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LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF PROVERBS EXPRESSING WISDOM AND FOOLISHNESS IN ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

Of the various verbal folklore genres (i.e., fairy tales, legends, jokes, and riddles), proverbs are the most concise but not necessarily the simplest form. Proverbs reflect various aspects of human life, which could be expressed vividly in human communication. Proverbs fulfill the human need to sum up experiences and observations into nuggets of wisdom that provide ready-made comments on personal relationships and social affairs.

In fact, human beings, coming from various cultures, use their own proverbs to express experiences, to give moral lessons, etc. These proverbs could share the same semantic features but different in their syntactic structures or they could be even different in semantic and syntactic features. Let us take the following examples of proverbs expressing *wisdom and foolishness* (PsEWF) in English and Vietnamese into consideration.

+ *Similar semantic feature under different structure*

In English, it is often heard the proverb:

(1.1) *"A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself; the simple pass on and are punished."*   [72]

Similarly, in Vietnamese, there are proverbs expressing the same idea:

(1.2) "Khôn sống, mống chết" [57, p.228] and (1.3) "Khôn thì khỏi, dại thì mắc" [57, p.229]

These proverbs imply that a wise man can manage to overcome problems in their life whereas a fool facing the problems easily gets into trouble with his ignorance or unwise judgment or action.

+ *Different semantic feature under different structure*

(1.4) "He who is born a fool is never cured"   [45, p. 91]

This English proverb means a person with innate unintelligence has no way to mend; whereas Vietnamese people have a proverb expressing a different thinking: unintelligence can be cured by patient and long-lasting learning and training.

(1.5) "Dốt đến đâu, học lâu cũng biết"   [57, p.135]

From the two above examples, it could be seen that Vietnamese and English people share many ideologies or thoughts in common expressed through their proverbs. However, these proverbs could be conveyed via different images and structures due to the differences in the linguistic and cultural features. Equally important, many Vietnamese and English proverbs could be underpinned by different ideology or thinking of Vietnamese and English community. It is these differences in the images, structures, and thoughts that could bring about hindrances for learners or communicators of English and Vietnamese as a foreign language.

There have been so far several contrastive studies of English versus Vietnamese proverbs concerning *money, numbers, love, human and animals' characteristics,* etc. Nevertheless, one of the major and besetting aspects of proverbs referring to the notion of *wisdom and foolishness* has not been dealt with yet, especially in the light of functional grammar viewpoint, which gives us a strong motivation to investigate this subject.

This thesis is carried out in order to help improve the teaching and learning as well as using effectively English and Vietnamese as a foreign language. In addition, the findings could help bridge the gap between two cultures.

1.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
1.3.1. Aims

- Investigating the semantic and syntactic features of English versus Vietnamese proverbs expressing *wisdom and foolishness* (PsEWF) based on functional grammar theory.

- Finding out the similarities and differences in the ways of expressing the *wisdom and foolishness* in these proverbs in terms of the semantic and syntactic features.

- Helping learners get a deep insight into some cultural features of English and Vietnamese which could cause similarities and differences in these semantic and syntactic features.

1.3.2. Objective

- Describing syntactic features of English versus Vietnamese PsEWF based on functional grammar theory

- Describing semantic and features of English versus Vietnamese PsEWF.

- Comparing syntactic and semantic features of English versus Vietnamese PsEWF.

- Finding out the typical cultural features regulating the use of PsEWF in English and Vietnamese.

- Putting forward some suggestions for the teaching and learning language in general, and English and Vietnamese proverbs in particular.

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the study, the following research questions could be put forward:

- What are the semantic and syntactic features of English versus Vietnamese PsEWF?

- What are the similarities and differences in the semantic and syntactic features of PsEWF?

- What are the cultural underlying reasons for these similarities and differences in English versus Vietnamese PsEWF?

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organized into five chapters.

Chapter 1- *Introduction*

Chapter 2- *Literature Review and Theoretical Background*
Chapter 3- *Method and Procedures*
Chapter 4- *Findings and Discussions*
Chapter 5- *Conclusions and Implications*

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Trench [29] represents a survey of the origin, nature, distribution, meaning, and significance of proverbs in the English - speaking world. There is also Taylor's well-known volume on *The Proverb* [24]mentioning the definition of proverbs, the metaphorical proverbs, the proverbial types, the proverbs' variants, the proverbs in folk narratives and literature, loan translations, and the classical or biblical origin of many proverbs. He also analyzes customs and superstitions reflected in proverbs. Norrick [20] investigates proverbs in text and interaction, finds out the literal and figurative meaning of proverbs. Also, which relations to present between and within entries for different proverbs in the proverb inventory, and solutions to represent them in the best way are mentioned. Bhuvaneswar [2] finds out examples of different syntactic patterns of proverbs in English and frame them in a syntactic model which includes all the basic types of English syntax.

Regarding Vietnamese proverbs studies, there have been a lot of studies by many well-known linguists. Among those are Chu Xuân Diên with "Tục ngữ Việt Nam" who showed his profound understanding and clear distinction between idioms and proverbs in his book [34]. In addition to these, the following pieces of work have caught attention from the public such as "Từ điển thành ngữ và tục ngữ Việt Nam" by Nguyễn Lân [41], "Từ điển thành ngữ và tục ngữ

Việt Nam" by Vũ Dung, Vũ Thúy Anh and Vũ Quang Hào [36], "Thành ngữ tục ngữ ca dao Việt Nam" by Ngô Thanh Loan and Nguyễn Tam Phù Sa [56], etc.

Besides those mentioned above, there have been many master theses on proverbs carried out by many Vietnamese researchers, among whom the following could be noticeable: Le Thi My Nhat (19), Nguyen Thi Le Van (31), Lưu Thi Mai Thanh (25), Nguyen Thi My The (26).

In view of functional grammar, the Theme-Rheme structure has been acknowledged as the structure of clause as a message, and it is also called under the name of the Thematic structure. In "An introduction to Functional grammar", Halliday has studied about the Theme and Rheme of a clause, simple Themes of more than one constituent, the relationship between Theme and Mood, the other characteristic Themes, clauses as Themes and Predicated Themes, then Theme in dependent, minor, and elliptical clauses and the Thematic interpretation of a text. Many other linguists have followed Halliday's theory and further studied them in many other works including the Bloors' [3], Martin's [16], Suzanne Eggins' [30], Graham Lock's [10], and so on. In Vietnam, Cao Xuân Hạo has studied the structure, meanings, and use of Vietnamese clauses in the view of functional grammar [39] and written a book on Vietnamese functional grammar [38]. Another highly valued author is Hoàng Văn Vân with "The Experiential Grammar Of Vietnamese Clause Described In The View Of Systemic Functional Grammar" [48]. He also translates Halliday's book on functional grammar into Vietnamese [47] and gives the contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese noun groups in the light of functional grammar [50].

On applying the functional grammar theory in English and Vietnamese in linguistic study, many works have been carried out relating to Theme-Rheme structure. These are two remarkable theses:

Tran Le Nghi Tran (2005) clarifies the theme-rheme structure of English and Vietnamese proverbs, Nguyen Thi Phuoc Tra [27] investigates The Thematic structures in English and Vietnamese on functional and pragmatic aspects.

In general, the above works present all the aspects related to proverbs. In addition, many mention functional grammar, yet none gives fully detailed analysis of PsEWF adopting the functional grammar viewpoint.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
2.2.1. Proverbs and Other Closely-Related Language Units
2.2.1.1. Definition of Proverbs
2.2.1.2. Proverbs and Idioms
2.2.1.3. Proverbs and Folk Verses
2.2.1.4. Proverbs Expressing Wisdom and Foolishness
2.2.2. Typical Features of Proverbs
2.2.2.1. Form and Structure of Proverbs
2.2.2.2. Content and Functions of Proverbs
2.2.3. Language and Culture
2.2.3.1. Concept of Culture
2.2.3.2. Relationship Between Proverbs and Culture
2.2.4. Functional Grammar
2.2.4.1. The Metafunctions and Three Simultaneous Semantic Processes of The Clause
2.2.4.2. The Information and Thematic Structure
2.2.4.3. The Identification of Theme, Rheme, and Their Boundary
2.2.4.4. Classification of Themes
2.2.5. Semantic Features
2.2.5.1. Semantic Field
2.2.5.2. Kinds of Meanings of English Versus Vietnamese Proverbs

2.3. SUMMARY

CHAPTER 3
METHOD AND PROCEDURES

3.1. RESEARCH METHODS

Descriptive method was supposed to be the main method for the contrastive analysis. The PsEWF withdrawn from dictionaries or books and their meanings could be described to clarify the syntactic and semantic features in English versus Vietnamese. The analytical method was used to identify different groups of PsEWF based on their semantic features expressed through the diverse synthetic structures. Furthermore, the contrastive method was used to find out the similarities and differences of PsEWF in terms of these features in the two languages.

Furthermore, a combination of qualitative and quantitative method was used to identify the relationship of semantic and syntactic features of PsEWF in English versus Vietnamese. In the qualitative approach, the researcher categorized the relevant PsEWF from the data, identified the main principles of meaning transfer, and classified all relevant PsEWF in their structures and their meanings. In the quantitative analysis, information on the frequency of use of these PsEWF were provided.

3.2. SAMPLING

The samples were taken from dictionaries, books of proverbs in English and Vietnamese and from the Internet.

After reading the materials we picked out about 400 proverbs expressing wisdom and foolishness for the corpus.

3.3. DATA COLLECTION

PsEWF in English versus Vietnamese were collected from English and Vietnamese books, dictionaries and from the Internet.

The sources of English books and dictionaries include *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* , *The Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs*, *English Language Toolbox: Proverbs*, *Proverbs: A Handbook* and *101 American English Proverbs.*

Relating to Vietnamese sources are *Tục ngữ Việt Nam* (Chu Xuân Diên, Lương Văn Đang, Phương Tri, 1975), *Từ điển thành ngữ - tục ngữ Việt - Anh tường giải* (Bùi Phụng, 1996), *Từ điển thành ngữ và tục ngữ Việt Nam* (Nguyễn Lân, 1997), *Tục ngữ ca dao dân ca Việt Nam* (Vũ Ngọc Phan, 1998), *Từ điển thành ngữ và tục ngữ Việt Nam* (Vũ Dung, Vũ Thúy Anh, Vũ Quang Hào, 2003), *Từ điển thành ngữ tục ngữ ca dao Việt Nam* (Việt Chương, 2003), *Thành Ngữ Tục Ngữ Ca Dao Việt Nam" (Ngô Thanh Loan and Nguyễn Tam Phù Sa, 2006), Thành ngữ tục ngữ tiếng Anh* (Xuân Bá, Quang Minh, 2008), *Thành Ngữ Tục Ngữ Việt Nam* (Nguyễn Trần Thụ, 2008), *Tục Ngữ Thành Ngữ Việt Nam Tinh Tuyển* (Dương Phong, 2011).

3.4. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The steps involved in the research procedure include:

- Collecting PsEWF in English and Vietnamese from books, dictionaries and the Internet.

- Analyzing these PsEWF to find out their syntactic, lexical and semantic features in English versus Vietnamese.

- Comparing and pointing out the similarities and differences in the ways of expressing *wisdom and foolishness* in these proverbs in terms of the semantic and syntactic features

- Finding out the cultural characteristics which could affect the ways of expressing *wisdom and foolishness* of these languages.

- Suggesting some implications for the better teaching and learning English and Vietnamese.

3.5. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

3.6. SUMMARY

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF PSEWF IN ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE

4.1.1. The Distribution Rate of Five Thematic Patterns in English Based on Theme Range

Table 4.1. The Distribution of Five Thematic Patterns in English PsEWF

Types of Theme patterns	Number of English PsEWF	Distribution rate	Examples
Simple Theme	88	44%	Fools // should not have chopping sticks. [54,p.91] Little things // please little mind. [54, p.93]
Multiple Theme	1	0.5%	Don't teach// your grandmother to suck eggs.[53, p.31]
Clause as Theme	83	41.5%	Wise men / have their mouth in their heart, // fools their heart in their mouth.[54, p. 259] The wise / seek wisdom, // a fool / has found it. [54, p. 261]
Predicated Theme	2	1%	It is a foolish sheep // that makes the wolf his confessor. [54, p. 92] It is a blind goose // that comes to the fox's sermon. [54, p. 92]
Dependent, embedded, minor and elliptical	26	13%	If fools went not to market, // bad wares would not be sold. [54, p. 93] As a dog returns to his own vomit,

clause as Theme			// so a fool repeats his folly. [54, p. 93]
Total	**200**	**100%**	

Table 4.2. Number of Constituents of Simple Theme in 88 Proverbs

Number of constituents	Number of proverbs	Distribution rate	Examples
One constituent	79	89.77%	The wisest man// may fall. [54, p. 262] God // sends fortune to fools. [54, p.91]
Two constituents	9	10.23%	Wit and wisdom // is good warison. [54, p. 260] A knave and a fool // never take thought. [54, p. 93]
Three constituents	0	0%	
Total	**88**	**100%**	

Table 4.3. Types of Theme in 89 Proverbs of First and Second Thematic Patterns

Themes	Number of proverbs	Distribution rate	Example
Nominal group	79	88.7%	Experience // is the mistress of fools. [54, p. 93] Folly and learning // often dwell together. [54, p. 259]
Verbal group	4	4.49%	Make not // a fool of thyself to make others merry. [54, p. 92] Take // head of mad fools in a narrow place. [54, p. 91]

Preposition al group	4	4.49%	For mad words, // deaf ears. [54, p. 259] Under a ragged coat // lies wisdom. [54, p.260]
Adjectival/ adverbial group	2	2.25%	Early to bed and early to rise, // makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. [54, p.260] Seldom // is a long man wise, or a low man lowly. [54,p.93]
Total	**89**	**100%**	

4.1.2. The Distribution Rate of Thematic Patterns in Vietnamese

4.1.2.1. The Distribution Rate of Five Thematic Patterns in Vietnamese Based on Theme Range

Table 4.4. The Distribution of Five Thematic Patterns in Vietnamese PsEWF

Types of Theme patterns	Number of Vietnamese PsEWF	Distribution rate	Examples
Simple Theme	61	30.5%	May // hơn khôn. [55, p. 316] Trăm cái khôn, // dồn một cái dại. [56, p. 34]
Multiple Theme	6	3%	Có dốt // mới có khôn.[79] Đã khôn // mà không ngoan. [59, p. 141]
Clause as Theme	119	59.5%	Dại / làm cột con, // khôn / làm cột cái. [59, p. 129] Khôn / làm lại, // dại / làm nho.[59, p. 227]

Predicated Theme	0	0%	
Dependent, embedded, minor and elliptical clause as Theme	14	7%	Hoa thơm /ai chẳng muốn đeo, // Người khôn / ai chẳng nâng niu bên mình. [55, p. 317] Thế gian / còn dại chưa khôn, // sống mặc áo rách / chết chôn áo lành. [56, p. 36]
Total	**200**	**100%**	

Table 4.5. Number of Constituents of Simple Theme in 61 Proverbs

Number of constituents	Number of proverbs	Distribution rate	Examples
One constituent	56	91.8%	Cái khó // bó cái khôn. [55, p.314] Bạc đầu // còn dại. [55, p. 313]
Two constituents	5	8.2%	Chết đi sống lại, // chẳng dại thì ngây. [57, p. 332] Đâm đi đâm lại, // gái dại cũng làm nên. [55, p. 301]
Three constituents	0	0%	
Total	**61**	**100%**	

Table 4.6. Types of Theme in 67 proverbs of First and Second Thematic Patterns

Themes	Number of proverbs	Distribution rate	Example
Nominal group	30	44.78%	Người khôn // dồn ra mặt. [58, p.141]
Verbal group	12	17.9%	Làm trai // cứ nước hai mà nói. [55, p. 314]
Prepositional group	2	2.99%	Ở xứ mù // tên chột làm vua. [33]
Adjectival/ adverbial group	23	34.33%	Khôn lỏi // sao bằng giỏi đàn. [59, p. 227]
Total	**67**	**100%**	

4.1.2.2. Cao Xuân Hạo's Ranking Patterns of Theme-Rheme Structure

Table 4.7. The Distribution of One, Two, Three and Four Rank Clauses in 200 PsEWF

	Number of clauses	Distribution rate	Examples
One-rank clause	52	26%	May // hơn khôn. [55, 316] Người khôn // dồn ra mặt.[58, p. 141]
Two-rank clause	139	69.5%	Chim khôn / tiếc lông, // người khôn/ tiếc lời. [59, p. 83] Làm trai // cứ nước hai / mà nói. [57, p. 314]

Three-rank clause	9	4.5%	Chồng khôn / [vợ / được đi hài], // vợ khôn / [chồng /được nhiều bài cậy trông]. [55, p. 241] Khôn ngoan / [đến cửa quan / mới biết], // giàu nghèo / [ba mươi tết /mới hay]. [59, p. 228]
Four-rank clause	0	0%	
Total	**200**	**100%**	

Table 4.8. The distribution of Two-rank Thematic Structure Types in 139 Proverbs

Two-rank proverbs	Number of proverbs	Distribution rate	Example
Parallel Thematic structure	118	84.89%	Khôn / ăn cái, // dại /húp nước. [59, p. 126] Quan khôn / thì dân sáng, // quan dại / thì dân ngu. [58, p. 163]
Non-parallel Thematic structure	16	11.51%	Vợ khôn, // [chồng /được có ngày nên quan]. [59, p. 227] Khôn kia// [dễ bán dại này/ mà ăn]. [59, p. 227]
Three Thematic structure	5	3.6%	Dại nhất là thổi tù và, // thứ hai hát dặm, // thứ ba thả diều. [55, p. 315] Dở chết, // giỏi chết, // biết sống. [58, p.56]
Total	**139**	**100%**	

4.2. SEMANTIC FEATURES OF PSEWF IN ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE

4.2.1. Semantic Fields of PsEWF in English Versus Vietnamese

Table 4.9. The Distribution of Semantic Fields in English PsEWF

Semantic fields	Occurrence	Distribution rate
Advantages of wisdom and foolishness	25	12.5%
Disadvantages of wisdom and foolishness	20	10%
Characteristics of the wise and the fool	118	59%
Sources of wisdom and foolishness	16	8%
Slight boundary between wisdom and foolishness	16	8%
Other minor fields	5	2.5%
Total	**200**	**100%**

Table 4.10. The Distribution of Semantic Fields in Vietnamese PsEWF

Semantic fields	Occurrence	Distribution rate
Advantages of wisdom and foolishness	27	13.5%
Disadvantages of wisdom and foolishness	23	11.5%
Characteristics of the wise and the fool	83	41.5%
Sources of wisdom and foolishness	39	19.5%
Slight boundary between wisdom and foolishness	18	9%

Other minor fields	10	5%
Total	**200**	**100%**

4.2.2. Semantic Features of PsEWF Based on Kinds of Meanings

4.2.2.1. Semantic Features of English PsEWF Based on Kinds of Meanings

Table 4.11. The Distribution of Kinds of Meanings of English PsEWF

Kinds of Meaning	**Occurrence**	**Distribution Rate**
Literal Meaning	62	31%
Figurative Meaning	20	10%
Literal-figurative Meaning	118	59%
Total	**200**	**100%**

4.2.2.2. Semantic Features of Vietnamese PsEWF Based on Kinds of Meanings

Table 4.12. The Distribution of Kinds of Meanings of Vietnamese PsEWF

Kinds of Meaning	**Occurrence**	**Distribution Rate**
Literal Meaning	88	44%
Figurative Meaning	13	6.5%
Literal-figurative Meaning	99	49.5%
Total	**200**	**100%**

4.3. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF PSEWF IN ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE

4.3.1. Similarities and Differences in Syntactic Features of PsEWF in English Versus Vietnamese

Table 4.13. A Statistic Summary of Syntactic Features of PsEWF in English Versus Vietnamese

Types of Theme patterns	English PsEWF		Vietnamese PsEWF	
	Occurrence	Distribution rate	Occurrence	Distribution rate
Simple Theme	88	44%	61	30.5%
Multiple Theme	1	0.5%	6	3%
Clause as Theme	83	41.5%	119	59.5%
Predicated Theme	2	1%	0	0%
Dependent, embedded, minor and elliptical clause as Theme	26	13%	14	7%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**

English and Vietnamese PsEWF share some similarities as follows. Firstly, Theme in English and Vietnamese is at the initial position of the clause. They are expressed in phrasal structures including noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases and adverbial phrases. Both languages have some similar types of Theme and are used to express various meaning such as location, instrument.

Secondly, Theme–Rheme structure classified based on Theme range in English and Vietnamese PsEWF are similar in the most common tendency, that is to thematise simple Theme with one constituent. In addition, Simple Theme with one constituent is the most popular among three types of simple Theme.

Beside similarities, some differences are pointed out. In English five Thematic patterns, the first pattern takes up the most dominant distribution 88 over 200 PsEWF (44%), whereas in Vietnamese PsEWF, the third pattern with clause as Theme is the most dominant with 119 proverbs at 59.5%. Another difference is the predicated Theme does not exist in Vietnamese PsEWF.

On working with the ranking Thematic system in Vietnamese proverbs, we find out that the two-rank clause pattern is the most popular, then the one rank clause. Two-rank proverbs which are made up by two parallel one-rank Thematic structure whose syntactic structure are very much similar to each other takes the highest percentage. A noticeable point emerged is that four-rank clauses do not have the frequent occurrence in Vietnamese proverbs for the very nature of proverb is the pithiness and condensability.

4.3.2. Similarities and Differences in Semantic Features of PsEWF in English Versus Vietnamese

4.3.2.1. Semantic Fields of PsEWF in English Versus Vietnamese

Table 4.14. A Statistic Summary of Semantic Fields of PsEWF in English Versus Vietnamese

Semantic fields	English PsEWF		Vietnamese PsEWF	
	Occurrence	Distribution rate	Occurrence	Distribution rate
Advantages of wisdom and foolishness	25	12.5%	27	13.5%
Disadvantages of wisdom and foolishness	20	10%	23	11.5%

Characteristics of the wise versus the fool	118	59%	83	41.5%
Sources of wisdom and foolishness	16	8%	39	19.5%
Slight boundary between wisdom and foolishness	16	8%	18	9%
Other minor fields	5	2.5%	10	5%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**

As can be seen from the summary below, English and Vietnamese PsEWF shares some similarities. Among six semantic fields, *Characteristics of the wise versus the fool* takes up the dominant distribution for it has many sub-types which can be divided. What is more, *the advantages of wisdom and foolishness, disadvantages of wisdom and foolishness, and slight boundary between wisdom and foolishness* are nearly equally distributed with 25 proverbs (12.5%), 20 proverbs (10%), 16 proverbs (8%) in English and 27 proverbs (13.5%), 23 proverbs (11.5%), 18 proverbs (9%). Other minor fields in English and Vietnamese take up the smallest percentage 2.5 % and 5% successively.

Beside similarities, some differences are found out. The distribution of the third semantic field characteristics in English PsEWF is much higher than that of Vietnamese PsEWF successively with 118 versus 83 proverbs.

What is more, the second highest distribution in English is occupied by the first semantic field – *Advantages of wisdom and*

foolishness 12.5% whereas in Vietnamese by the fourth field – *Sources of wisdom and foolishness* 19.5%. Another noticeable point is that the distribution of frequency of *Sources of wisdom and foolishness* in Vietnamese is twice as high as those in English.

4.3.2.2. Semantic Features of PsEWF Based on Kinds of Meaning

Table 4.15. A Statistic Summary of Features of PsEWF Based on Kinds of Meaning in English Versus Vietnamese

Kinds of meanings	English PsEWF		Vietnamese PsEWF	
	Occurrence	Distribution rate	Occurrence	Distribution rate
Literal	62	31%	88	44%
Figurative	20	10%	13	6.5%
Literal-Figurative	118	59%	99	49.5%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**

Three similar points between English and Vietnamese PsEWF are disclosed in terms of kinds of meanings. First of all, both English and Vietnamese PsEWF are classified into three kinds of meanings: (1) literal meaning, (2) Figurative meaning, (3) Literal-Figurative meanings. Secondly, of these three kinds of meanings, type (3) takes up the highest percentage in both English and Vietnamese data with 59% and 49.5% respectively. Finally, the least one belongs to those of literal meaning (10% in English and 6.5% in Vietnamese).

In the first two kinds of meanings, the number of Vietnamese PsEWF is higher than that of English ones with 88 and 13 proverbs in Vietnamese, 62 and 20 proverbs in English successively; especially the literal meaning in Vietnamese is rather high in comparison with that in English. However, for group of literal-figurative meaning, the result is on the contrary with 118 in

English and 99 proverbs in Vietnamese. A possible explanation maybe also lie in the feature of individualistic society

4.4. CULTURAL UNDERLYING REASONS OF ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE PSEWF

Language is a mirror of culture. In fact, language simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it. In this section, the origin of proverbs, the way culture aspects affect the syntactic and semantic features of PsEWF in English versus Vietnamese are under investigation.

4.4.1. Origin of Proverbs

4.4.2. Cultural Underlying Reasons of Syntactic Features in English Versus Vietnamese PsEWF

4.4.3. Cultural Underlying Reasons of Semantic Features in English Versus Vietnamese PsEWF

4.4.3.1. Reflecting Different Religion

4.4.3.2. Reflecting Different Civilization

4.4.3.3. Reflecting Cultural Values and Beliefs

• *Speech Behavior*

• *Eating Issue*

• *The Way To Be Successful*

• *Family Relationships*

- *Husband-wife Relationship*

- *Parent-child Relationship*

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis is to describe the syntactic and semantic features of PsEWF and then to find out their similarities as well as differences. Also, the cultural features underlying PsEWF are discussed. To achieve this goal, this study is divided into five

chapters, successively the introduction, the review of literature and theoretical preliminaries, the method and procedure of carrying out the thesis, the discussion of findings and the conclusion of the work.

Syntactically, we have dealt with the Theme-Rheme structure of PsEWF in English and Vietnamese adopting the functional grammar approach. It means we consider clause as a message. Summary of the findings can be reviewed in the comparison and differences between English and Vietnamese PsEWF. Theme-Rheme structure in English and Vietnamese PsEWF in this thesis are under investigation based on Theme range – five Thematic patterns, but to have a practical and more suitable way in analyzing Vietnamese proverbs structure, theory of Cao Xuân Hạo's ranking pattern is employed. The similarities and differences of five Thematic patterns and some noticeable points of Cao Xuân Hạo's are drawn out from the findings.

Semantically, PsEWF are classified into two sections: semantic fields and semantic features based on kinds of meanings. In the first section, PsEWF in both languages are classified into six semantic fields: *advantages of wisdom and foolishness, disadvantages of wisdom and foolishness, characteristics of the wise and the fool, sources of wisdom and foolishness, slight boundary between wisdom and foolishness and some other minor fields*. The next section, PsEWF are analyzed and classified based on three kinds of meanings: literal, figurative, literal-figurative meanings. Similarities and differences between semantic fields in English and Vietnamese PsEWF are drawn successively.

Culturally, both English and Vietnamese PsEWF reflect the differences and similarities in religion, civilization and cultural values and beliefs in speech behaviors, eating issue, the way to be successful and family relationships.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

To teachers

- The syntactic features of PsEWF in both English and Vietnamese are useful for teachers in teaching grammar especially in the light of functional grammar approach. For proverbs used in daily communication, analyzing them into Subject-Predicate structure is really complicated. Thanks to Theme-Rheme structure, teachers can help learners access a new and much practical analyzing to easily remember the structures. On the other hand, teachers are supposed to point out the syntactic differences between two languages so that learners can distinguish and avoid making errors.

- The results of semantic features also contribute much in foreign language teaching. Firstly, teachers can teach learners kinds of meanings of PsEWF, in particular, show the learners whether a PsEWF has only literal meaning, figurative meaning or both literal and figurative meanings, the definition of each kind and how to identify them exactly to acquire the most suitable understanding and interpretation of PsEWF. For semantic fields, teachers can classify PsEWF into particular fields and help learner memorize proverbs according to their fields.

- Last but not least, teachers can help learners find out Vietnamese equivalence for English ones and vice versa so that learners can have deep understanding and good memory about PsEWF. This finding is also of great help to learners in translating PsEWF from English to Vietnamese and contrarily, or collecting condensed expression to enrich their own vocabulary dictionary.

To learners

This study will be much beneficial to learners of both languages. Those who can find Vietnamese proverbs structure analysis in formal grammar problematic can turn to their thematic analysis and see that it is much easy for Vietnamese to be considered

a Theme-inclined language. In addition, they not only learn its grammar rules and kinds of meaning of proverbs, but also know the differences in cultures and values embedded in the way people use language in general and proverbs in particular. Also they can apply the kinds of meanings in translating accompanied with cultural aspects to have the best translation.

5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher could only conduct the data collection process on around 200 proverbs in each language. This obviously does not guarantee a full collection of PsEWF, even though the researcher has tried hard to avoid any biases. Moreover, under the constraint of ability, the researcher could only point out some similarities and differences of PsEWF in both languages in terms of syntactic, semantic and cultural features, which may not be totally adequate for a thorough understanding of cross-cultural similarities and differences.

In brief, despite the efforts made by the researcher, the study has got certain restrictions. Therefore, any comments or extra contributions are warmly welcome for the completion of the research.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Discovering the linguistic features of English and Vietnamese PsEWF still leaves the possibilities for further study.

- The way of classification of Theme-Rheme structure of proverb in general and PsEWF in particular should be investigated in deeper levels.

- Further research could focus on the following areas such as the pragmatic features of PsEWF in English and Vietnamese, the semantic aspects of the thematic structure of PsEWF in English versus Vietnamese, etc.