

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
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**A STUDY ON SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC  
FEATURES OF IDIOMS CONTAINING WORDS  
DENOTING COLORS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE**

**Field: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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**MASTER THESIS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND  
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(SUMMARY)**

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. RATIONALE**

To some people, learning English is such a hard process when they have to deal with a large number of unfamiliar vocabularies and strange structures everyday. Slangs and idioms, therefore, are also big matters causing them many troubles. The English language is full of idioms (over 15,000). Native speakers of English use idioms all the time, often without realising that they are doing so. This means that communication with native speakers of English can be quite a confusing experience. In this reasearch, the author will make an effort to focus the topic on one popular type of English idiom, i.e Idiom containing word denoting colors.

It is said that mastering idioms means you're using and understanding the language more like a native speaker would. The tough part about mastering idioms is that knowing all the individual words may not help you to understand the meaning of the phrase. Idioms of colors in English and Vietnamese are too because we have many idiomatic expression involving the whole range of colors in both languages. For example, knowing the meanings of “roll out” or “carpet” may not help you to understand the meaning of “roll out the red carpet: put on a special welcome for an important person.

Therefore, in an attempt to learn and use idioms effectively, it is such a necessary task for language learners to take the culture and the habit of native speakers into consideration

#### **1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **1.2.1. Aims**

The aim of this thesis is to make a contrastive analysis between English and Vietnamese Idioms containing words related to Colors in terms of semantic and pragmatic features in order to help English users easily understand and use this kind of idiom more effectively and confidently in various contexts. Moreover, this study also aims to show the affect of Social and Culture behaviors in using Idioms denoting words related to Color in the two languages: Vietnamese and English.

### **1.2.2. Objectives**

The objectives of the research are:

- identify and describe semantic and pragmatic feature of Idioms containing words denoting Color in both Vietnamese and English.

- point out similarities and differences of Idioms containing words denoting Colors in terms of semantic and pragmatic features in English versus Vietnamese.

- indicate social and cultural factors influencing on ways Vietnamese and English people use Idioms related to Colors.

- provide Vietnamese learners of English with a practical knowledge of the field to enable them to thoroughly understand, effectively and naturally use Idioms of Colors in listening, speaking, writing, reading and especially, in translating.

### **1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are Semantic features of Idioms containing words related to Colors in English and Vietnamese?

2. What are Pragmatic features of Idioms containing words related to Colors in English and Vietnamese?

3. What are the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese Idioms containing words related to Colors in terms of semantic and pragmatic aspects ?

#### **1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study is organized into five chapters:

Chapter 1 (Introduction), Chapter 2 (Literature Review and Theoretical Background), Chapter 3 (Research Design and Methodology), Chapter 4 (Findings and Discussions) and Chapter 5 (Conclusions and Implications).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Words denoting colors and idioms of colors have so far arrested much attentions of reseachers. Dealing with the problems of colors, there was a remarkable thesis named “An Investigation on the Semantics Features of Words Denoting Color- Black, White, Blue, Green, Red, Yellow”. (Nguyen Thi Thu Suong- Hanoi, 1999). Also, Truong Thanh Ngoc and Mai Nguyen Dieu Khoa in their research have made a great contribution to this topic. In the study by Truong Thanh Ngoc (2003), she mentioned semantic features of WDsC in English and Vietnamese: black, white, green, red, yellow, blue, brown, grey, orange, pink and purple. However, in other study by Mai Nguyen Dieu Khoa (2003), she focused her attention on the study of metaphoric meaning of words denoting colour which includes six main colours.

Besides, there has been an interesting small research paper by Nancy Alvarado and Kimberly A. Jameson on the Internet named “The Use of Modifying Terms in the Naming and Categorized of Color Appearances in English and Vietnamese” (Journal of Cognition and Culture), they exmanined the use of modifier in English and Vietnamese colors. Nguyen Thi Dieu Hao(2005), found that people tend to use idioms denoting colour words in daily communication. Phan Thi Le Huyen marked a new trend with contrastive analysis on both semantic and pragmatic features of the adjective “Black” in English and “Đen” in Vietnamese in compound words, collocation and idiomatic phrases. In term of Red, Bui

Thi Thanh Hien studied the metaphor related to Red in English and Vietnamese. Most of them only systemized words denoting colors in English and focused on the semantics features of them.

## **2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.2.1. Definition of Idiom**

Idioms are a unique feature of languages and may differ from each language, culture and country. Idioms may contain words which denote people, objects or animals. Learning idioms of a language makes it easier and fun to understand and use the language. English language is supposed to contain about 25,000 idiomatic expressions. It is important to learn the idioms of a language to avoid any misunderstandings in the use of words.

### **2.2.2. Principal Features of Idioms**

There are two features that identify an idiom: firstly, we cannot deduce the meaning of the idiom from the individual words; and secondly, both the grammar and the vocabulary of the idiom are fixed, and if we change them we lose the meaning of the idiom

### **2.2.3. Classification of Idioms**

### **2.2.4. Semantic Theory**

In linguistics, semantics is the study of how words convey meaning. A semantics theory attempts to account for the relationship between a word, or signifier, and the real-world object, idea, etc. that it describes, which is called the signified or denotation

*a. Formalist Semantics Theory*

*b. Cognitive Semantics Theory*

*c. The Categories of Meaning in Semantics*

### **2.2.5. Pragmatic Theory**

*a. Pragmatic with Human Language Behavior*

*b. Aspects Of Language Studied In Pragmatics***2.2.6. Relationship between Semantic and Pragmatic**

Semantics and pragmatics are both related to the way meaning is derived from language. Semantics studies the meaning that words and certain combinations of words hold for both the speaker and listener. Pragmatics deals with how the context in which words are used can dictate their true meaning at that particular time. Semantics and pragmatics are closely related as they both are attempts to understand the meaning of language beyond the literal definition of words.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

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

The research design is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

#### **3.2. RESEARCH METHODS**

With the aim of achieving the set goal, several methods are simultaneously employed such the descriptive method, the analytic method, the inductive method.

#### **3.3. DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLES**

Firstly, i determined some criteria to select the samples, namely samples of idioms containing words denoting colors in English and Vietnamese. They must be from verbal or written sources, be dialogues and contain unadjacent pair.

Secondly, with such set criteria I collected 100 samples of idioms containing words denoting colors in English and 100 in Vietnamese.

Then, the distinctive features of English and Vietnamese idioms containing words denoting colors were found and analysed.

#### **3.4. DATA COLLECTION**

For the data, I selected 200 samples (Vietnamese and English) of idioms containing words denoting color from sources as follow:

- English dictionaries, English and Vietnamese idioms and proverbs books
- English/ Vietnamese teaching textbooks
- Pragmatics coursebooks
- Semantic coursebooks
- Academic websites

### **3.5. DATA ANALYSIS**

In my thesis, 100 samples of idioms containing words denoting colors in English and 100 ones in Vietnamese selected for the analysis are in the form of written texts in the sources provided. They are analysed in terms of pragmatics and semantic and the compared and contrasted in order to find out the similarities and differences between them.

### **3.6. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The idiomatic expressions I was looking for were those, which included one or more words from the following list:

Black, Blue, Green, Grey/gray, Orange, Red, Violet, White, Yellow.

The terms are all used frequently and I, therefore, anticipated that idiomatic expressions would not be difficult to find.

#### 4.1. THE SEMANTIC FEATURES OF IDIOMS CONTAINING WORDS DENOTING COLOR IN ENGLISH AND IN VIETNAMESE

##### 4.1.1 The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing Words Denoting Color in English

###### a. *The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Black”*

English people were familiar with this color in every daily activities because this was the color of sky at night when there was no light at all. Black colour is not used to convey positive meanings : as black as night/ as black as the ace of spades. Most of the phrases in the group are associated with disapproval (black sheep of the family, black look), sadness and gloom (black mood), illegality (black economy, blackmail) and evil (black deeds, black as hell).

###### b. *The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “white”*

Contrary to black, white usually has a positive connotation. It's easy to find this color in many popular idioms of Westerners therefore people put this color next to many familiar things in daily life to express what they want to say, for example “ as white as

snow”, “white as a sheet” .... In English, when someone mentions something “ in black and white”, they will aim at something clear, undeniable, i.e in the example : “I put down my complaint in black and white.”.

**c. *The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Red”***

– To be as red as a beetroot indicates deep embarrassment. Red as a lobster, on the other hand, is used to describe sunburn.

– Red with anger or to see red indicates the rush of blood to the face associated with anger.

– A red letter day is a holiday, a cause for celebration. Calendars typically have holidays marked in red ink whereas other days are in black.

– To be caught red-handed. In this idiom, the colour red originally referred to blood

**d. *The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Green”***

Green is the anticipation of things to come. It is also the signal of safe. In the popular idiom “give (someone) the green light” , the speaker aim to to give the hearer a permission/ promise to proceed with a project. Futhermore, the idioms which contain the word green is sometimes indicate anger , jealousy and envy. These are “green with envy” and the “green-eyed monster”.

**e. *The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Blue”***

Unexpected events can be said to come like “a bolt from the blue” or “out of the blue”, and are thus compared to a lightning bolt appearing in a clear blue sky – not a dark, stormy one where it might be expected. Infrequent events are said to occur “once in a blue moon”.

***f. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Yellow”***

Cowardly people are said to “have a yellow streak”. The idiom “yellow-bellied” in the sentence: “The man is yellow-bellied and is never willing to fight for what is right” also shares the same meaning to name a man with timid and coward characteristics.

***g. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Violet” / “Purple”***

In England and the United States, violet is the color most commonly associated with the extravagant, the individualist, ambiguity, the unconventional, and the artificial. The popular idiom “not a shrinking violet” is used to refer to someone who is anything but shy.

***h. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Orange”***

The author found several expressions with orange colour; however, only one proved to be a pure idiom: (all) “Lombard street to China orange”. The remaining expressions collected during the preliminary search in dictionaries were excluded from the further corpora search, as explained in Chapter 2. The idiom (all) “Lombard street to China orange” is described as old-fashioned, but no information was found as to when it was coined.

***i. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “ Gray/ grey”***

Apart from the idiom “gray matter”, where the colour may be attributed simply to the colour of neurons and brain in general, the expressions in this group suggest that the situation or entity that they connote is somewhat shady, illegal or immoral. Grey matter here

means brain or intelligent. “Grey area” is a situation, where the rules are unclear and it is difficult or impossible to say what is right and what is wrong.

#### **4.1.2 The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing Words Denoting Color in Vietnamese**

##### ***a. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Đen”***

English idioms are favored of black color and so are Vietnamese ones. In English, Black is the colour of mourning whereas this color represents for something unlucky, unfortunate: “Đen bạc đồ tình”, “Đen như đít chảo” ( as black as the back of saucepan)

Black in Vietnamese idiom is sometimes used to show something unclear, something bad. This concept of meaning can be found in some idioms “Ăn đen ở bạc” (to behave ungratefully) or “Thay đen đổi trắng”...

Furthermore, it is different that black in Vietnamese is used to make a comparison to describe color : “Đen như bô hóng” ( as black as shoot), “Đen như than” (as black as coal), “Đen như quạ” (as black as crow).

##### ***b. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Trắng”***

It is a fact that when we are sick, we lack blood, which makes our complexion not pinkish but pale white. Too much plain white without other colors causes a feeling of monotony, emptiness and loss: “Trắng bệt như ma”, “Đầu trắng khăn tang”

Influenced by Western culture, white also has some positive associations. Beside the red traditional aodai, brides often wear white dresses in wedding. Students go to school in white uniform.

Therefore, there are many Vietnamese idioms containing “white” with positive meaning: “Thanh thiên bạch nhật”, “Giấy trắng mực đen”, “Làm rõ trắng đen”.

***c. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Đỏ”***

It is the color of luck: “Đen bạc đỏ tình”

The Vietnamese call it the prosperous sign. The red also symbolizes the success, luck. We can see this in some phrases popularly used by Vietnamese people such as “số đỏ”, “vận đỏ”, “bằng đỏ” or in the following idiom: “Chê vò vẫn thua vận đỏ”.

In addition, when we want to express somebody who does something wrong, we often use the color red to describe his face. So there is such idiom “become red-faced” in English and “Mặt đỏ như gấc”, “đỏ mặt tía tai”, “mặt đỏ như Trương Phi” in Vietnamese. That’s also the reason why Vietnamese people use “red” as a symbol of human’s anger

***d. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Xanh”***

In Vietnamese idioms, there’s no distinction between what’s so-called “xanh da trời” ( blue) and “xanh lá” ( green), therefore, green and blue in English idioms were used with the same name “xanh” in Vietnamese ones.

“Xanh” in Vietnamese represents for something quiet, peaceful : “ Non xanh nước biếc” ( a very beautiful landscape), “Xanh biếc giậu tằm xuân”. It is also used to describe something or someone that is still young because “xanh” is the color of something unripe and not ready to be eaten. Vietnamese contains many idioms modified for this concept: “Lá xanh chồi biếc”, “ Kẽ tóc bạc tiền người đầu xanh”

In addition, “xanh” sometimes was used to describe a person in a bad mood, pale and lack of vitality: “Mặt xanh như gà cắt tiết” (The face is as purple as a stacked chicken), “Mặt xanh như tàu lá”.

***e. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Vàng”***

In the old day, yellow was only favored by King and his family, therefore we can easily see this in some popular phrases or idioms: “Lá ngọc cành vàng”, the concept of this idiom comes from a girl, or a woman who has a higher position in society, “Vàng thau lẫn lộn”, “vàng” in this idiom means gold.

This color term is used to indicate a very good characteristic of a person i.e bravery and constancy. This feature is proved via these following idioms: “Lửa thử vàng, gian nan thử sức”, “Gan vàng dạ ngọc” ( a person who is of a brave heart and an iron will)

***f. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Tím”/ “Tía”***

Tím/ Tía is used in most of Vietnamese idioms with the same meaning, that is anger:

- “Giận tím gan” ( be purple with suppressed anger)
- “(Giận) Đỏ mặt tía tai” (to be purple with rage)
- “Bầm gan tím ruột” (terribly angry)

***g. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Xám”***

Cam is the color of orange fruit. In general, an Orange hue is a warm, happy color. Because it's a mixture of two colors, a more Yellow/Orange will tend to create color meanings more closely associated with Yellow. That is the main reason why the author can't find any source of document mentioning to this color in Vietnamese

idiom.

***h. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Xám”***

“Xám” in Vietnam is the color of ash. From the concept that ash is the only thing to remain after wood was totally burnt, this hue is used to indicate something sad, something destroyed, something broken. This feature of meaning can be seen clearly in some popular phrase such as “xám xịt” (leaden), “xám ngắt”, “xám như tro”

**4.2.1. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing Words Denoting Color in English**

***a. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Black”***

- Dad: “Shut up and go away! No where here for you, black sheep!”

In this argument between a dad and his son, the dad seemed to be very angry with his son. Out of control, he called the boy “black sheep”. In the first part, the idiom “black sheep” was said to indicate someone who is thought to be a bad person by the rest of their family.

- “Pat Fitzgerald, who was nearly as black as the ace of spades, laughed and shook his head. “Charlie, Charlie,” Mr. Grace said, as if very sad. “Only you can save his life”.

In this context, some cristics said that, the idiom “as black as the ace of spades” shares a little bit thought of race discrimination.

***b. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “White”***

- To the King, after his little princess left the country, he felt terrible this morning and in the mirror he looked himself as white as a sheet.

- My cousin came home one night shaking..and white as a ghost..! She was with 2 of her girl friends..and she had jus dropped off a friend at home....

As can be seen that the two idioms in two different context “as white as a sheet” and “white as a ghost” nearly share the same meaning that someone gets really frightened . When you're white as a sheet, you look "like you've seen a ghost," and that expression also sounds right and can be replaced with each other in some cases. Perhaps there is a strong connection between whiteness and ghosts in English.

***c. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Red”***

If anyone gets angry, more blood is pressed to their face and makes it turn red. That’s why we have these idioms “see red” (be very angry), “a red face”, “go as red as a beet”, “red in the face.

Red is effectively used to draw our attention, to catch our eyes. “Red bull’s eye” (hông tâm) is the centre of the target that you shoot or throw at. “In the red” means being in financial difficulty, in debt.

We have an English idiom “a red rag to a bull”. For example:

“Tom, Don’t talk about politics. It’s like a red rag to a bull. You’re too young”. In this case, the teacher warned his student Tom against talking about politics.

***d. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Green”***

Color Green was used to describe the color of a jealous face.

“When George brought home his expensive car, his neighbor Bill was green with envy”

It is said that green color in English represents for jealousy so the idiom “green with envy” in this context shares the same meaning.

When George by himself a luxurious car, it's easy to make his neighbor get jealous.

"My supervisor has read my proposal. Now I have the green light to start the project".

Like a green traffic light, which gives permission to start, this idiom means allowing someone to go ahead with their job

***e. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word "Blue"***

This is the color of sadness and depression:

- "After seeing the old house in such bad shape, I had the blues for weeks" or "Patricia tends to feel blue around the holidays"

Futhermore, it is very popular to idicate something random, something comes unexpectedly:

"Out of the blue, a few days ago all my sub-menus pop-up on the left and not the right. If I pull the FILE menu down and go to NEW or SEND, the sub-menu opens on the left of the top menu instead of the right side.

"I re-booted my Windows 76 computer but it still doing it. Can some one please help me fix this major annoying problem I have?"

***f. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word "Yellow"***

English people tend to use diom containing color "Yellow" to indicate a person with cowardice. In other cases, yellow in almost every culture represents sunshine, happiness, and warmth. Take into a consideration in some context below:

- "Well, this little yellow streak has the gall to blow in to-day and say he'll take Carthey's place."

- Alleyne gave a gulp in his throat, for the yellow streak seemed to pass through the man; but he still ran forward.

***g. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Violet”/“Purple”***

Despite the fact that violet color is favored very much by English, it is not used widely in idiom. On collecting data for my thesis, unluckily, the author just find only one idiom containing this color, i.e “shrinking violet” This one, however seems to be very popular in daily speaking and novel. In contexts, shrinking violet is used to indicate a shy person who doesn't express their views and opinions:

- There was a time when Kate was a **shrinking violet**, too timid to make a stand - but not anymore.

***h. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Orange”***

The meanings of Orange tend to be quite ambiguous, being neither considered positive or negative. The pure Orange hue is a Secondary Color. Because it's a mixture of two colors, a more Yellow/Orange will tend to create color meanings more closely associated with Yellow. Perhaps, it is the main reason why English idioms containing “Orange” are rarely used in context.

***i. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Gray/grey”***

Though there are so many idioms containing color “Gray” in English, only some of them are used in daily speaking or novel especially the idiom “get gray hair”. This one is easily found in numerous context as follow:

- The younger, on the contrary, not wishing to become the

wife of an old man, was equally zealous in removing every gray hair she could find.

- He was a very lean man, of no more than average height, with gray hair cut short and a stubbly gray moustache.

#### **4.2.2 The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing Words Denoting Color in Vietnamese**

##### ***a. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Đen”***

One of the most popular meaning of this color expressed in Vietnamese idiom is bad luck. It can be easily seen in following context:

- Mèn dết oi, lâu quá hồng gặp thằng Tư Can nghe, dạo này nghe đồn phát lên dữ lắm hả mậy. Cờ bạc đỏ như gạch

Moreover, as mentioned above, it is different that black in Vietnamese is used to make a comparison to describe color. This makes the meaning of this color more various in some cases such as: “Đàn ruồi bu lại, thi nhau trút vào mặt Hoàng, biến nó thành một màu đen như đít chảo...”

##### ***b. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Trắng”***

In daily speaking, like black, it's simple that “white” is just used to make comparison to describe level of color: *Người đàn bà sau mấy tháng ở cử ngày càng mẫn mòi hơn. Nước da trắng như trứng gà bóc.*

Vietnamese people tend to use this color to mean something true or clear: *Tháng Hai con bà mậy! Tao ghi hết trên giấy trắng mực đen. Và tao bảo mậy, không còn số nào*

##### ***c. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Đỏ”***

Red in Vietnamese idiom usually represents for the good luck or prosperity

- Tao nghĩ mày nên dừng ngay cái trò đỏ đen này lại Nam ạ, có được gì đâu.

- Sao lại không được, đen bạc đỏ tình, mày không nghe à.

The red also symbolizes the success, luck. We can see this in some phrases popularly used by Vietnamese people such as “ số đỏ”, “vận đỏ”, “băng đỏ”

In addition, this color was used in idiom to indicate some embarrassing situations:

- Mặt mày tôi đỏ như Trương Phi, hai tay run bần bật vì tức giận.

#### ***d. The Semantic Features of Idioms Containing word “Xanh”***

First, “xanh” in our language is favored by most of the people to describe fear:

- Quan Huyện sợ xanh mặt, đổ hết lỗi lên đầu của Hồ Phong Ông. Nhưng Phong Ông tự thấy việc mình làm không thẹn với lòng nên hết sức bình tĩnh

#### ***e. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Vàng”***

Idioms containing color “vàng” are widely used to indicate something precious, something belongs to royal, nothing can be compared. Take a consideration into this situations:

“Vậy chú vào lễ các cụ rồi nằm xuống đây. Đừng ngại, mình dân vận cử chứ đâu phải dạng lá ngọc cành vàng đâu chú”. – ông Phủ nói với ông Tham

#### ***f. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word***

### ***“Tím”/ “Tía”***

On finding the data, the author could only find one context where the idiom “Đỏ mặt tía tai” (be purple with rage) was used to describe an embarrassing situation: “Tôi nuốt nước bọt đỏ mặt tía tai giờ cuốn Hoàng tử bé cao hơn để hòng che đi khuôn mặt mình. Xấu hổ muốn độn thổ luôn”

### ***g. The Pragmatic Features of Idioms Containing word “Xám”***

It is undeniable that Vietnamese people rarely use idiom containing this color because of some specific culture. “Xám” is not favored and tends to be strange in daily speech of Vietnamese people.

## **4.3. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TERM OF SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE IDIOM CONTAINING WORD DENOTING COLOR**

### **4.3.1 Similarities and differences in term of Semantic feature**

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

Although Vietnam and England do not have the same derivation, it is amazing that both languages use certain familiar images, daily events and phenomena to express the abstract sense thanks to the means of metaphor, simile...

Furthermore, Vietnamese and English idioms containing words denoting colors share some of the same semantic fields such as human personality, human actions/activities, human psychological state, physical state, work, success and value.

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

**Table 4.1: Differences in cognition of Idioms containing color word in English and Vietnamese**

<i>Idioms containing word denoting colors</i>	<i>Prototype (the source domain)</i>	
	<i>English</i>	<i>Vietnamese</i>
1. <i>Black</i>	Darkness	Guilty
2. <i>White</i>	Lightness	Loss
3. <i>Red</i>	Danger	Luck
4. <i>Green</i>	Permission	Youth
5. <i>Blue</i>	Sadness	
6. <i>Orange</i>	Irrelevance	None
7. <i>Violet</i>	Shy person	Anger
8. <i>Grey</i>	Getting older	Dull, Dirt
9. <i>Yellow</i>	Old	Luxury

As can be seen from the table, the popular meaning of idioms containing color in English and Vietnamese differs from each other despite of having so many things in common. In attempt to collect and process the data, the author came to a conclusion that culture is the main factor influencing on the way of using color in idiom of both language, and it also the main reason causing the semantic gap in context.

#### **4.3.2 Similarities and differences in term of Pragmatic feature**

##### *a. Simliarities*

- In the two countries, the three basic color black, white and red are used in context with high frequency.

- In some cases the expressions are the same in some languages and can be understood smoothly basing on the similar concept

***b. Differences***

**Table 4.2: Distribution of idioms containing words denoting color in English and Vietnamese**

<i>Type</i>	<i>English</i>		<i>Vietnamese</i>	
	<i>Occurrence</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Occurrence</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>1. Black</b>	16	16%	22	22%
<b>2. White</b>	15	15%	20	20%
<b>3. Red</b>	16	16%	19	19%
<b>4. Blue</b>	15	15%	21	21%
<b>5. Green</b>	12	12%		
<b>6. Gray/ Grey</b>	7	7%	0	0%
<b>7. Violet/ Purple</b>	7	7%	10	10%
<b>8. Orange</b>	5	5%	0	0%
<b>9. Yellow</b>	7	7%	8	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

We can clearly find that the semantic and pragmatic differences of the eight colors are mainly reflected in their social and symbolic meanings. In another way, we can say that it is different social environment, cultural background and historical period that give those color idioms different meanings.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1. CONCLUSIONS**

In the comprehension of English and Vietnamese idioms that contain color words, there are similarities among different nations. But differences still exist due to the different cultural traditions, historical backgrounds and views of seeing things. Therefore, it is important for language learners to make clear the semantic and pragmatic reflections of such similarities and differences, which can intensify their understanding of the two languages, thus a more effective intercultural communication can be realized.

#### **5.2. IMPLICATIONS**

Provide the language learners both semantic and pragmatic knowledge of comprehending and using idioms containing words denoting colors effectively.

It can help the learners master the different elements in function and distinctive features of such these kinds of idioms in order to contribute to communicative ability efficiently and value the beauty of language with its diversity and variety.

#### **5.3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The number of samples collected is only 200 samples which are not enough to reflect the reality of using idioms containing words denoting color in English and Vietnamese

#### **5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

- An Investigation into Stylistic Devices of Idioms containing color words in English and Vietnamese.

- An Investigation into Linguistic Devices of Idioms containing color words in English and Vietnamese.