

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

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**A CONTRASTIVE STUDY
OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF PROVERBS
EXPRESSING CAUSE-EFFECT
IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE**

Field: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

Proverbs as spoken expressions in daily speech of the folk people are a main part of a nation's culture, which reflects all aspects of the social life, including beliefs, customs, tradition as well as their way of thinking, feelings, ideas. Accordingly, never should learning a language be separated from learning its culture as stated by Boas [3, p. 5]: "Language is culture and culture is language". As a result, in communication as well as in language teaching and learning, the cultural element plays an equally vital role to the language element. However, in daily cross-cultural communication, Vietnamese learners of English are likely to commit errors and face "cultural shock" due to the lack of the knowledge of the difference in linguistic and cultural features between English (as a foreign language) and Vietnamese (as a mother tongue). It is the difference in the cultural images as well as in linguistic features that could cause problems to Vietnamese learners and users of English and English learners and users of Vietnamese as a foreign language. Therefore, it could be said that, as proverbs are an important constituent of a language which is assumed to reflect the cultural values, belief, customs, viewpoint of life especially of causal relationship as well as other aspects of the social life of a nation, studying proverbs of a nation especially proverbs expressing *cause-effect* is one of the best ways to understand its culture and people.

However, there has hardly been any research into the linguistic features of proverbs expressing cause-effect in Vietnamese and in

English. As a result, I have decided on this thesis titled “A *Contrastive Study of Linguistic Features of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and in Vietnamese*” with the hope of helping those who are studying English/Vietnamese as a foreign language and those who are interested in proverbs in general and in proverbs of *cause-effect* in particular have a better insight into proverbs and especially in their cultural features.

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims

This thesis is aimed at:

- Examining the linguistic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and in Vietnamese in terms of their syntactic as well as semantic features.

- Providing Vietnamese learners of English or English learners of Vietnamese with a basic knowledge of the proverbs to use them effectively in their learning of these two languages as a foreign language, particularly in the subject of translation.

1.2.2. Objectives

This study is intended to fulfill the following objectives:

- Describe the syntactic and semantic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English versus Vietnamese.

- Compare these proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English versus Vietnamese in terms of syntactic and semantic features.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to achieve the above research objectives, the following research questions could be put forward:

1. What are the syntactic and semantic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English?

2. What are the syntactic and semantic features of proverbs expressing *cause - effect* in Vietnamese?

3. What are the similarities and differences of English versus Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in terms of syntactic and semantic features?

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This thesis will be restricted to the investigation of 250 proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and 250 proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in Vietnamese in terms of syntactic and semantic features.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

With the purpose of doing a research into the linguistic features of *cause - effect* proverbs, this study could help:

- Native Vietnamese learners of English or native English learners of Vietnamese have a comprehensive understanding of the syntactic, semantic features of these proverbs in these languages.

- These learners grasp the use of *cause - effect* proverbs in these two languages and use them effectively in their learning process as well as in their daily life.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This paper consists of 5 chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 - the Introduction - presents the rationale, the aims, objectives and the significance of the study. It is also devoted to the presentation of the scope, the research questions and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review and Theoretical Background - is divided into two parts. The first part reviews the previous studies

chiefly related to the thesis; the second deals with some related theoretical background.

Chapter 3 - Research Methods and Procedures - describes the methods and procedures of the study. This chapter also deals with the description of the samples and how the data are collected, described and analyzed.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Discussions - is devoted to the description and comparison of semantic and syntactic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English versus Vietnamese and their underlying cultural reasons.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion and Implications - summarizes the study's major results and also presents some implications for better teaching and learning English and Vietnamese. Finally, it presents some of the thesis's limitations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Proverb is highly appreciated as a noble genre of national oral tradition that reflects a people's wisdom and philosophy in life. As a literary genre and an aspect of living language, proverb is stable, concise and can therefore be transmitted from generation to generation with little change. It has been noted by certain scholars that since the proverb falls under the category of the "fixed" form genres, it is durable over several generations.

There have been many famous scholars in the field. Among the leading paremiologists are Trench (1853), Hulme (1902), Taylor (1931), Galperin, especially Mieder-the foremost proverb scholar in the US. In view of Vietnamese proverb studies, some elaborate works connected with proverbs have contributed to the knowledge of the field and among are Chu Xuan Dien (1975), Nguyễn Lân (1997), Vũ Dung, Vũ Thúy Anh, Vũ Quang Hào, (2003), Vũ Ngọc Phan (2008), etc. In addition, there have been so far some master theses in English by Vietnamese learners on proverbs. Some of them are Le Thi My Nhat (2002), Dang Ngoc Cu (2003) Tran Le Nghi Tran (2005), etc.

However, none of the above studies on proverbs has given a detailed analysis of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English versus Vietnamese. It is this very reason that inspires me to decide on this study topic.

2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Proverbs

a. Definitions of Proverbs

b. Typical Features of Proverbs

2.2.2. The Concepts of Cause-Effect Relationship and Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect

In this thesis, a *cause-effect* proverb could be defined as a kind of proverb which is in sentential form - maybe in simple, compound or complex sentence by using logical-semantic structures in full or reduced form - expressing *cause-effect* relationship in the objective reality or in human-thinking based on point of view, background knowledge, or life experience.

2.2.3. Identification of Cause-Effect Relationship and Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and in Vietnamese

a. Identification of Cause-Effect Relationship

b. Identification of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and in Vietnamese

2.2.4. Proverbs and idioms

2.2.5. Proverbs as a Reflection of Culture

2.2.6. Semantic Fields

2.2.7. Syntactic Structures

a. English Sentence Types

b. Vietnamese Sentence Types

2.3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2. DATA COLLECTION

The sources of English books and dictionaries include *The Peinguin Dictionary of Proverbs* [54], *The Facts On File Dictionary of Proverbs* [55], *English Proverbs Explained* [56], *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs* [57].

Relating to Vietnamese data sources are *Từ điển thành ngữ tục ngữ ca dao Việt Nam* [60], *Tục ngữ Việt Nam* [61], *Từ điển thành ngữ và tục ngữ Việt Nam* [62], *Tuyển tập thành ngữ, tục ngữ, ca dao Việt-Anh thông dụng* [63], *Từ điển thành ngữ - tục ngữ Việt Nam* [64].

3.3. SAMPLING

After reading the materials from such different sources as books, dictionaries, and also from the Internet, I will pick out equally 250 proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and 250 proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in Vietnamese for the corpus.

3.4. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The steps involved in the research procedure include:

- Collecting proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and Vietnamese from books, dictionaries and the Internet.
- Analyzing these proverbs expressing *cause-effect* to find out their semantic and syntactic features in English versus Vietnamese.
- Comparing and pointing out the similarities and differences between English versus Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect*.

- Discovering the cultural characteristics which could affect the ways of expressing proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in these languages.

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

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis covers the following steps:

- Collecting the data, examining, classifying, describing, and comparing to find out the similarities and differences in the semantic and syntactic features of English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect* .

3.6. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. LINGUISTIC PATTERNS EXPRESSING LOGICAL-SEMANTIC RELATIONSHIP OF CAUSE-EFFECT IN ENGLISH VERSUS VIETNAMESE PROVERBS EXPRESSING CAUSE-EFFECT

Table 4.1. Linguistic Patterns Expressing Logical-Semantic Relationship of Cause - Effect in English Proverbs of Cause-Effect

	Patterns	Proverbs
1	X is Y	Experience is the mother of wisdom. [54, p. 85] Diligence is the mother of good fortune. [54, p. 63]
2	X - V_{causative} - Y	Change of the pasture makes fat calves. [54, p. 22]
3	X => Y (The symbol => represents the ellipsis of conjunction)	Spare the rod; spoil the child.. [54, p. 66]
4	<i>If X, (then) Y</i> Or: <i>If there is X, (then) there is Y</i> Or: <i>If one has X, (then) one has/gets Y</i>	<i>If you play with fire you get burnt</i> [54, p. 37]. <i>If you lie down with dogs, you will get up with fleas.</i> [54, p. 37]
5	He that/who X, Y	<i>They that sow the wind will reap the whirlwind.</i> [54, p. 13]
	Patterns	Proverbs
6	<i>Like X, like Y</i>	<i>Like father, like son.</i> [54, p. 177]
7	<i>As X, so Y</i>	<i>As the tree, so the fruit.</i> [63, p. 216] <i>As the twig is bent, so the tree inclined.</i> [54, p. 26]
8	<i>Where there is/are X, there is/are Y</i>	<i>Where bees are there is honey.</i> [54, p. 63]

	Patterns	Proverbs
9	<i>No X, no Y</i>	No pain, no gain. [54, p. 64]
10	Others: - <i>Where X, Y</i> - <i>No X without Y</i> - <i>X and Y</i>	Where vice is, vengeance follows. [54, p. 14] No smoke without fire. [63, p.86] Do right and fear no man. [54, p. 33]

Table 4.2. Linguistic Patterns Expressing Logical-Semantic Relationship of Cause-Effect in Vietnamese Proverbs of Cause-Effect

	Patterns	Proverbs
1	a thì b or: a => b (The symbol => represents the ellipsis of conjunction)	- Tham <i>thì</i> thâm, đa <i>dâm</i> <i>thì</i> chết. [60, p. 550] - Gieo gió, gặt bão. [64, p. 170] - Ở hiền (<i>thì</i>) gặp lành [64, p. 321] - Dao nằng liếc <i>thì</i> sắc, người nằng chào <i>thì</i> quen. [64, p. 118]
2	<i>Có a thì (mới) có b</i>	- <i>Có</i> đứt tay, <i>mới</i> hay thuốc. [60, p. 370] - <i>Có</i> công mài sắc, <i>có</i> ngày nên kim. [64, p. 89]
3	<i>Có a, có b</i>	- <i>Không</i> bóp cổ <i>thì</i> chẳng lè lưỡi. [64, p. 201]
4	<i>Không a thì không b</i>	- <i>Muốn</i> ăn hết <i>phải</i> đào giun. [64, p. 263]
5	<i>Muốn a phải b</i>	- Rau nào, sâu <i>nấy</i> . [64, p. 338]
6	<i>a</i> nào, <i>b</i> <i>ấy/nấy</i>	- <i>Ai</i> làm người <i>ấy</i> chịu. [60, p. 15]
7	<i>Ai ... , <i>nấy/người</i> <i>ấy</i> ...</i>	- <i>Cây</i> càng cao, gió <i>càng</i> lay. [64, p. 60]
8	<i>Càng a, càng b</i>	- <i>Cây</i> lành <i>sanh</i> trái ngọt. [63]

4.2. SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF PROVERBS EXPRESSING CAUSE-EFFECT IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE

4.2.1. Individual Behavior

Table 4.3. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and in Vietnamese in Individual Behaviour Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		16	25.8%	4	6.8%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	7	11.3%	14	23.7%
	Asyndetic	0	0%	34	57.6%
Complex Sentences		35	56.5%	7	11.9%
Aphoristic Sentences		4	6.4%	0	0%
	Total	62	100%	59	100%

4.2.2. Experience & Learning

Table 4.4. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs of Cause-Effect in English and Vietnamese in Experience & Learning Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		12	41.4%	1	4.5%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	4	13.8%	3	13.6%
	Asyndetic	2	6.9%	15	68.2%
Complex Sentences		8	27.6%	3	13.6%
Aphoristic Sentences		3	10.3%	0	0%
	Total	29	100%	22	100%

4.2.3. Working & Business

Table 4.5. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs of Cause-Effect in English and Vietnamese in Working & Business Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		24	44.4%	9	22%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	1	1.9%	7	17%
	Asyndetic	1	1.9%	25	61%
Complex Sentences		11	20.3%	0	0%
Aphoristic Sentences		17	31.5%	0	0%
	Total	54	100%	41	100%

4.2.4. Social Relationship

Table 4.6. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and Vietnamese in Social Relationship Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		16	42.1%	15	28.8%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	4	10.5%	13	25%
	Asyndetic	0	0%	17	32.7%
Complex Sentences		15	39.5%	7	13.5%
Aphoristic Sentences		3	7.9%	0	0%
	Total	38	100%	52	100%

4.2.5. Family & Marriage Relationship

Table 4.7. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs of Cause-Effect in English and Vietnamese in Family & Marriage Relationship Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		6	28.6%	3	8.8%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	2	9.5%	14	41.2%
	Asyndetic	0	0%	13	38.2%
Complex Sentences		9	42.9%	4	11.8%
Aphoristic Sentences		4	19%	0	0%
	Total	21	100%	34	100%

4.2.6. Saving

Table 4.8 Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and Vietnamese in Saving Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		14	53.8%	2	12.6%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	3	11.5%	1	6.2%
	Asyndetic	0	0%	10	62.5%
Complex Sentences		8	30.8%	3	18.8%
Aphoristic Sentences		1	3.9%		0%
	Total	26	100%	16	100%

4.2.7. Human Virtues & Vices

Table 4.9. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and Vietnamese in Human Virtues & Vices Field

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		11	55%	3	11.5%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	3	15%	5	19.2%
	Asyndetic	0	0%	14	53.8%
Complex Sentences		4	20%	4	15.3%
Aphoristic Sentences		2	10%	0	0%
	Total	20	100%	26	100%

Table 4.10. Frequency of Syntactic Features of Proverbs Expressing Cause-Effect in English and in Vietnamese

Syntactic Features	Patterns	Occurrence			
		English		Vietnamese	
		Number (N _E)	Frequency (F _E)	Number (N _V)	Frequency (F _V)
Simple Sentences		99	39.6%	37	14.8%
Compound Sentences	Syndetic	24	9.6%	57	22.8%
	Asyndetic	3	1.2%	128	51.2%
Complex Sentences		90	36%	28	11.2%
Aphoristic Sentences		34	13.6%	0	0%
	Total	250	100%	250	100%

As can be seen from the table 4.10., both English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect* occur in three basic sentence types that both English and Vietnamese share in common,

namely, simple sentence, complex sentence, and compound sentence consisting of syndetic and asyndetic compound. Notwithstanding, the frequency of each type of sentence, is quite different in English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect*. The most popular sentence type used in English proverbs expressing *cause-effect* is simple sentence, taking up the highest frequency with 39.6% ($N_E = 99$). Meanwhile, this kind of sentence only makes up 14.8% ($N_V = 37$) in Vietnamese proverbs of *cause-effect*. However, in Vietnamese proverbs, compound sentences appear most frequently ($N_V = 185$ # $F_V = 74\%$) compared to the least popular in English ($N_E = 27$ # $F_E = 10.8\%$).

It is noted that there is a statistically considerable difference between English and Vietnamese proverbs in terms of syndetic and asyndetic compounds: $N_E = 24$ # $F_E = 9.6\%$ Vs $N_V = 57$ # $F_V = 22.8\%$ for syndetic compounds, $N_E = 3$ # $F_E = 1.2\%$ compared to $N_V = 128$ # $F_V = 51.2\%$ for asyndetic compound.

Complex sentence ranks second in English proverbs expressing *cause-effect* with $N_E = 90$ # $F_E = 36\%$; whereas, in Vietnamese, it makes up only with $N_V = 28$ # $F_V = 11.2\%$. Aphoristic sentence, which does not exist in Vietnamese ($N_V = 0$ # $F_V = 0\%$), has a considerable amount of 34 ($N_E = 34$ # $F_E = 13.6\%$) in English proverbs. The main reason for the above syntactical differences could be due to the difference between English and Vietnamese as well as the significant difference in sentence classification, especially in compound sentence between the two languages and the underlying cultural characteristics of the two nations.

Table 4.11. Frequency of Semantic Fields of Proverbs
Expressing Cause-Effect in English and in Vietnamese

Semantic Fields	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage
Individual Behaviour	62	24.8%	59	23.6%
Experience & Learning	29	11.6%	22	8.8%
Working & Business	54	21.6%	41	16.4%
Social Relationship	38	15.2%	52	20.8%
Family & Marriage Relationship	21	8.4%	34	13.6%
Saving	26	10.4%	16	6.4%
Human Virtues & Vices	20	8.0%	26	10.4%
Total	250	100%	250	100%

The first point that could be realized from the statistical table 4.11. is that proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in both language cover all the semantic fields as have been examined in the thesis, namely individual behaviour, experience & learning, working & business, social relationship, family & marriage relationship, saving and human virtues & vices. The second point is the semantic field of *individual behaviour* takes up the highest percentage in both English proverbs expressing *cause-effect* and their Vietnamese counterpart ($N_E = 62 \# F_E = 24.8\% \text{ Vs } N_V = 59 \# F_V = 23.6\%$); whereas, there is a difference in the number and percentage of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in other semantic fields in the two languages.

The significant differences in the semantic fields of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and Vietnamese lie on the semantic fields of *family & marriage relationship* ($N_E = 21 \# F_E =$

8.4% $V_S N_V = 34 \# F_V = 13.6\%$) and *social relationship* ($N_E = 38 \# F_E = 15.2\%$ $V_S N_V = 52 \# F_V = 20.8\%$). The main reason is that Vietnamese language belongs to *collectivism* culture [48] where family and marriage as well as social relationships are highly appreciated whereas English language belongs to *individualism* culture where social relationships between people in a society in general and *family & marriage* relationship in particular are not as highly as valued. This difference in cultural features is reflected through these semantic fields in English and Vietnamese *cause-effect* proverbs.

It is also noted that the findings of the thesis show that beside a number of proverbs of *cause-effect* conveying the contradictory meanings in both English and Vietnamese, there are many *cause-effect* proverbs of similar or identical meaning in English and Vietnamese in spite of their diversity in form and images used in English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect* due to the difference in culture and other factors of natural and social environment as well as the difference between the two languages.

4.3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, the linguistic features of English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect* are described, discussed and compared to find out their similarities and differences in terms of semantic and syntactic features. In terms of syntactic features, a comparison has been made between types of sentences in English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect*: simple, compound and complex sentences. In terms of semantic features, the contrastive analysis has uncovered the dissimilarities in the semantic fields of proverbs of *cause-effect* in English and in Vietnamese, namely,

individual behaviour, experience & learning, working & business, social relationship, family and marriage relationship, saving and human virtues and vices. In the next chapter, the thesis gives the final conclusions and implications for those who are interested in English and Vietnamese in general and Vietnamese and English proverbs of *cause-effect* in particular.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned in the previous chapters, this thesis examines the semantic and syntactic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and in Vietnamese. This helps the learners of English and Vietnamese find out the differences or similarities between English and Vietnamese *cause-effect* proverbs so that they could translate these proverbs correctly and effectively.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

In order to help learners of English and Vietnamese and teachers of English and Vietnamese as a foreign language overcome possible problems, the following implications could be put forward from the results of the study.

5.2.1. Implications for Teachers

From the results of the study, some implications for teaching could be drawn as follows:

- The semantic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and Vietnamese are useful for teachers in teaching grammar, especially in teaching types of sentences. Thanks to the syntactic similarities between English and Vietnamese, teachers can help learners easily remember the structures. On the other hand, teachers could point out the syntactic differences between the two languages so that learners can distinguish and avoid making mistakes.

- The results of semantic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and Vietnamese also contribute to the foreign language teaching. Teachers are provided with two approaches of

teaching the meaning of proverbs. First of all, teachers can teach learners kinds of meaning of proverbs of cause-effect, i.e. teachers teach them whether a proverb of cause-effect has literal meaning or figurative meaning or both literal and figurative meaning and then explain these kinds of meanings one by one. For the second approach, teachers can have educational lessons based on categories of proverbs of *cause-effect* in positive, negative, or positive-negative semantic types.

- Last but not least, based on the findings of semantic-syntactic characteristics of English and Vietnamese proverbs of *cause-effect* withdrawn from the thesis, teachers can help learners to find out Vietnamese equivalent proverbs of *cause-effect* for English ones and vice versa so that learners could understand and remember proverbs easily and quickly. This finding is also one of great help to learners in translating proverbs expressing *cause-effect* from English to Vietnamese and vice versa.

5.2.2. Implications for Learners

Learners could benefit from studying proverbs in other languages in many ways. First and foremost, the learning of proverbs could be a key element in the language acquisition process. Second, proverbs could provide a snapshot of other cultures which allow a more thorough understanding of the native and the foreign language and their cultures. Indeed, Vietnamese learners of English have obtained a profound knowledge of English proverbs, they could improve the mutual understanding in a conversation between them and their friends from English-speaking countries; thus, misunderstanding and communication breakdown could be avoided. Last but not least, learning proverbs of the target language enables a

better insight into authentic texts and help learners really enjoy their reading. It is really frustrating if they have to constantly stop and check for the meaning of a proverb that they come across in the process of reading an English novel in which a full range of idioms and proverbs is used. In this case the pre-learning of English proverbs is extremely beneficial to learners' getting the full pleasure and understanding.

To sum up, both teachers and learners could gain a lot of benefits thanks to the teaching and learning proverbs. The idea of teaching and learning proverbs in addition to other linguistic features is becoming more and more appealing to all of us.

5.2.3. Implications for Translating proverbs

As mentioned in the previous chapters, proverbs reflect the cultural features of each nation which are closely related to its cultural tradition. Therefore, comprehending proverbs is the best way to thoroughly know a certain language and deeply understand the people speaking that language through cultural and historical background reflected through proverbs. However, in translation, understanding proverbs in general and proverbs of *cause-effect* in particular as well as finding the translational equivalents is not an easy task due to the use of rhetorical devices of different cultural images used in proverbs of *cause-effect*. In this thesis, some translation hints relating to literal translation and figurative translation could be given to help Vietnamese learners of English deal with proverbs of *cause-effect*.

- *Literal Translation*

Literal translation is the transference of a text directly from one language to another when the original version almost accords with

the target language in terms of vocabulary and grammatical structure. The aim of the literal translation is to preserve the national flavour of the source language proverbs, while not violating the linguistic principles of the target language. Many English proverbs could be translated in a literal way, for example: “Prevention is better cure”. For this kind of translation, the original form and images of English proverbs are unchanged and there is no confusion in meaning. It is a preferred version of translation because it fulfills the function of communicative translation yet retains the original flavour of the source proverb.

• *Figurative Translation*

Because of the influence of cultural factors, we cannot keep the literal meaning and imagery meaning of the source language. Under such a condition, we could change the original image into the target language image in order to express the implied meaning. Many proverbs are generally used figuratively and have an implied meaning. Accordingly, if proverbs are always translated literally, readers could be puzzled. Take the English proverb “Better lose the saddle than a horse” as an example and its Vietnamese translational equivalent “Tham một đĩa, bỏ cả mâm”. Therefore, translators should make a great effort to adjust the figurative image, rhetorical devices and the cultural characteristics of the original proverbs to fit those of the target language proverbs. Dealing with the figurative meaning of a proverb, I would like to suggest some approaches to the translation of proverb of *cause-effect*:

+ Interpreting the denotative meaning of the given proverb of *cause-effect* in the source language.

+ Clarifying the connotative meaning of the proverb of *cause-effect* mentioned.

+ Elucidating or explaining the general meaning of the proverbs in the given context in terms of semantic features.

+ Finding the Vietnamese equivalent under the light of the cultural characteristics.

5.3. LIMITATIONS & SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.3.1. Limitations

Due to the shortage of time, reference materials as well as the limited knowledge of the researcher, the study has got certain restrictions. Firstly, the collection of 250 proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and 250 in Vietnamese used as the corpus of this study, to some extent, cannot generalize the features of English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect*. Secondly, the study mainly investigates the semantic and syntactic features of proverbs expressing *cause-effect* in English and in Vietnamese, so it cannot cover other aspects such as pragmatic or rhetorical features. Last but not least, in this study, proverbs of *cause-effect* is the only one sub-type of proverbs chosen for the data collection. Other sub-types of proverbs expressing *contradiction* or *others* are not included in the study.

5.3.2. Suggestions for Further Studies

This thesis is an attempt to make a detailed analysis of semantic and syntactic features of English and Vietnamese proverbs expressing *cause-effect*. Additionally, much of our effort has been made to point out the similarities and differences between these features in *cause-effect* proverbs in English and Vietnamese.

However, for the limitation of time and material, the study is by no means incomplete and there still remain some aspects for further investigation:

- A contrastive study of semantic and syntactic features of proverbs expressing the *contradiction* in English and in Vietnamese.

- A contrastive study of semantic and pragmatic features of proverbs expressing the *contradiction* in English and in Vietnamese.