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**A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF
CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR OF “SUN”
IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE 20TH CENTURY POEMS**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

In poetry, conceptual metaphor has long been acknowledged as an indispensable device for the writers. It has been used with a primarily decorative purpose to make writings more exciting and beautiful. Under the skillful pen of talented poets, every word of poems seems to be able to dance in the reader's eyes and mind. It wakens human beings' senses up and makes them feel their heart sobbing. Poems likely have potential energy like a restorative remedy which provides us with essential nutrients to strengthen and refresh our spirit, to alleviate our sadness or pain, to save our soul, to raise us up when we are in troubles. In this way, we can console ourselves and feel as if we found a sympathetic friend. Moreover, through meaningful messages of verses conveyed, the readers can learn some lessons about how to make their life more colorful and beautiful.

For a long time, humans' life has a very close connection with natural factors such as river, mountain, mainland, sky, etc... Every phenomenon in nature can become an endless inspiration for poets. And the *sun* is one among them. In poets' artistic eyes, the *sun* is not simply an object giving humans the source of light, but an original poetic image. Beside praising the beauty of the *sun*, they intend to convey different messages by using conceptual metaphor. Let us consider the following examples:

(1.1) Em cu Tai ngủ trên lưng mẹ ơi / Em ngủ cho ngoan đừng
rời lưng mẹ / Mẹ đang tia bắp trên núi Ka Lui / Em ngủ ngoan em,
đừng làm mẹ mỏi / *Mặt trời của bắp* thì nằm trên đồi / *Mặt trời của*

mẹ, em nằm trên lưng (*Khúc hát ru những em bé lớn trên lưng mẹ* - Nguyễn Khoa Điềm)

(1.2) *You are my sun, my stars, and my moon / I owe you everything, plus some / I cherish you and the love you have / If the sun ever fails to rise / If the stars fail to fill the sky / If the moon ever fails to return / I will still treasure you (Still - Amy)*

In example (1.1), “*Mặt trời của bắp*” is the sun of the eternal nature, which brings light and life for all beings as well as freshness for rice, corn, ... From the image of the universal sun, the poet associates with “*mặt trời của mẹ*” or “*em Cu Tai*” – the mother’s child. The child is the mother’s sun, that is her happiness, pride and reason for living. We could call this the *SUN IS A PERSON* conceptual metaphor.

Similarly, in instance (1.2), the image of sun is mentioned twice with different purposes. In the line “*If the sun ever fails to rise*”, *sun* refers to the sun of the universal nature. And in the line “*You are my sun, my stars, and my moon*”, the *SUN IS A PERSON* metaphor is also found. But unlike the Vietnamese example, the sun here refers to the image of a lover who is compared as a potential and warm source of light which shines the writer’s heart. She feels so fascinated and attracted by this light that without it her heart is likely to be icy and cold, which means that her life will become insipid and meaningless. How ardent the poet’s love is!

The difference in the poets’ perception in the above two examples is due to the dissimilar experiences of culture. As a result, I find it interesting to study and explore what actually goes behind the words or phrases related to “*sun*” / “*mặt trời*” in English and Vietnamese poems. This motivates me to conduct the research titled:

A Contrastive Study on Conceptual Metaphor of “Sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th Century Poems.

1.2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study investigates the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems in the light of cognitive linguistics. Moreover, the research tries to find out factors influencing the conceptual metaphors of sun in these two languages.

1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. Aims

- Investigating the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems.
- Finding out the similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems.
- Helping learners have better understanding of conceptual metaphor used in poems, then effectively apply them in their creative writing as well as in poem translation.

1.3.2. Objectives

- To describe the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems.
- To find out the similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the conceptual metaphors of “sun” in English 20th century poems?
2. What are the conceptual metaphors of “mặt trời” in Vietnamese 20th century poems?
3. What are the similarities and the differences in the conceptual metaphors of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems?

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research is conducted with the hope that it could be a practical piece of work to understand conceptual metaphor, especially the conceptual metaphor of “*sun*” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems. What is more, it is expected to facilitate the readers’ understanding of the conceptual metaphor of “*sun*” in English poems and “*mặt trời*” in Vietnamese ones. It could also help teachers and learners of English teach and learn English poetry. Last but not least, it is hoped to be used as a good reference for further studies of conceptual metaphor.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study consists of 5 main chapters as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction.
- Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical background.
- Chapter 3: Research design and methodology.
- Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion.
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Aristotle’s time, despite different viewpoints, classical theorists agreed that metaphor is a matter of language, not a matter of thought and it was studied as a rhetorical device which is not used in daily life.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that conceptual metaphor is pervasive in both thought and language. Lakoff and Turner (1989) used metaphor to show how our mind get hold of the world. Gibbs (2008)

discovered the significance of metaphor in language, thought, culture and artistic expressions. Two years later, Kövecses (2010) summarized the theory of conceptual metaphor as well as the development of conceptual metaphor in the past two decades.

In Vietnam, Lý Toàn Thắng (2005) introduced the history of cognitive linguistics. Phan Thế Hưng (2007) helped the readers to review the theory of conceptual metaphors initiated by Lakoff and Johnson. Trần Văn Cơ (2009) discussed the background of cognitive linguistics. Nguyễn Lai (2009) explained some abstract concepts “misery”, “love” and “ideal” metaphorically expressed in poetry. Phan Văn Hòa (2011) investigated the conceptual metaphor in “Love is a journey” in English and Vietnamese.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Metaphor

a. Traditional Metaphor

In this traditional approach, metaphor is considered as a stylistic device, mostly used in poems and songs. A metaphor is considered as a substitution of words, means of an analogy between the substitution word and the word being substituted. Hence, it is assumed to be an ornament of language which conveys no new information.

b. Conceptual Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (2010) assumed that: “*The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.*” (p.5) and gave an explanation that conceptual metaphors are mostly used to describe rather abstract conceptual domains with conceptual domains that are somewhat easier to comprehend. Ungerer and Schmid (2006) defined the conceptual domains that are generally easier to grasp as source concepts and the conceptualized more abstract

domains as target concepts. Kövecses (2010) had a clearer explanation that “*the source domains are typically more concrete or physical and more clearly delineated concepts than the targets, which tend to be fairly abstract and less-delineated ones*” (p.38). The conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain is called the Source Domain, which the other that is understood this way is the Target Domain.

2.2.2. Classification of Metaphor

a. Structural Metaphor

b. Orientational Metaphor

c. Ontological Metaphor

2.2.3. Metaphorical Mappings

According to Lakoff and Turner (1989), a metaphor, after all, is not a linguistic expression. It is a mapping from one conceptual domain to another, and as such it has a three-part structure: two endpoints (the source and target schemas) and a bridge between them (the detailed mapping). A mapping is the systematic set of correspondences that exist between constituent elements of the source and the target domain. Many elements of target concepts come from source domains and are not pre-existing. To know a conceptual metaphor is to know the set of mappings that applies to a given source-target pairing.

2.2.4. Classification of the Most Prevalent Source Domains and Target Domains

a. Common Source Domains

b. Common Target Domains

2.2.5. Concept of “Sun” and Sun Cognition in Different Cultures

a. Concept of “Sun” and Names Denoting “Sun” in English And Vietnamese

b. Sun Cognition in Different Cultures

2.3. SUMMARY

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis is mainly a descriptive and comparative research using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Quantitative approach was used to present the data in term of frequency of occurrence in percentage of the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese poems. On the contrary, qualitative approach was exploited to classify, describe and analyze the data with the aim at pointing out the similarities as well as the differences in the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems.

In the study, the descriptive method was used to describe the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems. Meanwhile, the comparative method was employed to point out the similarities as well as the differences in the conceptual metaphor of “sun” in these poems between the two languages.

3.2. RESEARCH METHODS

3.2.1. Data Collection

To conduct the research, 400 samples of conceptual metaphor of “*sun*” (200 in English and 200 in Vietnamese) were collected from 300 poems in the 20th century (150 in each language). All of these samples were gathered from a variety of poems on different reliable websites and poem collections.

3.2.2. Description of Samples

In the research, 200 samples of conceptual metaphor of “*sun*” in English and 200 ones of “*mặt trời*” in Vietnamese were gathered from English and Vietnamese 20th century poems from poem collections and the Internet. They were collected on the following criteria:

- The samples have to be related to “*sun*”/ “*mặt trời*”.
- The samples have to be extracted from poems written by famous poets in the 20th century.
- The sources where the samples are taken should be reliable.

3.2.3. Instrument

To collect the relevant samples, many types of tools were used such as Microsoft Word, Foxit Reader softwares as well as Google search engine. Beside these instruments, tables were exploited to support for the results of analysis and the percentage.

3.2.4. Data Analysis

3.3. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.4. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

3.5. SUMMARY

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF “SUN” IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE 20TH CENTURY POEMS

4.1.1. Sun is a person:

This is an ontological metaphor in which the target domain - *sun* is described in terms of the source domain - *person*. In the conceptual metaphor SUN IS A PERSON, we found its sub-categories as follows:

- a. Sun is a friend*
- b. Sun is a lover*

c. *Sun is a man*

d. *Sun is a woman*

e. *Sun is a child*

4.1.2. Sun is a plant

It is a kind of structural metaphor. In Sun is a plant metaphor, the properties of *plant* - the source domain is mapped onto *sun* - the target one, which is clarified by the following metaphorical mapping:

PLANT		SUN
The plant sprouts	⇒	The sun rises
The growth of the plant	⇒	The brightness of the sunlight
The ripeness of the fruit	⇒	The intense heat of the sun
The fruit falls	⇒	The sun sets

4.1.3. Sun is an object

It is a kind of structural metaphor which is seen a lot in both English and Vietnamese poems. In this metaphor, the properties of the source domain - *object* are used to conceptualize the target domain - *sun*.

OBJECT		SUN
The shape of the object	⇒	The shape of the sun
The movement of the object	⇒	The movement of the sun
The material and color of the object	⇒	The color of the sun
The object is old	⇒	The sun fades out
The object falls	⇒	The sun sets
The object sinks	⇒	The sun vanishes

4.1.4. Sun is fire

Another structural metaphor found in both English and Vietnamese corpora is *Sun is fire*. In this metaphor, the target domain - *sun* can be comprehended by means of the structure of the source

domain - *fire*. Based on some similarities of the two domains, we could illustrate the mapping of the conceptual metaphor *Sun is fire* as below:

FIRE		SUN
The fire starts	⇒	The sun rises
The sparks of the fire	⇒	The rays of the sun
The color of the fire	⇒	The color of the sun
The burning level of the fire	⇒	The heat level of the sun
The fire burns down	⇒	The sun fades out
The fire puts out	⇒	The sun sets

4.1.5. Sun is love

The *Sun is love* conceptual metaphor is a set of ontological metaphor in which love is the source domain and sun is the target one. The latter domain – *sun* is understood by means of the former one – *love*. Some identical traits of the two domains can be presented in the following metaphorical mapping:

LOVE		SUN
Love arises	⇒	The sun rises
The color of heart	⇒	The color of the sun
The warmth of love	⇒	The warmth of the sun
The passion of love	⇒	The ardent heat of the sun
Lack of love	⇒	Lack of the sunlight
Love becomes faded	⇒	The sunlight is dim
Love breaks	⇒	The sun sets

4.1.6. Sun is hope

Another ontological metaphor which appears in the corpora is *Sun is hope*. In this case of conceptual metaphor, *sun* – the target domain is comprehended by means of *hope* – the source one. Based on

some similar features of the two domains – *sun* and *hope*, we could come to a conclusion on the set of mapping as follows:

HOPE		SUN
A new beginning	⇒	Sunrise
Rays of hope	⇒	Rays of sun
The feeling of optimism	⇒	The brightness of sun
Full of hope	⇒	Full of sunshine
Hope disappears	⇒	The sun sets

4.1.7. Sun is a container

This is an interesting kind of structural metaphor in which the target domain *sun* is understood as a *container* of love, hope, and life. *Sun is a container* metaphor is found out through the prepositions like “*in*”, “*into*” in English and “*trong*” in Vietnamese. In addition, we could consider *sun as a container* based on some nouns referring to container, for example, “*bình rượu*”, “*chiếc lồng*”, “*cauldron*” (a large deep pot for boiling liquids or cooking food over a fire).

4.1.8. Sun is time

Affected by the cultures, many Western and Vietnamese poets often use the image of *sun* to refer to time. This case belongs to ontological metaphor in which sun is the target domain while time is the source one. For centuries, humans calculate the passage of time by observing the position of the sun in the sky. This method of calculation is called solar time. The fundamental unit of solar time is *day*. From this basic unit, we measure the higher units – *month*, *year* and *season*.

4.1.9. Sun is blood

Sun is blood is a case of structural metaphor, in which the concept *sun* is understood by means of the concept *blood*. The former functions as the target domain while the latter is known as the source

one. In general, we could illustrate the metaphorical mapping of the two domains like this:

BLOOD		SUN
Jets of blood	⇒	Rays of sun
The color of blood	⇒	The color of sun
Blood covers all the body cells	⇒	Sunlight covers all the planet
Blood flows from cell to cell	⇒	Sun moves from East to West
Life ends without blood	⇒	Life ends without sun

4.1.10. Sun is religion

Sun is religion conceptual metaphor is just found in English poems. This is an ontological metaphor in which *sun* – the target domain is understood via the term *religion* – the source domain describing actions, events, states or characteristics.

4.1.11. Sun is revolution

Like *Sun is religion* conceptual metaphor, *Sun is revolution* also belongs to ontological conceptual metaphor in which *sun* – the target domain is comprehended by means of *revolution* – the source domain. While the former occurs only in English poems, the latter is seen only in Vietnamese ones because of different cultural features.

4.1.12. Sunup is happiness, sundown is sadness

This orientational metaphor corresponds with the conceptual metaphor “HAPPY IS UP, SAD IS DOWN” cited as an example by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In this metaphor, *sunup* is conceptualized as *happiness* whereas *sundown* is conceptualized as *sadness*, which is often found in a lot of English and Vietnamese poems about *sun*.

4.1.13. Sunup is sadness, sundown is happiness

This conceptual metaphor is against the metaphor we have just discussed in 4.1.12 above. *Sunup* – an enjoyable moment – is seen as

sadness, meanwhile *sundown* – a dreary moment – is described as *happiness*.

4.2. COMPARISON OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR OF “SUN” IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE 20TH CENTURY POEMS

From 13 cases of conceptual metaphor of “*sun*” found above, we did some calculations of their frequency in each language. And the results are showed in the table below:

Table 4.2. Frequency of Conceptual Metaphor of “Sun” in English and Vietnamese 20th Century Poems

No.	Conceptual Metaphors	English		Vietnamese	
		Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage
1	<i>Sun</i> is a person	67	33.5%	63	31.5%
2	<i>Sun</i> is a plant	4	2%	17	8.5%
3	<i>Sun</i> is an object	21	10.5%	21	10.5%
4	<i>Sun</i> is fire	12	6%	23	11.5%
5	<i>Sun</i> is love	14	7%	12	6%
6	<i>Sun</i> is hope	31	15.5%	27	13.5%
7	<i>Sun</i> is a container	15	7.5%	6	3%
8	<i>Sun</i> is time	10	5%	8	4%
9	<i>Sun</i> is blood	1	0.5%	1	0.5%
10	<i>Sun</i> is religion	6	3%	0	0%
11	<i>Sun</i> is revolution	0	0%	5	2.5%
12	<i>Sunup</i> is happiness,	13	6.5%	10	5%

	<i>Sundown</i> is sadness				
13	<i>Sunup</i> is sadness, <i>Sundown</i> is happiness	6	3%	7	3.5%
Total		200	100%	200	100%

In the conceptual metaphor *sun is a person*, we have divided it into some sub-categories including *sun is a friend*, *sun is a lover*, *sun is a man*, *sun is a woman*, and *sun is a child*. These could be illustrated in the following table:

Table 4.3. Frequency of the Conceptual Metaphor “Sun is a person” in English and Vietnamese 20th Century Poems

No.	Conceptual Metaphors	English		Vietnamese	
		Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage
1	A friend	12	17.9%	7	11.1%
2	A lover	19	28.3%	15	23.8%
3	A man	17	25.4%	15	23.8%
4	A woman	3	4.5%	10	15.9%
5	A child	0	0%	3	4.8%
6	Others	16	23.9%	13	20.6%
Total		67	100%	63	100%

The statistics in tables 4.2 and 4.3 present a lot of remarkable similarities and differences in the two corpora.

4.2.1. Similarities in Conceptual Metaphor of “Sun” in English And Vietnamese 20th Century Poems

First of all, it could be seen that the two languages share a lot of common expressions of conceptual metaphors of “*sun*”, including: *sun*

is a person, sun is a plant, sun is an object, sun is a container, sun is fire, sun is blood, sun is love, sun is hope, sun is time, sunup is happiness, sundown is sadness and sunup is sadness, sundown is happiness. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) mentioned in their work named “*Metaphors We Live By*” that conceptual metaphors are seen in language in our everyday lives, they are widely used and understood all over the world. Therefore, some similarities in the conceptual expressions in the two languages are apparent.

Secondly, among the above expressions of conceptual metaphors of “*sun*”, the *sun is a person* metaphor is found with the highest number in both English and Vietnamese (67 occurrences in English and 63 occurrences in Vietnamese). More interestingly, Table 4.3 displays that in this case of conceptual metaphor, both Western and Vietnamese authors are favor of conceptualizing *sun as a man* than *a woman*. The occurrences of the metaphors *sun is a man* and *sun is a woman* in the two languages are respectively 17 compared to 3 in English and 15 compared to 10 in Vietnamese. The reason for this tendency is that from ancient times to the present, the image of sun is considered as the symbol of strength, power and vehemence, which are the men’s main qualities; whereas, the gentle, charm and mysterious beauty of women is popularly compared to the image of moon. Furthermore, Western and Vietnamese poets also share the same ideas of using *sun as a lover* and *sun as a friend* despite the unequal frequency in the two languages. For them, sun seems to be as beautiful, burning and passionate as a lover. And when no one is beside them, the sun can become their confidant. It is like the savior to get them out of sadness, even despair because of the sun’s beauty and warmth.

Thirdly, in the two corpora, the *sun is hope* metaphor gets the second place with 15.5% in English and 13.5% in Vietnamese. Sun is regarded as a source of life which brings light, joyfulness and hope to all beings. Humans' life has had a strong attachment to the sun for a very long time. Imagine how life is without sun! Just dark and dark. We need sun to live as we need air to breathe. The sunlight, especially at sunrise, gives us the feeling of freshness with full of energy for the day to work and hope for better things in our own life. Accordingly, *sunup* is conceptualized as *happiness* whereas *sundown* is considered as *sadness* found in the two languages regardless of some opposite cases.

Unsurprisingly, English and Vietnamese authors tend to define “*sun*” as time. The frequency of this conceptual metaphor is quite equal in the two languages with 5% in English and 4% in Vietnamese. For thousands of years, the sun has been regarded as the main indicator of the day and the year. Basing on the position and the motion of the sun, people can measure and keep track with the time. Besides, the heat of the sunlight can tell people about parts of the day, specific moments in the day (for example: sunset, sunrise, or noon, ...), and seasons as well.

In a similar way to *sun is time* conceptual metaphor, the conceptualization *sun is love* in the two languages has the proximate rate of 7% in English and 6 % in Vietnamese. This is because the light and the heat from the sun correspond to the passion in love. Sometimes the sunlight is bright like happiness in love, sometimes the sun is extremely hot like the intenseness in love, but sometimes the sun's rays grow dim as if love were about to break.

Interestingly, *sun is an object* and *sun is blood* are the only expressions which have the same occurrences in the two corpora. The number of the sun is an object conceptual metaphor in both languages is also quite big (21 # 10.5%). In the same way, the color of blood is mapped to the color of the sun, which helps to describe sun as blood. However, this metaphor accounts for the least rate with just one case in each language (0.5%).

In conclusion, many conceptual metaphors appear simultaneously in both languages. It seems that English and Vietnamese poets share the way of conceptualizing these types of metaphor and use them in their poems popularly due to the universality and the arbitrariness of language.

4.2.2. Differences in Conceptual Metaphor of “Sun” in English And Vietnamese 20th Century Poems

First and foremost, the statistics in table 4.3 show that the percentage of the *sun is a woman* conceptual metaphor in Vietnamese poems is much higher than that in English poems (15.9% compared to 4.5%). This disproportion is affected by different lifestyles of the two cultural typologies. According to Trần Ngọc Thêm (2004), Western countries are typical of nomadic cultures, whereas Eastern countries are examples for agricultural cultures. While Westerners hold men in high esteem, Easterners (included Vietnamese) highly appreciate women instead. It was long thought that in Vietnam, male's role dominated female's one because of conservative conceptions like “*nam tôn nữ ti*”, “*nhất nam viết hữu, thập nữ viết vô*”, “*tam tông, tứ đức*”, ... In fact, these were influenced by Chinese culture when Confucianism tapped Vietnam. Trần Ngọc Thêm (2004) affirmed that they are wrong ways of thinking. He said: “*Trong truyền thống Việt*

Nam, tinh thần của người nông nghiệp định cư coi trọng ngôi nhà → coi trọng cái bếp → coi trọng người phụ nữ là hoàn toàn nhất quán và rõ nét.” (p. 48). Traditionally, Vietnamese women took responsibility for financial management, which was known as “*tay hòm chìa khóa*” in folk culture. Also, they play the decisive role in educating their children (“*phúc đức tại mẫu*”). Contradictorily, in Western countries, women are not respected. Trần Ngọc Thêm (2004) explained that in ancient Roman times, women were not given their own names. Until now, women in many European countries still follow the custom of bringing their husband's full name in official documents. This custom originates from Christianity legend in which women are only considered as the ribs of men. These different outlooks are an explanation for the dominance of the “*sun is a woman*” metaphor in Vietnamese poems.

The second gripping difference drawn from Table 4.3 is that the case of conceptual metaphor “*Sun is a child*” only occurs in Vietnamese poems. This could be explained on the basis of the two cultural patterns which are suggested by Samovar, Porter, McDaniel and Roy (2015). In their famous book named “*Communication between Cultures*”, the authors stated that in the cultures of Western Europe and North America, *individualism* is a distinctive feature, whereas *collectivism* highlights the cultures of Asia. Accordingly, Vietnam belongs to collectivistic societies. Vietnamese people highly value family cohesion, solidarity and hierarchy. They live in favor of sentiment. Dissimilarly, Westerners puts an emphasis on their personal goals and desires. What is more, in the *Sun is a man* conceptual metaphor, in Vietnamese poems the image of *sun* can be mapped to the image of a father: “*Mẹ ơi! Con thấy tội ghê! / Mặt trời đi lạc biết*

về ngủ đâu?” (Nguyễn Lãm Thắng), or a soldier: “*Ừ có thể anh là mặt trời trong đất / Cháy không nguôi, cháy không biết mình còn...*” (Lâm Thị Mỹ Dạ), or a revolutionary leader: “*Ngày ngày mặt trời đi qua trên lăng / Thấy một mặt trời trong lăng rất đỏ*” (Viễn Phương), or even a teacher: “*Mặt trời hồng giữa xích đạo tình thương / Chiếu rạng ngời son sắc nghĩa hiến chương*” (Tụ Vinh). Nevertheless, in English poems the image of *sun* mainly refers to the image of a friend or a lover. This difference is also under the influence of the two cultural patterns just mentioned above.

Noticeably, the case of conceptual metaphor “*Sun is a plant*” is dominant in Vietnamese poems. Table 4.2 presents that this metaphor accounts for 8.5 % in Vietnamese but just 2% in English. This is due to Vietnam’s agricultural origin. For centuries, Vietnam has still been a country of which agricultural products are a strength. Traditionally, Vietnamese people’s life is closely connected with farming, especially wet-rice growing. They respect nature and live in harmony with nature because their cultivation cannot be productive without the blessing of Nature. This cultural background affects Vietnamese poets’ perception, which leads to the conceptualization “*Sun is a plant*” in many of their works. Especially, kinds of plant they choose to portray are also simple and close to Vietnamese’s culture like rambutans: “*Ngẩng lên vườn chôm chôm đỏ / Trái xoè những tia mặt trời*” (Phan Thị Thanh Nhàn), or palm trees: “*Mặt trời xanh - tàu cọ / Một rừng xanh mặt trời!*” (Mạnh Khoa).

Another considerable difference is that the disparity in frequency of the conceptual metaphor “*Sun is fire*” in both languages. According to the statistics in table 4.2, the percentage of this case in Vietnamese (11.5%) is nearly twice as high as that in English (6%). In

Western and Eastern cultures, fire is a mystical and religious symbol and it has a very significant role in humanity's development. It has not only brought light, warmth to people but also helped them in cooking, heating and protecting against dangerous animals for ages. Besides, it has been used as a tool to help humans invent and develop many things and techniques, ranging from smelting metals to providing enough power to blast ships into space. However, the unequal rate of the conceptual metaphor “*Sun is fire*” proves that the image of fire has a closer connection with Vietnamese culture. In Vietnamese people’s belief, humans are created from five elements: metal, wood, water, fire, earth. Moreover, in the past, fire always accompanied soldiers in wars against enemies. And fire has appeared on the altar of every Vietnamese family for a very long time. Especially, fire plays a key role in the spiritual life of Vietnamese ethnic groups in the Central Highlands. The fire genie is present at all family festivals like longevity congratulation ceremonies and New Year and new rice crop celebrations. On these occasions, villagers dance around a big fire along to the sounds of gongs. Therefore, the dominance of the metaphor “*Sun is fire*” in Vietnamese poems is easily understandable.

Remarkably, the “*Sun is religion*” metaphor appears only in English poems, meanwhile the “*Sun is revolution*” metaphor can be merely seen in Vietnamese ones. This opposition highlights characteristics of two cultures. They are cultural factors that have a great impact on the poets’ perception. Samovar, Porter, McDaniel and Roy (2015) pointed out the connection between culture and perception: “*Perception is culturally determined. We learn to see the world in a certain way based on our cultural background.*” (p. 187). They clarified that “*Perceptions are stored within each human being in the*

form of beliefs and values.” (p. 187). Therefore, religion is an important part of culture and some metaphorical images could be approached by means of religion. As we know, Christianity is a dominant religion in Western countries. Typically, the United States has the largest Christian population in the world, with 75% of polled American adults identifying themselves as Christians in 2015. In addition, according to the 2011 Census, Christianity is the majority religion in the United Kingdom with 60% of the residents are Christians. Thus, the influence of Christianity on Western writers is unavoidable. On the contrary, the 2014 Census reveals that in Vietnam, about 45.3% of the population are associated with folk religion – the ethnic religion of the Vietnamese people, which is a set of local worship traditions devoted to "*spirits*", "*gods*" or "*generative powers*". Most of the citizens are non-religious and they practice the ancestor worship custom – a very popular belief among Vietnamese. For Vietnamese people, ancestors are considered a supreme force because of their dedication and sacrifice for the country which had a long history of battling against the enemy. Together with hierarchy, solidarity, loyalty and patriotism are always in Vietnamese people’s minds. Especially in wartime, revolutionary ideas and in-group’s benefits took priority over everything. These qualities of high moral value have been traditionally preserved from generation to generation. Consequently, the appearance of the “*Sun is revolution*” in Vietnamese poetry is undeniable.

Last but not least, although the conceptual metaphor “*Sun is a container*” are found in both English and Vietnamese, the percentages are not the same. In English, it accounts for 7.5%, but it just occupies 3% in Vietnamese. In addition to the unequal rates, the ways of

expressing the poets' views in “*Sun is a container*” metaphor are different, too. Due to the impact of individualistic culture pattern, Westerners highly value independence, privacy, and self-expression. They are active and assertive to express their own desires and personal rights. Therefore, Western authors usually have a tendency to describe the sun as a container of their dreams and hopes for changes to have better things in their own life, for example: “*don't you wish to melt away? / into the golden sun? / to have a little fun?*” (Desperado), or “*To fling my arms wide / In some place of the sun*” (Langston Hughes), ... In Vietnamese poems, the conceptualization *sun as a container* of dreams and hopes still occurs but almost hopes for in-group's goals like: “*Màu cờ đỏ vẫn thắm màu lòng tôi / Ru em trong ánh mặt trời*” (Diệp Minh Tuyền), or “*Em đứng soi trong ánh mặt trời / Trái đất và em hoà một*” (Bằng Việt). What is more, because of life in harmony with nature, many Vietnamese writers describe sun as a container of simple and familiar things like wild flowers and animals, even kinds of food and drinks from nature, for instance: “*Hang ổ của mặt trời / Sớm chiều mây vỗ cánh / Chim hót mừng không ngơi*” (Phạm Thiên Thu) or “*Tôi sẽ đi góp nhặt từ mặt trời / Những sữa, kem và mật để làm nên rượu ngọt*” (Nhã Ca), ...

In brief, the different experience between the two cultures leads to the poets' dissimilar literature and art perception in general and in conceptual metaphor of “*sun*” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems in particular.

4.3. SUMMARY

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of theories of conceptual metaphor of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Kovesces (2010), we conducted this study with the aim at exploring conceptual metaphors of “*sun*” in English and Vietnamese 20th century poems. In the end, we have found out totally thirteen cases of this conceptual metaphor. We have made effort into classifying the thirteen cases of conceptual metaphor whether they belong to structural metaphor, ontological metaphor, orientational metaphor or integrated metaphor and giving various metaphorical mappings from the source domain and the target domain. In addition, the similarities and differences in the expressions of conceptual metaphors of “*sun*” in English and Vietnamese poems are pointed out and clarified.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

As far as concerned, metaphor is considered to be a common language phenomenon which reflects different cultural models used in different languages and the structure of conceptual metaphors can vary from culture to culture. Thus, linguistics teachers should provide students with knowledge of culture for the explanation. In general, when teaching, learning and translating conceptual metaphors, it is very important to take factors surrounding language into consideration.

5.3. LIMITATIONS

Due to the limited time and references, we just concentrated on thirteen cases of conceptual metaphor as discussed before. Thus, some weaknesses are unavoidable. We would be very grateful to those who

take interest in this topic. Any comment, advice, and adjustment will be highly appreciated and very valuable to make this study more fulfilled.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

We would like to make some suggestions for further researches as follows:

- We suggest three possible cases of conceptual metaphor in which “*sun*” is used as a target domain: “*sun is food and drinks*”, “*sun is an animal*” and “*sun is water*”.

- A deeper research into the orientational metaphor “*sunup is sadness, sundown is happiness*” which is against Lakoff and Johnson’s theory could be carried out.

- Beside the image of *sun*, *moon* also appears densely in both English and Vietnamese poems or songs. Hence, a contrastive study of conceptual metaphor of *moon* in songs could be possible.