that English people are careful in social interaction, so they tend to keep the distant and be timid in communication for fear that what they say may threaten Hs' face. Therefore, negative strategies appear rather frequently in this language. On the contrary, Vietnamese people prefer positive strategies. This can be explained by the tendency to make the relationship between communicators closer in Vietnamese culture.

### 5.4 LIMITATIONS

First, the lack of material relating to bad news delivery in English and Vietnamese make it hard for us to do the research to our expectation. Therefore, it may not be thoroughly analyzed.

Second, bad news as defined is what people do not want to receive. Therefore, some of the respondents did not answer the

questionnaire completely and carefully and they prefer to write the answers as short as possible.

Last but not least, due to the problem from the questionnaire, the study has not been analyzed completely on the factors that influence the ways people deliver bad news as the researcher has expected.

### 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- How to deliver bad news to patients.
- Good news as Bad news and vice versa.
- Bad news delivery in business.