

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

**LÊ THỊ BẢO LỘC**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO SYNTACTIC AND  
SEMANTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND  
VIETNAMESE IDIOMS CONTAINING COGNITIVE VERBS**

**Field Study: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. RATIONALE

An idiom is a common phenomenon in a language. People cannot know an idiomatic meaning simply by its structure and by using the standard lexical and syntactical rules to analyze it. An idiom, according to the dictionary, is defined as follows: “a succession of words whose meaning is not obvious through knowledge of the individual meanings of the constituent words but must be learned as a whole” [35, p.156].

Idioms, as a whole, have been studied in the lexicological relation with words, with free – combination group of words and with proverbs. Here and there, there are investigations into idioms with certain linguistic units, such as with color terms, cultural terms, kinship terms, and so on. There are also studies on idioms in terms of noun phrases and adjective phrases. I take *Idioms Containing Cognitive verbs* as the topic of research with the consideration of the Lexicon and Syntax of Both the English and Vietnamese Languages.

### 1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 1.2.1. Aims

This project will examine the basic ideas and various views on semantic and syntactic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs* to demonstrate their popularity in terms of practical uses in comparison with other kinds of verb phrases. To be equipped with the knowledge of semantic and syntactic mechanisms and characteristics of *idiomatic cognitive verbs phrases*, Vietnamese learners of English will be able to handle such and interesting and popular group of *cognitive verbs* in English and Vietnamese idioms.

#### 1.2.2. Objectives

The paper is intended to aim at the following objectives:

1. To identify and describe semantic and syntactic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs*.

2. To find out the differences and similarities of English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs*.

3. To suggest solutions and hints aimed at enabling Vietnamese students of English to use appropriate idioms containing *cognitive verbs* in their speaking as well as in translating and writing.

### 1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

In general, the research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are syntactic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs*?

2. What are semantic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs*?

3. What are similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verb*?

4. How does the research contribute to the teaching and learning of English idioms containing *cognitive verbs*?

### 1.4. RESEARCH SCOPE

This research paper is restricted to English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs*. The researcher does not have much ambition to cover all idioms as well as idiomatic *cognitive verbs* in English and Vietnamese, which seems to be impossible due to limited time and ability.

**CHAPTER 2**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**  
**AND THEORETICAL BACK GROUND**

**2.1 A REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS STUDIES  
RELATED TO THE PROBLEM**

Up to now, a number of writers have discussed much about English and Vietnamese idioms, cognitive verbs and related subjects. I would like to show my realization of performance in the analysis of *cognitive verbs*. The descriptions of syntactic and semantic views are seen through ages in the history of linguistics as in Bullock's [76] and then description makes further progress to the view of Fowler [74]. The description of *cognitive verbs* in the modern time takes the first steps from Cobuild [32] and Levin [46], then the structural grammar and semantic of *cognitive verbs* by Dixon [38]. In the light of "*Functional Grammar*" by Halliday [42] and "*Từ vựng, ngữ nghĩa tiếng Việt*" by Đỗ Hữu Châu [4], idiomatic *cognitive verbs* were observed with a different view as a class of words functioning as *predicator, object, complement, adjunct* in the idiomatic structure where most of my description and generalization of idiomatic *cognitive verbs* come from.

- Palmer [61] said that idioms are consequences of words whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meaning of the words themselves. Semantically, idioms are single units, but they are not single grammatical features and the problem of idioms involves the much wider issue of word formation, by which what would appear to be new and more complex lexemes can be formed from single ones.

- D. A. Cruse [37, p.127] mentioned the traditional definition of idioms as "an idiom may be briefly characterized as a lexical complex which is semantically complex". According to him, most

idioms are homophonous with grammatically well – formed transparent expressions. Besides, he made the conception of idiom in his book clearer distinguishing idioms from collocations and "dead" metaphor.

- In the dictionary by Flavell, Linda and Roger [40], the authors and many essays which discussed idioms from animals. For them, the English are very flexible when using words denoting animals in idioms.

In Vietnamese, a lot of works have been done to make collections of Vietnamese idioms in comparison with those in foreign languages such as English, French, Russia, and others. In the works of Lê Hương Lan [15], Đỗ Hữu Châu [4], the authors analyzed Vietnamese idioms and showed their semantic and syntactic features.

- There are five research papers that have some relationship with the thesis. The first research is done by Nguyễn Văn Long [60], which gives a glimpse at structural mechanism, cultural features and a contrastive analysis on semantic features of English and Vietnamese Idiomatic Verb Phrases. Others are done by **Phạm Thị Tố Như** [62], **Nguyễn Thị Hiệp** [58], **Võ Thanh Quyên** [72], **Lê Diệu My** [47], **Nguyễn Hồng Đức** [39]. These papers dealt with idioms related to animals, human body parts, numbers, and spatial verbs, However, *the investigation into syntactic and semantic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing verbs of cognition* has not been carried out yet, especially, with these verbs: **Think, Assume, Ponder, Remember, Know, Conclude, Solve, and Believe ...**

**2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

**2.2.1. Overview of the Verb Phrase**

**2.2.1.1. Verb Phrase**

**Halliday** [42] defines the verb phrase as a constituent that functions as "Finite plus Predicator" [42, p.175] in the mood

structure (clause as exchange); and as Process in the transitivity structure (clause as representation).

### 2.2.1.2 Phrasal Verbs

The class of word functioning as Event in the verbal group structure is the verb. We can refer to this more specifically as the “lexical verb” to distinguish it from the finites and auxiliaries.

Phrasal Verbs are lexical verbs which consist of more than just the verb word itself.

## 2.2.2. Clause as Exchange

### 2.2.2.1. The Mood Element

According to Halliday [42, p.68], Mood consists of two parts: (1) the Subject, which is a nominal group, and (2) the Finite element, which is part of a verbal group. Thus in *he might*, *he* is Subject and *might* is Finite. The Subject supplies the rest of what it takes to form a proposition: namely, something by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied.

### 2.2.2.2. The Residue

In Halliday’s views [42, p.78], the Residue consists of functional elements of three kinds: **Predicator, Complement and Adjunct**. There can be only one Predicator, one or two complements, and an indefinite number of Adjuncts.

#### a. Predicator

The Predicator is present in all non – elliptical major clauses, apart from certain clauses with verbs *be* and *have*. It is realized by a verbal group minus the temporal or modal operator, which as we have seen functions as Finite in the Mood element

#### b. Complement

According to **Halliday** [42, p.79], a Complement is an element within the Residue that has the potential of being Subject but is not. It is typically realized by a nominal group.

#### c. Adjunct (circumstantial)

An Adjunct is an element that has got the potential of being Subject. It is realized by an adverbial group or prepositional phrase.

#### d. Object

Objects normally follow the Finite and the rest of the verb group. Like Subjects, they are typically realized by noun groups.

## 2.2.3. Clause as Representation.

### 2.2.3.1. Process, Participant and Circumstance

In Halliday’s conception [42, p.101], whether a verb takes or does not take a Direct Object is not a prime consideration. Halliday’s conception is also useful for stylistic analysis. In the concept of *transitivity*, there are three components of what Halliday calls a *transitivity process*:

### 2.2.3.2. The Six Processes in Halliday’s Approach to Transitivity

The six *processes* involved in Halliday’s approach to *transitivity* are best illustrated in Table 2.4 which is reproduced with a slight modification below: the round brackets indicate that the *second participant* which they enclose is optional.

## 2.2.4. English cognitive verbs

\* Cognition is action or process of acquiring knowledge, by reasoning or by intuition, or through the senses. [27, p.172]

## 2.2.5. Vietnamese cognitive verbs

*Nguyễn Kim Thán* (1976) defined *cognitive verbs* as “Động từ cảm nghĩ – nói năng”. He gave explanation to these verbs as follow: “Những động từ này biểu thị sự hoạt động của trí não, của các cơ quan cảm giác và ngôn ngữ.

## 2.3. OVERVIEW OF IDIOMS

### 2.3.1. Definition

There is a variety of definitions of idiom in English. From Simple English Wikipedia [110, p.47] – “An idiom is a word or phrase which means something different from what it says” – it is usually a metaphor. “An idiom” most often refers to a phrase or expression that cannot be understood by knowing what the individual words in the phrase mean.

### **2.3.2. Principal Features of Idioms**

#### **2.3.2.1. Structure of Idioms**

Structurally, in an idiom the central part of an idiom may be adjectives (*ghi xương khắc cốt*), (*thăng ruột ngựa*), nouns (*chăn đon gói chiếc*), or verbs (*đi guốc trong bụng*). An idiom can also be a clause of a complex sentence as in (*Easy, come, easy go*). Most idioms are fixed and unique in their grammatical structure. We cannot modify, add, extract, or replace components without breaking or disturbing their real meaning.

#### **2.3.2.2. Lexical Meaning.**

Unlike common words, the meaning of an idiom follows a different rule as follows:

- *As a set block and generalization.* Even though an idiom is composed of words, its meaning is not the combination of the meaning of each element forming it.

- *As a symbol.* Symbolic meaning or figurative meaning is the most important expression of an idiom.

- *As imagery (imaginative).* Most idioms have the imaginary quality because of their symbolic expression. In common words (except metaphor and metonymy) the meaning of words is directly and rationally perceived; however, in idioms, the perception of the general meaning can only come through lively images of forming elements.

- *As evocativeness (expressiveness).* Idioms are only used in communication situations where the speakers’ appraisal or attitude is required.

#### **2.3.2.3. General Syntactical Glimpse at Idiomatic Verb Phrases.**

In the *Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English*, Moons [67, p.84] advocates that “there are enormous structural varieties of English idioms. But syntactically, they could be categorized into three main types: (i) phrase idioms consist of nominal groups, adjectival groups, modifiers, quantifiers, adjunct, submodifier, (ii) clause idioms consist of predicates and conventions, exclamations and subordinate clauses, and (iii) sentence idioms”.

### **2.4. SUMMARY**

Chapter Two of the paper has presented a review of related previous studies, fundamental and essential theoretical preliminaries concerning the subject under consideration which serve as the basic foundation of data analysis and findings discussion in the following Chapters.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE**

#### **3.1. RESEARCH METHODS**

The methods of research are for all time determined by “object” of the research. This study makes use of contrastive analysis in qualitative and quantitative approaches. We have collected and analyzed data in order to find out the differences and similarities in semantic and syntactic features between English and Vietnamese idioms containing cognitive verb. As mentioned in the scope of research, 450 English idioms and 205 Vietnamese idioms containing verbs of Cognition are collected for qualitative and quantitative

analysis. Contrastive method helps us to set up the similarities and differences in the ways English and Vietnamese people use the idioms containing verbs of m in their daily conversations as well as pieces of writing. Besides, we have used a combination of interpretive, exploratory, and contrastive methods, while doing this research paper.

### **3.2. RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

This research is carried out through the following steps:

1) Collecting English and Vietnamese idioms containing *cognitive verbs* from publications (published words, novels and radio programmes) with reference to dictionaries and relevant materials; finding examples in which they are used.

2) Using the view points of functional grammar by Halliday to analyze English and Vietnamese idioms containing verbs of cognition in term of the contrastive analysis and to classify them in accordance with their semantic and syntactic features.

3) Finding and making a comparison and contrast between structural mechanisms and then semantic mechanisms of English and Vietnamese idioms containing verbs of cognition.

4) Showing the similarities and differences in terms of semantic characteristics between English and Vietnamese idioms containing verbs of cognition.

5) Suggesting possible ways of learning and teaching English idioms containing verbs of cognition.

#### **3.2.1. Data Collection and Corpus Building.**

In this study, there are 450 English idiom samples containing verbs of m and 205 Vietnamese idiom samples containing verbs of m. These samples are of different genres and registers: English and Vietnamese idiom dictionaries, fiction as well as non-fiction, novels,

short stories, magazines, newspapers. Both monolingual and bilingual publications are the main sources of examples. These examples are classified into relevant headings and for investigation.

#### **3.2.2. Data Analysis.**

Qualitative and quantitative analysis will be used to find out the relationship between the syntactic and semantic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing cognitive verbs.

### **3.3. SUMMARY**

The study is carried out through a descriptive, comparative and contrastive analysis. English is chosen as the source language and Vietnamese, the target language.. With the purpose of making an investigation into the syntactic and semantic features of *cognitive verbs* in English and Vietnamese idioms, the design as well as the method of the study is as follows:

**CHAPTER 4**  
**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE IDIOMS CONTAINING *COGNITIVE VERBS*.**

**4.1.1. Syntactical Glimpse at English Idioms containing *cognitive verbs*.**

**4.1.1.1. Syntactic Features of English Idioms of Think Subtype Consisting of Think, Consider and Imagine, Assume and Vietnamese equivalents.**

a) *Syntactic Features of English Idioms of Think and Vietnamese equivalent.*

b) *Syntactic Features of English Idioms Containing Consider, Imagine, Assume and Suppose and Vietnamese equivalents.*

**4.1.1.2 Syntactic Features of English Idioms of Ponder Subtypes Consisting of Ponder, Speculate, Reflect, Dream and Contemplate**

**4.1.1.3. Syntactic Feature of English Idioms of Remember Subtypes consisting of Remember and Forget.**

**4.1.1.4. Syntactic Features of English Idioms of Know Subtypes Consisting of Know, Learn, Realise, Understand and Teach and Vietnamese equivalents.**

**4.1.1.5. Syntactic Features of English Idioms of Believe subtype consisting of Infer, Demonstrate, Show, Guess, Believe, Doubt.**

**4.1.2. Syntactic Features of Vietnamese Idioms Containing Cognitive Verbs Consisting of Nghĩ, Xem xét, Tưởng tượng, Tin rằng, Suy nghĩ, Tự hỏi, Suy xét, Mơ về, Nhớ, Quên, Biết, Học, Hiểu, Dạy, Suy luận, Chứng minh, Làm rõ, Đoán, Tin tưởng.**

**4.1.3. Concluding Remarks**

We have so far touched upon the syntactic features of idioms containing English *m* verbs with a description of all the possible structures that these *m* verbs take and the collocation of these verbs with different functional syntactical elements like *object*, *complement*, *adjunct*, etc. All the syntactic structures of EICVs have been taken into consideration.

**4.1.4. The Structures of English and Vietnamese Idioms Containing *Cognitive verbs***

Relying on descriptive approach, we can divide the whole of *Cognitive verbs* containing Vietnamese idioms into three main kinds: ***contrary idioms, comparative idioms, and common idioms***.

**4.1.4.1. Parallel Structures**

- *Contrary idiom (Parallel structures)* is the most popular one in Vietnamese. They occupy up to 56% of the total of realistic idioms [10, p.38]. The most outstanding character about the structure of this is that the correspondence among components and words establishes idioms.

**4.1.4.2. Comparative Structures**

The construction of the comparative idiomatic verb phrases in general and in idioms containing *cognitive verbs* in particular has the structure as follows.

“A – c.m – B”

**4.1.4.3. Metaphorically Descriptive Structures**

The idioms containing *cognitive verbs* are constructed on the basis of describing events and phenomena by means of metaphor.

ICCVs are constructed on the basis of describing events and phenomenon by means of metaphor. To understand the meaning of an idiom, we must use an imaginative way to describe the relationship between words and events and phenomena. So, the real meaning is not emerged on the surface structure of ICCVs.

*a. ICCVs with one fact*

This kind of idioms consisting of only one event or phenomenon to be dealt with. These verbs can also go with indirect adverbs object or adverbial phrases, noun phrase or verb phrases

*b. ICCVs with two analogical facts*

Each idiom consists of two events or phenomena that are dealt with and reflected. They are analogical and in concord with one another

**4.1.5. The Similarities and Differences of Syntactic Features of English and Vietnamese Idioms Containing *Cognitive verbs***

**4.1.5.1. Similarities**

Both English and Vietnamese idioms containing cognitive can take the structure of the constituents such as: *predicator, complement, adjunct, and object*.

**4.1.5.2. Differences**

*Firstly*, most EICCVs use common grammatical structures of English verbs and verb phrases. Therefore, there is no peculiar difference between the construction of EICCVs - and English verb phrase. While the syntactic structure of VICCVs has distinctive features in comparison with Vietnamese verb phrases.

*Secondly*, in EICCVs, there are a great number of verbs *think, know, show and learn* while the other are just small. They occupy more than 70 % of EICCVs and they are familiar and various meaning. The English verbs can combine with diversity of prepositions such ahead to, before, of, out of, on, in to form EICCVs, but in VICCVs, prepositions rarely appear, or are omitted.

*Thirdly*, in idiom structures, the parallel construction is more numerous in VICCVs than EICCVs. Most of VICCVs has parallel structures which consist of familiar topic, the common relationship or phenomenon in Vietnamese daily activities or life

*Fourthly*, the Theme of EICCVs is usually verbs phrases while the Theme of EICCVs may be both nouns and verbs. For example, we can see that the theme of EICVs is sometimes a noun and also belongs to a subject of a clause or a question

*Fifthly*, EICCVs may use pronoun "It" for object with empty meaning

*Finally*, EICCVs use indefinite pronoun such as *something, someone, everything, everyone* to generalize the syntactic as well as semantic meaning.

We have so far touched upon the syntactic features of English and Vietnamese ICCVs with a description of all the possible structures that these *cognitive verbs* take as well as the collocation of these verbs with different functional syntactical element in English and Vietnamese idioms like an object (a noun phrase), complement (a noun phrase or an adjective phrase), adjunct (adverbial phrase or prepositional phrase).

**4.2. SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE IDIOMS CONTAINING COGNITIVE VERBS**

The content mechanism of Vietnamese idioms is an agreement between two meaning types in which the literal meaning is the expressive means while the figurative meaning is both the content and the purpose of the expression. This mechanism equips *idioms* in use with both the imaginary quality (created by the literal meaning) and the containment quality (created by the figurative meaning).

The purpose of this part or ICCVs semantic study is to picture the extending meaning of the idiom corpus and as a consequence, some semantically similar and contrastive points in the two languages must be shown up.

#### 4.2.1. Symbolic Characteristics of English and Vietnamese Idioms Containing Cognitive

In term of contents, English and Vietnamese idioms are real life skill books. Via idioms, we see the land and its people with ethical and valuable qualities of their lives like *đi nhớ về thương; biết thân biết phận; biết đâu đến việc triều đình; học chẳng hay, cày chẳng thông; khôn ngoan đến cửa quan mới biết* in Vietnamese and **know** no more about something than a frog **knows** about bedsheets; not **know** which side your bread is buttered on; not know someone from Adam; **show** somebody in their true colors; close your eyes and **think** of England in English, to express the production and life experiences of Vietnamese and English people.

##### 4.2.1.1. Simile

Simile is thought to be a way to express an idea clearly, concretely and lively. In a simile, both sides of a comparison are clearly stated. Simile in English and Vietnamese is a comparison between two different things that resemble each other in at least one way. In formal prose the simile is a device both of art and explanation, comparing an unfamiliar thing to some familiar things known to the reader.

##### 4.2.1.2. Metaphor

Unlike simile, metaphor is the process of seeing something as something rather than comparing something. According to Nandy, M., "In a metaphor only one side is stated, but not the other". He also adds: "a metaphor is an indirect or implied comparison". Ellis, R. and G. Barkhuizen (2005), states "a metaphor consists of a comparison between two dissimilar notions where one notion is to be understood in terms of the other notion".

##### 4.2.1.3. Symmetry

In some Vietnamese idioms which consist two parts *chín nhớ, mười thương; chưa học bò/đã lo học chạy; có lẽ quên lựu/có trăng quên đèn; đi học thầy đánh/đi gánh đau vai; đi nhớ/về thương; học một/biết mười; học trước/quên sau, etc*, the relation of opinion opposite between two parts of contrary idioms are set up due to the corresponding in terms of grammatical and semantic field.

##### 4.2.1.4. Metonymy

Metonymy is based on a type of relation between the dictionary and contextual meanings, a relation based on not on affinity, but on some kind of association connecting the two concepts which these meaning represent [41, p.140].

##### 4.2.1.4. Hyperbole

"Hyperbole is deliberate overstatement or exaggeration, the aim of which is to intensify one of the features of the object in question to such a degree as will show its utter absurdity"[41, p. 173]. This stylistic device is used in meaning transfer of idioms such as *một chữ bẻ làm đôi cũng không biết; nhớ như chôn vào ruột, etc* in Vietnamese. At the first sight, we see that each word composing the idiom *một chữ bẻ làm đôi cũng không biết* (not know even half of word) does not separately mean anything related to understanding of other people's thoughts.

#### 4.2.2. Semantic Fields of English and Vietnamese Idioms Containing Cognitive Verbs.

After a detailed analysis, the ICCVs selected can be organized into ten main categories: *human relationships, behaviors and attitudes, human states and feelings, efficiency - competence, business - work - employment -jobs* and so on ...

##### 4.2.2.1. Human relationships

The first interesting finding is that despite the typically concrete and precise feature of ICCVs, the ICCVs turn out to acquire

much of this social and abstract semantic area for denoting various subtle aspects of relationships between man and man. The idiom may be put into opposite sub-groups.

#### 4.2.2.2. *Behaviors and Attitudes*

An amazing finding is that there is a rather numerous group of EICCVs in this semantic area which is, however, not arbitrary at all. Most of these idioms are related to cultural knowledge in interpreting their meanings and there must be some co-relation between the cognitive verbs and the quality of behavior or attitude: *dying to know* (very eager to know something), *not know what hit you* (to feel very shocked and confused), *wonder at someone or something* (to be amazed at or in awe of someone/something), *forget about someone or something* (to put someone or something out of mind) and in Vietnamese such as: *coi trời bằng vung; đi câu nào, biết câu ấy; suy bụng ta ra bụng người.*

#### 4.2.2.3. *Human states and feelings*

The number of the idioms classified in this lexical group is numerous. Below are some of them: *chín nhớ mười thương; biết thân biết phận; không biết nếp tẻ ra sao; thâm yêu trộm nhớ; dám nghĩ dám làm; nói trước quên sau* in Vietnamese and *dying to know; know at a glance that; not know whether to laugh or cry; I don't understand (it); show one's teeth; come to think of it; think outside the box* in English.

#### 4.2.2.4. *Efficiency - Competence*

The idioms classified in this group denote perfect result. Here the association between the cognitive verbs, precision and idiomatic meanings rather direct and analytical as it is in the English people's way of thinking, for instance: *Know something in one's done (tosense something) know something backwards (know sth very well); learn*

*by come thing (learn from actual experience or in Vietnamese: học một biết mười; đào sâu suy nghĩ; thuộc như lòng bàn tay.*

#### 4.2.2.5. *Human Character idioms*

The sense of intelligence, understanding, honesty and dishonesty may be a reasonable explanation for the bigger number of the idioms in English than in Vietnamese, as *know best* (to have opinions that should be accepted and respected) (if you buy goods that have fallen off the back of a lorry, they are stolen goods), *learn one's lesson* (to learn something useful about life from an unpleasant experience) and in Vietnamese such as: *ăn vụng không biết chùi mép, dạy bà lang bóc thuốc ...*

#### 4.2.2.6. *Success - failure*

English people are well - known for their logical way of thinking. When they meet with problems or difficulties in their work as well as in their daily life, they just have two opposite opinions of win or lose. Therefore, it is not surprising the amount of these idioms are bigger than any other kinds (about 13). Here are some: *can't hear oneself think* (hardly have time to think), *forget one's manners not know beans about something*; in Vietnamese such as *học tài, thi phận; học như gà đá vách; dạy ông cống vào tường; còn không biết hết chẳng hay.*

### 4.2.3. National Characteristics of English and Vietnamese Idioms Containing Cognitive Verbs.

It is true that the national characteristic is a common particularity of a given language. Hence, this feature is more clearly expressed in idioms in general and ICCVs in specific.

The national characteristic in ICCVs is first seen in contents themselves. As discussed previously, ICCVs reflect various color in actions of events and phenomena, nominal or non - nominal. Each

nation has its own ways of recording events and phenomena that are particular and typical of that nation.

#### ***4.2.3.1. Cultural Symbols***

The cultural symbols reflects through customs. As we know, custom is the long - established way of thinking and behaving, general beliefs of a particular group of people in the very situation of particular culture. A nation, no matter it is modern or backward, cannot shake off its traditional culture. It cannot also resist the influence of all the social customs that have been established, in a nation with specific and cultural backgrounds.

#### ***4.2.3.2. Religious Symbols***

Religion plays an important role in every country. It is so especially before the modern civilization. The people in different countries believe in Buddhism. So in Chinese, we have. On the contrary, most western people believe in God, they are Christian, which even exerts influence on people's everyday life in some nations. They still have many idioms related with God such as *go to the Hell*, ect...

#### ***4.2.3.4 English and Vietnamese ICVsM using Human body parts in their component***

*E & VICCVs about Body Parts* focus on people, their behavior, perceptions of their environment, their physical and emal states, and their interaction with others.

Makkai[55]'s points out that the meaning of an idiom cannot be predicted from its component part is not quite valid and cannot be applied to idioms of body parts. If we take the idiom for example *show one's hand*, it can be seen that the basic meaning of the word head (the upper part of a human body) is considered during the processing of the idiomatic meaning of this expression.

### **4.2.4. Similarities and Differences in Semantic Features of English and Vaietnamese Idioms Containing Cognitive Verbs.**

#### ***4.2.4.1. Similarities***

##### *a. Similarities in Function*

Many Vietnamese and English people favor the treasure of idioms in general and ICCs in particular. This is because ICCVs, which possess a function of performing, narrating and placing extra feelings, can make language connotative and allusive.

##### *b. Similarities in Vehicle*

Both Vietnamese and English ICCVs use some certain characters, things or events to reveal or illustrate an idea or phenomenon. Employing things, events, names of places, the animals, etc as metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, simile, and symmetry.

##### *c. Similarities in Meaning*

ICCVs fix in language, which forms gradually in history. It is a unity, which cannot be separated semantically, and it can't be understood according to its literal meanings. To take another example, "diving the fish and falling the swallow" does not describe the fish falling down or swallow diving, but the phrase is used to describe the amazing beauty of women. So does the English allusion. It can't be understood literally; the user has to realize the particularity and habituation on the whole.

#### ***4.2.4.2. Differences***

##### *a. Different Origins*

Vietnamese and English people have different customs, historical and cultural backgrounds. This may lead to a different source of Vietnamese and English ICCVs. As everyone knows, the English civilization originated mainly from civilization of ancient

Greece and Rome in the Mediterranean, and mythology classical fairy tales and ancient heroes enter the usage of English directly, and become the widely known idioms in general and ICCVs in particular.

*b. Different Meanings*

Different countries have different origins of civilization, cultural tradition, religious belief and different geographical environments. Therefore, the ICCVs of each country bear the weight of different cultural intension, expressing different cultural information.

**4.3. SUMMARY**

We have been so far touched upon the syntactic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing *Cognitive verbs*. In English, basing on the theoretical background of Dixon and Halliday, we've carefully studied the syntactic features of *Cognitive verbs* and their Vietnamese equivalents because of their frequency in English and Vietnamese idioms. From the result gained, we come to some conclusion as follows:

Firstly, the syntactic features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing Cognitive verbs are described with all the possible structures. Their collocations with different functional syntactical elements like object (noun phrase), complement (adjective or noun phrase), adjunct (adverbial phrase or prepositional phrase) have been already shown up.

Secondly, what we also focus next is the discussion of semantic features of these idioms mapped in three properties: (i) symbolic characteristic of EICCVs-and VICCVs, (ii) semantic fields of EICCVs and VICCVs, (iii) national characteristic of EICCVs and VICCVs. There are also some similarites between them presented in creative way.

Thirdly, the constrastive and comparative analyse are carried out in terms of syntactic and semantic features between EICCVs and VICCVs. But because of the limitation of time, I have just given some, not all.

Last but not least, the way Vietnamese people use idioms and the way English people use idioms have been compared, in order to help us to understand the cultures of the two countries. This will be a good condition for us to obtain more success in communicative competence as well as in better international relationship.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1. CONCLUSION**

The first thing that we need to do in Chapter One was to present the rationale of the study and state what the study is aimed at. Also, the research questions, scope of the study and methods of the study are included.

Chapter Two of the paper has provided a review of related previous studies, fundamental and essential theoretical preliminaries concerning the subject under consideration which serve as the basic foundation of data analysis and findings discussion in the following Chapters.

While Chapter Three is designed to describe the methods and procedures of the paper, Chapter Four presents the findings and discussion of the research where the semantic, syntactic characteristics of EICCVs and VICCVs are in focus.

#### **5.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Idioms have drawn great attention of many linguists. And there have been a lot of course books published to help the learners with idioms. However, they still have to confront many difficulties in the process of studying. They do not know when and in what situation idioms should be used. Furthermore, idioms, as defined earlier, are semantically opaque, the learners will be confused at clarifying their meanings. The learners sometimes have to guess the meaning of idioms based on their intuition, their knowledge about the individual words, and most of them are not successful.

#### **5.3 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.**

There is no denying that this paper cannot cover all constructions as well as all meanings possessed by EICCVs and VIC.

CVs under discussion, which may be resulted from due to the limitation of time as well as reference materials, this research cannot cover all idioms containing cognitive verbs. Moreover, idioms containing cognitive verbs are a rather large topic and are just considered in terms of syntactic and semantic features while it does not attempt to explore them culturally and pragmatically; therefore, it can be the fact that there are some unavoidable weakness in the study. In the process of doing this research, we can see that many cognitive verbs appear in both English and Vietnamese idioms; therefore, hopefully there are some other aspects that need to be further investigated.

- An Investigation into Pragmatic and Cultural Aspects of English and Vietnamese Idioms Containing Cognitive Verbs.

- English and Vietnamese Proverbs Containing Cognitive Verbs.