

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
UNIVERSITY OF DA NANG**

**LÊ THỊ LỆ TRINH**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO METAPHORICAL  
FEATURES EXPRESSING HUMAN APPEARANCE  
IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

**Field: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**Code: 60.22.15**

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

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**DA NANG, 2013**

This thesis has been completed at College of Foreign Languages,  
University of Danang.

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This thesis will be orally defended at the Examination Council at  
University of Danang.

Time: 03/03/2013

Venue: University of Danang.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. RATIONALE

If ‘sound’ and ‘melody’ are the features of music, if ‘colour’ and ‘line’ are the ones of painting, ‘words’ are the material of writing. “How to choose exact words for an image?” is a big problem for most students learning English as a foreign language. What words should they choose to describe someone with the sense they feel. The best suggestion for this problem is metaphor. For this reason, I would like to study the topic “**An Investigation into Metaphorical Features Expressing Human Appearance in English and Vietnamese**”.

As we can see, appearance is the most important of the factors that create our images in other’s eyes. It is the reason why writers often describe someone’s appearance to make the first impression on the readers. As in a short story, the writer says: “*The red color of her skin, narrow high forehead, prominent cheek bones and **the hawk-bridged nose** which flattened at the end above thick negro lips, all showed the mixture of two races.*”. [84, p.344] Obviously, the most useful, precise tool used to describe something as well as human appearance is language. In the ways of expressing human appearance, metaphor is the most forceful and active one because metaphor asserts two things that are the same.

As looking back the literature of metaphor, it is not very difficult to recognize that metaphoric features of description are not only used to denote any appearances but also to express our feelings, our love, our imagination and our knowledge of the similarity of described objects and the nature. It also brings out our appreciation toward the world around us. Let us examine how feelings are

described and expressed in a poem, we will employ a literary device to write about their own feelings. It is metaphor. Let us have some examples from Kieu Story (By Nguyen Du) [112, p.1]

*“Khuôn trăng đầy đặn, nét ngài nở nang. Hoa cười, ngọc thốt đoan trang”*

In the example , readers can implicatively see the writer’s good feelings for the characteristics with the features of the beautiful images when he wants to describe Thuy Van’s beauty such as *khuôn trăng* (the similarity of the shape of a girl’s face with the moon), *nét ngài* (the similarity of the shape of a girl’s brows with soft, thin silkworms), *hoa* (a girl’s attractive smile is compared with flowers), *ngọc* (a girl’s voice is as sweet as the sound of precious stones when they hit each other).

Also. We can see that kind of implication in English writing. The word “*cock*” is used to describe the physical characteristics of appearance:

*The trouble was, I couldn’t concentrate too hot. Sometimes it’s hard to concentrate.*

*“One thing I like a lot you mean?” I asked her.*

*She didn’t answer me, though. She was in a **cockeyed** position way the hell over the other side of the bed. She was about a thousand miles away. “C’mom answer me”, I said. “One thing I like a lot, or one thing I just like?”*

*“You like a lot”*

*“All right” I said. But the trouble was, I couldn’t concentrate.*

The word “*cock*” in the example above describing the word denoting human body part “*eyes*” generally means that someone looks at you in a strange or funny way. To get an idea, it would typically be if the person’s head is kind of tilted or if one eye looks bigger than the other given the way they are facing you. You may also describe these people as being cockeyed. Obviously, with the writer’s fine choice of words, we can see not only a description but also a feeling or an expression.

In fact, during communication, speakers or writers want to express clearly what they mean and listeners or readers try to get exactly what the others mean. It is, however, not easy to capture thoroughly and exactly what is said or written because one word itself may bring with it a lot of variants besides its root when it is used in different contexts.

Undoubtedly, it is necessary for learners of English to study more about metaphoric features expressing human appearance to make their expressions of describing people clearer and more precise. So that they may naturally communicate with each other in English. I hope that the result of this careful study may help both teachers with their work and students with mastering English.

## **1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1. Aims of the study**

This study aims to investigate the metaphoric features expressing human appearance in English and Vietnamese in stories, novels, articles, literature writing, etc. The study of metaphors of human appearance will be based on the visual image metaphor and the similarity of appearance features. Finally, it also finds out a

variety of ways of describing human appearance in the two languages.

### **1.2.2. Objectives**

In order to reach the aims, there are three objectives to guide the study:

- Presenting, describing and analyzing metaphoric features expressing human appearance in English.
- Presenting metaphoric features relating to human appearance to find out the similarities and differences in the use of metaphors expressing human appearance in English and Vietnamese.
- Suggesting some ideas for teaching, learning and translating metaphoric features expressing human appearance in the two languages.

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

In order to get the in-depth analysis, this study only focuses on characteristic and semantic features of metaphorical expressions denoting human appearance in English and Vietnamese.

### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study will seek the answers for the following questions:

1. What are the metaphoric features expressing human appearance in English and Vietnamese?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the metaphoric features expressing human appearance in English and Vietnamese?
3. What are some suggestions for teaching and learning English as well as translating English metaphoric description into Vietnamese?

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

By studying metaphoric features expressing human appearance, I would like to make an effort to contribute to the present knowledge in the field of metaphor. The result of the study will help learners define the beauty of language and use it sensibly. The deep investigation will help learners improve their skills and be good at translating Vietnamese to English and vice versa.

### **1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH**

This research includes five chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction,

Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical background,

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures,

Chapter 4 :Findings and Discussion,

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications.

## **CHAPTER 2**

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

#### **2.1. REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS STUDIES**

There have been well-known scholars dealing with studies on metaphor such as Aristotle (2000), Halliday (1985), Merriam Websters (1992), Hatch & Brown (1995), Galperin (1998). Lakoff and Johnson's work "*Metaphor We Live By*" in 1980.

Vietnamese linguists pay much attention to metaphor such as Trần Trọng Kim, Bùi Kỳ and Phạm Duy Khiêm, Nguyễn Văn Tu, Đỗ Hữu Châu , Nguyễn Thiện Giáp. There have been many authors who have been interested in metaphor such as Đỗ Hữu Châu (1996), Cù Đình Tú (2001), Đinh Trọng Lạc(2005) Phan Văn Hòa (2007).

At the College of Foreign Languages, the University of Da Nang, there have been quite a number of MA theses dealing with metaphor from various aspects such as Mai Nguyễn Diệu Khoa (2003), Trương Thanh Ngọc (2005), Trần Thị Thu Hà (2008), Phạm Thị Minh Trang (2010), Huỳnh Thị Anh Chi (2010) .

Various as they are, metaphor is mainly paid attention in literature, or daily communication. However, there are no researches in metaphoric features expressing human appearance. To some extent, I hope that this investigation will be helpful for those who wants to describe human appearance in English and Vietnamese.

## **2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.2.1. Definitions of Metaphor**

Metaphor is one of the most popular rhetoric devices in the majority of languages, so it has been studied for ages. There are so many definitions of metaphor, from the traditional view, beginning in Aristotle's time, to the modern one dealing with cognitive linguistics. Some definitions of metaphor are defined as association, comparison or resemblance. [61], [56], [62], [15, p.109], [19, p.98]. Besides, some other theorists defines metaphor as transference of some qualities from one object or idea to another. [26], [7, p.54], [64], [11, p.320]. Also, some definitions of metaphor suggest the analogy. [63], [19, p.98], [35, p.136], [14, p.56], [50, p.93], [52], [44], [45].

### **2.2.2. Characteristics Of Metaphor**

#### ***2.2.2.1. The Similarity of Shape***

#### ***2.2.2.2. The Similarity of Position***

#### ***2.2.2.3. The Similarity of Function***

#### ***2.2.2.4. The Similarity of Movement***



### ***2.2.2.5. The Similarity of Size or Appearance***

### ***2.2.2.6. The Similarity of Behavior or Character***

### ***2.2.2.7. The Similarity of colour***

## **2.2.3. Context**

Some linguists describes contexts which influence or contribute to understanding meaning such as Crystal [4, p.82], Frawley (1992), Nunan (1993).

## **2.2.4. Types of Metaphors**

David Crystal [4, p.249], metaphors consist of conventional, poetic, conceptual, or mixed metaphor. Peter Newmark divides metaphors into five kinds: dead, cliché, stock, recent or original. [22] Lakoff and Johnson [18, p.42], metaphor may be divided into three subgroups: conventional metaphors, mixed metaphors and new metaphors. Đinh Trọng Lạc [48, p.57-59], metaphor is divided into complementary metaphor and symbolic metaphor. Cù Đình Tú [54], metaphor is divided into lexical metaphor and rhetorical metaphor. Based on the degree of unexpectedness, metaphors may be divided into two main groups: common types and uncommon types.

## **2.2.5. Metaphor Versus Other Ways of Meaning Transference**

### ***2.2.5.1. Metaphor versus Simile***

Metaphor and simile are two of the most popular rhetorical devices. Both metaphor and simile are forms of comparison. The former is direct and the latter is indirect. The difference between metaphor and simile may be found in Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary [26], the Colombia Encyclopedia, 6<sup>th</sup> edition [31], Cù Đình Tú (2001) [54, p.180-181].

### ***2.2.5.2. Metaphor versus Metonymy***

Both metaphor and metonymy are figures of speech used in rhetoric. Both of them involve the substitution of one term for another. Metaphor is the tranference of names based on the association of similarity and metonymy is the tranference of names based on the association of contiguity. Lakoff G. and Johnson (1980) [18], Oxford Dictionary (2000) [26].

### **2.2.6. Human Appearance and Metaphors of Human Appearance**

Human physical appearance which is defined as the main outward look of human in Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia [65].

According to Cao Xuân Hạo (2001), there are some metaphorical expressions of describing human beings in Vietnamese. [42] In English we can also find metaphorical descriptive expressions as noun phrases which base on the possessive combination [66].

### **2.2.7. Summary**

After studying the theories of metaphor and prior studies in this chapter, we have reviewed the concepts and definitions of metaphor in traditional and cognitive views. Also, the difference of metaphor from simile and from metonymy have been made. In addition, definitions and concepts of human appearance as well as metaphors of human appearance have been presented.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN**

To reach the aims, this study will be carried out through qualitative and quantitative approaches.

#### **3.2. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

##### **3.2.1. Data Collection**

Over four hundred samples of English and Vietnamese human appearance metaphors are mainly collected from different data such as literary works, newspapers, magazines, and novels, daily communication, research paper in English and Vietnamese, bilingual stories and on the Internet. In order to investigate the metaphoric features expressing human appearance, the relevant samples are collected during the time the researcher is treating the sources. Then, they are selected and classified in a proper way. Finally, they are compared with a contrastive analysis to produce reliable and persuasive findings.

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

From more than three hundred examples, we try to choose the most interesting and clear ones which relates to metaphors expressing human appearance. All the samples are copied in a notebook so that we could find them easily when we are in need. Then, the samples are grouped into categories of parts of human body so that we could find out the frequency of metaphors of human appearance as well as we could draw the similarities and differences in English and Vietnamese for discussion.

### **3.3. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

Due to the lack of time, reference materials and limited researcher's knowledge, mistakes and shortcomings in the thesis are unavoidable.

The information cited in this study as well as the data utilized for the analysis is derived from published English and Vietnamese books, newspapers, magazines. Some of the data taken from linguistic books (both in published and electronic) are used to serve the theoretical background. In the case of collecting data from the internet, we always enclose a note of the date of surfing those websites. Thus, the data and the theoretical background are reliable. Observation and investigation techniques have been chosen to be the main instruments for data collection. The supporting instruments such as calculation, tables are also used. Moreover, the irrelevant and unstable data are eliminated. The study must strictly follow the research design. The data collection of the human appearance metaphors 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. METAPHORIC FEATURES OF WORDS OR PHRASES EXPRESSING EYES IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

#### 4.1.1. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Eyes in English

##### **4.1.1.1. Dove's Eyes**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The Similarity of Color*
- c) *Good-looking Eyes*
- d) *Denoting Gentleness and Innocence*

##### **4.1.1.2. Pool, Lake and Water**

- a) *The Similarity of Character*
- b) *Good-looking Eyes*
- c) *Denoting Pure-minded People*

##### **4.1.1.3. Sea, Sky**

- a) *The Similarity of Color*
- b) *Good-looking Eyes*

##### **4.1.1.4. Star, Sun, Moon**

- a) *The Similarity of Character*
- b) *Good-looking Eyes*
- c) *Denoting Ambition*

##### **4.1.1.5. Other Eye Metaphors**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The Similarity of Character*
- c) *The Similarity of Color*

## **4.1.2. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Eyes in Vietnamese**

### **4.1.2.1. “Bồ Câu” Eyes (Dove’s eyes)**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The Similarity of Color*
- c) *The Similarity of Character*
- d) *Good-looking Eyes*
- e) *Denoting Innocence and Gentleness*

### **4.1.2.2. “Lá Răm (Dăm)” Eyes (fragrant-khotweed-leaf eyes)**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *Good-looking Eyes*
- c) *Denoting Indecent Women*
- d) *Denoting Lively and Unruffled Girls*

### **4.1.2.3. “Phượng” Eyes (Phoenix’ eyes) (Beautiful eyes)**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *Good-looking Eyes*
- c) *Denoting Noblemen*

### **4.1.2.4. “Lươn” Eyes (eel’s eyes)**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The Similarity of Size*
- c) *Ugly Eyes*
- d) *Denoting Dishonesty*

### **4.1.2.5. “Ốc nhồi” Eyes (bulging eyes) (fulfilled-snail-eyes)**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *Ugly Eyes*
- c) *Denoting Aggressive People*

### **4.1.2.6. “Ếch” Eyes (frog’s eyes)**

a) *The Similarity of Shape*

b) *The Similarity of Character*

c) *Ugly Eyes*

d) *Denoting Dull-headed People*

**4.1.2.7. “Hạt nhãn” Eyes (longan-seed-shaped eyes)**

a) *The Similarity of Shape*

b) *The Similarity of Color*

c) *Attractive Eyes*

d) *Denoting Kindness and Innocence*

**4.1.3. Summary**

Most of the Vietnamese and English eye-metaphors are used basing on the similarity of shape, color and character. The metaphoric expression *mắt bồ câu*, *dove's eyes* shares the same features in both English and Vietnamese. Due to cultural differences, Vietnamese eyes metaphors are mainly made relying on the Vietnamese nature. For example, *mắt lươn* is used to talk about very small eyes, or *hạt nhãn* is used to describe the beautifully black color of someone's eyes. Meanwhile, English nature makes differences in the eye metaphors in English. For example, the color of sea or sky is used to describe their eye color. Moreover, Vietnamese eye metaphors are mainly based on the similarity of shape or color whereas English eye metaphors are popularly based on the similarity of character. For example, in Vietnamese, the fet black color of *dove's eyes* or *hạt nhãn* (longan-seed) is used to metaphysicize people's glistening black eyes. Meanwhile, most of animated eye metaphors in English share the similarity of character such as *sheep's eyes*, *magpie's eye*, *seagull's eyes* or *hawk's eyes*. In short, due to differences natural environment and cultures in English and

Vietnamese, we can find some eye metaphors in English such as pool, lake, sky, sea, etc which can not be found in English. Conversely, *mắt phượng* (phoenix' eyes), *mắtếch* (frog's eyes), *mắt ốc nhồi* (fulfilled-snail eyes), *mắt lươn* (eal's eyes), *mắt lá răm* (fragrant-khotweed-leaf-shaped eyes), *mắt hạt nhãn* (longan-seed-like eyes) are popular metaphors in Vietnamese but not in English.

## **4.2. METAPHORIC FEATURES OF WORDS OR PHRASES EXPRESSING HAIR IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

### **4.2.1. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Hair in English**

#### **4.2.1.1. Waterfall**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The similarity of character*
- c) *Good-looking Hair*

#### **4.2.1.2. Pigtail and Pony-tail**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The Similarity of Size*
- c) *Good-looking Hair*

#### **4.2.1.3. Raven-haired**

- a) *The Similarity of Color*
- b) *Good-looking Hair*

#### **4.2.1.4. Gold and Silver**

- a) *The Similarity of Color*
- b) *Good-looking Hair*

#### **4.2.1.5. Other Hair Metaphors**

- a) *The Similarity of Shape*
- b) *The Similarity of Color*



c) *Good-looking Hair*

#### **4.2.2. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Hair in Vietnamese**

##### **4.2.2.1. “Đuôi gà” Hair (chicken-tail-shaped hair)**

a) *The Similarity of Shape*

b) *Good-looking Hair*

##### **4.2.2.2. “Mây” Hair (Cloud-like-haired)**

a) *The Similarity of Character*

b) *The Similarity of Size*

c) *Good-looking Hair*

d) *Denoting Gentleness and Affectionateness*

##### **4.2.2.3. “Rễ tre” Hair (bamboo-root-shaped hair)**

a) *The Similarity of Shape*

b) *Denoting Unpretty Hair*

##### **4.2.2.4. Other Hair Metaphors**

a) *The Similarity of Color*

b) *The Similarity of Character*

c) *Denoting Experienced People*

#### **4.2.3. Summary**

It is obviously seen that natural and cultural features make the differences in the metaphoric expressions denoting hair in English and Vietnamese. In Vietnamese nature, it is easy to find the image of bamboo trees, lovely chickens or strands of soft silk. Therefore, it is not very difficult for Vietnamese people to catch the meanings and the images of the metaphors such as *tóc rễ tre*, *tóc đuôi gà*, or *tóc tơ*. The hair metaphors are more plentiful in English. It can be found a lot of hair metaphors based on the similarity of shape such as *question marks*, *curtain*, *rolls*, etc. and many based on

the similarity of color such as the color of *iron, gold, silver*, even *vintage* or *shoeblack*. In order to metaphysicize short bunch of hair, *đuôi gà* should be used in Vietnamese and *pigtail* in English. In order to describe smooth and soft hair, the metaphor *cloud* or *waterfall* is used in English whereas *mây* or *tơ* in Vietnamese. We also see that most of English and Vietnamese hair examples found hardly shows character features.

### **4.3. METAPHORIC FEATURES OF WORDS OR PHRASES EXPRESSING FACE IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

#### **4.3.1. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Face in English**

##### ***4.3.1.1. Heart-shaped face***

- a) The Similarity of Shape*
- b) Good-looking Face*

##### ***4.3.1.2. Hatchet Face***

- a) The Similarity of Shape*
- b) Ugly Face*

A Dictionary of The English Language by Jamuel Johnson, [80, p.109] .

##### ***4.3.1.3. Pear-shaped Face***

- a) The Similarity of Shape*

The metaphor *pear-shaped face* is based on the similarity of the shape of a pear compared to the shape of someone's face. [240]

- b) Pretty Face*

##### ***4.3.1.4. Other Face Metaphors***

- a) The Similarity of Shape*

Some face metaphors based on the similarity of shape such as nut-cracker or marionette.

*b) Unpretty Faces*

The metaphors marionette or nutcracker is used to visualize someone's ugly face.

**4.3.2. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Face in Vietnamese**

**4.3.2.1. 'Trái xoan' face (oval face or chinaberry-shape face)**

*a) The Similarity of Shape*

*b) Beautiful Face*

*c) Denoting Kindness and Gentleness*

**4.3.2.2. "Chữ điền" Face (a square face)**

*a) The Similarity of Shape*

*b) Good-looking Face*

**4.3.2.3. 'Hoa' Face (flower face)**

*a) The Similarity of Character*

*b) Pretty Face*

**4.3.2.4. 'Ngựa' Face (horse-like face)**

*a) The Similarity of Shape*

*b) Ugly Face*

**4.3.2.5. Other Face Metaphors**

*a) The Similarity of Shape*

The metaphorical images 'trái bầu' (gourd), *mặt chuột*(mouse-like face) are used to describe faces basing on the shape resemblance.

*b) Ugly Face*

Unattractive faces are the metaphorical images such as *mặt chuột, mặt trái bầu, mặt cú*.

### 4.3.3. Summary

In the summary tables, cultural and natural features are thought to make the differences in the expressions denoting face in English and Vietnamese. *Trái xoan* (chinaberry), *chữ điền* (square-shaped letter), *trái bầu* (gourd-shaped), *ngựa* (horse) are popular things in Vietnamese people's normal lives. Hence, these expressions are easily used to metaphysicize kinds of faces in Vietnamese. Similarly, the popular things in English culture such as *heart, hatchet, pear, nut-cracker*, etc. are normally used to metaphysicize faces in English. For example, the images of *heart* or *pear* are used to describe goodlooking faces while *hatchet* or *nutcracker* are unpretty images of faces.

## 4.4. METAPHORIC FEATURES OF WORDS OR PHRASES EXPRESSING OTHERS PARTS OF BODY IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

### 4.4.1. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Other Parts of Body in English

#### a) *The Similarity of Shape*

In the English findings, someone's nose is described in the rather curved shape of a bird's beak. The metaphor *umbrella* is well used to draw a very thin woman. Cows and Elephants are used to describe fat people. Punctuation marks serve as interesting metaphors.

#### c) *Good-looking Appearance*

#### d) *Unattractive Appearance*

The metaphor *pistons* is used to metaphysicize the young girl's unpretty legs.

#### **4.4.2. Metaphoric Features of Words or Phrases Expressing Other Parts of Body in Vietnamese**

##### *a) The Similarity of Shape*

Someone's nose is metaphorically described in the hawk-nosed shape or *dọc dĩa*. *Cổ cò* is a metaphor used to describe someone's long, thin neck which looks like a stork's neck in shape. The metaphor *búp măng* is based on the resemblance of the shape of bamboo sprouts and someone's fingers.

##### *b) Good-looking Appearance*

Someone's *dọc dĩa* nose is long, straight and summetric and it matches its owner's face beautifully. In Vietnamese, *búp măng* fingers are about someone's beautiful fingers. The other metaphors are used to describe someone goodlooking such as *mày ngài* (silkmoth-shaped eyebrows), *chân mày vòng nguyệt* (semicircle-shaped eyebrows), *mày lá liễu* (willow leave-shaped eyebrows).

##### *c) Unpretty Appearance*

The images *bấp cày*(plough-beam), *bàn cuốc* (hoeblade-shaped) are used to draw someone's big, boorish hands and large, rough feet.

#### **4.4.3. Summary**

It is easy to find a lot of metaphors denoting someone's body shape in English such as *cow* or *elephant* for fat person, *umbrella* or *broomstick* for thin person, but there are hardly any examples of this kind of metaphor in Vietnamese. Besides, the differences in culture and nature make the differences in metaphoric expressions denoting parts of human body in English and Vietnamese. For example, *button*

or *beak* are used to describe nose in English, whereas *dọc dừa, điều hâu* are used in Vietnamese. Also, *búp măng* which is a popular image in Vietnamese culture is used to metaphysicize chubby hands. The images of *sticks, chicken bones, pistons* or *the colour of apples* are easily found in English.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1. CONCLUSIONS**

With the aim of investigating the metaphorical features of expressions denoting human appearance in English and Vietnamese, we have already explored various metaphorical expressions and have done such a careful investigation into characteristics and semantic features of these expressions so that we can find out the similarities and differences between two languages and two cultures. We have also organized and designed our thesis as follows.

We presented the rationale and the aim of the study clearly in chapter One. Besides, the objectives, the scope, the organization of the study, the research questions are mentioned in this chapter. Then, a short review of related previous studies and necessary theories of the topic are examined in chapter Two in which fundamental and really essential theories relating to the investigation are explored. This chapter concludes extremely important theories such as definitions of metaphors in both traditional and recent views, characteristics of metaphor, classification of metaphors, definitions of context and human appearance as well as popular expressions describing human appearance in English and Vietnamese. After that, the methods and procedures of the research are presented in chapter

Three. Moreover, the ways of data collecting and data analysis are mentioned in this chapter. In chapter Four a careful investigation and analysis into the metaphorical features of expressions denoting human appearance in English and Vietnamese have been done.

Firstly, basing on the examples found and the characteristics of metaphor, English and Vietnamese metaphorical expressions denoting human appearance are mainly relied on the similarities of shape, color and character. Because of the differences in cultures and natural environments, English metaphorical features expressing human appearance is different from the ones in Vietnamese. Secondly, we found out some semantical similarities and differences in English and Vietnamese. Due to the cultural differences and natural conditions, each language contains its own expressions to metaphorically describe human appearance with its own notions of beauty. Finally, we review the study and recommend some implications to help learners or writers of English to be able to choose some useful expressions describing human appearance and provide some suggestions for translational equivalents in metaphors expressing human appearance in English and Vietnamese in chapter Five.

We hope that this research may provide a variety of human appearance metaphors as well as their useful semantical and characteristic features to the readers.

## **5.2. IMPLICATIONS ON TEACHING, LEARNING AND TRANSLATION**

### **5.2.1. Implications on the Language Teaching and Learning**

Within the scope of the study, we have dealt with some popular metaphoric expressions used for the description of human

appearance and their characteristics as well as their semantic fields. The finding of the study may be in one way or another beneficial to the language learners since it provides a variety of means of describing people. For the language teaching, this study may help the teachers have a plenty of words or phrases to guide their language learners better in using interesting words or expressions in practising the language.

From the study we can clearly see that there are different notions of metaphorically expressing human appearance because of the differences in cultures in English and Vietnamese. Thus, the teacher should provide the learners with English notions of beauty as well as the characteristics of English metaphorical expressions of human appearance.

During the course of learning a foreign language, in fact that the learners generally impose the use of their culture on that of the target language is very common. This eventually provokes interlingual errors. To help the learners avoid such problems, it is the teacher's duty to point out all of the similarities and differences between the two cultures concerning the matter under discussion. In short the teacher should guide the learners to transfer their description of human appearance into English effectively.

### **5.2.2. Implications on Translation Work**

An investigation into characteristics and semantic fields of metaphorical expressions denoting human appearance shows that translative complexity is inevitable because of the differences in perception of cultures and natures of the languages. Hence, Vietnamese and English learners and translators should get some certain knowledge of culture and nature of the source as well as the



target language to have a proper and understandable translated version to its readers.

Obviously, the learners of translation should bear in the mind that each language has its own usual metaphors depending on its nature and culture. For that reason, it is important to choose proper words, phrases or structures to transfer the meaning to the target language such as *đuôi gà* for *pigtail*, *square face* for *mặt chữ điền*, etc. so that the translated version becomes easy and precise for its readers to understand.

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

This thesis has made a study of characteristics and semantic fields of metaphors expressing human appearance in English and Vietnamese. However, there are some aspects that have not been dealt with within this framework, calling for further investigation:

- Lexical features of metaphors denoting human appearance.
- Descriptive metaphors denoting animals and plants.