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**A STUDY ON THE LINGUISTIC FEATURES
 OF THE WORDS “GREEN” IN ENGLISH
 AND “XANH (LÁ CÂY)” IN VIETNAMESE**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

Color has received much attention in linguistics because of their apparently universal character. It is one of the virtual parts of life and it makes the world more beautiful and lively as well. Color also symbolizes the style of a trade-mark, a football team or a company. Besides, the colored rays not only affect our physical bodies but also our emotions, mood or feeling. In any language words denoting color (WsDC) occupy a considerable amount and are regarded as interesting and extensively studied lexical set. We use WsDC to communicate and express the attitude, feelings, behaviors, related inspiration as well as the world outlook.

It is the fact that most areas of our planet are covered by the green - the color of mountains, plants, vegetation, paddy fields and meadow. “Green” and “Xanh (lá cây)” does not only shows color but also contains other connotation that requires good background knowledge of English learners and teachers to use it correctly and properly. Theoretically, some relevant studies on colour in Vietnamese have been done so far. However, researches on linguistic features of Green and Xanh (lá cây) have not been carried out. Therefore, it is necessary to do a research on this matter to enrich characteristics of Green and Xanh (lá cây). As a result, the topic “A Study on Linguistic Features of the Word “Green” in English and “Xanh (lá cây)” in Vietnamese” has been carried out in relation to the reasons above.

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.2.1. Aims of the Study

- Investigate some semantic diversity and usage of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese.
- Help teachers and learners explore similarities and differences of cultural characteristics of each country implied through its language.

1.2.2. Objectives of the Study

- Make a contrastive analysis of semantic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese.
- Find out similarities and differences of semantic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese.

1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is restricted to describe, analyse and contrast the semantic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese in compound words, collocation and idiomatic phrases. The contrastive analysis is based on the source language of English in contrast to Vietnamese. The study is carried out within the essential sources on 250 samples containing Green, 250 samples containing Xanh (lá cây) selected from British, American and Vietnamese stories, novels, and idioms books. Also, some educational, political, economic and health newspapers and magazines are added to.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (1) What are semantic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese?
- (2) What are semantic similarities and differences of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese?

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Hopefully, doing a research of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) will be a contribution on the present recognition of the field. And the findings of classification of semantics as well as analysis of pragmatic and cultural aspects of these words will be expected as great benefits for Vietnamese learners of English and English learners of Vietnamese. With the contrastive analysis of the different features of meaning of the word Green and Xanh (lá cây), pragmatic acquisition of how to apply such a word in appropriate and suitable ways, learners will be able to improve their understanding of the field, and get the final goal - communication in an effective way.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature review and Theoretical Background

Chapter 3: Methodology and Procedure

Chapter 4: Finding and Discussions

Chapter 5: Conclusion

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Color categorization and the expansion of color terms have been discussed. In the study by Truong Thanh Ngoc (2003), [25, p. 33-62], she mentioned semantic features of WDsC in English and Vietnamese: black, white, green, red, yellow, blue, brown, grey, orange, pink and purple. However, in other study by Mai Nguyen Dieu Khoa (2003), [17, p. 35-36], she focused her attention on the study of metaphoric meaning of words denoting colour which includes six main colours. Nguyen Thi Dieu Hao(2005), [19, p. 23-60] found that people tend to use idioms denoting colour words in daily communication. Phan Thi Le Huyen [15, p. 26-81] marked a new trend with contrastive analysis on both semantic and pragmatic features of the adjective “Black” in English and “Đen” in Vietnamese in compound words, collocation and idiomatic phrases. In term of Red, Bui Thi Thanh Hien studied the metaphor related to Red in English and Vietnamese [13]. However, researches on the linguistic features of Green and Xanh (lá cây) to find out their similarities and differences between two languages have not systematically been carried out. Therefore, it is necessary to do a research on this matter to hit the target.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Definition of Color

Color is the visual perceptual property corresponding in humans to the categories called red, green, blue and others. Color categories and physical specifications of color are also associated with objects, materials, light sources, etc., based on their physical properties such as light absorption, reflection, or emission spectra. [53]

2.2.2. Basic Color Terms

In Basic Color terms: Their University and Evolution (1969), Brent Berlin and Paul Kay argued that these differences can be organized into a coherent hierarchy, and that there are a limited number of universal "basic color terms" which begin to be used by individual cultures in a relatively fixed order. They based their analysis on a comparison of color words in 98 languages (20 in more detail) around the world. To be considered a basic color term, the words had to be monolexemic ("green", but not "light green" or "forest green"), high-frequency and agreed upon by speakers of that language.

2.2.3. Words Denoting Colors (WsDC)

In fact, English has a self contained set of 11 words that can be described as "basic colour words": black, white, red, yellow, green, blue, brown, pink, orange, purple and gray (đen, trắng, đỏ, vàng, xanh lá cây, xanh lơ, nâu, hồng, cam, tím và xám). In Vietnam, there are 9 words denoting color: đen, trắng, đỏ, vàng, xanh, nâu, hồng, tím và xám [40]. We normally mention WsDC as natural characters or in denotative meaning. However, WsDC are also used

to express different ideas, thoughts, feelings and attitude in connotative and social meaning in daily communication.

2.2.4. Word

2.2.4.1. Single words are largely monosyllabic. For example: go, white, toy, good ...

2.2.4.2. Complex words are "words that are obviously composed by putting together smaller elements to form larger words with more complex meaning". For example, employee

2.2.4.3. Derivation words are ones containing affixes as derivatives. For example, blackish, exhausted, peaceful...

2.2.4.4. Compound words are units consisting of two or more bases, in some cases, they are composite words: blackbird, blackboard, White House...

2.2.4.5. Reduplication words: Some compounds have two or more elements which are either identical or only slightly different. For example: good-goody, tick-tock of clock, bow-wow of dog.

2.2.5. Approaches to Collocations

This paper deals with the definition by Watson [29, p. 7]: "Collocation is the placing together of words which are often associated with each other, so that they form common patterns or combinations".

2.2.6. Idioms

An idiom is an expression, word, or phrase that has figurative meaning that is comprehended in regard to a common use of an expression that separated from the literal meaning or definition of the words of which it is made.

However, in this paper we consider idiomatic phrases denoting the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese due to limitation of data.

2.2.7. Semantic features

Semantic features play a very important part in differentiating the match between word and meaning. We need a very large number of features to do this work. But linguists believe that a much smaller number of features would be needed in writing grammar description.

2.2.7.1. Components of Word Meaning

a. Denotation is a part of the meaning of a word or phrase that relates it to phenomena in the real world or in a fictional or possible world.

b. Connotation is the additional meanings that a word or phrase has beyond its central meaning.

2.2.7.2. Transference of Meaning

a. Metaphor

According to Arnold (1986), a metaphor is a transfer of name based on the association of identical features and this is actually a hidden comparison.

b. Metonymy

According to Arnold, metonymy can be defined a transfer based on the association of contiguity. In fact, it is a transfer of names between things which are known to be in some ways or others connected in reality or the substitution of the name of an attribute of a thing for the name of the thing itself.

c. Polysemy

According to David Crystal [8, p.106], polysemy refers to cases where a lexeme has more than one meaning. For example, the

word “fan” can mean an electric instrument for cooling, a paper instrument for cooling the person or one’s love towards his/ her favourite stars.

2.2.7.3. Semantic Fields

The assumption of lexical field analysis or semantic field analysis is that lexemes can be grouped together into semantic fields on the basis of shared meaning and that most, if not all the vocabulary of a language, can be accounted for in this way. The description of meaning, the definition of lexemes, is then undertaken within each semantic field and involves defining each lexeme in relation to the other lexemes in the field.

2.2.8. Pragmatic Features

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics which studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning. Pragmatics encompasses speech act theory, conversational implicature, talk in interaction and other approaches to language behavior in philosophy, sociology, and linguistics.

2.2.9. Culture in Language

It is considered that features of our lifestyle are our use of things in the world around us to extend the capabilities, the complex social structure and so forth. In fact, language has become the vital means whereby we can carry out our social lives: language for learning, language for planning, language for co-operation. Speakers and writers, within the context of culture, use language in many more specific situations.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

With the purpose of making a description and contrastive analysis of linguistic features between the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese, this study was intended to follow qualitative approach and developed in different chapters containing some basic theoretical concepts related to semantic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese.

3.2. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.2.1. Data Collection

- I select 250 phrases containing the word Green and 250 phrases containing the word Xanh (lá cây) in different collocations randomly to be samples of the thesis. The study is also carried out with the essential sources from British, American and Vietnamese stories, novels and several educational, political, economic and health newspapers and magazines.

- Samples are collected, selected and categorized into fields (color, complexion, animals, plants, business, technology, etc. In fact, Green and Xanh (lá cây) summarized in each field can be described in compound, collocation and idiomatic phrases for the descriptive, analytical and contrastive methods of semantic and pragmatic features of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây).

3.3.2. Data Analysis

- Classifying the meaning of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) according to their categories of semantic features.

- Describing the semantic features of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây).

- Giving contrastive analysis of Green and Xanh (lá cây) in terms of frequency and semantic features.

- Drawing conclusions on semantics of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây).

3.3. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In brief, the research will strictly follow the research design. The data collection of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) and the way to deal with the data will play an important part in finding the result of the paper to give a qualified study, with a view to helping learners of English to have a good feeling in using this sort of word as well as to achieve better communicative aim.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF THE WORDS "GREEN" IN ENGLISH

4.1.1. Semantic Features of the Word Green in English

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionaries [23], English Dictionary and New Shorter Oxford [5], the word Green denotes the following cases of meaning:

- a. of the colour between blue and yellow in the spectrum; coloured like grass or emeralds: *green eyes*, the leaves are bright green
- b. covered with grass or other vegetation: proposals that would smother green fields with development: *green hill*
- c. concerned with or supporting protection of the environment as a political principle: official Green candidates ; not harmful to the environment: traditional, modern, and *green funerals*
- d. (of a plant or fruit) young or unripe: *green shoots*, *green tomatoes*
- e. (of a wound) fresh; not healed: *green wound*
- f. still strong or vigorous: clubs devoted to *keeping green* the memory of Sherlock Holmes
- g. (of a person) inexperienced or naive: *a green recruit fresh*
- h. (of a person or their complexion) pale and sickly-looking: "Are you all right? - You *look absolutely green*"
- i. (of wood, food, or leather) in its original or untreated state; not seasoned, tanned, cured, or dried: *greenwood*
- j. envious or jealous: *green-eyed monster*
- k. denoting a unit of account that is adjusted in accordance with fluctuations between the currencies of the EU nations and is used to

make payments to agricultural producers within the EU: *green pound*, *green franc*

4.1.2. Semantic Fields of the Word "Green" in English

Table 4.1: The semantic fields of the word "Green" summarized from collected data

Semantic Fields of "Green"	Compound	Collocation	Idiomatic Phrases	Percentage
1. Color	green leaves	green eyes	as green as the emerald	78 (31,2%)
2. Environmentally friendly issues	greenwashing	green products	acts of green	37 (14,8%)
3. Plants	green tea	green aloe		25 (10%)
4. Fields and Mountain		green fields	as green as the hills of Ireland	22 (8,8%)
5. Business/ Investment	greenmail	green stock exchange	Be in green	12 (4,8%)
6. Unripeness/ uncooked	green corn	green rice-shoots		11 (4,4%)
7. Complexion	pale green	green-tinged face	as green as the old cheese	10 (4%)
8. Animals	greenfly	green parrot	as green as a fresh pickled toad	10 (4%)
9. Physical state	greenhouse effect	green rust		9 (3,6%)
10. Technology	Green Browser	green car	Green Cross Code	8 (3,2%)

11. Inexperience	greenhorn	jolly green	as green as a schoolboy	8 (3,2%)
12. Politics/ Military	Green Berets		green-on-blue	6 (2,4%)
13. Envy		green scornful eyes	green with envy	4 (1,6%)
14. Disease	Green monkey disease	green diarrhoea		4 (1,6%)
15. Permission	Green card		give a green light	3 (1,2%)

4.2. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF THE WORD “XANH (LÁ CÂY)” IN VIETNAMESE

4.2.1. Semantic Structures of the Word “Xanh (lá cây)” in Vietnamese

- Color of leaves and grass: *lá xanh, cỏ xanh, tre xanh, ...*
- (of a plant or fruit) unripe: *cà chua xanh, chuối xanh, đu đủ xanh,*
- (of a person) youth: *tóc xanh, xuân xanh, tuổi xanh...*
- Mountain: *khu xanh,...*
- (of complexion) pale and sickly-looking: *da xanh xao,*
- fear, panic: *sợ xanh mắt,*

4.2.2. Semantic Fields of the Word “Xanh (lá cây)” in Vietnamese

Table 4.2: The semantic fields of the word Xanh (lá cây)

summarized from collected data

Semantic Fields of "Xanh (lá cây) "	Compound	Collocation	Idiomatic Phrases	Percentage
1. Màu sắc	Đèn xanh	Mực xanh	Xanh như lá chuối non	79 (31,6%)
2. Thân thiện môi trường	Hành lang xanh	Mái nhà xanh	Ngày chủ nhật xanh	31 (12,4%)
3. Thực vật	Thường xanh	Súp lơ xanh		25 (10%)
4. Cánh đồng, rừng núi	Lá phổi xanh	Đồng xanh	Non xanh nước biếc	22 (8,8%)
5. Non, chưa chín		Đu đủ xanh	Xanh lè xanh lét	13 (5,2%)
6. Kỹ thuật công nghệ	Năng lượng xanh	Xe xanh		13 (5,2%)
7. Kinh tế/ chứng khoán	Đồng bạc xanh	Sắc xanh	Kinh tế xanh	12 (4,8%)
8. Làn da	Xanh xao	Xanh mai má	Xanh búng xanh beo	12 (4,8%)
9. Động vật	Nhặng xanh	Rắn lục	Xanh như đít nhái	10 (4%)
10. Sự sợ hãi/lo sợ	Xanh mét	Xanh mặt	Tái xanh tái xám	10 (4%)
11. Tuổi / tuổi trẻ	Xuân xanh	Đầu xanh	Thò lò mũi xanh	8 (3,2%)

12. Quân sự/ Chính trị	Khu xanh	Quân hàm xanh		6 (2,4%)
13. Hiện tượng lý tính	Nước xanh	Huỳnh quang xanh		4 (1,6%)
14. Bệnh tật/ Triệu chứng của bệnh	Xanh lợt	Chảy mũi xanh	(nôn) mật xanh mật vàng	3 (1,2%)
15. Sự cho phép			Bật đèn xanh	2 (0,8%)

4.3. Similarities and Differences in the Semantic Features of the Word “Green” in English and “Xanh (lá cây)” in Vietnamese

Table 4.3: Relative Frequency of “Green” in English and “Xanh (lá cây)” in Vietnamese

Order	Green in English	Percentage	Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese	Percentage
1	Color	78 (31,2%)	Màu sắc	79 (31,6%)
2	Environmentally friendly issues	37 (14,8%)	Thân thiện môi trường	31 (12,4%)
3	Plants	28 (11,2%)	Thực vật	25 (10%)
4	Fields/Mountain	22 (8,8%)	Cánh đồng/ rừng núi	22 (8,8%)
5	Business/ Investment	12 (4,8%)	Kinh doanh/ Đầu tư	12 (4,8%)
6	Unripeness	11 (4,4%)	Non, chưa chín	13 (5,2%)
7	Complexion	10 (4%)	Màu da	12 (4,8%)

8	Animals	10 (4%)	Động vật	10 (4%)
9	Physical state	9 (3,6%)	Hiện tượng	4 (1,6%)
10	Technology	8 (3,2%)	Kỹ thuật công nghệ	13 (5,2%)
11	Inexperience	8 (3,2%)	Sự thiếu kinh nghiệm	0
12	Politics/ Military	6 (2,4%)	Chính trị/ Quân sự	6 (2,4%)
13	Envy	4 (1,6%)	Sự ghen tị	0
14	Disease	4 (1,6%)	Bệnh tật	3 (1,2%)
15	Permission	3 (1,2%)	Sự cho phép	2 (0,8%)
16	Fear	0	Sự sợ hãi	10 (4%)
17	Age/ Youth	0	Tuổi/ tuổi trẻ	8 (3,2%)

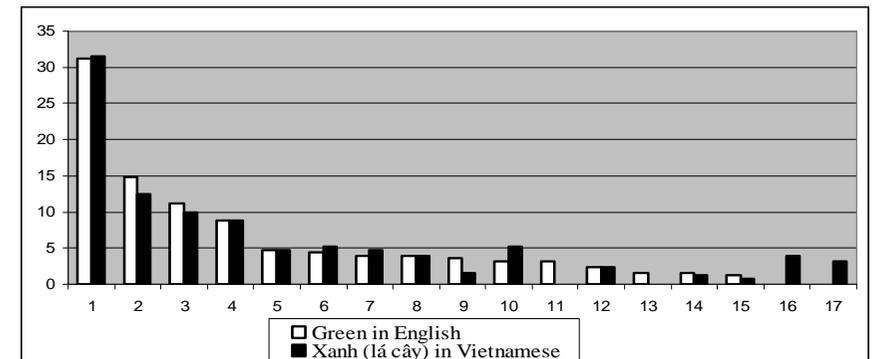


Chart 4.1: Comparison between “Green” in English and “Xanh (lá cây)” in Vietnamese

4.3.1. Similarities

4.3.1.1. Frequency

The counted percentage shows that frequency of usage of word-groups in semantic combination with the word Green and Xanh (lá cây) in most of fields is quite equivalent.

4.3.1.2. Semantics

In general, the word Green and Xanh (lá cây) contains cases of meaning such as: colour of leaves and grass, unripeness, environmentally friendly issues.... In fact, Green and Xanh (lá cây) can combine with other words that can be described in compound word, collocation and idiomatic phrases. In addition, the phrases denoting Green and Xanh (lá cây) share thirteen fields of meaning carrying the same denotative, connotative and social meanings.

4.3.2. Differences

4.3.2.1. Frequency

Through description, classification and contrast, we recognize that there are some different frequencies in some different fields between the word-groups combined with Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese.

4.3.2.2. Semantics

Firstly, there are two fields which can be found in English, but we hardly see in Vietnamese. They are the fields of inexperience and envy.

Secondly, on the contrary, we can find the word “xanh” in the fields of fear and youth in Vietnamese. However, English people do not tend to employ “green” in these two fields.

Thirdly, it can be seen from the chart 4.1 that the frequency in the fields of physical state and technology gets remarkably disparity between the two languages.

4.4. Summary

With the number of 250 word Green in English and 250 word Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese collected through various data, we analysed to indicate semantic features of Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese as a basis to contrast.

In term of semantics, Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese has been described in compound word, collocation and idiomatic phrase based on denotative, connotative and social meaning. All of the phrases denoting Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese are classified into different fields of meaning: field of color, environmentally friendly issues, plants, fields / mountain area, business, unripeness, complexion, animals, physical state, technology, inexperience, politics, envy, disease, permission, fear and age/ youth. In general, the semantic features of Green and Xanh (lá cây) can be similar in some aspects of meaning between two languages but there are also different cases of meaning which only appear in English or in Vietnamese.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

5.1. CONCLUSION

The basic goal of this thesis is to describe, analyze and contrast linguistic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) in Vietnamese to explore various meanings belonging to Green and Xanh (lá cây) as well as to find out similarities and differences between two languages and two cultures.

Through the four chapters, we have attempt to give answers to the research questions about semantic features of the word Green in English and Xanh (lá cây) presented on some British, American and Vietnamese novels, short stories and some magazines.

Semantically, meanings of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) are diverse. Actually, in order to deeply understand their cases of meaning, it is important to consider them in their collocations. With the desire of discovering in what fields Green and Xanh (lá cây) refer to, they should be summarized in each field of color, environmental issues, plants, complexion, business, animals, etc...Through the collected and analyzed data, the meanings of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) are affected by the noun behind and in front of them.

From the results of the investigation, suggestions will be made for language teaching, learning and translation.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS ON TEACHING, LEARNING AND TRANSLATION

5.2.1. Implications on Language Teaching and Learning

Through the paper, the semantic and pragmatic features of the words “Green” and “Xanh” have been found. This finding help the learners achieve the proper use of the words. Besides, teachers can encourage their students to exploit the meaning of the word “Green” in different situations flexibly and effectively.

Furthermore, the learners should consider the meaning of the word “Green” in the contexts where it appears due to the fact that the meaning of a word is not decided by itself. In addition, each word possesses various meanings. This may confuse the learners in choosing appropriate meaning. In order not to make mistakes in using it, teachers should remind their students to explain the word by accompanying with its contexts.

Finally, any learners of foreign languages are affected by their mother tongue. There is no exception to Vietnamese learners. It is common for them to impose the use of their native language on that of the target language. This eventually provokes interlingual errors. Therefore, teachers’ duty is to point out all the similarities and differences between the two languages concerning the matter under discussion. In other words, contrastive and comparative analysis of the language matter should be recommended. This method makes it easy for teachers to diagnose as well as indicate errors committed by learners.

5.2.2. Implications on Translation Work

People have to pay a special attention to the context and cultural factors between English and Vietnamese to acknowledge

what the authors mean. It is also the requirement for both Vietnamese and English learners as well as translators who have ambition of getting an appropriate translation.

On translation study, the learners usually cope with certain obstacles in the process of translation, especially in translating polysemous words. The reason accounting for this is that translators seem to promptly apply the typical meaning of Green and Xanh (lá cây) to cover all the cases where Green and Xanh (lá cây) is exploited in discourse, whereas other implications Green and Xanh (lá cây) seem to be ignored. For example, in the following example, “*flourish like the green bay tree*” does not indicate the colour “xanh” of the plant named bay tree but it expresses other figurative meaning. Consequently, the application of “*xanh*” or “*tươi tốt*” in this situation would be unsuitable. It is better to employ the equivalent “*phát lên như điều*”.

(90) If I were a low-bred poverty-stricken villain, people wouldn't be so mad. But a rich, flourishing villain - of course, that's unforgivable.”
“I wish you'd be serious sometimes!”
“I am serious. It's always annoying to the godly when the ungodly **flourish like the green bay tree**.“ [72, p. 190]

(91) Nếu tôi là một tên lưu manh nghèo khó, hạ đẳng thì thiên hạ sẽ không tức điên tới mức ấy. Nhưng một tên lưu manh giàu có, phát đạt...điều đó tất nhiên là không thể tha thứ được.
- Tôi những muốn đôi khi anh đứng đắn một chút.
- Tôi nói thật đấy. Bao giờ những người ngoan đạo cũng bực mình khi thấy bọn vô đạo **phát lên như điều**.
[88, p. 388]

5.3. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This thesis has made a study of the linguistic features of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) which includes the semantic and pragmatic features. Consequently, it is necessary to give some suggestions for the possible translational equivalents of the words Green and Xanh (lá cây) in each separated sense. However, there are some aspects that have not been dealt with within this framework, calling for further investigation:

- Syntactic features of the phrases containing Green and Xanh (lá cây).
- Cultural characteristics of other words denoting colors “blue, yellow, white...”