

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
**UNIVERSITY OF DANANG**

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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO LEXICAL  
STYLISTIC DEVICES DESCRIBING  
THE APPEARANCE OF CHARACTERS  
IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PROSE**

Field Study : **THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
Code : 60.22.15

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

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. RATIONALE

Literature, an essential part in language and life, has two roles, an active, engaging role and a passive, reflective one. The former role helps an individual form ideas and concepts about the world in which they live in, the latter one is to “show” to society the history of ideologies, of thought, and of action. It reveals what people thought during a particular time and how they thought about it. To some extent, Literature is also considered as a great treasure of a nation, a territory, a region or even a remote and isolated area, belonging to culture and providing us with considerable knowledge of the people’s customs, habits, religions, rites, historical ages, lifestyles and their own ways of thinking.

One of the ways to express the ideas by writing media is literature. Literature is an imagination of fact to express human feelings. There are many definitions of the literature. One of them according Rene Wellek and Austin Warren (1956:15) “Literature is a creative activity and art without artistic values literature would be just another kind writing, along with scientific, works, reports, etc”. Literature helps us grow, both personally and intellectually. It provides an objective base for knowledge and understanding. It links us with the broader cultural, philosophic, and religious world of which we are a part. Literature has three main divisions; they are drama, poetry and prose. In this thesis I just focus on analyzing of prose.

The common subject of literature is life, in which people

always take center stage. The economic events, politics, society, and natural scenery and so on all contribute to the success and diversity to literary texts. Among these factors, building the characters through their appearance plays a crucial role in achieving the best quality of works in prose. Appearance including costumes, gestures, behaviors, physical appearance and so on helps the writer convey his ideas and concepts to readers.

The main characteristic of a literary text is to use words to express, use stylistic devices, especially lexical stylistic devices, to enhance the effectiveness of word expressions the writer used. To have good quality of art, a writer not only has to use language effectively, colorfully and creatively in his literary works but also has to use stylistic devices to make his imagination and creation more and more accurate and vivid to arouse reader’s attention and interest. This is the reason explaining why lexical stylistic devices are commonly used in describing people appearance in most literary texts. Let us consider the following examples:

(1) She doth teach the torches to burn right. [17]

(2) He caught sight of her face, so white and motionless that it seemed as though the blood must have stopped flowing in her veins.

[18]

(3) Tay lêu nghêu như cái sào, chân khuỳnh ra như kẹp lấy một cái bánh lái tưởng tượng, giọng nói ào ào như thác lũ sông Đà, nhãn giới vôi vôi như nhìn về một bên xa nào đó. [76]

In (1) the writer uses metaphor as a lexical stylistic device to describe the appearance of Juliet. This tells us that Juliet’s beauty is much brighter than the torches in the dark night so she is very

beautiful. Whilst in (2) the writer uses hyperbole as a lexical stylistic device to depict the very white and motionless face of Irene Heron. This helps the reader imagine and “see” the image of the character quickly and effectively. In (3) Nguyễn Tuân uses simile as a lexical stylistic device to compare the character’s appearance of the boatman. This makes the appearance of the boatman more vivid and appeal to the reader. It is clear that every writer employs lexical stylistic devices in his own discretion.

The use of lexical stylistic devices in character’s appearance description has great impact on the readers. However, to what extent readers as well as the English learners recognize, understand and use lexical stylistic devices must be more exploited.

From the reasons mentioned above, I think it is essential and worthwhile to take an investigation into lexical stylistic devices describing the appearance of characters in English and Vietnamese prose. It is hopeful that “**An Investigation into Lexical Stylistic Devices Describing the Appearance of Characters in English and Vietnamese Prose**” will bring some contribution to the comprehension of lexical stylistic devices used in English and Vietnamese prose.

## **1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1. Aims of the Study**

### **1.2.2. Objectives of the Study**

## **1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

With limited time and our own ability, in this thesis we just investigate lexical stylistic devices describing the appearance of the characters in English and Vietnamese novels, short stories and

narratives. We also try our best to find out the similarities and differences in terms of the use of lexical stylistic devices as well as figure out the frequencies of occurrence of lexical stylistic devices in English and Vietnamese prose.

## **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are lexical stylistic devices used to describe the appearance of characters in EP and VP?

2. What are the similarities and differences in terms of the use of lexical stylistic devices in EP and VP?

3. What are the frequencies of occurrence of lexical stylistic devices describing the appearance of characters in EP and VP?

## **1.5. SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY**

## **1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This thesis is divided into five chapters:

**Chapter 1**, “Introduction” deals with the introduction of study, in which the rationale, the aims and objectives, the scope and the organization of the study are presented. The research questions are also included in this chapter as a guide to the following sections of the thesis.

**Chapter 2**, “Literature review and theoretical background”, makes a review of previous studies on stylistics in general and stylistic devices in particular. Theoretical matters related to the study such as functional styles of the literary language, some notes on prose, appearance and characters, definition and function of stylistics and classification of lexical stylistic devices are carefully and logically mentioned.

**Chapter 3**, “Methods and procedures”, presents the methodology and procedures of the study. Especially, the procedures of the research are clearly described in logical order. Data collection and data analysis are also mentioned in this chapter.

**Chapter 4**, “Discussion of findings”, deals with the findings of lexical stylistic devices describing the appearance of characters in English and Vietnamese prose, the discussion and analysis on the similarities and differences in terms of the use of lexical stylistic devices as well as frequencies of occurrence of lexical stylistic devices in English and Vietnamese prose.

**Chapter 5**, “conclusion and implications”, summarizes the main points discussed in chapter 4 and provides some implications for teaching and learning lexical stylistic devices in English and Vietnamese prose. Last but not least, some suggestions for further studies are mentioned on.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The main aspects of this approach were first formulated in *Stylistics* by Galperin [12], and subsequently elaborate in Leech and Short [32].

In “Prose Style” Book, Robert Milles, Marc Bertolasco and William Karns [22] focused on larger more content-based matters such as thesis statements, topic and support sentences, etc. , rather than on the sentence-level matters of styles .William Minto [37] in his book “ A Manual of English Prose Literature”, discusses about the elements of Style including vocabulary, the sentence, the paragraph and figures of speech, the quality of style and kind of composition.

In Vietnamese, there have been a number of scholars inspired and interested in this. They are: Đinh Trọng Lạc, Nguyễn Thái Hòa, Cù Đình Tú and Nguyễn Lai.

#### **2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

##### **2.2.1. Functional Styles of the Literary Language**

##### **2.2.2. General Notes on Prose**

##### **2.2.3. General Notes on Appearance and Characters**

##### **2.2.4. General Notes on Stylistics**

##### **2.2.5. Stylistic Devices**

##### **2.2.5.1. Definition of Stylistic Devices**

Galperin [17] defines that a stylistic device is “*a conscious and intentional intensification of some typical structural and/ or*

*semantic property of a language unit (neutral or expensive) promoted to a generalized status and thus becoming a generative model*". It follows then that a SD is an abstract pattern, a mould into which any content can be poured.

### 2.2.5.2. Functions of Stylistic Devices

### 2.2.5.3. Classification of Stylistic Devices

According to Galperin [17], stylistic devices can be divided into three main categories: (i) phonetic, (ii) lexical and (iii) syntactical stylistic devices.

(a) *Phonetic stylistic devices*

(b) *Lexical stylistic devices*

**Table 2.3. The Summary of Lexical Stylistic Devices**

| <b>Stylistic devices</b> | <b>Definition</b>  | <b>Effect</b>   |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Metaphor                 | a comparison between two things, which are basically quite different without using <i>like</i> or <i>as</i>                              | Create a vivid mental image and arouse readers' interest    |
| Metonymy                 | The object meant is not explicitly named but rather substituted by a closely associated feature, a characteristic part or a proper name. | Build up imagery  |
| Irony                    | A SD based on the opposition of the two meanings, dictionary and contextual one.   | Humorous effect, express criticism and the author's opinion |

|             |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|
| Simile      | an explicit comparison (using <i>as</i> or <i>like</i> ) between two distinctly different things which have at least one feature in common | Create a vivid mental image and arouse readers' interest |
| The Epithet | Based on the interplay of emotive and logical meaning in an attributive word, phrase or even sentence                                      | Emotive effect   |
| Oxymoron    | combination of two terms which are contradictory in meaning  | Make the reader think, express criticism                 |
| Hyperbole   | Deliberate overstatement or exaggeration   | Amuse the reader<br>Express author's opinion             |

(c) *Syntactical Stylistic Devices*

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### 3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 3.2. RESEARCH SUBJECT

#### 3.3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will be carried out by using descriptive and analytical methods.

#### 3.4. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

In order to gain success in our research, the process of our research follows the steps:

- We collect and analyze 200 English and Vietnamese samples of describing the appearance of the character in Modern English and Vietnamese prose and then sort out the data into categories of lexical stylistic devices.

- We identify the category of the stylistic device, explain how it works and find out its function in a particular text.

- We figure out the frequencies of occurrence of some commonly used stylistic devices in English and Vietnamese prose.

- We discuss the results of the above analysis, compare and contrast the similarities and differences in terms of the use of lexical stylistic devices in qualitative and quantitative approach.

- Finally, we suggest further research.

#### 3.5. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

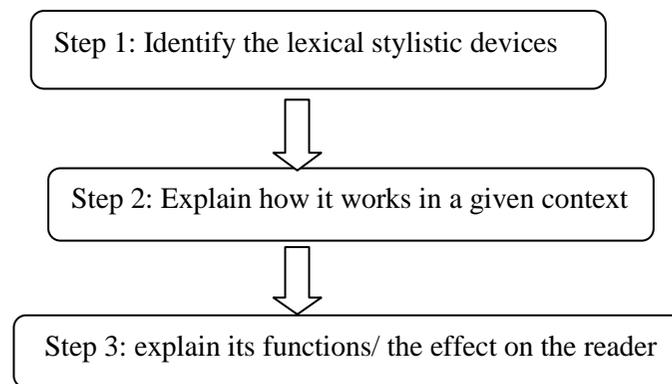
##### 3.5.1. Data Collection

The study is carried out about 200 English and Vietnamese samples of describing the appearance of the character in modern

English and Vietnamese novels, short stories and narratives on the Internet and in publication printing.

##### 3.5.2. Data Analysis

The collected data re examined and sorted out into categories of lexical stylistic devices. Particularly, we analyze and identify each kind of lexical stylistic devices, then explain how it works and its functions in a given context.



**Figure 3.1. Three Steps Analyzing Lexical Stylistic Devices**

Finally, we figure out the frequency of the occurrence of each category of lexical stylistic devices in English and Vietnamese and attempt to find out the similarities and differences in terms of lexical stylistic devices describing the appearance of the character in English and Vietnam prose.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1. LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES USED IN CHARACTER'S APPEARANCE DESCRIPTION IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PROSE

##### 4.1.1. The Epithet in EP and VP

According to Galperin [17], structurally, Epithets can be viewed from the angle of (i) composition and (ii) distribution.

From the point of view of composition, we find only kinds of compositional structure, namely simple and compound epithets. The following examples are simple epithets:

(1) Mr. Hewet turned his *full* face towards the window. They could see that he had *large eyes* obscured by glasses; his complexion was *rosy*, his lips clean-shaven; and, seen among ordinary people, it appeared to be an *interesting* face. [51, p.95]

Compound epithets are built like compound adjectives. For examples:

(2) At tea-time he was introduced to her father, an invalid who had to be helped about, but who was ruddy and *well-favoured*, with snowy hair and watery blue eyes. [31, p. 177]

From the point of view of distribution, we find two models of epithets namely, string and transferred epithets. In his depiction of Rochester, Charlotte Bronte and D. H. Lawrence give string of epithets:

(3) While they would pronounce Mr. Rochester at once *harsh-featured* and *melancholy-looking*. I saw them smile, laugh—it

was nothing; the light of the candles had as much soul in it as their smile. [5, p. 265]

Another distributional model is the transferred epithet. Transferred epithets are ordinary attributes generally describing the state of a human being, but made to refer to an inanimate object, as we can see in the following examples:

(4) Soames watched this *rugged, enthusiastic careless* face, with an unpleasant feeling. [18, p. 183]

In Vietnamese, many simple Epithets are used in describing the appearance of characters. Here are some examples:

(5) Thì ra bà cũng *đẹp*. Mọi đường nét trên gương mặt bà đều rõ ràng. Lông mày *cong, đen và dày*. Sóng mũi *sổ thẳng, mạnh*. [70, p. 108]

In addition to simple Epithets, compound Epithets play a crucial part in describing the appearance of characters in Vietnamese. For example:

(6) Chị tôi đã qua tuổi con gái lâu rồi, nhưng nét mặt *thanh tú*, cái mũi *thẳng*, cái miệng *tươi cười* và đôi môi *đỏ thắm* của chị không theo năm tháng mà nhạt nhòa đi. [70, p. 249]

Reduplication is a specific characteristic in Vietnamese. With the aim at adding color and vividness to their characters, there is no doubt that reduplication is a perfect device to support their aim.

(7) Một cô vợ *mồm mồm* nhưng *đen đúa*, màu da nâu của đất vùng chua phèn, ngập mặn. Làm dâu năm năm mới có ngày làm vợ. [70, p. 98]

#### 4.1.2. Metaphor in EP and VP

One of the most useful and unique lexical stylistic devices is the metaphor. Let us consider the following example:

(8) It was like pushing the chair itself back into the past, when we began the old slow circuit round about the ashes of the bridal feast. But, in the funeral room, with that *figure of the grave* fallen back in the chair fixing its eyes upon her, Estella, looked more bright and beautiful than before. [12]

In Vietnamese, many writers are interested in employing metaphors in describing their characters. Here is an example of metaphors:

(9) *Đôi mắt lá răm* không chớp, nhìn say mê chính mình. Mái tóc rất đen, rất dày, chỉ để quá vai buộc qua bằng một sợi len, nhưng với dáng điệu có màu dài cát. Lạnh luôn toát lên mình vẻ mê hoặc như một con công mái. [73, p. 11]

#### 4.1.3. Simile in EP and VP

Comparison in general is a device of comparing two things using such terms as “like”, “as”, “as if” or “as though”. Let us consider the following example

(10) But my body was *like a harp* and her words and gestures were *like fingers running upon the wires*. [20, p. 27]

(11) Again he looked at her, *huddled like a bird that is shot and dying*, whose poor breast see panting as the air is taken from it, whose poor eyes look at you who have shot it. [31, p. 183]

(12) Now your hair, I don't know what it is like! *It's as bright as copper and gold, as red as burnt copper*, and it has gold threads where the sun shines on it. [30, p. 14]

In Vietnamese just one word is in comparison such as *là* or *như*. After analyzing and categorizing the collected samples, we just find the word *như* used in describing the appearance as in:

(13) Cu Tý dắt ghé men theo bờ ruộng. Cái bóng dáng lùn cùn thấp tròn, úp cái nón tuy bé nhưng cũng còn quá to đối với người, *trông như cây nấm*. [84]

(14) Nong ngồi trước, anh ngồi sau, *ôm lưng như đôi ếch ngày mưa rào*, bốn bàn tay nắm ghi-đông, nắm tay nhau, đập long vòng quanh sân cỏ. [73, p. 20]

#### 4.1.4. Oxymoron in EP and VP

Syntactically, oxymoron is divided into three main types namely: (a) noun phrase, (b) adjective phrase and (c) verb phrase.

##### ❖ *Noun Phrase*

Let us consider the following examples:

(15) But her *ugly-beautiful mouth* was still unmoved and sad. [31, p. 96]

##### ❖ *Adjective phrase*

(16) Skating to-day I saw the Gold Fairy. She is *awfully pretty*, but I really don't think her so lovely as I did last year. [40]

##### ❖ *Verb phrase*

(17) I watched. Purring. In my arms, *he cried beautifully as I admired his red, wrinkled feet*. [40]

In Vietnamese, oxymoron expressions are popularly employed in describing the appearance of characters. Let us consider the following examples:

(18) Nó không nói, không khóc, đứng dậy đi rất bình thường, *một vẻ bình thường đầy kinh dị*. [70, p. 96]

(19) Hấn khê nhún vai, mặt nhăn nhúm lại, nhếch một *cái cười đầy cay đắng* và và vẫn đứng im nhìn tôi. [67, p. 336]

#### 4.1.5. The Hyperbole in EP and VP

##### ❖ *Single-word hyperbole*

Let us start analyzing the following examples quoted from well-known novel and short story by Charles Dickens and D. H. Lawrence:

(20) He gulped down the brandy, and more brandy, till his face became pale, his eyes *burning*. [31, p.56]

(21) Her black eyes *flaring* at him, as if to forbid him to notice her. [31, p. 66]

In Vietnamese:

(22) Bỏ bát cơm Tua ngồi như hóa đá, *đen thui một khúc xương khô gộc ngạch*. Tách ra khỏi tất cả, đóng kín các cánh cửa giao tiếp, Tua hoàn toàn biệt lập. [61, p. 59]

##### ❖ *Phrasal hyperbole*

Here is an example of phrasal hyperbole:

(23) So attractive that the Reverend Mr Crisp, fresh from Oxford, and curate to the Vicar of Chiswick, the Reverend Mr Flowerdew, fell in love with Miss Sharp, *being shot dead by a glance of her eyes which fired all the way across* Chiswick Church from the school-pew to the reading-desk. [49, p.149]

In Vietnamese:

(24) Lạc đưa mắt ren rén nhìn qua đồng lửa đang cháy rừng rực giữa căn lều. Phía bên kia một ánh mắt long lanh, trong đáy mắt thỉnh thoảng cũng *lóe lên hai đốm lửa*, nhưng âm nồng và chan chứa tình người. [70, p. 192]

##### ❖ *Clausal hyperbole*

Beside single-word and phrasal hyperbole, clausal hyperbole is commonly used in many works, for example:

(25) He *felt the fine flame running under his skin, as if all his veins had caught fire on the surface*. [31, p.66]

In Vietnamese:

(26) Tôi biết rằng tôi đang đứng trước một cô Quế thật sự, cô gái nhỏ nhắn đẹp hơn sự hình dung của tôi nhiều. Đôi mắt của cô như đang cười, long lanh sáng rực dưới hàng mi dài rung rung. [84]

##### ❖ *Numerical hyperbole*

(27) The eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic—their retinas are *one yard high*. They look out of no face but, instead, from a pair of *enormous* yellow spectacles which pass over a *nonexistent nose*. [16, p. 26]

##### ❖ *Comparison hyperbole*

(28) Her eyes were most wonderfully blue, *bluer than forget-me-nots*. She seemed to have a certain confidence in Gerald, and to feel a certain motherly mistrust of him. [28, p. 485]

In Vietnamese:

(29) *Cộng cổ gầy như cộng cổ vốn là đặc điểm của mỹ nhân*, nhưng giờ đây nâng khuôn mặt xanh xao, ruột rø, mấp mé một nhẵn nhặn, một khấn nài. [61, p.24]

##### ❖ *So.....that hyperbole*

Hyperbole is used to increase the effect of a description. It creates a humorous effects as in:

(30) Cheeks and *arms so hard and red that I wondered the birds didn't peck her in preference to the apples*. [95]

#### 4.1.6. Irony in EP and VP

(31) I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for *as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley may like you the best of the party.*' [2]

In Vietnamese:

##### ❖ *For humour*

(32) Su ông lăm lét nhìn trộm Xuân rồi gãi tai như *một su ông hợp thời trang.* [69, p. 50]

##### ❖ *For pity*

(33) Cái khăn lượt với cái áo thụng xanh làm cho chú rể trở nên *trịnh trọng một cách đáng thương.* Và hãy tưởng, anh ấy đóng trang phục ấy suốt ngày lẫn đêm. [81]

##### ❖ *For mocking*

(34) Vợ anh, thật vậy, là một người đàn bà có cái nhan sắc của một người đàn ông không đẹp giai. Hai con mắt nhỏ, đôi gò má cao, cặp môi phàm phũ, dáng người thô tục, những ngón tay tròn và dài như những quả chuối ngự. [59]

## 4.2. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TERMS OF LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES USED IN CHARACTER'S APPEARANCE DESCRIPTION IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PROSE.

### 4.2.1 Similarities

- Firstly, all of the six lexical stylistic devices (Epithets, metaphor, hyperbole, simile, oxymoron and irony) are found in the collected samples in EP and VP.

- Secondly, vividness, attractiveness, poetic flavor and peculiarity are similar features in linguistic use to describe the appearances. Each writer has his own talent and creativeness to make the appearance of his characters more and more vivid and appeal to readers.

- Thirdly, all lexical stylistic devices used in describing appearance in EP and VP have high artistic effects in the way of describing, drawing attention to the appearance, making a strong impact on readers to arouse their interest and entertain them.

- Fourthly, Simile used in depicting appearance of characters is the same in both English and Vietnamese. It is an explicit comparison between two different things that resemble in at least one way. It is expressed by comparative words such as like (như), more... than (hơn), less... than (kém), etc.

### 4.2.2 Differences

#### a. Epithets

*Table 4.7. The summary of Epithets in EP and VP*

|                            | Composition |            |               | Distribution |               |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
|                            | Simple E    | Compound E | Reduplication | String E     | Transferred E |
| <b>English Epithets</b>    | +           | +          | -             | +            | +             |
| <b>Vietnamese Epithets</b> | +           | +          | +             | +            | +             |

- Differences: Reduplication is a specific but popular case in Vietnamese. Almost every Epithet has its reduplicated form. Phonologically, there are two main types of reduplication: full

reduplication such as: trầm trầm, buồn buồn, thon thon, etc. and partial reduplication with three main sub categories such as: xanh xao, mảnh mai, lờ đờ, lũn cũn,...etc.

*b. Metaphor*

**Table 4.8. The Summary of Source Domain (less abstract)**

*Used in Depicting Appearance in EP and VP*

| Source Domain        | ENGLISH | VIETNAMESE |
|----------------------|---------|------------|
| Animals              | +       | +          |
| Human Beings         | +       | -          |
| Natural objects      | +       | +          |
| Artifacts            | +       | -          |
| Abstract             | +       | -          |
| Legendary characters | -       | +          |

- Differences: The source domains including human beings, artifacts and abstract (coachman's half tamed leopard, first rate athletes, grave and graceful fancy) are used in describing the appearance of characters. These are not found in Vietnamese. Last but not least, legendary characters such as Cô Tấm, Chị Hằng are just used in Vietnamese.

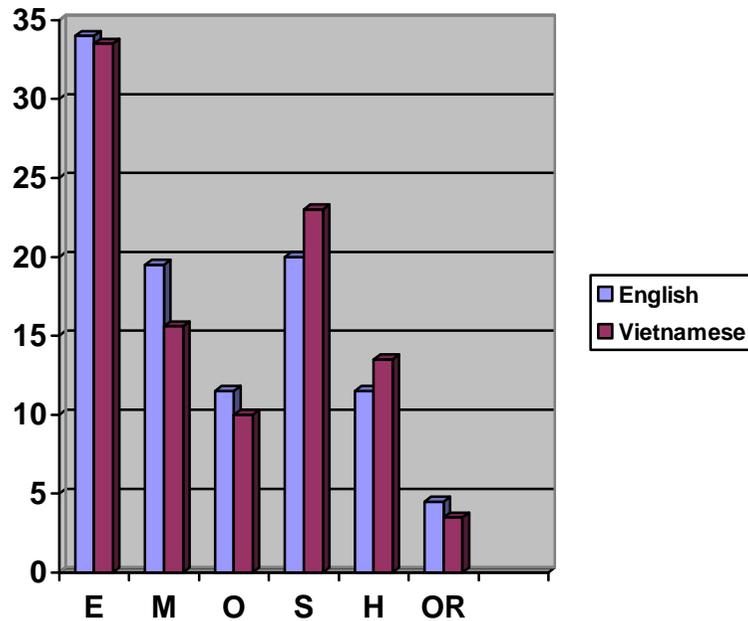
*c. Hyperbole*

**Table 4.9. The Summary of Hyperbole Used in Depicting Appearance in EP and VP**

| Hyperbole             | ENGLISH | VIETNAMESE |
|-----------------------|---------|------------|
| Single-word hyperbole | +       | +          |
| Phrasal hyperbole     | +       | +          |
| Clausal Hyperbole     | +       | +          |
| Numerical Hyperbole   | +       | -          |
| Comparison hyperbole  | +       | +          |
| So.....that Hyperbole | +       | -          |

- Differences: According to table 4.9, Numerical hyperbole and so... that hyperbole can not be found in the collected samples in Vietnamese.

**4.3. FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES USED IN CHARACTER'S APPEARANCE DESCRIPTION IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PROSE**



**Figure 4.1. Frequency of Occurency of Lexical Stylistic Devices used descrbing the appearance in EP and VP**

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

This study aims at analyzing lexical stylistic devices used in describing the appearance of characters in EP and VP and its achievements can be summarized as follows:

The aims and objectives of the study are clearly set up in chapter One as a guideline for this study. Besides, the rationale, the scope of the study, research questions, significant of the study as well as its organization are logically mentioned in this chapter. Then we give a brief review of the related previous studies in chapter Two. This includes very significant theories such as: functional styles of the literary language, general note on prose; appearance and characters and stylistics, stylistic devices with its definition, functions and classification. After that, we present the methods, procedure of the study and data collections and analysis in chapter Three. Finally based on the aims and objectives, the theoretical background and research method in previous chapter, we carry out to categorize the samples and analyze them. In addition, a contrastive analysis is also carried out to find out the similarities and differences in terms of lexical stylistic devices used in EP and VP. We find out some important things like these:

Firstly, Epithet, metaphor, oxymoron, simile, hyperbole and irony are the six commonly used lexical stylistic devices describing the appearance of characters in English and Vietnamese. These descriptions are very vivid and attractive thanks to the writer's talent

and skill in using language and stylistic devices. These are two factors making a literary work successful. It is noteworthy that he uses a wide range of lexical stylistic devices with their functions as follows:

- Arouse the reader's interest or catch his/ her attention;
- Make the reader think;
- Create a vivid mental image;
- Amuse or entertain the reader;
- Criticize, mock or humorous effects

Secondly, simple, compound, string and transfer Epithet are found in both in English and Vietnamese. Remarkably, in these two languages when depicting the beautiful appearance, the writer tends to employ the images of very nice natural objects and animals such as: flowers, autumn leaves, birds, the surface of the pond in spring and so on. With regard to the ugly one, the images of some animals namely, monkeys, bats, pigs and rats are used in many texts. Thanks to the images of everyday objects and animals, readers can look back on easily and efficiently no matter what these descriptions has poetic flavor and writer's peculiarity. Through his characters, readers can share their feelings, ideas and thoughts with the writer. On a higher level, talking about characters in a work of art is talking about humanism in which human beings always take the central role and have the right to give meaning and shape to their own lives.

Thirdly, with regard to the differences the findings show that reduplication is really common in Vietnamese. They are formed by repeating a part of a word to form new words, altering the meaning of the original word. Its effect is to sometimes either increase or

decrease the intensity of the adjective, and is often used as a literary device (like alliteration) in poetry and other compositions, as well as in everyday speech. A lot of reduplicative epithets such as: xanh xao, tròn trĩnh, mũm mĩm, thon thon, nhỏ nhắn and so on are employed in the collected samples. In addition, the images human beings, artifacts and abstract (coachman's half tamed leopard, first rate athletes, grave and graceful fancy) are used in describing the appearance of characters in English not in Vietnamese whilst legendary characters such as Cô Tấm, Chị Hằng are just used in Vietnamese. Finally, so... that and numerical hyperbole can not be found in Vietnamese.

## **5.2. IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.3. LIMITATIONS**

Due to the shortage of time, reference materials as well as the limited knowledge of the researcher, the study has got certain restrictions. Firstly, lexical stylistic devices are broad and describing the appearance of the characters has been concerned by many writers. Therefore, there are many materials related as expected and it takes a lot of efforts to collect as well as to categorize them and then analyze and contrast. Secondly, it is difficult for the researcher to choose the contemporary writers in both English and Vietnamese prose.

### **5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

1. An investigation into syntactical stylistic devices describing the appearance of characters in English and Vietnamese prose.

2. An investigation into phonetic stylistic devices describing the appearance of characters in English and Vietnamese poems.

3. An investigation into lexical stylistic devices describing the landscapes in English and Vietnamese prose.