

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO LINGUISTIC  
FEATURES OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE  
PROCESSES IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE  
FROM THE FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR ASPECT**

**Field: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Rationale

According to Halliday, the experiential world represents in Transitivity system, consisting of types of process: mental, material, relational, behavioural, and verbal. Every process has associated with it at least one participant that is the key figure in that process; this is the one through which the process is actualized. And in the process, together with its functions, the names of participants are identified. Let us consider some examples: (1) Mary sailed the boat.

(2) The boat sailed.

In (1), Mary is the Subject and means the person who does the deed. ‘Mary’ is called Actor and ‘the boat’ is Goal in a material process while the boat in (2) is Actor. Participants, together with Process and Circumstance are the three main elements expressing the experiential world around us and inside us. The identification and classification of participants in the processes often causes some confusion and mistakes for Learners of English so it is necessary to synthesize all the participants’ features systematically from the Functional Grammar Aspect.

For this reason, I choose to do research on the topic “*An Investigation Into Linguistic Features Of Participants In The Processes In English And Vietnamese From The Functional Grammar Aspect*”. This thesis is carried out with the hope that the research result will provide useful systematical knowledge of the participants in the processes for teachers and learners of English, as well as for those who are keen on the field.

### 1.2. Aims and objectives

The fundamental aim of the study is to raise Learner’s awareness of the syntactic and semantic features of participants in the processes

in English and Vietnamese, and to provide them with the knowledge of the similarities and differences on linguistic features of these participants in English and Vietnamese so that they can avoid unnecessary mistakes caused by language interferences in their writing and speaking.

### 1.3. Scope of the study

Because of the limitation of time, the thesis limits itself to a sub-area of functional grammar, the transitivity system, of which the study focuses on **Participants** in the processes. The study basically draws on the framework of Halliday [9], Butt [4], Bloor [2]. Lock [11], Martin [12], ect., that is to say, on Hallidayan SFG.

### 1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the syntactic features of participants in the processes in English and Vietnamese?
2. What are the semantic features of participants in each process in English and Vietnamese?
3. What are the similarities and the differences of participants between English and Vietnamese from the functional grammar aspect?

### 1.5. The significance of the study

The research into all the participants in all types of process in English and Vietnamese in the aspects of semantics and syntax could serve a good understanding of Participants in English and Vietnamese. The similarities and differences between the two languages analysed and classified in the study may be of great benefit for Vietnamese Learners of English.

### 1.6. Organization of the study

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Methodology of Research

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions

Chapter 5: Conclusion, Implications, Suggestions.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. The Review of Prior Research

Up to now, the aspect of the meaning of the clause as representation has been examined by many linguists, especially by Halliday. According to Halliday [9], a clause is the most significant grammatical unit because it functions as the representation of process. The most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of "goings-on": of doing, happening, feeling, being. These goings-on are sorted out in the semantic system of the language, and expressed through the grammar of the clause. The basic semantic framework for the representation of process potentially consists of three components: the process itself, the participants (Roles) in the process, the circumstances associated with the process.

In Vietnamese, many linguists also join in the trend, show their ability and then, create a great impetus to the field. Hoang Van Van [32], Cao Xuan Hao [25] describe the Vietnamese clause in the system of transitivity, based on Halliday's viewpoints.

In addition, Dương Ngọc Bích Đào [6] in the research "An Investigation into the features of participants in mental process-Senser and Phenomenon in English and Vietnamese" investigates the usage of participants in three sub-types of mental processes: affection, perception and cognition processes in English and Vietnamese.

The participants of the processes viewed in linguistic approach of Functional Grammar have not been given due consideration. It has been so far studied on each process only. Therefore, a contrastive

analysis of participants in all types of process in English and Vietnamese will hopefully bring a great significance to the literature of the issue, and help the Vietnamese learners minimize confusion among the various structures.

### 2.2. Theoretical Background

#### 2.2.1. Introducing Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory interested in describing language in terms of its semantic function in the social and cultural contexts within which it is put to use by speakers. In this way it differs from the formal, syntactic approach of traditional grammars. Halliday [9], a major figure in the development of SFL, describes language as a *social semiotic*. SFL asks questions how language is used by speakers and writers in order to make meanings in functional contexts and how it is organized to achieve this.

#### 2.2.2. Different Kinds of Meaning: Introducing the Metafunctions

SFL suggests that language makes different kinds of meaning concurrently. Halliday and Matthiessen [10] group these meanings into three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual. We use these metafunctions to construe different aspects of our experience. The **ideational** compromises our construal of the 'experiential world' through language; the **interpersonal** 'our construction of social relationships'; and the **textual**, the semiotic enactment of discourse.

#### 2.2.3. Transitivity Systems

The transitivity system is the system in which Process type is chosen by the speaker and is located within the ideational metafunction. According to Halliday, a Process has three components

- (i) The process itself realized by a verbal group.

(ii) Participants in the process realized by (a) nominal group(s)

(iii) Circumstances associated with the process by (an) adverbial group(s) or prepositional phrase(s).

#### 2.2.4. Types of Process

The transitivity system of a language construes experience into the small set of domains of meaning, which differ according to the process itself and the nature of participants involved in it. In English, there are 6 types of process: Material, Mental, Verbal, Behavioral, Relational, and Existential. And each process type is discussed in the subsections below.

#### 2.2.5. Linguistic Features of Participants in the Processes

##### 2.2.5.1. Syntactic Features of Participants in the Processes

As one of the three main components in the transitivity system, a participant function as Subject, Object, Complement. The participant most commonly realised by a NOMINAL GROUP revolve around the Process and can interact with it through a variety of Participant Roles [4, p.46].

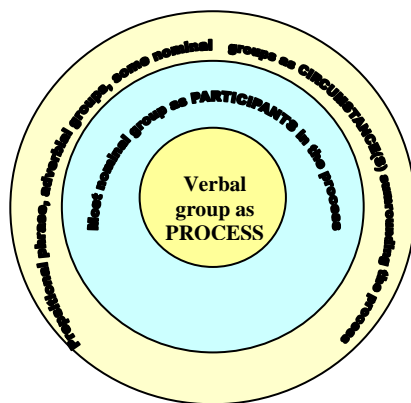


Figure 2.1: Pattern of experience in the clause Butt [4, p. 66]

#### 2.2.5.2. Semantic Features of Participants in the Processes

Basically, process type is the resource for sorting out our experience of all kinds of events into a small number of types. These differ both with respect to the process itself and the number and kinds of participants involved. The system discriminates six different types of process in English.

Each process type has its own set of participant roles. This means that once the process type has been identified, the function labels for the participant roles fall into place easily. Functional Grammar Aspect distinguishes a number of different participant roles to give a more accurate picture of the relationship between participants and the processes. Some participant roles are associated with one process type only. Other participant roles may be found across a number of process types.

The summary of the process types can be shown in the figure 2.2.

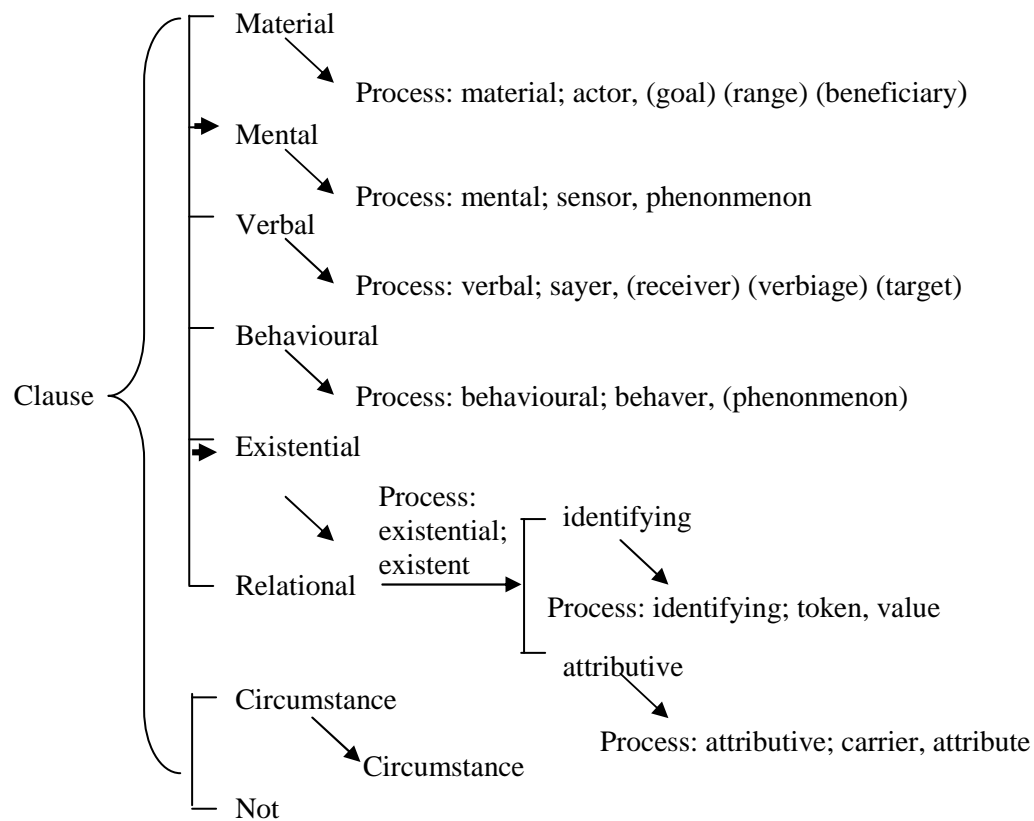


Figure 2.2: System of Process Types

### 2.2.6. Summary

This chapter has had a close look at all the processes so far especially the participants in the processes. In the next chapter, the methods and procedure will be presented as a guide to the main focus of the research in chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

### 3.1. Aims and Objectives

This study is conducted to investigate the semantic and syntactic features of participants in the processes in English and Vietnamese from Functional Grammar Aspect. It aims to supply better insight into participants and their semantic roles as well as their syntactic features to Vietnamese learners of English in order to help them overcome their difficulties.

### 3.2. Research Methodology

In order to reach the aims, the methods used are the combination of descriptive and the comparative.

### 3.3. Data Collection

The data are collected basing on the criteria of the recognition of participants. All the examples for the study and the data for investigation are collected from magazines, novels, short stories by different English, famous Vietnamese translators and literature books on the Internet. Some examples are also taken from grammar books by grammarians. The samples taken from the sources of data are based on the kinds of participants in the sentences.

Since the study is concerned with the aspect of participants which confine to clauses and clause complexes, examples of the whole text seem not to be necessary.

### 3.4. Data Analysis

The corpus of sentences containing participants in English and Vietnamese equivalent is described and compared from the view of the Functional Grammar Aspect.

### 3.5. Summary

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Syntactic Features of Participants in Processes in English and in Vietnamese

Participants are typically realised by Subject, Direct Object and Indirect Object in the syntactic structure. In respect of elements in the process, the table mapping syntactic function and structural element can be presented as follows:

*Table 4.1 Syntactic Function and Structural Element in the process*

Ideational roles	Syntactic function	Structural element
process	verbal	predicator
<b>participant</b>	<b>nominal</b>	<b>subject</b> <b>object</b> <b>complement</b>
quality	adjectival	complement

#### 4.1.1. Syntactic Properties of Participants as Subject

#### 4.1.2. Syntactic Properties of Participants as Object

##### ❖ Participants as Direct Object

##### ❖ Participants as Indirect Object

#### 4.1.3. Syntactic Properties of Participants as Complement

In sum, the participants in the processes syntactically represent by Subject, Object (Direct or Indirect) or Complement. They are typically recognized by Proper Names Personal pronouns or Noun Groups and sometimes by Adjectives or Prepositional phrases functioning as Attribute or Identifying in the Relational Processes. In reality, there are many sentences raised from the context without Subject or Subject implied. But the investigation of the research is carried out on the linguistic features of participants, the examples extracted for the corpus are concentrated on the participants in all

types of process. From the corpus, we can see that a process has at least a participant functioning as Subject. Some processes with two participants or more appear depending on the kinds of verb: monotransitive, complex transitive, or ditransitive. They may function as Direct Object, Indirect Object or Complement.

### 4.2. Realizations of Participants in the Processes in English and in Vietnamese

A participant can be a person, a place or an object (this is the notion of thingness), and in the grammar of a clause the participant is most commonly realised by a NOMINAL GROUP. The participants in the processes can be realised by

✚ *Pronouns* (Personal Pronouns, Reflexive pronouns....)

✚ *Proper Names*

✚ *Nominal Groups*

✚ *Adjective/ Adjective groups*

✚ *Prepositional Groups*

✚ *Finite Clauses*

✚ *Non-Finite Clauses*

### 4.2. Semantic Features of Participants in the Processes in English and Vietnamese

#### 4.2.1. Participant Roles in Material Processes

##### 4.2.1.1. Participants as Actor

**Actor** is an inherent Participant, “the one that does the deed” [15, 109]. **Goal** is a non- inherent Participant, the “one to which the Process is extended” and “that suffers or undergoes the Process” [9, 102]. Both Actor and Goal are *things*. The term *thing* here is understood as “a phenomenon of our experience including of course our inner experience and imagination-some entity (person, creature, object, institution or abstraction), or some process (action,

event, quality, state or relation)” [9, 102]. Actor and Goal are realized by nominal groups, either animate or inanimate. A material process may be intransitive and middle if it consists of only Actor or transitive and effective (active or passive) if it involves Actor and Goal.

#### 4.2.1.2. Participants as Goal

In the process with two participants, the Actor is realised as Subject and Goal as Direct Object; or passive, in which Subject realises Goal and Actor is realised as Adjunct and its semantic relationship to the process has not changed. The **Goal** is, however, the essential participant, the one which is primarily involved in the action. The Goal is an entity to which the process is extended or directed.

In sum, Participants as **Actor** and **Goal** in material process in both languages have the same features. They are animate or inanimate, conscious or non-conscious. They can be person, thing, creature, object, institution, abstraction.... Sometimes, natural phenomena or the psychological states may be interpreted as real animate agents as a device of stylistics.

#### 4.2.1.3. Participants as Beneficiary

The **Beneficiary** is the one to whom or for whom the process is said to take place. In a material process from the transitive aspect, the Beneficiary is either *Recipient or Client*. The *Recipient* is one that goods are given to, and the *Client* is one that services are done for.

#### 4.2.1.4. Participants as Range

The participant as *Range* is the nominal concept which is implied by the process as its scope or range.

## 4.2.2. Participant Roles in Mental Processes

### 4.2.2.1. Participants as Senser

*Senser* is a human-like Participant and endowed with consciousness, often people. This is the one who sees, feels, thinks, likes, etc...In three subtypes of the process, All Sensers share the same characteristics typically recognised by proper names, personal pronouns or nominal groups which have to be conscious.

### 4.2.2.2. Participants as Phenomenon

*Phenomenon*, semantically, may be a thing, idea, event or fact which is thought, seen, liked, wanted, and so on. For more details, the characteristics of phenomenon in subtypes of mental process will be exploited below.

Briefly, Senser and Phenomenon are the two participants in the Mental process. The senser is the conscious being that is feeling, thinking or seeing; nominal groups serving as Senser which denote non-conscious entities have to be construed metaphorically as ‘personified’. The phenomenon is that which is ‘sensed’ - felt, thought or seen.

## 4.2.3. Participant Roles in Relational Processes

### 4.2.3.1. Participant Roles in Relational Attributive Processes

#### *Participants as Carrier*

The participants as *Carrier* are the entities which carry the attributes. Syntactically, they often function as Subject in the sentences. They may be human or non-human. There is no difference between the Participant as Carrier in English and in Vietnamese.

#### *Participants as Attribute*

As presented in syntax, *Attribute* may be either a nominal group, a prepositional group or an adjectives, but not a pronoun. The

participant as Attribute is the one that is ascribed to some entity, either as a quality, circumstance or a possession.

Semantically, in Attribute Relational Processes, there is no big differences between the Attributes in the both languages.

#### 4.2.3.2. Participant Roles in Identifying Relational Processes

##### ❖ Participants as Identifier and Identified

Relational Identifying Processes set up an identity, role and meaning. If someone asks “Which is my office?” they are looking for the identity of their office, and the question and answer contain an identifying process. The nominal group about which the question is asked is labelled **Identified** and the new identity, the answer to the question, is **Identifier**.

##### ❖ Participants as Token and Value

Halliday [9, p115] points that semantically the *Token* will be a “sign, name, form, holder or occupant” of a *Value*, which gives the “meaning, referent, function, status or role” of the Token.

These functions - Token and Value are conflated with those of Identifier and Identified; the conflation can go either way. Either the Token and the Value can serve as the Identifying element (the Identifier) as shown above.

#### 4.2.4. Participant Roles in Verbal Processes

##### 4.2.4.1. Participants as Sayer

The Sayer is the participant that has a very special relationship with the verbal process. Typically, of course, the Sayer is human. Being treated as a symbolic source, the Sayer does not have to be a conscious participant, but anything putting out a signal. In view of the nature of the Sayer, according to Halliday, verbal processes might more appropriately be called “symbolic” processes.

##### 4.2.4.2. Participants as Receiver

Another participant that may be involved, and that is also typically human is the Receiver. The Receiver is the participant to whom the saying is addressed.

##### 4.2.4.3. Participants as Verbiage

The Verbiage functions as *what is said*. According to Nguyễn Tài Căn [23, p. 293], the verbs of saying in Vietnamese can go with both the modifier indicating *the name of the saying* and the modifier indicating *the content of the saying*.

##### 4.2.4.4. Participants as Target

Another participant of the process studied in the research is the Target. The Target is the entity that is targeted by the process of saying.

#### 4.2.5. Participant Roles in Behavioural Processes

##### Participants as Behaver

Behavioural processes construe physiological or psychological behaviour. The main participant, the BEHAVER, is generally a conscious being and, if it is not, the clause is considered to be personification.

#### 4.2.6. Participant Roles in Existential Processes

##### Participants as Existent

Existential processes are processes of existing or happening. Because the function of existential processes is to construe being as simple existence, there is only one participant known as *the existent*, which may refer to a *countable entity*, an *uncountable entity* or an *event or situation*.

From the corpus, the participants as Existent in both language systems may serve the same formulas and have no much difference.



### 4.3. Discussions

#### 4.3.1. Similarities

From the Functional Grammar Aspect, both the English and Vietnamese languages have the same nature of clauses. As we have presented, the clauses of English typically express our experience of the world in terms of things and events and the various circumstances that surround those events. According to Halliday [9, p. 101], “Our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of ‘going-on’: of doing, happening, feeling, being”. These goings-on are sorted out in the semantic system of the language through different types of process. One of the three process elements is Participant expressed by nominal groups. The concepts of process types are based on Halliday’s approach show that there isn’t much difference between Participants in the two languages.

##### 4.3.1.1. Syntactic Features

All the participants are main elements in the processes. They can function as Subject, Object or Complement. They are typically realised by proper names, pronouns or noun phrases generally called nominal groups. Some participants are also recognised by prepositional phrases.

*Table 4.9: Syntactic Functions of Participants in English and in Vietnamese*

Syntactic Function		English	Vietnamese
Subject		+	+
Object	Direct	+	+
	Indirect	+	+
Complement		+	+

*Table 4.10: Realizations of Participants in the processes*

	English	Vietnamese
Proper names	+	+
Pronouns	+	+
Nominal Groups	+	+
Finite	+	-
Non-finite	+	-
Prepositional Phrases	+	+

##### 4.3.1.2. Semantic Features

In the view of Functional Grammar Aspect, Vietnamese linguist as H.V.Vân considers that “*tham thế có thể tham gia vào quá trình; nó có thể tạo ra quá trình; nó có thể cảm giác thông qua quá trình; nó có thể tiếp nhận thông qua quá trình hay hưởng lợi từ quá trình; nó có thể bị ảnh hưởng bởi quá trình, v.v.*” and “*tham thế được hiện thực hóa điển hình bằng các cụm danh từ*”. With this approach, there are no big differences in meanings in the two languages. English and Vietnamese have the same types of process. And each type of process is systematically characterised by participant’s meaning role in the process.

#### 4.3.2. Differences

##### 4.3.2.1. Syntactic Features

In English as well as in Vietnamese, the participants are mostly in forms of nominal groups. The order of these groups especially the position of pre-modifiers is different between the two languages. Pre-

modifiers always stand before Head in English but come after head noun in Vietnamese.

Additionally, in form of non-finite clause, these participants only appear in English but not in Vietnamese because this concept doesn't exist in Vietnamese.

#### 4.3.2.2. Semantic Features

By comparing pairs of English and Vietnamese sentences, the differences between the participants in the two languages have been found. However, in the same language, there also exist differences which I want to mention here.

*First of all*, when describing the features of participants in the processes, we find out the distinctions of the processes especially of participants. In material process, it is a process of doing or happening. Every participant is a THING: that is, it is a phenomenon of our experience; including our inner experience or imagination- some entity (person, creature, object, institution, or abstraction), or some process (action, event, quality, state or relation) while these 'things' may also be object of consciousness in a mental process. In mental process, there is always one participant who is human; this is the one that 'senses- feels- thinks or perceive'. Because of expressing physiological and psychological behaviours, the participant in Behavioural process is typically a conscious being, like the Sayer. Verbal processes do not require a conscious participant. It can be human or non-human. The Sayer can be anything that put out a signal. Such entities could not figure naturally as Sayer in the mental process. For this reason verbal processes might more appropriately be called 'symbolic' processes. The Existent in Existential processes

may be a phenomenon of any kind, and is often a thing, an event. Frequently, the existential clause contains a circumstantial element and is followed by a non-finite clause. The most difficult ones are in Relational processes. In the attributive mode, an attribute is ascribed to some entity; either as a quality, as a circumstance - of time, place etc. or as a possession while an entity is used to identify another in the identifying mode. The clause in identifying process can be reversible but not in attributive process.

*Secondly*, the participant in the processes encodes with some specific verbs. For example, Senser encodes with the verbs of sensing, feeling, thinking such as *love, like, think, remember....*. Behavior encodes with the verbs expressing physiological and psychological behaviours like *breathing, dreaming, smiling, coughing*. Verbs of attribution include *be, become, get, turn, turn out, seem....*

*Thirdly*, each participant has their own function in the process so the probe question is different. "What do/ did X do?" or "What happen?" is used for material processes. Attributive clauses are probed by 'what?' or 'how?'; 'What do you think/ feel/ know about X?', or 'What is your perception/cognition..?' are often used in mental processes.

The representation of the participants in the processes in both languages has shown some differences though it is small. In English, the first person refers to the speaker *I, we*. The second refers to the persons addressed *you* and the third person to *he/ she/ it/ they*. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese may use *tôi, cậu, mình, em, anh...* for the first person and *bạn, cô, mày, chúng mày, tụi mày...* for the second persons and the third persons are expressed by a lot of Vietnamese

equivalents like *gã, anh ấy, chị ấy, bà ấy, hắn, họ, chúng họ...* (for they: human) and *chúng, những cái ấy...* (for they: non-human).

When Participants in the processes are Attributes, Identifier, Identified, they are also realised by adjectives and adjective groups. In the two languages, we see that there is no big difference. When Attribute, Identifier are a group of adjectives, these forms are related to the support of conjunctions. They are *but, and, both.....and, not only.....but also.....* in English and *nhưng, và, vừa.....vừa....., cả hai.....* in Vietnamese. There also exists Attribute, Identifier formed by a group of adjectives that link together with *commas*.

The prepositional groups served as participants in the processes usually consists of preposition (in, on, at..... ) + nominal group. On comparing between English and Vietnamese, it is found out that in Vietnamese, there are cases whose components are exactly similar to the one in English.

In English, the typical prepositional paraphrase of Recipient is “*to*”, and of Client is “*for*” but in Vietnamese, these two roles have the typical prepositional paraphrase “*cho*”, “*đến*”, “*tôi*”. These semantic roles of indirect object do not go with a preposition when coming right after verbs whereas in Vietnamese, it is an acceptable construction. These are considered the source of difficulties for Vietnamese learners of English in their learning.

In Vietnamese, there is no concept of *finite* or *non- finite* clauses. The equivalent interpretations of these forms are based on their roles and functions in the processes. That is to say the relationship between grammar and meaning and context must be taken into consideration.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

### 5.1. Concluding Remarks

In this study, the syntactic and semantic features of participants have been analyzed in a systematic and comprehensible approach in the light of functional grammar. From the analysis, similarities and differences in the syntax and semantics of participants between the two languages have been found out. The findings of the research, therefore, enable the writer to explore appropriate suggestions that will help students overcome the difficulties in their learning.

+ The framework of types of process in English and Vietnamese is typically similar to each other. They both have the same kinds of process, the same numbers of participant in each process. They can be represented by the following configuration:

**Participant + Process (verb) (±) participant (±) participant**

+ Syntactically, participants in the processes in both English and Vietnamese can function as Subject, Object (Direct & Indirect), Complement. As Subject, participants can be Actor, Sayer, Behavioer, Carrier, Token.... They are typically realised by proper names, pronouns or noun phrases generally called nominal groups. When functioning as Object (Direct or Indirect), participants may be Goal, Beneficiary, Phenomenon, Range....They are also realised by nominal groups or by finite and non finite clauses in English. Attribute, Identifier often come after the verbs “be, seem, look, feel, become...” can function as Complements. They can be realised by adjective, adjective groups. Client, Recipient, Receiver, Verbiage are sometimes expressed by prepositional phrases. Moreover, the structures of nominal groups in which the orders of modifiers as

deictic, numerative, epithet or classifier are different between English and Vietnamese.

+ Semantically, participants in English have the same semantic roles as in Vietnamese. Their name is also their semantic role. They are Actor, Goal, Beneficiary and Range in Material processes; Sayer and Phenomenon in Mental processes; Carrier, Attribute in Relational processes; Behavior in behavioural processes; Existent as participant in Existential process. Verbal processes have four participants as Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver and Target. These roles of participants appear to be similar in the two languages. Though there is no big difference in meanings in the two languages, the difference types of process have particular kinds of participant role that are systematically associated with each. From the research, we can see the properties characteristic of each process type. Thus “relational processes” are characterized by a few favourite verbs- in particular, *be and have*. “Mental processes” must be construed with one conscious participant, while “material processes” have a more varied central participants that may or may not be a conscious being. “Existential process” is unique in that the Subject is not a participant but rather the item there, which represents only ‘existence’, not the participant that exists; this participant comes after the Process.

Also from the research, we can see that there are the close relationships between the structure and the meaning. Learners can use their knowledge in both fields to help the work easier. “To master the function of participants, we have to broaden our view of what constitute ‘going-on’. It is important to recognize there may be more than one kind of process in the grammar of a language; and that

functions assumed by the participants in any clause are determined by the type of process that is involved” [9, p. 105]

## **5.2. Implication for English Language Teaching and Learning**

Firstly, the overview of the processes in the transitivity system helps the students distinguish between different types of processes and draw their attention to structural patterns in the clause which may otherwise be considered by some students as arbitrary rather than being related to meaning and function. In addition, experiential grammar is also useful for helping students to respond critically to the texts they encounter. The words and structures chosen by producers of texts reveal how they perceive and experience what is going on in the world. An exploration of experiential grammar, therefore, shows a great deal about the worldview expressed in a text.

Next, by analyzing and comparing the participants in the types of process in English and in Vietnamese, the research provides learners and teachers with a help tool in analysing as well as identifying the participants in processes so that learners can produce correct and effective clauses to express experience of the world. From the study, we can see that potential problems for Vietnamese learners in classifying the process including participants can come both from the differences between English and Vietnamese and from difficulties within English itself. When teaching process elements in general and participants particularly, not only do we provide the learners with the theory but also with the practice. It is because of the fact that our aim in teaching grammar should be to ensure that students are communicatively efficient with the grammar that they have at their level. We should help learners raise their awareness about the

differences in the syntax and the semantics of participants between English and Vietnamese in order that they can use what they know as well as what they learn effectively. To help learners to classify the process and identify the participants more easily, I suggest three steps here

**Step 1:** We have to find the key word which identifies which the process belongs to. That is Process (Verb). It is the key figure in the process; this is the one through which the Process is actualized. If there are two verbs in a sentence, the one stands right after the Subject is the main verb.

**Step 2:** Find the participants

By using the probe questions like “*what do/ does/ did + X + do?*”, “*what...do?*”, *what do you think/ feel/ know about X ?, or* “*What is your perception/cognition..?*” We can identify the participant in the process.

**Step 3:** Name the participants. The name of the participants is their semantic roles. It is the most difficult task of all because participants’ name is rather complex. We have to pay attention to the relationship between the participants and the Process (Verb). The best way is that we have to learn by heart the participants depending on the specific verb.

Then, taking points from the study, we also conclude that participants in English and Vietnamese reveal quite many differences in the syntax and semantics. There are some constructions which only exist in Vietnamese but it is really hard to find them in English and vice versa. We would like to emphasize that in many cases we cannot find the complete equivalents in the two languages, therefore

Vietnamese learners of English should choose the most suitable and acceptable relative equivalents to avoid errors made by the lack of knowledge about process elements especially about participants in both languages. In such cases, it is impossible to translate words by words, but chunk by chunk. We must read the grammatical construction as a single unit, understand the meaning, compare the meanings of the sentences in the two languages and determine where the process begin and end to get the most suitable equivalents.

Finally, grammar teaching has always been one of the most controversial aspects of language teaching. Few teachers remain indifferent to grammar and many teachers become obsessed by it. This study is an attempt to shed light on one small part of the issue. That is to say from the findings and the results of the study, the teachers can explore the appropriate ways to help students learn and acquire the semantic and syntactic features of participants better and better and to use them effectively in communication.

### **5.3. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies**

Within the scope of a master thesis we cannot cover all the features of participants in both English and Vietnamese, the study just limits itself to the syntactic and semantic features of participants in English and Vietnamese, therefore there are still areas for further studies such as:

- Participants in Egrative System
- The distinguished features of participants as projected clauses in Mental Processes and Verbal Processes.
- Range in verbal and relational processes.