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**A STUDY OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES
 OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF FOODSTUFFS
 IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

Subject area: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

Language instruction for use not only fulfills its informative function by manufacturers but also has its influence on the safety and the health of ultimate consumers. Especially, together with the development of the society and the world, people's living standards are increasing. According to Maslow [64], human needs form a pyramid-shaped hierarchy from low to high. Maslow argues that the higher-level needs cannot be achieved unless the basic needs have been satisfied. Foodstuffs are a good example: in the case of persons with allergies or diabetes or restricted to a particular diet, failure to understand instructions for use may have serious health consequences. Here are some examples related to instructional terms of some English and Vietnamese instructions for use below:

- Fisherman's Friend Sugar: This product isn't recommended for children under 5 years of age. [E-28]
- Viên Gia Vị - Bún Bò Huế: Bỏ 1 viên vào 0,5 lít nước đun sôi, đun từ 2 đến 3 phút. Dùng cho 2 tô BÚN BÒ HUẾ (150g cho mỗi tô). [V-145]

Therefore, to understand any language more deeply and clearly, language learners should know not only the role of lexicon and of syntax and, but also the semantic aspect of its language to get a thorough insight in the language use. Moreover, language will not be a barrier to the free movement of products. As a balance needs to be found between the safeguarding of free movement and safety and health of consumers, I realize that language instruction for food use is a very important matter for ultimate consumers who will directly use food products as well as

food manufacturing of companies. Therefore, "A Study of Linguistic Features of Instructions for Use of Foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese" is the title of the master thesis I wish to perform.

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims

The research aims to find out the lexical, syntactic, and semantic features of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese. This study also considers these aspects to clarify similarities and differences of instructions for use of foodstuffs in two languages so that the paper helps language learners, translators, as well as ultimate consumers gain a better insight into the meaning of instructions for food use in a more effective way.

1.2.2. Objectives

- To identify and describe lexical, syntactic, and semantic features of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese languages.
- To point out and explain similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese instructions for use of foodstuffs.
- To suggest some implications for English users, especially for food companies and ultimate consumers.

1.3. THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Within the limited scope of an MA thesis, this research will focus on some linguistic features of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are lexical, syntactic, and semantic features of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese?
2. What are similarities and differences of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese in terms of linguistic features?

3. What are some possible suggestions for teaching, learning, as well as using English by learners, translators, manufacturers, and ultimate consumers to construct effective food instructions?

1.5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In daily life, the most basic target of human is safety and effectiveness. Nowadays, with the economic development and the globalization trend, the matter of multilingual information will be promoted. In order to achieve a healthy life, people have their right to receive the most exhaustive possible information on the quality and characteristic of foodstuffs offered to them. Therefore, instructions for use become the basic and important information, and must be readily available to final consumers. In this view, I hope that my MA thesis entitled “*A Study of Linguistic Features of Instructions for Use of Foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese*” will be helpful for buyers as well as food companies responsible for making food products.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Up to now, there have been various studies on the language instruction based on theories of linguistic scholars such as Halliday, M.A.K (1985) *Spoken and Written Language*; Garder (1979), *Linguistic*

instruction: method of instruction that makes use of written languages; Mc Mahon, AMS (1994) - *Understanding Language Change*, Cambridge University Press; and Austin (1962), “*How to Do Things with Words*”. More particularly, some laws closely associated with the research of instructions for use of foodstuffs are regulations by Commission of the European Communities – Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament concerning *Language Use in the Information of Consumers in the Community* (1995).

In Vietnam, Diệp Quang Ban (1998), *Ngữ Pháp Tiếng Việt*; Cao Xuân Hạo (2003), *Tiếng Việt, mấy vấn đề ngữ âm, ngữ pháp, ngữ nghĩa*; Tô Minh Thanh (2005, 2007), *English Syntax and English Semantic*; Nguyễn Hòa Lạc, Lecture in English (2004), *An Outline of Syntax*; and Đỗ Việt Hùng (2002), *Sổ tay kiến thức tiếng Việt trung học phổ thông* discussed linguistic features in Vietnamese texts. “*Luật an toàn thực phẩm*” (2010) as well as “*Hướng dẫn ghi nhãn thực phẩm*” by Vietnamese writers plays an important role in building language instructions in general and instructions for use of foodstuffs in particular.

In this thesis, the author described the discourse features of medicine instructions for use in English and Vietnamese in terms of layout, syntactic, and semantic features and found out the similarities and differences of medicine instructions for use in both languages. However, up to now, no one studies basic linguistic aspects of lexical, syntactic, and semantic features of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese. It is the reason why I have made up my mind to deal with the research entitled “*A Study of Linguistic Features of Instructions for Use of Foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese*” with the hope to make a contribution to the language instruction for use of foodstuffs.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Overview of Instructions for Use of Foodstuffs

2.2.1.1. Definitions of Foodstuff

According to the online dictionary Wikipedia, some European countries list the legal definition of foodstuff: “foodstuffs as any item that is to be processed, partly processed, or unprocessed for consumption and include any substance intended to be, or reasonably expected to be ingested by humans” [61]

2.2.1.2. Definitions of Instructions for Use of Foodstuff

Instructions for use are activities of directing users how to use or prepare the product. In fact, instructions for use of the foodstuff not only fulfill their informative function but also help to understand and to apply the nutritional value of the product in life safely, effectively and reasonably.

2.2.1.3. Language of the Instruction for Use

The function of instructions is to transfer the message from producers to consumers, it cannot be denied that information is transmitted more precisely when it is provided to the consumer in his own language. Hence, an effective instructional message should be: Understandable; Simplified, and Explicit

2.2.1.4. Regulations of the Instruction for Use of Foodstuff

All information labeling of foodstuffs needs to be pre-approved by the governments. According to laws in the UK and in the US on food labeling [62], any food products must include the following items: Name; Ingredients; Nutritional Information; Medicinal or Nutritional Claims; Date Tagging; Storage Conditions; Business Name and Address; Place of Origin; Instruction for Use; Presentation

2.2.1.5. Aims of the Instruction for Use of Foodstuff

It is clear that the instruction for use would be impossible to make

appropriate use of the foodstuff in the absence of such instructions. Especially, the pressure of consumers will also be the motivation making manufacturers have more quality instructions to meet the large demand on market.

2.2.2. Lexical features

2.2.2.1. Definitions

2.2.2.2. Word Classes

- According to Do Huu Chau [41, p.37], the Vietnamese words are classified into two kinds: single words and complex words.

- Quirk et al [22, p.45] distinguishes as follows, “*the words of any languages can be divided into broad types of categories, closed and open*”.

2.2.2.3. Modal Auxiliaries

As stated by Sidney Green Baum and Randolph Quirk [28, p.35-36], auxiliaries have one important function in common with following grammatical characteristics:

- Followed by the bare infinitive
- Not occur in nonfinite function
- No-s form for the 3rd person singular of the present tense
- Past forms can be used to refer to present and future time.

Alexander [1, p.207] pointed out that modals have two major functions which can be defined as primary and secondary.

2.2.3. Syntactic Features

2.2.3.1. Definitions

2.2.3.2. Imperatives

Quirk et al (1985) [21, p.803 & p.830] defined that “*imperatives are sentences which normally have no overt grammatical subject, and whose verb has the basic form*”. In their opinion, the most common type of the imperative is the subjectless 2nd imperative. Two main forms of

imperative are affirmative imperative [V (Base form)] and negative imperative [Do not + V (Base form)].

2.2.3.3. *Passive Voice*

In English language, most passive constructions are formed with the auxiliary be/get and ed-participle.

In Vietnamese language, Diep Quang Ban and Nguyen Thi Thuan [39], Hoang Trong Phien [43] pointed out that Vietnamese has its own ways of expressing passive meanings, typically shown through the use of means of words “*bị*”, “*được*” or “*do*”.

2.2.3.4. *Sentence Types*

In the study of IUFs, I mainly focused on simple sentences and irregular sentences.

2.2.4. *Semantic Features*

2.2.4.1. *Definitions*

2.2.4.2. *Speech Acts*

- George Yule [33, p.43] stated that “*action performed via utterances are generally called speech acts and, in English, are commonly given more specific labels, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request*”.

- According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, “*speech act is an utterance as a functional unit in communication*”. In speech act theory, there are two kinds of utterance: “*propositional meaning or locutionary meaning*” and “*illocutionary meaning or illocutionary force*”.

Relating to what to be discussed in this paper, illocutionary force is necessary to be clarified.

A. *Illocutionary Force*

According to Searle [26], illocutionary acts are classified into the

following types: *representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative*.

B. *Directive*

C. *Modality*

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

With the aim of achieving the study on linguistic features and the distinctive features of instructions for use of foodstuffs as well as similarities and differences between EIUFs and VIUFs. The thesis was carried out the research through the descriptive, qualitative and quantitative approaches combined with the contrastive analysis.

Besides, analytic method and inductive method are also used in this research.

3.2. DATA COLLECTION RESEARCH PROCEDURE

In order to prepare data for the research, I mainly collected 400 samples of instructions for use from foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese. These data were written from 2008 to 2011 so that they are not out-of-date.

3.3. DATA ANALYSIS

In order to prepare data for research, I proceeded to collect more than 400 samples of EIUFs and VIUFs. Based on some criteria such as sources, the length of samples, types, dates, etc... I selected 300 samples for both languages of which 150 EIUFs and 150 VIUFs with the average length from 100 to 200 words.

3.4. DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

The data analysis was carried out to identify the linguistic features of the data in terms of lexicon, structures, and meanings for investigation.

3.5. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

3.6. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. LEXICAL FEATURES OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF FOODSTUFFS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

4.1.1. Adverbs

Adverbs are words that add more information about manner, time, place, circumstances and so on to a verb, an adjective, a phrase or another adverb. Basing on the data analysis, we found that adverbs of manner, adverbs of time and adverbs of degree are three main kinds of adverbs used in EIUFs and VIUFs.

4.1.1.1. Adverbs of Manner

Manner adverbs express information about how an action is performed.

- *Carefully* check the temperature. [E-40]
- Rã đông *tự nhiên*, có thể chiên, xào, hấp, nấu canh, nấu lẩu. [V-50]

4.1.1.2. Adverbs of Time

The special feature of time adverbs expresses not only define time but also indefinite time. By using adverbs of time, manufacturers want to show the sequence of specified time of instructions in order to show more information about the best processing order.

- Mix well and feed *immediately*. [E-37]
- Cho chả giò vào chảo dầu và trở đều khi chiên *đến khi* vàng đều là được. [V-21]

4.1.1.3 Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs of degree describe the extent of a characteristic. They can

be used to emphasize that a characteristic is either greater or less than some typical level [5, p.206].

- Bake the cake until it mounds *slightly*. [E-110]
- Khuấy đều cho đến khi bột tan *hoàn toàn*. [V-129]

4.1.2. Quantifiers

According to Alexander, exact indications of quantity can convey by means of numbers [1, p.91]

4.1.2.1 Cardinal Numbers

- Pour in *125g* melted butter, *2* beaten eggs and *1* teaspoon vanilla essence. [E-111]
- Chiên trong dầu *170*°C từ *3-4* phút. [V-139]

Unlike Vietnamese cardinal numbers, English quantifiers can function as determiners [1, p.88]. Like Alexander, Quirk [21, p.261] showed that in many contexts, “one” may be regarded as “a” stressed form of the indefinite article and may sometime replace it.

- Pour the contents of the jar into *a* bowl and stir to combine. [E-105]
- Mở nắp, trộn *đều*, ta sẽ có *1* tô mì tuyệt hảo. [V-95]

4.1.2.2. Fractions

- To prepare an 8 fl oz drink pour *3/4* cup of cold water into glass. [E-24]
- *1/2* gói bột ngâm với nước chín trong 10 phút. [V-127]

Fractions in English and Vietnamese that are considered in written and read aspects have a different point. In English, we can make use of cardinal and ordinal numbers with hyphens when referring to a fraction (2/3: two-thirds) [2, p.92]. Vietnamese fractions are written and read out cardinal numbers and fraction with the word “phần” (1/2: một phần hai; 3/4: ba phần tư).

4.1.2.3. Decimals

In English, fractions expressed as decimals [1, p.92]. Let us look at following examples:

- Each serving (a heaping tablespoon) provide **4.5g** calcium citrate, **2.25g** hyrosine and **1.5g** l-carnitine. [E-129]

Instead of using the point symbol “.” between integers and odd numbers, in Vietnamese decimals is separated basic numbers and single numbers by the comma symbol “,”.

- Hòa tan 4 viên trong **1,5** lít nước sôi. [V-146]

4.1.3. Nouns

Measure and container nouns are used to refer to units and instruments which are usually marked with standard units and particular instruments for measuring as well as containing.

- Use 1 **tablespoon** per 5 **pounds** of seafood, plus 8 **ounces** of dry seasoning for the most flavor. [E-116]
- Hòa tan 4 **viên** trong 1,5 **lít** nước sôi. [V-146]

4.1.4. Verbs

4.1.4.1. Modal Verbs

A modal verb is an auxiliary verb that can be used to change the modality of a sentence - the attitude of the speaker/writer to the action indicated by a verb, especially with regard to necessity, probability and desirability. In English, it is easy to identify modal auxiliaries because of their defectiveness.

Quirk et al (1985) divided the factors of meaning in modal verbs into two types: intrinsic – “*permission*”, “*obligation*” and “*violation*” and extrinsic – “*possibility, ability*”, “*necessity*” and “*prediction*”. Two modal verbs *can* and *should* which are commonly used in EIUFs are often termed extrinsic modality. Therefore, the most common meaning category of *can* is *possibility* and that of *should* is *necessity*.

Let us see the following examples of *can*:

- It **can** be directly mixed in the food. [E-54]
- Rã đông tự nhiên, **có thể** chiên xào, hấp, nấu canh, nấu lẩu. [V-55]

In order to help consumers avoid cases of contamination in processing and preservation foodstuffs, manufactures use “*should*” in EIUFs and VIUFs.

- Water used in infant formula **should** be boiled first and then cooled quickly to serve to the infant. [E-148]
- Nhu cầu mỗi bé có thể khác nhau, các bà mẹ **nên** tăng giảm lượng bột cho phù hợp với bé. [V-38]

4.1.4.2. Activity Verbs

Although many verbs have more than one meaning, we find it useful to distinguish seven categories: activity verbs, communication verbs, mental verbs, causative verbs, the verbs of occurrence, verbs of existence or relationship, and verbs of aspect. Among these kinds of verbs, activity verbs occur with the highest frequency in EIUFs and VIUFs.

- **Store** in cool place. After **opening, fold** inner bag to **keep** balance of contents fresh. [E-46]
- **Hòa tan** 4 viên tròn 1,5 lít nước sôi. Khi **ăn, sắp** bánh hủ tiếu ra tô, **xếp** thịt băm, xá xíu, tôm, gan, cải bắp thảo, tỏi phi rồi **chan** nước lèo vào. Món này **ăn** nóng kèm giá, hẹ, sà lách, cần tàu, tần ô, chanh, tỏi ớt. [V-146]

Activity verbs in IUFs can be transitive, taking a direct object, or intransitive, occurring without any objects.

- Examples of EIUFs and VIUFs with transitive verbs:

- **Cover** the non-heated remaining portion. [E-41]

- *Nhai* kẹo gum Xylitol không thay thế cho việc chải răng. [V-71]
- Examples of EIUFs and VIUFs with intransitive verbs:
- *Defrost* before use. [E-48]
- *Trộn* đều trước khi dùng. [V-102]

4.2. SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF FOODSTUFFS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

4.2.1. Imperatives

Affirmative imperative and Negative imperative are two forms of imperative and are often found in EIUFs.

- *Serve with chips, crackers or fresh vegetables.* [E-51]
- *Đình nấu chín quá, vớt mì ra, bỏ vào nước lạnh.* [V-101]

4.2.2. Passive Voice

We use the passive when we wish to focus on a happening which is more important to us than who or what causes the happening or when and there is simple no need to mention the doer. Especially, we always prefer the passive when we wish to avoid using a vague word as subject (e.g. *someone, a person, etc...*) of an action. In EIUFs, most passive constructions are formed:

Subject passive + Verb passive (be + PP) + Optional Agent (by-Phrase)

- It *is recommended* that 2 servings of Nestlé Koko Krunch breakfast cereal *are consumed* with full cream milk to help meet daily energy. [E-46]

Apart from the constructions above, the passive in EIUFs can be used with modal verbs such as “*should*”, “*may*”, “*can*”, “*will*” etc...

Subject passive + Modal Verbs + Verb passive (be + PP)

- Product *should be stored* between 18 – 24°C. [E-30]

In Vietnamese language, according to Diep Quang Ban and Nguyen

Thi Thuan [39], Hoang Trong Phien [43], Vietnamese has its own ways of expressing passive meanings, typically shown through the use of means of words “*bị*”, “*được*” or “*do*”. Likewise, Do Viet Hung [42] said that a passive sentence is realized by three main constructions:

Goal + Vtransitive (1)

Goal + bị/được + Vtransitive (2)

Goal + bị/được/do + Agent + Vtransitive (3)

- Thêm vào ly ba phần nước đã *được* đun sôi để ấm. [V-130]
- Không sử dụng sản phẩm có nhãn *bị* rách thùng. [V-3]

4.2.3. Sentence Types

4.2.3.1. Simple Sentences

According to “*Longman English Grammar*” of Alexander [1, p.4], the smallest sentence-unit is the simple sentence. A simple sentence normally has one finite verb. It has a subject and a predicate. There are five simple sentence patterns:

- (1) Subject + verb
- (2) Subject + verb + complement
- (3) Subject + verb + direct object
- (4) Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object
- (5) Subject + verb + object + complement

Most of simple sentences in EIUFs go with structures (2) and (3).

- *This product contains no artificial colors, flavor, preservatives, wheat milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts.* [E-38]

In Vietnamese, according to Diep Quang Ban (2006), a simple sentence consists of one main clause.

- *Vây cá hồi tiện dụng để chế biến tùy thích trong các món nấu lẩu, nấu canh măng chua, kho ớt, kho tiêu...* [V-144]

4.2.3.2. Irregular Sentences

According to Quirk et al [21, p.838], irregular sentences are the sentences which do not conform to regular patterns of clause structures or to the variations of those structures in the major syntactic class. He claimed that irregular sentences contain forms not found in the structures of regular sentences and they are fragmentary, lacking constituents that are normally obligatory.

➤ *Serve cold.* [E-25]

➤ *Store at room temperature.* [E-38]

In Vietnamese language, Nguyen Van Hiep stated that irregular sentences contain forms not found in the structures of regular sentences and we cannot analyze the elements such as subject, predicate or complement.

➤ *Rã đông tự nhiên 20-30 phút.* [V-22]

4.3. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF FOODSTUFFS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

4.3.1. Speech Act

According to Searle [27], the illocutionary act is classified into five categories:

Directives: speech acts that are to cause the hearer to take a particular action, e.g. *requests, commands, advice, explaining, warning*, etc...

Representatives: speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed

Commissives: speech acts that commit a speaker to some future action, e.g. *promise* and *oaths*

Expressive: speech acts that express on the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition, e.g. *congratulations, excuses* and *thanks*

Declaratives: speech acts that change the reality in accordance with the proposition of the declaration

Quirk et al (1985) stated that “*directives are primarily used to instruct somebody to do something*” [21, p.804]. In this context, the hearer can be known as the reader or user who will be targeted to take required actions in the directives.

4.3.1.1. Requesting

IUFs with the requesting function make the user follow the instructional information provided by manufacturers. Requests all can be found in the structure of imperatives accompanied by quantifiers and measure nouns

➤ *Mix 2 level scoops with 16 ounces of water or low sugar juice.* [E-58]

➤ *½ gói bột ngâm với nước chín trong 10 phút.* [V-127]

4.3.1.2. Explaining

As IUFs differ from another, the language of IUFs is required to clearly present in the degree of their meaning in steps of processing and using. In other words, adverbs of manner and degree in IUFs convey the different ways and different levels of degree in imperatives with manner adverbs, degree adverbs, and intensifiers

➤ Bake on tins *slightly* buttered. [E-110]

➤ Đừng nấu chín *quá*, vớt mì ra, bỏ vào nước lạnh. [V-101]

4.3.1.3. Warning

Warning is an essential part in all instructional labels and it often occurs in special warning and storage parts about some bad and unsafe signs or unexpected situations for the readers/ users if the instruction is not followed.

➤ *Keep out of reach of children.* [E-110]

➤ *Sẽ chảy sệt nếu ấm hơn 300C.* [V-26]

4.3.2. Passive Voice

In IUFs, manufacturers use very commonly of passive voice with the following semantic functions:

- Denote the recipient of the action rather than the performer.
- *This product is sold by weight, not volume.* [E-11]
- *Thành phần giá trị năng lượng một ngày được tính trên cơ sở một khẩu phần 2000 calorie.* [V-97]
- Shows the quality of the products and ingredients in the product.
- *Isomalt diet sugar is recommended for dieticians and those who have diabetes, obesity.* [E-45]
- *O'star được chế biến từ khoai tây tươi giống Atlantic Mỹ.* [V-123]

In Vietnamese, contrasting with “*được*”, “*bị*” and “*do*” express negative meaning. Actually, “*bị*” is used to talk about damage or warning before using the foodstuff as well as the present situation that prompt readers to use foodstuffs carefully. Although “*do*” expresses the negative meaning denoting damage, it is also used to highlight the importance of the product and to show the useful effect of the product thanks to their ingredients as well as characteristic.

- Không sử dụng sản phẩm có nhãn *bị* rách thủng. [V-3]
- Dùng thay muối thường trong bữa ăn hằng ngày để phòng chống các rối loạn *do* thiếu i-ốt và phát triển trí tuệ, ngăn ngừa bướu cổ. [V-109]

Passive voice combined with modal verbs makes the utterances more polite and lighter.

- Once opened can *should be covered* with over cap and *stored* in a cool, dry place, but not *refrigerated*. [E-24]
- Cơm sấy ăn liền *phải được bảo quản* nơi khô, sạch, thoáng mát, không bị nhiễm bẩn hay côn trùng xâm nhập. [V-59]

4.3.3. Modality

Table 4.13. Meanings of Modals of IUFs in English and Vietnamese

No	English	Vietnamese	Meanings	
			Semantics	Pragmatics
1	May	Có thể	Possibility, certainty	Warning
2	Can	Có thể	Possibility, ability, more certainty than “may”	Warning, advice suggestion,
3	Should	Nên	Necessity, almost certainty	Advice, suggestion
4	Will	Sẽ	Prediction, certainty or near certainty	Warning, advice
5	Need	Cần	Necessity, obligation, more certainty than “should”	Advice

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

Lexicon, syntax, and semantics are really basic features to study how texts are structured beyond the sentence level. This thesis is the study of how IUFs are written in English and Vietnamese so as to get a full understanding of the typical features of this kind of instructions in both languages. With this aim, I have set up major goals for the thesis to investigate and to find out the similarities and differences between EIUFs and VIUFs in terms of lexical features, syntactic features, and semantic features. The findings presented below are drawn from the major differences and similarities between EIUFs and VIUFs.

In term of the lexicon, there are some similarities and differences between EIUFs and VIUFs. First, both EIUFs and VIUFs share the same

ideas in the word use in IUFs. That is, adverbs, quantifiers, nouns and verbs, all appear in both EIUFs and VIUFs. Second, the use of words found in EIUFs and VIUFs is nearly the same (adverbs: 11.8% & 13.8%; quantifiers: 25.2% & 22.7%; nouns: 41.9% & 40.3%; verbs: 21.1% & 23.2%). So there isn't a large difference in rates between words used. Third, the use of adverbs found in the three kinds (manner, time and degree) in both languages focuses of ways to process or use IUFs, shows the sequence of specified time of instructions and describes the extent of a characteristic that is either greater or less than in some typical levels. Thanks to measure and container nouns, readers/users can use their purchased products easily and exactly. Moreover, in EIUFs and VIUFs, manufacturers develop empirically and give consumers a formula based on measurement. With the use of modal and activity verbs, IUFs in English and Vietnamese ensure the balance risks and benefit information which means that manufacturers must denote the usage and direction of foodstuffs according to regulations of authorized associations of food safety. Apart from such similarities, the lexical features of IUFs have differences. Firstly, although there is not a large difference in rates in lexical choice between EIUF and VIUFs, the frequency of occurrence of words in EIUFs is higher than in VIUFs such as quantifiers, nouns and verbs (25.2%, 41.9%, & 21.1% in English and 22.7%, 40.3%, & 23.2% in Vietnamese). Secondly, unlike Vietnamese, English cardinal numbers can function as determiners. Particularly, "one" may be regarded as "a" stressed form of the indefinite article and may sometimes replace it. Thirdly, both English fractions and Vietnamese ones are completely similar in the numeral form. Nevertheless, fractions in English and Vietnamese that are considered in written and read aspects have a different point. In English, we can make

use of cardinal and ordinal numbers with hyphens when referring to a fraction ($\frac{2}{3}$: two-thirds). Vietnamese fractions are written and read out cardinal numbers and fraction with the word "phần" ($\frac{1}{2}$: một phần hai; $\frac{3}{4}$: ba phần tư). Finally, instead of using the point symbol "." between integers and odd numbers, in Vietnamese decimals is separated basic numbers and single numbers by the comma symbol ",".

As regards the syntactic features, EIUFs and VIUFs share similarities in imperatives, passive voices, irregular and simple sentences. Firstly, both languages have a strong tendency in syntactic feature in sentences, in which imperatives make up the highest percentage in comparison with other syntactic features both in English and Vietnamese (49.5% in EIUFs and 46.5% in VIUFs). Moreover, there is the similar tendency between affirmative imperatives and negative imperatives in English and Vietnamese with the percentages of 58.7% and 41.3% for EIUFs; 53.7% and 46.3% for VIUFs. Most of the imperatives in collected samples in both languages were found in the form of affirmative and negative. With regard to passive voices, the use of passive voices is at the lowest rate in both EIUFs and VIUFs (23.8% in English and 15.2% in Vietnamese). In both languages, passive voices with agent occupy the modest percentage with the rate of 0.8% in English and 0% in Vietnamese. Lastly, simple and irregular sentences are at the second rate in both English and Vietnamese following imperative with 26.7% in EIUFs and 38.3% in VIUFs. This is the reason why manufacturers tend to use more short and simple structures in both languages because of the space of instructional labels and the short as well as understandable needs of readers/users. Besides the similarities, there are differences between EIUFs and VIUFs. First, the frequency of occurrence of all syntactic categories examined in English is higher than

in Vietnamese. Particularly, the percentage of English imperatives is higher than that of Vietnamese ones with the rate of 49.5% in EIUFs versus 46.5% in VIUFs. Especially, there is a remarkable difference between EIUFs and VIUFs. That is, English manufacturers tend to use more passive voices than Vietnamese ones do. The occurrence of passive sentences in EIUFs is nearly three times higher than in VIUFs (119 in English versus 48 in Vietnamese). Finally, with simple and irregular sentences, there is a slight difference between two languages. In the quantitative aspect, simple and irregular sentences in EIUFs occur 133 sentences, meanwhile in VIUFs, simple and irregular sentences happen 121 cases. In spite of their differences, EIUFs and VIUFs have a noticeable similarity about the use of syntactic structures with simplicity and clarity. However, the percentage of imperatives, passive voices, simple and irregular sentences in EIUFs is higher than in VIUFs. The differences contribute to distinguishing features of IUFs in each language.

Finally, as for semantic features, the findings show that EIUFs and VIUFs have some similar tendencies. Generally, manufacturers have a strong tendency in using speech acts, passive voice and modality with a lot of semantic functions in both languages. With regard to speech acts, directives (requesting, explaining and warning) are found to be used a lot in both languages with the meaning of suggestion, advice and warning. Moreover, directives with requesting and explaining functions have a higher percentage in both EIUFs and VIUFs with the rate 57.5% and 32.3% in English versus 60.5% and 29.6% in Vietnamese respectively, meanwhile directives with warning meaning only take up the lowest percentage in both languages (10.2% for EIUFs and 9.9% for VIUFs). In terms of passive category, passive sentences denote the recipient of

action rather than the performer in both languages because the purpose of English and Vietnamese manufacturers of using passive voices in IUFs is to emphasize the products' benefit as well as how well they are made. Finally, in both EIUFs and VIUFs, expressions for suggestion, warning and advising often occur a lot with statements with the non-explicit performative, utterances without performative verbs and statements with modal verbs such as “*can*” – “*có thể*”, “*should*” – “*nên*”, “*need*” – “*cần*”, “*must*” – “*phải*” and “*will*” – “*sẽ*” in English and in Vietnamese respectively. These modal words occurred with the meaning of “*possibility*”, “*necessity*” and “*prediction*” in both languages. However, there are some differences in semantic functions between EIUFs and VIUFs. First of all, the frequency of occurrence of all semantic categories studied in EIUFs is higher than in IUFs (894 versus 780). Next, passive voice with various meaning categories is used with a three-time higher frequency in EIUFs than in VIUFs. Lastly, modal words that express the basic modality of “*possibility*”, “*necessity*” and “*prediction*” in EIUFs is more slightly complex than in VIUFs. Of which, the meaning category of “*possibility*” in English include two modal verbs “*can*” and “*may*”. Although the modal verb “*can*” is used in the same sense of possibility as “*may*”, “*can*” are more certain than “*may*”. Meanwhile, its equivalent of “*can*” and “*may*” in Vietnamese language is “*có thể*” with the meaning category of possibility.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

With the findings of linguistic features and the similarities as well as differences between EIUFs and VIUFs, it is our hope that the thesis will be of much benefit not only for users but also for teachers, learners, and translators of English.

Firstly, the finding of the study will probably be a useful reference

resource for anyone who is keen on studying language, especially the instructive language of IUFs. In fact, there are not many researchers who have studied the language of IUFs in linguistic features. Therefore, this research hopefully will be of some help for teachers and students majoring the English language or for language researchers when they conduct a piece of scientific research on the instructive language related to food topics. Moreover, this thesis will be basis for teachers in teaching how to write the instructions for use of foodstuffs. The lexicon is considered as cells and vessels to develop the writing. Meanwhile, syntactic and semantic features will help teachers and learners have an exact and deep understanding of the way of using words and writing sentences in IUFs. Thus, the learners should be introduced some basic knowledge of grammar and structures before writing.

Secondly, the typical linguistic features of EIUFs and VIUFs as well as similarities and differences between two languages can make a considerable contribution to the translating and understanding English for specific purposes, especially for translators, manufacturers, and ultimate users. In addition, the result of the study will supply the standard frame that helps them write and translate IUFs with the right structures and effective content. Therefore, translators can translate IUFs from English to Vietnamese and vice versa accurately with standard language and food manufacturers can draft good IUFs for their food products. Thanks to these good messages, users can use the foodstuffs effectively and safely.

5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to the shortage of time, reference material as well as limited linguistic knowledge, the study has got certain restrictions. Firstly, linguistic features include many subfields. However, the study only

focuses on some linguistic features in terms of the lexical, syntactic and semantic features without mentioning cohesive devices and discourse features etc..., so it has not reached the expected depth as it should. Secondly, although having compared and found out similarities and differences of lexical, syntactic, and semantic features between EIUFs and VIUFs, the researcher has not explained the similarities and differences in the linguistic features in EIUFs and VIUFs based on the cultural differences of two languages.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis is an attempt to make a detailed study of linguistic features of EIUFs and VIUFs in terms of lexical, syntactic, and semantic features. In addition, the researcher's effort has been made to find out the similarities and differences between two languages. For sake of making further investigation into the field of IUFs, I would like to offer some suggestions for further research:

1. An investigation into cohesive devices of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese.
2. An investigation into stylistic devices of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese.
3. An investigation into cultural influences of instructions for use of foodstuffs in English and Vietnamese.