

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
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**VÕ THỊ MINH LAN**

**A STUDY ON SYNTACTIC, SEMANTIC AND  
LEXICAL FEATURES OF SONG TITLES  
IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE**

**Field: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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**Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. PHAN VĂN HÒA**

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**Danang University**

**Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. PHAN VĂN HÒA**

**Examiner 1: Dr. NGŨ THIỆN HÙNG**

**Examiner 2: Dr. DƯƠNG BẠCH NHẬT**

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. RATIONALE

Music has always been a source of happiness to all men on the Earth. Music comes in human souls through its melody and lyrics. Definitely, each of us understands the humanitarian meaning undergoing these song titles, even when we have not heard their lyrics yet.

Life seems to be a colourful painting adorned with the complicated and copious net of human's sentiments: happiness, sadness, meditation, recall, etc. Literarily speaking, song titles are the crystallization of four items: lyrics, melody, emotion and experience. When composing a song, the musician must think of the title he names to his mental product so that the title accumulates all of those crystals. He also takes into consideration of the impression that a song title can approach in a very long song lists.

It can be seen that song titles are a source of interesting abundant examples for teachers to have lessons on phrase analysis or clause analysis. Analyzing song titles enables us to have deep understanding of using structures (of sentences, clauses and phrases) and words in English and Vietnamese and to collect vivid models for English teaching.

For those reasons, song titles are chosen as the subject area of my thesis. The research is intended to cover the syntactic, semantic and lexical features in English and Vietnamese song titles and to find out the similarities and differences of the two languages in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features.

## **1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1 Aim of the study**

This study investigates the syntactic, semantic and lexical features of song titles in English and Vietnamese.

### **1.2.2 Objectives of the study**

The study is intended: To analyze the syntactic features, the semantic features, the lexical features of song titles in English and Vietnamese; to find out the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese song titles in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features and to present suggestions for English teaching and learning.

## **1.3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Our study is intended to help English learners to know well about the syntactic, semantic and lexical features of song titles in English and Vietnamese.

## **1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

In this research, we mainly focus on the findings of the syntactic, semantic and lexical features of English and Vietnamese song titles. In terms of syntactic features, we try to analyze the structures of song titles in English and Vietnamese. In terms of semantic terms, we clarify the meaning the song titles and guess their themes. Furthermore, lexical features will be indicated in the lexical choice and some findings relating to word formation.

## **1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the syntactic features of song titles in English and Vietnamese?
2. What are the semantic features of song titles in English and Vietnamese?

3. What are the lexical features of song titles in English and Vietnamese?
4. What are the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese song titles in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features?

## **1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications

## **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

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

In reality, songs are exploited for various purposes. Many authors analyze and comment on song lyrics in some magazines and online articles. A lot of song melodies are chosen as the background music in certain programs. In learning and teaching English, the lyrics and melody of popular songs can be used effectively in classrooms to provide the voices rarely heard in textbooks. It is discussed how song lyrics can be used as texts to develop students' critical literacy (<http://readingonline.org/article/lloyd>), how to write a song analysis for English class and the effects of songs in teaching English classes (<http://www.ehow.com>).

We see that analyzing the structure and the meaning of titles is quite amazing. Nguyễn Thị Dành (2011) in her master thesis “*An*

*Investigation into Linguistic Features of Films Titles in English and Vietnamese*". Đặng Thanh Bình (2011) with the subject of her research "*A study on company names in English and Vietnamese*" clarifies company names in terms of syntactic and morphological features as well as cultural features. In that research, we found out about the analysis of phrases which has the similarity with the song titles.

No research on analyzing song titles has been found. We just collected some articles which discuss how to create a song title or how to write the song titles on the website: <http://songwriting.songstuff.com> In some master theses, songs are considered as a source to search on certain features such as semantics metaphor of love in English and Vietnamese songs, done by Trần Thị Thanh Thảo (2011).

## 2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.2.1. Definition of terms

#### 2.2.2. Phrases

##### *a. Noun phrase*

##### *In English:*

The structure of a noun phrase can be described as follows:

<b>(Pre-modifier) + Head + (Post-modifier)</b>
--

##### *In Vietnamese*

We can summarize the structure of a noun phrase in the following:

<b>Tiền điều biến tố + Đầu tố + Hậu điều biến tố</b>
(Pre-modifier)      Head      (Post-modifier)

**b. Verb phrase:*****In English***

Verb phrase formula is:

<b>(Auxiliary)</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Head</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>(Object/ Complement)</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>(Modifier)</b>
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**\*In Vietnamese**

Following Diệp Quang Ban [16, p.62], three parts forming a verb phrase are

<b>Phần đầu</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Đầu tố</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Phần cuối</b>
(Operator)		(Head)		(Object/Complement)

**c. Prepositional Phrases*****In English***

A prepositional phrase is introduced by a preposition which is followed by a noun phrase

***In Vietnamese***

The structure of a prepositional phrase in Vietnamese can also be illustrated in the formula below:

<b>Preposition + Prepositional Complement</b>
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**d. Adjective Phrases*****In English***

Within an adjective phrase, pre-modifiers go before the head and post-modifiers, of course follow the head.

***In Vietnamese***

To sum up, we can illustrate the structure below:

<b>Phần phụ trước</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Phần trung tâm</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Phần phụ sau</b>
(Pre-modifier)		(Head)		(Post-modifier)

### 2.2.3. Clauses

#### *a. Independent Clauses*

An independent can stand alone as a sentence by itself:

**Subject + Verb (+ complement)**

#### *b. Dependent Clauses*

Typically, a dependent clause begins with a subordinator such as *when, while, if, or that* and it is formed as following:

**Subordinator + subject + verb (+ complement)**

#### *c. Finite Clauses*

A finite clause looks like a complete sentence.

#### *d. Non-finite Clauses*

The non-finite verb forms can be constructed without a subject and they consist of the infinitive and the participial

### 2.2.4. Sentences

#### *In English*

##### *a. Simple sentences*

A simple sentence is one independent clause. It consists of subject, verb and/or object, complement and adverbial.

##### *b. Compound sentences*

A compound sentence is two or more independent clauses joined together.

##### *c. Complex Sentences*

A complex sentence contains one independent clause and one (or more) dependent clause(s).

#### *In Vietnamese*

##### *a. Two-component simple sentences*

A simple sentence consists of only one subject and one predicate functioning as sentence core.

### ***b. Partial complex sentences***

A partial complex sentence is formed by two or more than two subject-predicate groups, in which only one subject-predicate group plays the role of sentence core and the others are included in sentence core.

### ***c. Compound sentences***

A compound sentence is a sentence which has at least two subject-predicate groups connected. Among them, no group is implied in the other.

## **2.2.5. Word formation**

### ***a. Word Formation In English***

#### ***a.1. Affixation***

*“Affixation is the formation of new words with the help of affixes”.*

#### ***a.2. Compounding***

*“Compounding is the building of a new word by joining two or more words” [6, p.20]*

#### ***a.3. Reduplicatives***

Some compounds have two or more elements which are either identical or only slightly different, i.e. goody-goody. These compounds are called reduplicatives.

### ***b. Word Formation in Vietnamese***

#### ***b.1. Compounding***

Vietnamese compounds are classified into two kinds: coordinate and subordinate ones.

#### ***b.2. Reduplication***

(1) Full reduplication

(2) Partial reduplication:

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHOD AND PROCEDURE**

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

Firstly, the combination of deductive and inductive methods was employed to select, systematize and generalize theoretical background from materials and books for the study and the analysis. Secondly, the results of the analysis could be reported qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative and quantitative analysis helped to find out the similarities and differences between English song titles and Vietnamese song titles in terms of their syntactic, semantic and lexical features. Qualitative method was used with the aim of categorizing the relevant song titles from the data, identifying the major features of structural types and song themes. Then, comparison was conducted to identify the similarities and differences between the English song titles and the Vietnamese ones in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features. Besides, the results were illustrated in tables of classification by quantitative approach. Quantitative method was used to determine frequency and distribution of English and Vietnamese song titles in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features. It was also taken advantage of to make sure if a number of chosen corpus were credible enough.

#### **3.2. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS**

##### **3.2.1. Data collection**

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

#### **3.3. STUDY PROCEDURES**

In the process of carrying out the study, the following steps are involved: Collecting song titles in English and Vietnamese from the Internet and song paper lists; Picking out 186 English song titles

and 186 Vietnamese ones for investigation; Analyzing data: identifying and describing syntactic, semantic and lexical features of English and Vietnamese song titles; Making a comparison to find out the similarities and differences between song titles in the two language in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features; Discussing the findings and suggesting some implications to support English teaching and learning.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1. THE SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE SONG TITLES**

##### **4.1.1. The syntactic features of English song titles**

###### *a. Phrases*

###### *a.1. Noun Phrases*

###### *a.1.1. The general structures:*

###### **[1] Head Noun**

(4.1) “*Hero*” [74]

###### **[2] Pre-modifiers + Head Noun**

(4.2) “*Last Christmas*” [102]

###### **[3] Head Noun + Post-modifiers**

(4.3) “*Colour of the wind*” [34]

###### **[4] Pre-modifiers + Head Noun + Post-modifiers**

(4.4) “*A Song For Mama*” [4]

###### *a.1.2. Syntactic features of the components*

###### *\* Head Nouns*

In any noun phrase structure, head nouns may be a noun or a pronoun.

*\* Pre-modifiers*

[1] **Determiner + Head Noun...**

[2] **(Determiner +) Adjective phrase + Head Noun...**

[3] **(Determiner +) Noun + Head Noun...**

[4] **(Determiner +) Participle + Head Noun...**

[5] **(Determiner +) Numners + Head Noun...**

*\* Post-modifiers*

[1] **...Head Noun + Prepositional Phrase**

[2] **...Head Noun + finite adjectival clause**

[3] **...Head Noun + Non-finite Clause**

[4] **...Head Noun + Number**

[5] **...Head Noun + Proper Noun**

*a.2. Verb phrases:*

*\*Bare Infinitive Phrases*

(4.29) **“Heal the World”** [73]

*\* To Infinitive Phrases*

(4.33) **“To Be Number One”** [167]

*\* Present Participle Phrases*

(4.34) **“Calling You”** [26]

*a.3. Adjective Phrases:*

[1] **Adjectives**

(4.38) **“Lucky”** [110]

[2] **Adjective + prepositional phrase**

(4.42) **“Cooler Than Me”** [37]

*a.4. Prepositional Phrases*

*b. Dependent Clauses:*

This clause is sometimes called subordinate clause because it begins with a subordinator .

(4.45) “*Because I Love You*” [14]

**c. Sentences**

**c.1. Simple sentences:**

(4.47) “*Tonight I Celebrate My Love For You*” [169]

**c.2. Complex sentences**

(4.51) “*I Knew I Love You*” [88]

**4.1.2. The syntactic features of Vietnamese song titles**

**a. Phrases**

**a.1. Noun Phrases**

**a.1.1. The general structures:**

**[1] Head Noun**

(4.53) “*Cây dừa*” [225]

**[2] Pre-modifiers + Head Noun**

(4.55) “*Hai mươi mùa xuân*” [264]

**[3] Head Noun + Post-modifiers**

(4.56) “*Ngôi nhà hạnh phúc*” [299]

**[4] Pre-modifiers + Head Noun + Post-modifiers**

(4.58) “*Những bông hoa trong vườn Bác*” [307]

**a.1.2. Syntactic features of the components**

**Head Nouns**

**Pre-modifiers**

The pre-modifiers of a Vietnamese noun phrase found in song titles include words denoting quantity.

**Post-modifiers**

**[1] ...Head Noun + Noun**

(4.65) “*Kỷ niệm cao nguyên*” [281]

**[2] ...Head Noun + Adjective**

(4.67) “*Tam Kỳ tươi đẹp*” [326]

**[3] ...Head Noun + Number**(4.69) “*Tiểu đoàn 307*” [345]**[4] ...Head Noun + Prepositional phrase**(4.71) “*Vệt nắng cuối trời*” [364]**[5] ...Head Noun + Clause**(4.73) “*Bà Rịa đất níu chân người*” [196]**a.2. Verb phrases:****a.2.1. Head Verb****a.2.2. Operators + Head Verb...**(4.77) “*Còn thương nhau thì về*” [236]**a.2.3. ...Head Verb + Object/Complement**(4.80) “*Cám ơn tình yêu*” [223](4.81) “*Gửi nắng cho em*” [260]**a.3. Adjective Phrases:****a.3.1. Adjectives**(4.85) “*Khó*” [278]**a.3.2. Head Adjective + Post-modifier**(4.87) “*Bao la tình mẹ*” [206]**a.4. Prepositional Phrases**(4.91) “*Bên bờ ao nhà mình*” [211]**b. Dependent Clauses:**(4.94) “*Giá như tôi đừng yêu em*” [257]**c. Sentences:****c.1. Simple sentences**(4.97) “*Cô gái Sài Gòn đi tải đạn*” [238]**c.2. Compound sentences**(4.100) “*Anh ở đầu sông, em cuối sông*” [190]**4.1.3. The Syntactic Similarities and Differences in**

## **English and Vietnamese Song Titles**

### **a. The statistical summary**

#### ***a.1. Structural Types***

#### ***a.2. Syntactic Features of each Structural Type***

### **b. Similarities:**

In general, both English and Vietnamese song titles have the patterns in form of phrases, dependent clauses and sentences. Phrases are used the most frequently to make song titles; Sentences are next and Dependent clauses are the least favorable.

### ***c. Differences:***

The differences in syntactic features in English and Vietnamese song titles have been found in group of verb phrases and group of sentences. In English song titles formed by a verb phrase, the main verb is classified into three forms: bare infinitive, to-infinitive and present participle; whereas, Vietnamese song titles own the main verb in bare infinitive. Another difference is found in the occurrence of operators which are used in Vietnamese verb phrases but not employed in English ones. In group of sentences, Complex sentence is found in English song titles and Compound sentence is used in Vietnamese song names.

## **4.2. THE SEMANTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE SONG TITLES**

### **4.2.1. The Semantic Features of English song titles**

#### ***a. English Song Titles denoting “War”***

Many songs about war relate to war, or a society’s attitudes towards war or simply a description of everyday life during war times.

(4.102) “*War Pigs*” [177]

***b. English Song Titles denoting “Family”***

Many English songs are written to honour the family sentiment and to show the deep love for family members.

(4.106) “*Mama*” [113]

***c. English Song Titles denoting “Transport”***

English songs relating to transport collected in the corpus are written for certain means of transport such as cars, planes, etc.

(4.108) “*Down in the Tube Station at Midnight*” [46]

***d. English Song Titles denoting “Media”***

Among the types of media, telephones, radios and televisions may be most chosen.

(4.110) “*Radio Radio*” [137]

***e. English Song Titles denoting “Places”***

Many musicians write nice songs to draw the fantastic view of cities or places.

(4.113) “*London Town*” [108]

***f. English Song Titles denoting “Music”***

(4.115) “*I Love Rock “N” Roll*” [89]

***g. English Song Titles denoting “Environment”***

Music is considered an effective tool for raising awareness, expressing emotions and prompting actions.

(4.117) “*Hole in the Sky*” [77]

***h. English Song Titles denoting “Holidays”***

On each occasion or certain holidays or festivals, music contributes to the lively and warm atmosphere during the time.

(4.119) “*It’s Christmas Time*” [99]

***i. English Song Titles denoting “Schools”***

Many songs dealing with school-related themes also tend to

focus on relationships of students and teachers.

(4.121) “*Schooldays*” [142]

***j. English Song Titles denoting “Friendship”***

(4.122) “*With a Little Help from My Friends*” [184]

In this song we can feel wonderful friendship among those who really need friends to love and to share.

***k. English Song Titles denoting “Pair Love”***

It seems that “Pair Love” is the most common theme for English songs

(4.123) “*Lovesong*” [109]

**4.2.2. The Semantic Features of Vietnamese song titles**

***a. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “War”***

Vietnam has always been proud of the heroic history throughout the patriotic struggles against invaders from many foreign powerful countries.

(4.125) “*Bình Trị Thiên khói lửa*” [215]

***b. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Family”***

These songs mainly express the love for family members: grandparent, father, mother and sibling.

(4.127) “*Bà tôi*” [198]

***c. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Transport”***

Some Vietnamese songs are written to mention means of transport as well as traffic problems. We can take these as examples:

(4.132) “*Xích lô*” [371]

(4.133) “*Taxi*” [328]

***d. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Media”***

A few songs about Media are found in Vietnamese. Hồ Hoài Anh writes the following song with lively rhythm:

(4.134) “*Radio*” [317]

***e. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Places”***

A large number of Vietnamese songs describe the beauty of places, especially cities or provinces.

(4.135) “*Đà Nẵng tình người*” [241]

***f. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Music”***

We can see that songs about Music are divided into subcategories such as musical instruments, love for music and types of music.

(4.137) “*Độc huyền cầm*” [248]

***g. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Environment”***

(4.138) “*Vì đâu*” [365]

A question is arose throughout the song which reflects the reality of environmental problems in Vietnam.

***h. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Holidays”***

Vietnamese songs about Holidays mainly describe the atmosphere and human feelings on Holidays.

(4.139) “*Ngày Tết quê em*” [293]

***i. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “School”***

Many Vietnamese songs are written to be grateful to teachers who give us the knowledge way to our future.

(4.140) “*Người thầy*” [304]

***j. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Friendship”***

In term of Friendship, Vietnamese musicians succeed in conveying valuable messages to the youth.

(4.141) “*Cho bạn cho tôi*” [229]

***k. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Pair Love”***

Love can be considered to be an abundant source for

musicians to get inspiration from.

(4.142) “*Bức thư tình đầu tiên*” [219]

### ***1. Vietnamese Song Titles denoting “Hero”***

Vietnamese musicians have written a great deal songs to honour heroic statues like the following example:

(4.143) “*Biết ơn chị Võ Thị Sáu*” [213]

## **4.2.3 The Semantic Similarities and Differences in English and Vietnamese Song Titles**

### ***a. Similarities:***

Both English and Vietnamese song titles convey various topics in common. A majority of song titles in the two languages convey the theme of songs about War (with words such as “*flame*”, “*attacks*”, and “*khói lửa*”, “*đạn*”); about Family (“*father and son*”, “*my sister*”, “*tình mẹ*”, “*cha và con*”); songs about Transport (“*taxi*”, “*bus*”, “*bicycle*”, “*xe buýt*”, and “*xe đạp*”); songs about Media (“*radio*”, “*telephone*”, or “*T.V*”); songs about Music (“*Rock n Roll*”, “*Mambo*”, “*piano*”, “*yêu âm nhạc*”); etc.

### ***b. Differences:***

Beside the similarities, English and Vietnamese song titles have the differences in terms of semantic features.

Firstly, among semantic fields, “*Heroes*” is only found in Vietnamese song titles, not in English ones. Many Vietnamese song titles are written to memorate national heroes in the past such as “*Nguyễn Viết Xuân*”, “*Võ Thị Sáu*”, “*Nguyễn Văn Trỗi*”, etc.

Secondly, in spite of the fact that both English and Vietnamese song titles formed in the same semantic fields, we can pick out some different images used in each field. For instance, some typical means of transport which are particular in each country are

found in each language. English song titles contain “*the tube*” - one of the most popular means in England while we can admire the image of “*xích lô*” - a special means of travelling throughout cities in Vietnamese song titles.

### 4.3. THE LEXICAL FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE SONG TITLES

#### 4.3.1. The Lexical Features of English song titles

##### *a. Word formation*

##### *a.1. Affixation*

##### *Prefixation*

Prefixes are added before the stem and they rarely form new parts of speech.

(4.143) “*Extraordinary Girl*” [53]

##### *Suffixation*

The most distinctive feature of suffixes is that they usually transfer new words to different parts of speech.

(4.147) “*Careless Whisper*” [30]

##### *a.2. Compounding*

(4.150) “*Schoolboy Heart*” [141]

“*Schoolboy*” is formed by combining two existing words, both of which are nouns, “*school*” and “*boy*”.

##### *b. Lexical Choice*

##### *b.1. Simple words*

Simple words convey understandable meanings and simple structures.

(4.152) “*Can’t Get You Out Of My Head*”

##### *b.2. Informal words*

All the informal words contribute to the natural feature of a

song title, which makes a title close to human's hearts.

(4.154) "*Play That **Funky Music***" [136]

### **b.3. Abbreviation**

Interestingly, some words written in abbreviation, instead of the full form, occur in English song titles. For instance:

(4.157) "*The Sun Always Shines on **T.V***" [164]

### **b.4. Stylistic Synonyms:**

(4.161) "***Father's Song***" [58]

(4.162) "***Daddy, What's a Train?***" [41]

(4.163) "*A Song for **Dad***" [3]

The words "*Father*", "*Daddy*" and "*Dad*" all denote "*a male parent of a child*". Nevertheless, each of them holds its own stylistic aspect. While "*Father*" is a neutral word, "*Daddy*" and "*Dad*" respectively indicate the informal style.

## **4.3.2. The Lexical Features of Vietnamese song titles**

### **a. Word Formation**

#### **a.1. Compounding**

All compounds picked up can be divided into two types: subordinate ones and coordinate compounds. The former can be found in: "*Anh Cho Em **Mùa Xuân***" and the latter can be analyzed in "*Cát **Bụi***".

#### **a.2. Reduplication**

Reduplicates which are created by repeating the phonetic pattern are found in Vietnamese song titles.

(4.171) "*Khúc Samba **rộn ràng***" [280]

### **b. Lexical Choice**

#### **b.1. Simple words:**

(4.174) "*Ba ru con **ngủ***" [197]

In the title above, all the words are simple, “*Ba*”, “*ru*”, “*con*” and *ngủ*”.

### **b.2. Idioms**

Vietnamese song titles are quite impressive with special expressions employed.

(4.175) “*Tình ta biển bạc đồng xanh*” [369]

### **b.3. Figurative words**

(4.178) “*Thuyền và biển*” [333]

“*Thuyền*” (boat) and “*biển*” (sea) are lively metaphoric images to symbolize male and female in the relationship of love.

## **4.2.3 The Lexical Similarities and Differences in English and Vietnamese Song Titles**

### **a. Similarities:**

Obviously, English and Vietnamese song titles share a few lexical features in common. Only compounding process of word formation and simple words in the part of lexical choice appear in two languages. Some compound nouns are picked out from the English corpus and numerous compounds of three types: compound noun, compound adjective, and compound verb occur in Vietnamese song titles.

### **b. Differences:**

In terms of word formation, English words are made up by affixation including prefixation and suffixation. However, these processes are not found in Vietnamese. We cannot find any English reduplicatives in song titles. On the other hand, reduplication, an interesting way of word formation, is used widely in Vietnamese song titles. In terms of lexical choice, informal words, abbreviation and stylistic synonyms are only seen in English. By contrast, idioms and figurative words are only found in Vietnamese.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1. CONCLUSIONS**

The thesis has so far studied the features of English and Vietnamese song titles in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical aspects with the description and analysis of the samples to find out the similarities as well as differences in syntactic, semantic and lexical features of the English and Vietnamese song titles.

In terms of syntax, song titles in the two languages can be formed by different kinds of structures. Phrases, Dependent Clauses and Sentences are employed to make song titles in both English and Vietnamese. In each type of phrases, three components, postmodifiers, head and premodifiers are used in a flexible manner. In groups of Verb phrases, English and Vietnamese song titles consist of only a verb or a verb phrase in which an object or a complement follows and modifies the head. In group of adjective phrases, song titles formed by only an adjective can be pointed out in two languages. Prepositional phrases in English and Vietnamese song titles have the features in common. A preposition functions as a head followed by a prepositional complement to indicate a place or a manner. Dependent clauses and simple sentences are also used in both English and Vietnamese.

Nevertheless, there are some syntactic differences between English and Vietnamese song titles. Firstly, with regard to phrases, premodifiers in English noun phrases conclude determiners, adjective phrases, nouns, participles and numbers; whereas, in Vietnamese, only words of quantity function as premodifiers. Moreover, in English song names formed in a verb phrase, the head verb can vary

from bare infinitive form, to-infinitive form to present participle form and it has no operators. On the other hand, only bare infinitive verbs from the head verb in a Vietnamese song titles and operators can be picked out such as “*Chỉ là*”, “*Hãy*”, and “*Xin đừng*”.

Turning to sentences, English song titles are formed in the pattern of complex sentences meanwhile compound sentences are found in Vietnamese song titles.

In conformity with semantic features, song titles are written in various themes which are found in both English and Vietnamese. The following are some of the examples Songs about War are written with different purposes. These songs describe the devastation of wars, express the protest attitudes towards wars and the heroic struggles of people against their enemy.

Love for family members is illustrated in a variety of songs. People have always wanted to show their sentiment and emphasize close relationship between them and their grandparents, their parents and their siblings.

All themes can be found in both English and Vietnamese song titles, except for “Heroes”, only occurs in Vietnamese. As for the field of “Heroes”, numerous Vietnamese songs are made to honour national heroes such as “*Trần Thị Lý*”, “*Nguyễn Viết Xuân*”, “*Ngô Mây*”, and “*Nguyễn Văn Trỗi*”.

Turning to lexical features, English song titles and Vietnamese song titles have differences, except for compounding if the process of word formation. With regard to word-formation, English song titles contain affixation and compounding. Words are formed by affixation such as “*extraordinary*” or “*unbreak*”. The process of affixation is not used in Vietnamese song titles. Some

English song titles are also created from compounds, especially noun compounds. We can take some examples: “ *schooldays* ”, “ *railroad* ” and “ *everything* ”. Compounding is also found in Vietnamese song titles; however, this process is more diversified than in English with three types: noun compounds (“ *ngôi nhà* ”, “ *mùa đông* ”), verb compounds (“ *noi gương* ”, “ *trốn chạy* ”) and adjective compounds (“ *huyền diệu* ”, “ *cô đơn* ”). Reduplication is an interesting way of forming new words, only seen in Vietnamese song titles. Some examples for this process are “ *hờ hững* ”, “ *rộn ràng* ”, and “ *gốc ghềch* ”.

As for lexical choice, song titles in both languages consist of simple words which are very understandable and have simple structures to memorize easily. All the other lexical features are quite different in two languages. English titles consist of words of informal style (“ *funky* ”, “ *gonna* ”), abbreviation ( *T.V.* ,  *Mr.* ,  *Mrs.* ), and stylistic synonyms ( *Father - Daddy - Dad* ;  *Mother - Mama - Mom* ). Meanwhile, Vietnamese song titles use familiar idioms (“ *biển bạc đồng xanh* ”, “ *chín đời mười chò* ”), and couples of figurative words (“ *thuyền* ” and “ *biển* ”; “ *bậu* ” and “ *dậu mông tơ* ”).

From the study, we find out that English and Vietnamese song titles have many similarities in terms of syntactic, semantic and lexical features. Differences found in each type of features are also analyzed and they show very vivid and interesting features of languages. By clarifying linguistic features of English and Vietnamese song titles, we hope that the study helps to enrich the knowledge for language studying and language teaching.

## **5.2. IMPLICATIONS**

Doing research on song titles stimulates learners to have an

insight into syntactic, semantic and lexical features of phrases, clauses and sentences in English and Vietnamese and at last to use them effectively. In this meaning, some implications are drawn.

For learners of English, this thesis helps English learners know more about the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese in terms of syntax, semantics and lexicology. Therefore, they can self-study to improve how to make a phrase, a clause or a sentence in language activities.

For teachers of English, it is helpful to select English song titles to illustrate certain linguistic features which teachers want to explain. Familiar titles are a plentiful source of examples used to design lessons, which creates effective teaching.

### **5.3. LIMITATIONS**

This study is carried out with an attempt to investigate similarities and differences on linguistic aspects of song titles in both English and Vietnamese. Because of knowledge and time limit, we have not been able to look at fully all aspects but syntactic, semantic and lexical features. Moreover, this study is based on a small sample of data, so it is too early to come to any substantial conclusions.

With those difficulties and limitation of personal ability and sources of materials related to the problem under investigation, some weakness is inevitable.

### **5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCHERS**

Within the limitations of the study, a full description of all aspects of song titles cannot be done. One suggestion for further studies can be drawn as following: *Stylistic and Cultural Features of Song Titles in English and Vietnamese*.