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CONTENTS

RESEARCH

- 1 **Hoang Van Van**, Publications and Trends of Research in Foreign Language Majors at VNU University of Languages and International Studies: A Preliminary Survey 1
- 2 **Ngô Phương Anh**, Teaching English Intonation to Vietnamese Students of English: Tonicity and Tone 11
- 3 **Nguyễn Doan Canh**, Linguistic Sexism in Current Upper Secondary School English Language Textbooks: *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12* 26
- 4 **Trần Thị Hao, Ngô Đình Phương**, World Englishes from a Holistic View and Considerations on English Education in Vietnam 41
- 5 **Phan Văn Hoa, Hồ Trinh Quỳnh Thu**, Poetic Metaphors of Love in English and Vietnamese 56
- 6 **Hoàng Trà My**, Verbal Strategies Used in Opening a Conversation in Office Settings by English and Vietnamese Staff and Managers 65
- 7 **Nguyễn Quang Ngoan, Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Dung**, Speech Act Types in Conversations in the “*New Interchange*” Series 78
- 8 **Tôn Nu My Nhat**, A Multimodal Analysis of Mathematical Discourse in English for Young Learners 93
- 9 **Nguyễn Thị Tú Trinh, Phan Văn Hoa, Trần Hữu Phúc**, Major Contemporary Approaches to the Analysis of the Vietnamese Simple Clause 102
- 10 **Trần Thị Anh Tuyết**, The Effectiveness of Collaborative Brainstorming Training Procedures at Pre-writing Stage in Intermediate English Classes 123
- 11 **Trần Thị Ngọc Yên**, The Effect of Brainstorming on EFL Reading Comprehension 142

DISCUSSION

- 12 **Nguyễn Thị Thu Hà**, Language and Gender Studies: Past and Current Approaches and Debates 150
- 13 **Hà Quang Nang**, Homophony Re-visited 158

INFORMATION

- 14 **Trần Thị Hieu Thuy**, *Reading Images - The Grammar of Visual Design*, Gunther Kress & Theo van Leeuwen (Authors) 164

TẠP CHÍ NGHIÊN CỨU NƯỚC NGOÀI
Tập 33, Số 6, 2017

MỤC LỤC

NGHIÊN CỨU

- 1 **Hoàng Văn Vân**, Công bố khoa học và xu hướng nghiên cứu trong các chuyên ngành ngoại ngữ ở Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội: Một khảo sát sơ bộ 1
- 2 **Ngô Phương Anh**, Dạy ngữ điệu tiếng Anh cho sinh viên Việt Nam: Xác định âm tiết hạt nhân và các kiểu ngữ điệu 11
- 3 **Nguyễn Doãn Cảnh**, Kì thị giới tính về ngôn ngữ trong sách giáo khoa tiếng Anh trung học phổ thông hiện hành: *Tiếng Anh 10, Tiếng Anh 11 và Tiếng Anh 12* 26
- 4 **Trần Thị Hảo, Ngô Đình Phương**, *World Englishes* từ cái nhìn tổng quan và việc xem xét chúng trong giảng dạy tiếng Anh tại Việt Nam 41
- 5 **Phan Văn Hòa, Hồ Trịnh Quỳnh Thu**, Ấn độ thi ca tình yêu trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt 56
- 6 **Hoàng Trà My**, Chiến lược ngôn từ được sử dụng bởi nhân viên và người quản lý để khai thoại ở văn phòng trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt 65
- 7 **Nguyễn Quang Ngoạn, Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Dung**, Hành vi ngôn ngữ trong các hội thoại từ bộ giáo trình “*New Interchange*” 78
- 8 **Tôn Nữ Mỹ Nhật**, Phân tích đa thức diễn ngôn toán bằng tiếng Anh dành cho lứa tuổi tiểu học 93
- 9 **Nguyễn Thị Tú Trinh, Phan Văn Hòa, Trần Hữu Phúc**, Các cách tiếp cận đương đại trong phân tích cú đơn tiếng Việt 102
- 10 **Trần Thị Ánh Tuyết**, Tính hiệu quả của quy trình rèn luyện phát triển ý tưởng theo nhóm trước khi viết cho sinh viên trình độ tiếng Anh trung cấp 123
- 11 **Trần Thị Ngọc Yến**, Ảnh hưởng của hoạt động động não đến mức độ đọc hiểu của người học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ 142

TRAO ĐỔI

- 12 **Nguyễn Thị Thu Hà**, Ngôn ngữ và giới: Các hướng tiếp cận từ trước đến nay 150
- 13 **Hà Quang Năng**, Trở lại hiện tượng đồng âm 158

THÔNG TIN KHOA HỌC

- 14 **Trần Thị Hiếu Thủy**, *Reading Images - The Grammar of Visual Design*, Gunther Kress & Theo van Leeuwen (Tác giả) 164

FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

Time flies, and the year is drawing to an end when the 6th issue of *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies* in 2017 which includes 14 articles on several issues of concern and focus of the journal is hot off the press.

To begin with, Hoang Van Van's presentation at a recent Graduate Research Symposium (GRS for short) hosted by our University, which has been re-edited for the journal, provides readers with an overview of publications and research trends in foreign language majors at our University of Languages and International Studies – VNU, Hanoi (VNU ULIS), including publications on our own journal. This is highly beneficial to our journal as well as our University since the paper, through the author's thorough though speedy survey, identifies a number of shortcomings to be addressed in our upcoming annual and long-term plans. The paper also points towards the issues addressed by subsequent articles in this edition.

Regarding foreign language teaching methodology, Ngo Phuong Anh's article reports the results of a study which adopts an experimental approach to investigate the effects of intonation training among Vietnamese learners of English at tertiary educational institutions in Vietnam, focusing on tonicity and tone. Meanwhile, Tran Thi Anh Tuyet looks at the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming training procedures at pre-writing stage in intermediate English classes. In the same vein, Tran Thi Ngoc Yen investigates the effect of brainstorming techniques on EFL learners' reading comprehension. Last, the paper by Tran Thi Hao and Ngo Dinh Phuong presents a holistic view of World Englishes (WE) in research generally and in relation to English education in Vietnam particularly by illustrating the Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions of WE in the Vietnamese teaching context. These four papers continue to demonstrate one of the primary foci of our journal.

Addressing the inter-relationship among various disciplines, Nguyen Thi Thu Ha discusses the different approaches in language and gender research since its emergence in the early 1970s. These approaches, namely the dominance, the difference and the post-modernist approach, are reviewed in a chronological order and a comparison is also provided to offer profound understanding of the approaches. Current trends in language and gender studies are also highlighted to inform potential researchers in the field of the updated foci in literature. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha's more theoretical article is followed by a practical study by Nguyen Doan Canh which investigates and evaluates linguistic sexism in current Vietnamese upper secondary school English language textbooks. It is revealed that *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12*, the three textbooks in current use, contain certain hidden messages through linguistic sexism, of which textbook designers, compilers and English teachers should be aware in order to avoid gender bias, or at least provide their students with better guidance for their proper language use, attitudes as well as behaviors.

In linguistic research, pragmatic, cognitive and multimodal approaches apparently dominate the articles in this edition with a paper by Phan Van Hoa and Ho Trinh Quynh Thu which focuses on examining and comparing poetic metaphors of romantic love in English to those in Vietnamese. The paper demonstrates both the universality of metaphors in this sphere and differences between these two languages due to variations of cultures, lifestyles, and thought. Next is the paper by Hoang Tra My which aims at yielding insights into the process of conversational opening, focusing

on the description of verbal strategies among the collected data of 60 English and 60 Vietnamese opening sections in scripted dialogues between staff and managers. Similarly, Nguyen Quang Ngoan and Nguyen Thi Ngoc Dung study speech acts in the conversations of a textbook series entitled *New Interchange 1, 2, and 3*. The study shows interesting results concerning speech act types, and although there is a strong tendency for combination of different speech act types, single speech act groups are preferred with the predominance of representatives. The fourth in this cluster of articles is Ton Nu My Nhat's *A Multimodal Analysis of Mathematical Discourse in English for Young Learners* which explores the materials in this realm from multisemiotic perspective. Finally, the three authors Nguyen Thi Tu Trinh, Phan Van Hoa, and Tran Huu Phuc, present their theoretical consideration of major contemporary approaches to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause. The study reveals that at present, structural approaches influenced by European and American structuralists such as Saussure and Bloomfield, and functional approaches influenced by Dik's Functional Grammar and Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar seem to be the dominant grammatical models for the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause.

To offer more theoretical bases for linguistic research, Ha Quang Nang re-visits the issue of homophony, which is an umbrella term for various phenomena not solely restricted to phonetics and phonology, but also encompassing lexicology, semantics and orthography, such as homonymy, homography, *inter alia*. His paper analyzes different views on homophones in existing literature and presents a comprehensive, complete and scientific view on homophony in languages. Finally, Tran Thi Hieu Thuy presents her review of *Reading Images - The Grammar of Visual Design* by Gunther Kress & Theo van Leeuwen, a very important book for those interested in applying multimodal approaches to their studies.

With this edition, we would like to put a happy ending to a successful year of the journal and will come back to our dear readers with 6 editions in 2018, including 3 in English and 3 in Vietnamese.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2018!

Respectfully,

Lam Quang Dong

Editor-in-Chief

RESEARCH

PUBLICATIONS AND TRENDS OF RESEARCH IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE MAJORS AT VNU UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES: A PRELIMINARY SURVEY¹

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Abstract: In this paper, an attempt is made to conduct a survey on the publications and research trends in foreign language majors at University of Languages and International Studies – Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU ULIS). The survey data includes articles by VNU ULIS academics published in Vietnamese prestigious specialized journals, theses and dissertations by master and doctoral students. The survey reveals some noticeable findings: (1) there are very few articles by VNU ULIS academics published in prestigious Vietnamese journals; (2) of the two fields of study recognised as the mandate of VNU ULIS as represented in its English name: foreign language studies and international studies, the latter has not yet gained its status on the same par as the former; and (3) between the two subfields of foreign language studies: foreign language education and foreign language linguistics, the former dominates the research scene at master level, but at doctoral level the two fields of research seem to be equally attended to. The findings of the survey also show that different foreign language majors seem to focus on different fields of research, making it difficult to state which field is the main trend of research at present and which one will be the main trend of research in the years to come.

Keywords: learning and teaching foreign language, foreign language education, foreign language linguistics, international studies

1. Introduction

At present, research has become a compulsory component in most graduate programmes in the world and in all graduate programmes in Vietnam. The need to improve the quality of teaching (transmitting knowledge) and research (creating knowledge)

is a constant concern of not only tertiary policy makers but also tertiary research scholars. This can be seen in various regulatory documents and in themes of annual scientific conferences, workshops, and seminars. It is perhaps due to the importance of research in foreign language learning and teaching that I am given the privilege by the President of VNU ULIS and the Dean of the Faculty of Post-graduate Studies to present the first report at the first conference held by the University for master and doctoral

¹ This paper was presented at the plenary session of the National Graduate Research Symposium (GRS) at VNU ULIS on 11th August 2017.

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students. This is the privilege of which I am fully appreciative. I am especially grateful to Dr. Huynh Anh Tuan for having conferred this privilege upon me through his impeccable art of communication. Pragmatically, if the report I am presenting today is considered to be the result of two speech acts: privilege-conferring act performed by Dr. Huynh Anh Tuan and responding to privilege-conferring act performed by myself, the process in which these two speech acts were performed can be described as follows:

One day not long before the Conference, Dr. Tuan came to my place on the 3rd Floor, Building A3 and said something to me, I recall, like this, “*Nhờ thầy viết một báo cáo trình bày trước phiên toàn thể tại Hội thảo khoa học GRS dành cho học viên cao học và nghiên cứu sinh lần thứ nhất*”. The words were something like these but the tone of his voice sounded as if I was a pre-programmed privilege recipient that I would have to prepare a plenary report to present at the first ULIS conference for master and doctoral students. My first reaction to Dr. Tuan’s privilege-conferring act (or you might also call it a goods-ordering act, if you wish), I must confess, was one of “panic”. The reason is that, perhaps all of you here may know, one could hardly produce a piece of research that could engage the wide and diverse range of interests of the experts (foreign language scholars, and foreign language master and doctoral students) who would be present on this occasion in such a short notice. What made matters worse was that the ordered goods was not quite specific. It may be that the ordering party was a bit too polite, assuming that the supplier had already had the desired goods that the consumers (master and doctoral students) today would need, but I must say honestly that it would be completely wrong if you also think as Dr. Tuan did. That was why, after Dr. Tuan had performed his act, I, also for reasons of politeness, had to have recourse to what is referred to in modern pragmatics as

the “Maxim of Relevance” in Grice (1975)’s model of Cooperative Principles: “Make your contributions relevant”, reluctantly accepted the privilege with a few ensuing moves in our dialogue (which I could not remember exactly) indicating the answer “Yes”, although in my mind I still wanted to say “No”. The biggest problem I had to solve after I accepted Dr. Tuan’s privilege-conferring act was to choose a topic for my report. As you all know, each researcher has only one or two, or at least three areas of in-depth study. Should I present one of my available studies in functional linguistics, in translation studies, or in applied linguistics (curriculum design & evaluation and English textbook development) – the three areas of research I have been most familiar with? It took me quite some time to think of this problem and finally, after several considerations, I decided to choose the topic under the rubric of my title: “Publications and Trends of Research in Foreign Language Majors at VNU University of Languages and International Studies: A Preliminary Survey”. My report consists of 5 parts. Part 1 provides some introductory notes leading to the choice of the topic. Part 2 covers the scope of the survey. Part 3 is concerned with my survey on the current situation of publications and trends of research in foreign language majors at VNU ULIS. Part 4 focuses on examining research trends and publications by master and doctoral students at VNU ULIS. And finally Part 5 summarizes the main contents of the report, provides some conclusions from the survey results, points out the limitations of the report and makes suggestion for further research.

2. Scope of the survey

It should be noted from the very beginning that the University we are learning and teaching has got a Vietnamese name and some other names corresponding to the foreign languages that are being learnt and taught at our VNU

ULIS (usually these foreign names are not quite equivalent to the Vietnamese name in the proper sense of translation studies). But here because English is my major, I will limit myself to discussing the meaning of its Vietnamese and English names. The Vietnamese name of our University is “Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ” (its commonly accepted English translation would be “University of Foreign Languages”) and its English name is “University of Languages and International Studies” (back translated into Vietnamese as “Trường Đại học các Ngôn ngữ và Nghiên cứu Quốc tế [Quốc tế học]”). Regarding the Vietnamese name, if we move back to the past of about a quarter of a century we may notice that the meaning indicating the main function of the University (to train teachers of foreign languages, or the pedagogical function) is not found (although teacher training still seems to dominate the other functions). With regard to the English name, the meaning that indicates foreign languages learning and teaching does not appear, the meaning that indicates the function of teacher training is not available, and in addition to the vague meaning indicated by the pluralized word “Languages”, there appears the meaning of international studies expressed in the nominal group “International Studies”. It should be noted, however, that despite being given different names, the main function of our VNU University of Languages and International Studies is still **to learn and to teach foreign languages**. It is the notion of “learning and teaching foreign language” that I will take as the key concept to develop my report.

The five-component phrase: “learning and teaching foreign language” looks simple in form, but in meaning if one attempts to take a closer look at it in the literature on foreign languages learning and teaching, one may find that it is not a univalent concept, encapsulating in it many faces and dimensions concerning the learner, the teacher, the curriculum, the textbook, the testing and assessment mode, the ICT resources, and of

course the social context in which the learning and teaching of foreign language occurs. The implication here is that if one wants to capture more specifically the meaning of the concept “learning and teaching foreign languages”, one has to narrow its scope by ruling out those senses that are less relevant or unrelated to it. For the purpose of this report, I will limit the scope of the concept by setting aside the learning and teaching of first language and the learning and teaching of second language as commonly conceptualised in sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies (see Brown, 2000; Brown & Attador, 2000; Denham & Lobeck, 2010; Fernández & Cairn, 2014, and many others; see also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_language and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_language), and, in particular, in the three concentric circle model (in relation to the learning and teaching of English) developed by the famous Indian-born American sociolinguist Braj Bihari Kachru (1982, 1985, 2006, 2008), focusing solely on the learning and teaching of languages in the outermost circle of his model – the circle which indicates the context in which the language that is learned and taught “is not a NATIVE LANGUAGE in a country” (Richards, Platt & Platt, 2008: 142) or to be more specific, a foreign language, and based on this defined notion what I intend to do is to observe what is actually happening in Vietnamese foreign language classrooms, taking it as the starting point for talking about different modes of foreign language learning and teaching in Vietnam.

If we observe foreign language classrooms in Vietnam, we can see that foreign languages are learned and taught in different ways, some may be more effective than others. We can also find that it is not easy to classify ways of learning and teaching a foreign language in this diverse world. But, within the total range of operations which merit the concept of “learning and teaching foreign language”, we can distinguish three modes of foreign language learning and teaching. The first mode may be called “learning

and teaching *through* foreign language”; the second one, “learning and teaching *about* foreign language”; and the third one, “learning and teaching foreign language” (cf. Halliday *et al*, 1964; Halliday, 1991 in relation to the learning and teaching of foreign languages in England and Australia; see also Lee, 1986). Learning and teaching *through* foreign language means learning and teaching content subjects such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, IT, etc., using foreign language as a medium of learning and teaching (a mode of learning and teaching some people in some countries including Vietnam have been promoting with the hope that through this mode, the student’s effectiveness of learning a foreign language and his/her ability to acquire knowledge of the content subjects will be improved and enhanced). Learning and teaching *about* foreign language means learning and teaching foreign language as an object with the aim to understand its nature (What is it? How is it structured? How it works?) by learning and teaching its linguistic aspects such as phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, semantics, etc., and the rules of behaviour governing the use of language. Here foreign language is learnt and taught as an object. Whether this mode of learning and teaching helps improve the effectiveness of learning a foreign language is still a matter in need of further research. Learning and teaching foreign language means learning and teaching foreign language as part of the curriculum with the aim to use that foreign language to communicate with other people (mainly with foreigners), including learning and teaching foreign language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Here foreign language is both a means of and an end to learning and teaching. The three modes of “learning and teaching *through* foreign language”, “learning and teaching *about* foreign language” and “learning and teaching foreign language” have generated different ways of looking at the foreign language learning and teaching process. It explains why research in the

field of foreign language learning and teaching is so rich and diverse, encompassing a vast range of research concerns, some are directly related, some others are indirectly related, and still some others do not seem to be related to the process of foreign language learning and teaching at all. Based on these three modes of foreign language learning and teaching, in what follows I shall be concerned with my survey on the publications and trends of research in foreign language majors at VNU ULIS.

3. Publications and trends of research in foreign languages majors at VNU ULIS

Ideally, in order to be able to say something meaningful about the current situation and research trends of a tertiary institution, the researcher must obtain a sufficiently large amount of data. However, due to time and space constraints, I have only been able to collect data on trends of research in foreign languages majors at VNU ULIS from 2014 to 2016 from two main sources: (1) publications by VNU ULIS academics in four Vietnamese prestigious journals, and (2) publications by VNU ULIS academics in two VNU ULIS national conference proceedings of 2016 and 2017 entitled “Research & Foreign Language Teaching, Linguistics and International Studies”.

3.1. Publications by VNU ULIS academics in Vietnamese prestigious journals

There are several journals related to the field of foreign language learning and teaching whose quality is recognised by the State Council for Professor Title of Vietnam. The following four journals are representative and are taken as data for analysis: (1) *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, (2) *HU (Hanoi University) Journal of Foreign Language Studies*, (3) *VNU Journal of Educational Research*, and (4) *VASS (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) Journal of Language*. The data is available for a two-and-a-half-year period, extending from the beginning of 2014 to June 2016. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Publications by VNU ULIS academics in four Vietnamese prestigious journals

Journal	Number of issues	Number of publications	Number of publications by VNU ULIS academics
<i>VNU Journal of Foreign Studies</i>	10	85	60 (70.58%)
<i>HU Journal of Foreign Language Studies</i>	10	118	6 (6.0%)
<i>VNU Journal of Educational Research</i>	10	43	6 (14%)
<i>VASS Journal of Language</i>	16	128	13 (10%)

Table 1 shows that the number of publications by VNU ULIS academics in these journals is very modest. Except for the number of articles published in *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies* (owned by the University) which takes up a relatively high proportion: 60/85 (80%), in the three remaining journals the greatest number of publications by VNU ULIS academics does not exceed 14%: 6/118 (6%) in *HU Journal of Foreign Language Studies*, 6/43 (14%) in *VNU Journal of Educational Research*, and 13/128 (10%) in *VASS Journal of Language*.

sharing (Những vấn đề lí luận, trao đổi và chia sẻ). In this report, however, the publications are analysed in terms of three fields of research: (1) foreign language linguistics (FLL), (2) foreign language education (FLE), and (3) international studies (IS), and in terms of each particular foreign language (by foreign language), including Vietnamese⁽²⁾. The results are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2. Publications by VNU ULIS academics in two national conference proceedings (by field of research)

Year \ Field	FLL (%)	FLE (%)	IS (%)	Total
2016	35 (47.9%)	36 (49.3%)	2 (2.7%)	73
2017	32 (49.2%)	32 (49.2%)	1 (1.6%)	65
Total	67 (48.5%)	68 (49.2%)	3 (2.1%)	138

Table 3. Publications by VNU ULIS academics in two national conference proceedings (by foreign language)

Year	English	Russian	Chinese	French	German	Korean	Vietnamese	Japanese	Arabic	Total
2016	43 (58.9%)	8 (10.9%)	7 (9.5%)	4 (5.4%)	0	4 (5.4%)	5 (6.8%)	1 (1.3%)	1 (1.3%)	73
2017	24 (36.9%)	6 (9.2%)	16 (24.6%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3%)	3 (4.6%)	3 (4.6%)	2 (3%)	0	65³
Total	67 (48.5%)	14 (10.1%)	23 (16.6%)	10 (7.2%)	2 (1.4%)	7 (5%)	8 (5.7%)	3 (2.1%)	1 (0.7%)	138

3.2. Publications by VNU ULIS Academics in Two VNU ULIS National Conference Proceedings

In the two proceedings of VNU ULIS national conferences of 2016 and 2017, the publications are divided into two categories: (1) Reports on research and survey results (Báo cáo kết quả nghiên cứu, điều tra, khảo sát) and (2) Theoretical issues, exchanges, and

² Although Vietnamese is not a foreign language, the articles in and on Vietnamese published in the two conference proceedings are analysed for convenience of discussion.

³ Of the 65 articles published in the 2016 conference proceedings, 3 do not belong to any particular foreign language. However, they are included in the total number of publications in the proceedings for convenience of discussion.

Table 2 shows that the number of FLL articles published in two VNU ULIS national conference proceedings of 2016 and 2017 is approximately equal to the number of FLE articles: 35/73 (47.9%) in 2016 and 32/65 (49.2%) in 2017 vs. 36/73 (49.3%) in 2016 and 32/65 (49.2%) in 2017 respectively. Table 2 also shows that in the three research fields, the number of IS publications represents an extremely small percentage: 2/73 (2.7%) in 2016 and 1/65 (1.6 %) in 2017.

Statistics by foreign language in Table 3 reveal that of the total number of 138 articles published in the two VNU ULIS national conference proceedings, English accounts for the largest proportion: 67/138 (48.5%), followed by Chinese: 23/138 (16.6%), Russian: 14/138 (10.1%), French: 10/138 (7.2%), Vietnamese: 8/138 (8%), 7%), and Korean: 7/138 (5%). Japanese, German and Arabic represent the smallest proportions: 3/138 (2.1%), 2/138 (1.4%), and 1/138 (0.7%) respectively.

4. Research trends and publications by VNU ULIS master and doctoral students

Research trends and publications by VNU ULIS master and doctoral students are examined in terms of the topics of their master theses and doctoral dissertations they conducted in the academic years of 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 and in terms of the number of articles they published in *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies* from 2015 to August 2017. Details are provided in Section 4.1 and Section 4.2 below.

4.1. Research trends of VNU ULIS masters and doctoral students

Research trends of VNU ULIS masters and doctoral students examined through the topics of their master theses and doctoral dissertations are also analysed in terms of three fields of research: FLL, FLE, and IS, and in terms of each particular foreign language, including English, German, Russian, Japanese, French, and Chinese (at master level) and English, Russian, French, and Chinese (at doctoral level). The results are presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4. Research trends of VNU ULIS masters students (examined in terms of research topics)

Year	Foreign language	English	German	Russian	Japanese	French	Chinese	Total
	Field							
2015	FLL	85 (36.3%)	13 (100%)	9 (75%)	11 (100%)	10 (50%)	15 (79%)	143 (46%)
	FLE	149 (63.6%)	0	3 (25%)	0	10 (50%)	4 (21%)	166 (54%)
	IS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	234	13	12	11	20	19	309
2016	FLL	19 (29.7%)	0	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	0	5 (33%)	26 (32%)
	FLE	45 (70.3%)	0	0	0	0	10 (67%)	55 (68%)
	IS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	64	0	1	1	0	15	81

Table 5. Research trends of VNU ULIS doctoral students
(examined in terms of research topics)

Year	Foreign language	English	Russian	French	Chinese	Total
	Field					
2015	FLL	4 (50%)	2 (100%)	4 (67%)	4 (67%)	14 (63.6%)
	FLE	4 (50%)	0	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	8 (36.4%)
	IS	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	8	2	6	6	22
2016	FLL	11 (55%)	0	1 (12.5%)	7 (78%)	19 (50%)
	FLE	9 (45%)	1 (100%)	7 (87.5%)	2 (22%)	19 (50%)
	IS	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	20	1	8	9	38

The statistic results in Table 4 and Table 5 reveal many noticeable points. At master level, one can find at least two striking characteristics. First, there are no dissertations on International Studies. Secondly, researches in the fields of FLL and FLE receive different foci in different foreign languages. While in English, the number of theses on FLE dominates: 149/234 (63.6%) in 2015 and 45/64 (70.3%) in 2016; in the other foreign language majors the number of theses on FLL is either equal to the number of theses on FLE (e.g. French: 10/20 (50%) and 10/20 (50%)) in 2015, or takes up an overwhelming proportion as compared with the number of theses on FLE (e.g. Russian: 9/12 (75%) and Chinese: 15/19 (79%)) in 2015. In particular, in Japanese and German, the number of theses on FLL accounts for 100%: 11/11 and 13/13 respectively in 2015. However, due to the fact that the number of English master students represents an overwhelming proportion, the total number of master theses on FLE in all foreign languages at VNU ULIS still takes up a higher proportion as compared to the total number of master theses on FLL: 166/309 (54%) vs. 143/309 (46%) in 2015 and 55/81 (68%) vs. 26/81 (32%) in 2016.

Turning to doctoral level, the statistics in Table 5 provide a very diverse picture of the research trends at VNU ULIS. Starting

with English, if at master level the number of theses on FLE takes up an overwhelming proportion as compared with the number of theses on FLL in 2015, at doctoral level, the number of dissertations in these two fields is equal: 4/8 (50%) of FLE and 4/8 (50%) of FLL; but in 2016 the number of dissertations on FLL reveals a slightly higher proportion: 11/20 (55%) of FLL vs. 9/20 (45%) of FLE. As for Russian, the number of dissertations on FLL accounts for 100% (2/2) in 2015, but in 2016, the number of dissertation on FLE accounts for 100% (1/1). Concerning French, if the number of dissertations on FLL and FLE is equal: 10/20 (50%) and 10/20 (50%) in 2015, the number of dissertations on FLL is twice as many as the number of dissertations on FLE: 4/6 (67%) of FLL vs. 2/6 (33%) of FLE. However, the results of the 2016 survey give a completely opposite picture: the number of dissertations on FLE suddenly takes up an overwhelming proportion as compared to the number of dissertations on FLL: 7/8 (87.5%) of FLE vs. 1/8 (12.2%) of FLL. In contrast, Chinese gives a picture which is completely different from that of French: the number of dissertations on FLL overwhelms the number of dissertations on FLE in both 2015 and 2016: 4/6 (67%) of FLL vs. 2/6 (33%) of FLE in 2015 and 7/9 (78%) of FLL vs. 2/9 (22%) of FLE in 2016. One

more remarkable characteristic to note is that in 2015 the number of doctoral dissertations on FLL in all foreign language majors at VNU ULIS accounts for a much higher proportion than the number of doctoral dissertations on FLE: 14/22 (63.6%) of FLL vs. 8/22 (36.4%) of FLE, but in 2016, the number of doctoral dissertations in these two fields appear to be equal: 19/39 (50%) of FLL and 19/38 (50%) of FLE.

4.2. Publications by master and doctoral students in VNU Journal of Foreign Studies

This section examines the current research situation of VNU ULIS master and doctoral students through their publications in *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies* from the beginning of 2015 to the present (August 2017). Statistics are conducted in terms of: (1) the number of issues published each year and in the whole period, (2) the number of articles published each year and in the whole period, (3) the number of articles by master students each year and in the whole period, and (4) the number of articles by doctoral students each year and in the whole period. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Publications by master and doctoral students in *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*

Year	Number of issues	Number of articles	Number of articles by master students (%)	Number of articles by doctoral students (%)
2015	4	26	3 (11.5%)	6 (23%)
2016	4	39	2 (5.1%)	8 (20.5%)
2017	3	40	2 (5%)	3 (7.5%)
Total	11	105	7 (6.6%)	17 (16%)

The statistic results in Table 6 show that the number of articles by master and doctoral students published in *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies* each year and in the period of nearly 3 years accounts for very small proportions. Of the total number of 26 articles published in the *Journal* in 2015, the number of articles by master students is

only 3/26 (11.5%) and the number of articles by doctoral students is only 6/26 (23%). Between 2016 and 2017, the situation does not look promising. This can be seen in the fact that although in four issues of 2016 and in the first three issues of 2017, the *Journal* has increased the number of articles to 39 and 40 respectively, the number of articles by both VNU ULIS master and doctoral students evidently declines: 2/39 (5.1%) of master students and 8/39 (20.5%) of doctoral students in 2016 and 2/40 (5%) of master students and 3/40 (7.5%) of doctoral students in 2017.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary and concluding remarks

In this report, I have conducted a survey on the publications and trends of research at VNU ULIS with special reference to the publications by and trends of research of master and doctoral students. I began my report by making some introductory notes explaining the reasons for choosing the topic of my report. Then after providing the scope of my report, I presented in detail the results of my survey on the publications by and trends of

research of VNU ULIS academics and master and doctoral students. The results of the survey have revealed a very diverse picture of the current situation and trends of research at VNU ULIS. At this point, it is possible to arrive at the following preliminary conclusions:

First, publications by VNU ULIS academics are diverse and unsteady, and with the exception of *VNU Journal of Foreign*

Studies, the number of their publications in the surveyed Vietnamese prestigious journals is modest.

Secondly, International Studies has not yet gained its research status at VNU ULIS.

Thirdly, publications by graduate (master and doctoral) students are very limited, and research trends of different foreign language majors in the graduate sector are very diverse: some foreign language majors seem to focus more on foreign language education research, some others seem to focus more on foreign language linguistics research, while still some others seem to favour foreign language education research at master level, but at doctoral level the trend of research seems to be the reverse.

Fourthly and lastly, due to the diversity in research, it is difficult to point out which field, foreign language linguistics or foreign language education, is the main research trend at the present, and it is even more difficult to predict which field will be the main research trend in the coming years.

5.2. Limitations and suggestion for further research

As already pointed out, the scope of this study is still limited; it is mainly confined to the survey of some research aspects at VNU ULIS within a limited period of time. The study has not yet been able to survey all publications by VNU ULIS academics and graduate students in other Vietnamese and international journals and conference and seminar proceedings. It has not yet been able to survey research projects which have been implemented by VNU ULIS academics and students. It has not yet been able to examine in detail the publications by academics and graduate students in the three fields: foreign language linguistics, foreign language education, and international studies. And in particular, it has not yet been able to explore the publications on the mode of “learning and teaching *through* foreign language”.

In order to be able to offer precise and reasonable conclusions and to make appropriate predictions about as well as suggestions on future trends of research at VNU ULIS, a more comprehensive research is needed. This will be our future research.

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CÔNG BỐ KHOA HỌC VÀ XU HƯỚNG NGHIÊN CỨU TRONG CÁC CHUYÊN NGÀNH NGOẠI NGỮ Ở TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC NGOẠI NGỮ - ĐẠI HỌC QUỐC GIA HÀ NỘI: MỘT KHẢO SÁT SƠ BỘ

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Tóm tắt: Trong bài viết này, chúng tôi tiến hành khảo sát tình hình công bố khoa học và xu hướng nghiên cứu trong các chuyên ngành ngoại ngữ ở Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội. Dữ liệu khảo sát bao gồm các bài báo khoa học công bố trong các tạp chí khoa học chuyên ngành có uy tín trong nước của cán bộ giảng dạy, các đề tài luận văn, luận án của học viên cao học và nghiên cứu sinh. Khảo sát cho ra một số kết quả rất đáng lưu ý: (1) có rất ít bài báo của cán bộ giảng dạy ở Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội đăng trong các tạp chí khoa học trong nước có uy tín; (2) trong hai lĩnh vực nghiên cứu được công nhận là chức năng của Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội như được thể hiện trong tên gọi tiếng Anh: nghiên cứu ngoại ngữ và nghiên cứu quốc tế (quốc tế học), nghiên cứu quốc tế chưa đạt được vị thế xứng đáng, ngang bằng với nghiên cứu ngoại ngữ; và (3) trong hai lĩnh vực của nghiên cứu ngoại ngữ: giáo dục ngoại ngữ và ngôn ngữ học ngoại ngữ, giáo dục ngoại ngữ chi phối khung cảnh nghiên cứu ở bậc thạc sĩ, nhưng đến bậc tiến sĩ, hai lĩnh vực nghiên cứu dường như được quan tâm ngang bằng nhau. Kết quả khảo sát cũng chỉ ra rằng các chuyên ngành ngoại ngữ khác nhau dường như tập trung vào các lĩnh vực nghiên cứu khác nhau, làm cho việc xác định lĩnh vực nào là xu hướng nghiên cứu chính trong hiện tại và lĩnh vực nào sẽ là xu hướng nghiên cứu chính trong những năm tới trở nên cực kì khó khăn.

Từ khóa: học và dạy ngoại ngữ, giáo dục ngoại ngữ, ngôn ngữ học ngoại ngữ, quốc tế học

TEACHING ENGLISH INTONATION TO VIETNAMESE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH: TONICITY AND TONE

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Abstract: English intonation is often regarded as difficult to teach in the foreign language classroom. However, its communicative value is of importance, with tonicity (nucleus placement / focus) singled out as one of the few prosodic features of the Lingua Franca Core (Jenkins, 2000). This study adopts an experimental approach to investigate the effects of intonation training among Vietnamese learners of English in tertiary education in Vietnam, looking at tonicity and tone. 27 second-year English major students at a Vietnamese university were recruited. Participants were split into the experimental group (EG, n=16) and the control group (CG, n=11). The research was implemented in an intonation training course of ten 150-minute classes taken by the EG, each class consisting of group discussion and intonation training. Quantitative data were collected from EG and CG on their ability to perceive and produce intonation focus and tonal differences in English using intonation pre-tests and post-tests. The results reveal a statistically significant difference in performance between EG and CG in perception and production of tonicity and tone. EG performed better in perception than production and in tonicity than in tone, and performance improved significantly over the period of training.

Keywords: English intonation, tonicity, tone, Vietnamese learners

1. Introduction

While some mainstream research on pronunciation teaching holds that intonation is, at best, difficult to teach (Chun, 1998; Roach, 2009; Taylor, 1993), others indicate that intonation can be taught successfully, examples being Goh (1994), McGregor and Sardegna (2014, cited in Derwing and Munro, 2015) and de Bot and Mailfert (1982). However, while there are studies looking at intonation patterns among learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), there is a lack of classroom-based research on intonation teaching and learning, as Derwing and Munro (2015) note. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether intonation training for intermediate Vietnamese EFL learners can be successful.

2. Intonation in English and in English language teaching

2.1. Intonation in English

Intonation is understood as the rise and fall of the pitch of the voice in spoken language (Tench, 1996). Pitch refers to the perceptual correlate of fundamental frequency, i.e., the continuous variation in the sounds we perceive as a result of changes in the rate of vibration of the vocal folds (Cruttenden, 1997). Pitch is relative in value since each individual's pitch level varies (Cauldwell & Allen, 1997).

Intonation is also known through the phenomenon called *prominence*, i.e., one syllable in a given meaning group is made more noticeable than others through variations in speech prosody (pitch, loudness and length). This prominent syllable is referred to variably as the focus, the tonic syllable, or the nucleus / nuclear syllable. Division of a stream of speech into meaning groups

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is known as *tonality*, with *tonicity* being the placement of the nucleus in that meaning group, and *tone* referring to the linguistically significant change in pitch instigated at the nuclear syllable.

The role of intonation in one's speech is of high communicative importance (Setter, Stojanovik, Van Ewijk & Moreland, 2007); as Halliday (1970) points out, intonation is not only a matter of making oneself understood or having good pronunciation, but a way of expressing different meanings. In social interaction, use of intonation signals turn-taking, i.e., giving the floor to another person (Brazil, 1994). It also functions to mark grammar, emphasis and, as an attitudinal marker, it can reveal the speakers' emotions, such as happiness, surprise, anger, and so on (Clennell, 1997). Jenkins (2000) emphasises that suitable placement of the nuclear syllable to draw the listener's attention to salient items in the stream of speech greatly influences a speaker's success (or intelligibility) in conversations, and includes this aspect as one of very few suprasegmental features in the Lingua Franca Core.

The teaching of intonation in EFL contexts, when attempted, is usually integrated into general pronunciation teaching where the focus is on segmentals, i.e., individual speech sounds. In most cases, intonation is often left out as either the 'Cinderella' of pronunciation teaching (Crystal, 1969, p. vii), a luxury, or a 'problem child' (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 76). However, since the communicative approach took hold in the 1980s, the pronunciation teaching movement has been diverted from bottom up approaches (i.e., a focus on segments) to top-down ones, where the focus is on prosodic features such as intonation, rhythm, and voice quality (Morley, 1991; Wennerstrom, 1994). The growing trend in favour of intonation or other aspects of speech prosody between the late 1980s and early 2000s is seen in the works of

Scovel (1988), Clennell (1997), Goh (1994), Levis and Pickering (2004), Pickering (2001) and Wennerstrom (1994).

A review of the available literature has shown that very little research on intonation teaching and learning has been recorded so far, and what has taken place failed to reveal evidence about the teaching of English intonation to speakers in tonal language contexts, such as in East Asia, Africa, or the speakers of tonal Indo-European or South Asian/Indian languages. While the research reported in this paper was carried out on speakers of Vietnamese, the literature survey indicates that there are similar intonation problems among speakers of other tonal languages (e.g., Thai, Chinese, Lao and Burmese) and that intonation teaching is neglected among learners from these language backgrounds (see, e.g., Bell, 1996).

Research on intonation training, such as de Bot and Mailfert (1982), Goh (1994) and McGregor and Sardegna (2014, cited in Derwing and Munro 2015), has signalled that improvement in the intonation competence of EFL learners is possible. Goh's (1994) study of Malaysian upper-secondary classes demonstrates improvement, and proposes that intonation can be systematically taught. McGregor and Sardegna (2014), using an approach which raised learners' linguistic awareness about the features they were learning, demonstrated significant improvements in the intonation of 30 second language (L2) English speakers from different first language (L1) backgrounds trained over a 15-week period in several aspects of pronunciation, intonation being one. Findings from de Bot and Mailfert (1982) reveal that the French and Dutch students in their study made improvement in the perception and production of English intonation, with audio-visual feedback found to be more effective than auditory feedback alone.

2.2. *Intonation teaching in Vietnam*

Ky (2007) claims that the absence of intonation instruction in university English classes in Vietnam results in obvious linguistic poverty both inside and outside the classroom setting.

Although English was introduced as a subject in Vietnamese schools over 30 years ago, in universities where English is not a major subject, English pronunciation has been neglected in favour of grammar, vocabulary and (more recently) other receptive and productive language skills. According to Nguyen, Ingram and Pensalfini (2008), only knowledge of vocabulary and grammar is needed for the students to pass the national exam for high school graduation. For English majors in the university where this research took place, intonation constitutes about one tenth of the whole pronunciation course, which itself accounts for about 5% of the curricular content. If pronunciation is found at all, the focus is placed on instructing students to pronounce single words correctly. Griffiths attributes this neglect to 'the lack of clear guidelines and rules available in course books' and 'the fact that isolated exercises once a month do not seem to have much of an effect' (Griffiths, 2010, para. 1). In addition, Vietnamese teachers lack confidence in providing a good model for learners (Griffiths 2010) and believe that the tonal system of Vietnamese makes learning English intonation difficult. Doan (2005) and Ky (2007) attribute the neglect of intonation in Vietnamese universities to three main reasons: the lack of time for intonation teaching in the classroom; the lack of available reference materials and the lack of facilities; and the adherence to traditional methods of testing English, which focus more on written tests and ignore speaking and pronunciation.

Studies which investigate Vietnamese learners' pronunciation do exist (e.g., Ha, 2005; Ngo, 2011), but there is hardly any research conducted concerned with intonation teaching. The only study we have been able to locate is that of Doan (2005), who examined 50 Vietnamese fourth year university students' ability to recognise pitch changes, and to produce and understand intonation. The findings of the study revealed that, although 90% of the participants had the ability to recognise the existence of pitch changes, most of them were unable to explain the meaning of those changes. The author attributed this to the influence of transferring Vietnamese tones into English intonation (Doan, 2005). In addition, the study showed a great difference in Vietnamese learners' intonation compared with native speakers' intonation. However, Doan's study is not about training Vietnamese learners in intonation, but about examining their existing patterns.

2.3. *Tone and intonation in Vietnamese*

This paper assumes a basic level of knowledge about English intonation (see, e.g., Cruttenden, 1997, for further clarification). However, it is useful to review how tone and intonation operate in Vietnamese, particularly as the difference in the two systems is one of the issues raised by Griffiths (2010).

Vietnamese belongs to the Austro-Asiatic language family, under the group of Viet-Muong on the Mon-Khmer branch. Lexical contrasts are marked by tonal pitch differences and laryngeal features (Yip, 2002). Like Thai and Chinese but unlike English, each monosyllabic word unit has one lexical tone that restricts the meaning of the syllable, i.e., the same syllable from a segmental point of view conveys different meanings depending on the different tone it bears. For example, the syllable [ta] means a variety of things, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The meaning of the Vietnamese syllable [ta] in the standard northern dialect

word	tone	Diacritics	Meaning
ta	Level		me / us
tá	Rising (sắc)	/	Twelve
ta	low broken (nặng)	.	100kg / weightlifting
tã	high broken (ngã)	~	Napkin
tả	Curve (hỏi)	?	Diarrhea
tà	Falling (huyền)	\	Evil

Vietnamese can be subdivided into three main dialects corresponding to three major geographical regions of Vietnam including the North, the South and the Centre, among which Hanoi Vietnamese (of the North) is considered the standard dialect.

3. Aims of the research and research questions

This study seeks to investigate the effect of English intonation training on the performance of Vietnamese university EFL students. Specifically, it aims to see if students make progress in their intonation tone/tonicity perception and production ability through the training, and if equipping them with explicit, basic knowledge of intonation is useful and effective. The research questions are as follows:

1: Does English intonation training make any significant difference to the tonicity and tone perception and production ability of the participants?

2: What effects do the participants think the training approach has had on their English learning?

4. Methodology

4.1. Context of the study

The study was conducted at a university in Vietnam which offers tertiary-level English programmes that train students to become teachers or translators/interpreters of English. The languages of instruction are English and Vietnamese. Intonation is found in the

pronunciation part of the *Speaking I* module, taught in the first semester of the first year. The module consists of 8 units (53 lessons) with 7 lessons on intonation, including one class on *prominent words* (stress and tonicity) and another on *falling and rising* intonation (tone). This means that intonation is practiced for two hours twenty-five minutes out of 33.75 hours, equal to 6.7 % of the pronunciation module time.

4.2. Participants

27 students (Male = 6; Female = 21) agreed to take part in the study. There was also a pilot study consisting of 11 participants, the results of which are not reported here. The participants were second year BA students, 19 to 20 years old at the time of the training. They all started learning English aged 10 or 12, came from the North of Vietnam and had all passed the *Speaking I* module the previous year. They are considered to be intermediate learners of English.

Based on interview data, in general, the participants were aware of intonation, i.e., they knew about falling and rising tones, which they associated with intonation and had been taught about in *Speaking I*. They were not aware of the term 'tonic syllable', but knew the term 'prominence'. They thought that intonation was important in English communication and wanted to improve their intonation.

The recruitment of the participants to the study was based on *criteria sampling* (Dörnyei 2007) in a bid to have a sample that is very similar to the target population in its most important characteristics (e.g., age, education background) as well as more specific features (e.g., L2 learning background, type/amount of L2 instruction received).

A non-treatment control group (CG) was used for comparison with the experimental group (EG) (Dimitrov, 2003; Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002). The current research takes as precedent the study by de Bot and

Malifert (1982) in which the control group received no intonation training but were administered the same pre-test and post-test as the experimental group.

In the first meeting with students, it was intended that they would be split equally into two groups. However, after discussion, 16 students committed to follow the study in full and were selected as the experimental group (M=2, F=14), the remaining 11 students agreeing to be in the control group (M=4, F=7).

CG participants took the pre-test and post-test at the same time as the EG. EG participants attended an induction session two days before the pre-test, during which the participants were informed of the training schedule, the syllabus and the research instruments. It was made clear that all participants could withdraw from the study at any time. Informed consent was then obtained from all participants according to recognized ethical procedures. The pretest (see below) revealed no significant difference in the tests of homogeneity of variance and no significance difference over tonicity perception, tone perception, tonicity production and tone production among the groups before training began.

4.3. Materials

The primary aim of the materials design was training the participants in the skills of perception and production of English tonicity and tones. In addition, participants had opportunities to discuss with each other their learning difficulties, to share learning resources, and to write reflections on the training process.

The choice of tonicity and tone was based firstly on the grammatical sub-approach, or 'Contour' approach (Halliday, 1967), and secondly because, along with tonality, tonicity and tone are introduced widely in varying degrees in EFL textbooks such as Hancock (2012), Hewings (2005), and Wells (2006). In

addition, systematic description is available for these aspects of intonation which may support teachers and learners (Cauldwell & Allen, 1997) should they wish to adopt or adapt the methodology used in this study. These aspects of intonation together create the most thorough picture of English intonation at clause level (Tench, 1996).

The instructions closely followed Wells (2006), which was chosen for several reasons: it conforms to the grammatical approach; it provides systematic intonation practice; and the language used is accessible to the target learners.

Supplementary material from other sources was also used. In training Day 7, the discourse function of intonation was introduced to emphasize the significance of intonation in revealing given and new information in conversation (Brazil, Coulthard & Johns, 1980). Material from Bradford (1994) was used for this.

Other material was a DVD of recordings taken from a popular American television comedy series, introduced to help the participants practice imitation and gesture, encourage them to learn independently, and help them enjoy their learning (Mills 1999). More recently, McGregor, Zielinski, Meyers and Reed (2015) recommend using TED talks for similar reasons.

We selected three tones for the intonation training – fall, rise and fall-rise – as they were the most commonly referred to in the textbooks available to students and also because they are the tones focused on in Wells (2006); Bolinger (1986) and Brazil (1994) have also recommended that these three be taught. See Wells (2006), Roach (2009) and Cruttenden (1997) for an explanation of the form and function meaning of these tones.

The first author, who had had four years' experience of teaching BA students on this university's programmes at the time the data were collected, acted as the intonation trainer.

A twelve-week period was chosen as that is about the length of a course in a semester (excluding examination time) at the university. Table 2 summarises the training time-frame.

Table 2. Training time frame for the intonation course

Week(s)	Groups involved	Activity
Week 1 (June)	EG	Induction Interview
Week 1 (June)	EG, CG	Pre-test
Weeks 2 – 5 (June – July)	EG	Training class
Week 5	EG	Mid-test
Weeks 6 – 11 (July – August)	EG	Training class
Week 12 (August)	EG, CG	Post-test Final meeting

4.4. Training course

Training took place in the context of a normal classroom, with 10 weekly training sessions lasting two and a half hours each. Classes typically began with a discussion by the participants in groups followed by the participants revising what they had learnt from the previous lesson. Following this was the teaching of the new lesson with a planned sequence of classroom activities and intonation practice from the course-book. At the end of the lesson there was a summary, with handouts distributed for practice after the class. The rest of the participants' time was spent outside the classroom. During this time, participants were told to learn intonation with homework activities suggested by the trainer, and were free to devise their own learning activities, such as to work with roommates, with non-Vietnamese English-speakers, and so on.

Following the design of the syllabus, the lesson plans were designed with the format based on Brown (2000) and Nunan (1991). A mixture of the direct method, the audio-lingual method and communicative methods were used, as recommended by Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) and Richards and Rodgers (2001). A number of classroom activities were used in each training class

with the objective of being as interactive as possible (Rivers 1987), including role-play, play-acting, discussion and group-work. Activities were divided into three types, namely controlled practice, semi-controlled practice and uncontrolled practice, which mapped on to Wells' (2006) practice activities, starting with controlled listening and imitating exercises such as drilling, followed by semi-controlled exercises such as the learners working in pairs to listen to and imitate a short dialogue. Finally, the learners practice with their own conversation with or without the trainer's guidance.

4.5. The test

The test consists of two parts: perception and production. For perception, the participants were required to recognise and mark the tone (falling, rising, falling-rising) and the tonic syllable (tonicity) in an utterance spoken with eight different intonation patterns. For this part, the audio file from Wells (2006, p. 246) of the utterance *But how do you want to pay for it?* was used, as produced by one male and one female British English native speakers in eight different intonation patterns. The same stimuli were used each time the test was taken (pre-test, mid-test and post-test) but were presented in a different order each time. For production, the participants were required to produce the same utterance (*But how do you want to pay for it?*) with different intonation patterns and to underline the tonic syllable (tonicity) and mark the tones (falling/rising/falling-rising) with a suitable diacritic. One reason for using the same sentence is because participants were also required to describe the function of the different tonicity and tone patterns they chose, but the description task proved too difficult for them and so is not further covered here. A native British English-speaking phonetician analysed the production data and compared them with the

first author's analysis. The first author then rated the participants' perception data.

As well as the tests, a further research instrument used here is students' diary reports. These were used to collect qualitative data and to support effective reflection on participants' learning (Pennington, 1992). The reflection serves a twofold purpose: 1) as a tool for encouraging self-awareness and the learner's involvement in the pronunciation improvement process; and 2) for the learner to show what he/she finds the most valuable in the course. After each training session, the participants were asked to write a diary report using a set of reflective points as a guide.

4.6. Data analysis procedures

In the studies by Goh (1994) and de Bot and Mailfert (1982), exactly how intonation was assessed was not made clear. In this study, intonation patterns were analysed using the contour approach following mark-up with the notation used in Wells (2006) and O'Connor and Arnold (1973).

Participants' production test recordings were anonymised and assessed twice by the authors. We independently identified/transcribed the tone and tonic syllable in the spoken utterances of 10 of the participants, using annotation conventions from the contour approach (see below for more information). The main method of analysis was auditory, but we used free software Speech Analyser (<http://www-01.sil.org/computing/sa/index.htm>) to check the intonation patterns. We do not describe its use further here.

We first identified how many IPs there were in the utterance, then underlined the tonic syllable in each IP and indicated a tone using arrows to the left of the tonic syllable. For example, in utterance 1 (U1) for participant 1 (P1), the intonation was marked as follows by both the trainer and the native judge:

P1U1: But how do you want to ↘ pay for it?

This indicates that the participant has produced the utterance as one IP, that the tonic syllable is on *pay*, and that the tone used is a fall, indicated by the downwards pointing arrow.

In U3, the intonation was marked as follows:

P1U3: But how do ↘ ↗ you want // to ↘ pay for it?

This indicated that there are two IPs, indicated by the divider //. There are two tonic syllables, one in each IP, each with different tones.

We then compared each participant's response sheet with our transcription to see if they matched. If, on the sheet, the participant had underlined the word *pay* for U1 and marked a falling tone on it as in the bold sentence P1U1 above, the candidate would get three points for correct tonicity description and three more points for correct tone description.

In the case of P1U3 above, the maximum points for correct tone and tonicity are still three points. As there are two IPs each containing a tonic syllable and a tone, each correct marked tone and tonic syllable received 1.5 points. In this way, the description of each utterance is worth 3 points, whether or not it contains one or two IPs. It was kept consistent at three points per utterance in order to aid comparison across participants.

Incorrect identification of the tones and tonicity for any one utterance gives the test taker a mark of zero. In cases where the test taker identified the correct tones without marking the tone in front of the right tonic syllable, but still underlined the correct tonic syllable, 0.5 points was deducted from the result if the utterance consists of two IPs and 1 point was deducted if the utterance consists of one IP. For example, in the following hypothetical mark-up, a participant would receive 2.5 points (assuming the tone was indeed a rise).

Hypothetical: But how do you want to pay for it? ↗

As the participants produced eight sentences, the highest production score possible in the test was 24 points for tonicity (8x3) and 24 points for tone.

To ensure consistency in evaluating the same data under the same scoring criteria, inter- and intra-rater agreement was calculated by taking the ratio of the number of ratings for which both raters agree to the total number of ratings (Bailey, 1998; Stemler, 2004). Initially, 25% of the recordings were first transcribed before starting to work with the rest of the recordings. The inter-rater agreement rate between the two authors was 88%, which was considered high enough to continue. As an additional measure of accuracy, both authors transcribed the whole batch again after three months. Intra-rater agreement between these first and second attempts was 93% for the first author and 94% for the second author.

The perception test scoring was carried out by the first author based on the accuracy of the correct choice of the participants in terms of tonicity and tone. This was double-checked by a colleague at the host Vietnamese university. The scoring was similar to that of the production score, i.e., 3 points for correct tone and 3 points for correct tonicity, with 24 being the highest possible score over the eight test phrases. As for the production test, where an utterance contained two IPs, each IP with correct tone/tonicity marked accurately by the

participants received 1.5 points respectively. Points were deducted for incorrect answers as in the production test.

Here is U1 as an example, with the nucleus underlined and tone indicated by P1.

Utterance 1: But how do you want to ↘ pay for it?

According to the answer key, there is one IP in this utterance, and the word ‘pay’ is identified as the tonic syllable with an underscore and marked as having a falling tone with the downward arrow. This means P1 has correctly identified the tonicity and tone as produced in the utterance, and scored three points for tonicity and three points for tone identification respectively.

The test scores for perception and production were analysed using SPSS 17. Comparison between pre- and post-test scores were made, and also comparison of learning gain.

5. Results

5.1. Quantitative results

Presentation of the quantitative data is followed by some observations from the qualitative results collected from the diary reports. *Between groups comparisons: pre-test.* Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for the pre-test results. Scores are rounded to a maximum of two decimal points. The highest possible score in each case is 24.

Table 3. Comparisons of pre-tests between groups

	Group	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Min score	Max score
<u>PreTcyPer</u>	EG	16	4.03	4.89	0	13.50
<u>PreTcyPer</u>	CG	11	3.18	5.97	0	16.50
<u>PreTonPer</u>	EG	16	1.13	1.77	0	5.00
<u>PreTonPer</u>	CG	11	1.09	1.92	0	6.00
<u>PreTcyPro</u>	EG	16	4.00	3.67	0	12.00
<u>PreTcyPro</u>	CG	11	1.64	2.06	0	6.00
<u>PreTonPro</u>	EG	16	4.06	3.86	0	14.00
<u>PreTonPro</u>	CG	11	2.09	2.77	0	8.00

As can be seen in Table 3, the experimental group (EG) outperforms the control group (CG) in all of the conditions. The lowest mark (i.e., the minimum score) for each group in each condition is 0. Both groups scored their lowest average mark in tone perception. The table also shows that CG has the lowest mean in comparison with EG in tonicity perception, tonicity production and tone production. The standard deviation of the pre-test results of CG is lower than EG regarding the production pre-tests, but 1 point higher than EG regarding perception pre-tests.

Levene’s test indicated homogeneity of variances across all the pre-tests of all four aspects including perception of tonicity (p=0.192), perception of tone (p=0.311), production of tonicity (p=0.158) and production of tone (p=0.619). One-way ANOVA indicated that there are no significant differences between the groups where any of pre-test conditions are concerned, as p>0.05 in all cases. We can therefore deduce that the perception and production of tonicity and tone of participants in the groups at the start of the training course are similar.

Between groups comparisons: post-test. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4. Once again, the highest possible score is 24.

Table 4 shows that EG participants outperformed those in CG on average in all tests. The highest average score for any component is in tonicity perception, in which EG scored 19.3, and CG scored 3.55. The maximum score of 24 was achieved by some EG participants for tonicity and tone perception. CG participants recorded the lowest score of 0 in all conditions; EG participants recorded this score in the tonicity and tone perception conditions.

Levene’s test indicated homogeneity of variances in Posttnc only (p=0.081). One-way ANOVA with a Post hoc LSD (Least Significant Difference) test revealed the scores of EG differ significantly from the CG scores in all conditions. Tonicity perception, tone perception and tone production were very highly significantly different (p<0.000), and tonicity production was highly significant (p<0.01).

In summary, looking at both the descriptive and the inferential statistics, the training has enabled the experimental group to considerably outperform the control group in all conditions.

Comparisons of the difference (Gain) between the post-test and pretest. Table 5 shows descriptive statistics of any learning gain, with the possible maximum score at 24.

Table 4. Comparisons of post-tests between groups

	Group	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Min score	Max score
<u>PosTcyPer</u>	EG	16	19.31	3.60	9.00	24.00
<u>PosTcyPer</u>	CG	11	3.55	3.75	0	10.50
<u>PosTonPer</u>	EG	16	13.69	5.41	3.00	24.00
<u>PosTonPer</u>	CG	11	1.81	1.33	0	3.00
<u>PosTcyPro</u>	EG	16	8.41	5.37	0	19.00
<u>PosTcyPro</u>	CG	11	1.32	1.45	0	4.50
<u>PosTonPro</u>	EG	16	8.13	3.55	0	14.00
<u>PosTonPro</u>	CG	11	1.68	2.35	0	6.00

Table 5. Comparisons of gain between groups

	Group	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Min score	Max score
<u>GaiTcyPer</u>	EG	16	15.28	5.52	6.00	24.00
<u>GaiTcyPer</u>	CG	11	0.36	6.17	-13.50	7.50
<u>GaiTonPer</u>	EG	16	12.56	5.09	3.00	24.00
<u>GaiTonPer</u>	CG	11	0.09	2.21	-5.00	3.00
<u>GaiTcyPro</u>	EG	16	4.41	6.38	-6.00	14.00
<u>GaiTcyPro</u>	CG	11	-0.32	2.59	-4.00	4.50
<u>GaiTonPro</u>	EG	16	4.06	4.43	-1.5	12.00
<u>GaiTonPro</u>	CG	11	-0.41	1.66	-3.00	2.00

EG performed better than CG in all four aspects. The tonicity perception gain has the highest gain mean value overall, in which EG gained 15.28 and the control group gained 0.36. The maximum score of 24 points is seen in EG in tonicity perception and tone perception condition whereas CG had no maximum gain. The minimum gain is minus for CG in all conditions while the EG had the minus gain (i.e., no gain) in tonicity production and tone production only.

Levene's test indicated no homogeneity of variances in only GaiTcyPer ($p=0.980$), with all other conditions at $p<0.05$. ANOVA with a post-hoc LSD test indicates that, in terms of tonicity perception and tone perception, EG's scores are very highly significantly different from CG ($p=0.000$). For tone perception, there is a highly significant difference ($p=0.01$). For tonicity production there is no statistically significant difference ($p=0.076$).

Within group comparison. The figures which follow show a comparison of the test scores for EG in tonicity and tone, and include the mid-test taken by participants at the mid-point of the training. Statistically significant differences between test scores are indicated with asterisks for within-feature comparisons and letters for across-feature comparisons, as follows: significance at $p<0.05$ is indicated with * or *a*, and at $p<0.001$ with ** or *b*. Performance across features is only looked at

for tests taken at the same time, i.e., both pre-tests, both mid-tests, or both post-tests.

The statistical comparison scores are derived from paired sample t-tests. Firstly, the perception of tonicity and tone is examined, followed by the production of tonicity and tone.

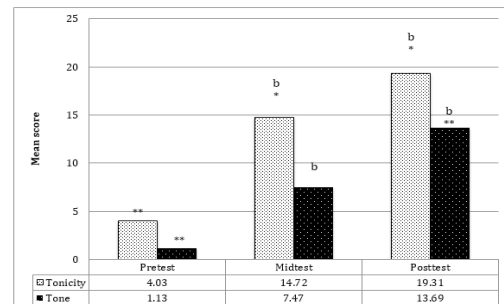


Figure 1. Perception score comparison within the experimental group

Looking at the asterisked items, Figure 1 shows that there is improvement in EG regarding perception of tonicity and tone. The improvement is consistent across the pre-, mid- and post-tests. For tonicity perception, the difference in score is significantly different between the pre- and mid-tests ($p<0.001$), the pre- and post-tests ($p<0.001$) and the mid- and post-test ($p<0.01$); i.e., there is less difference between the mid- and post-test scores but it is still highly significant. For tone perception, the difference between all test scores is very highly significantly different at $p<0.001$ for each comparison (pre- and mid-test, mid- and

post-test and pre- and post-test). Turning to the items marked with letters, i.e., the across feature comparisons, significance is found between the scores for the tonicity and tone perception mid-tests ($p < 0.001$) and between tonicity and tone perception post-tests ($p = 0.000$), but not between the pre-tests. This shows that performance was significantly better in tonicity perception than in tone perception, even though improvement is seen in both conditions.

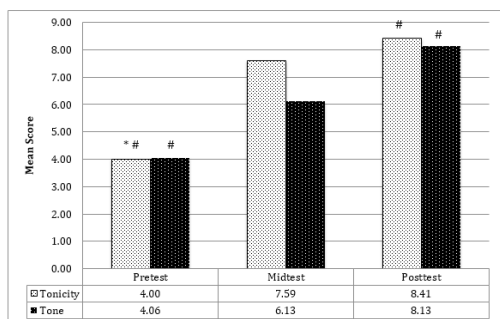


Figure 2. Production score comparison within the experimental group

A similar pattern of improvement emerges in the production tests of tonicity and tone, i.e., a consistent improvement is seen across the pre-, mid- and post-tests, as shown in Figure 2. In the production of tonicity (light grey bars), there is significant difference between the pre- and mid-tests ($p < 0.01$, indicated with *) and the pre- and post-tests ($p < 0.01$, indicated with '#'; the hash symbol is used here to disambiguate between the two). Concerning tone (dark grey bars), there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-tests only ($p < 0.01$, indicated with a hash symbol). No significant difference is found in test scores across features of tonicity and tone. It is also worth noting here that, although production improvement is shown in each of the categories, it is less than the improvement in perception in that the scores are generally much lower.

There were no statistically significant differences in the CG data.

5.2. Qualitative results

We now turn to the participants' diaries to answer research question 2 on their perceived effect of the training course on their learning. Results indicate a positive perceived impact of the training overall. Noteworthy is the positive change the training brought about in the participants' understanding of intonation (75% of the EG, i.e., 12 participants, commented on this), and the raising of awareness of intonation in speech ($n = 1$, 6%). Three examples follow (roughly translated from Vietnamese by the paper's author).

In the past, my awareness of intonation was nothing, but this is changed at this point. I always think that we have to use rising tone for yes/no question and falling for wh-question. After completing the session, I realized that what I thought was not true. (P13D1)

My knowledge about intonation and pronunciation was broadened. (P7D1)
 I thought in tag questions, I should always raise my voice at the end of a sentence to express that my partner would agree with me. However, I was wrong. Moreover, I saw that I use a rise or a fall for the tag question to express my different idea. In addition, independent elliptical questions are not so difficult. (P7D2)

Although this is only a small sample of comments, to some extent they refute Dalton and Seidlhofer's (1994) assertion that learning aspects of English intonation is difficult.

There were also comments about the positive effects that certain strategies adopted by the participants had had on their learning. Students were given a list of suggested strategies, some of which they had not tried before.

The language learning strategies list [we were given] is very helpful. I learnt very much from the list. Some of the strategies I used before but many are new. (17D10)

One participant commented on imitation as a strategy:

After the training, I realize that intonation is so interesting and previously, I didn't want to imitate anyone, but now, I really want to imitate the native speakers. They speak so beautifully (P7D9).

Another commented on the usefulness of rote learning of words and phrases:

It is very interesting to learn tones by learning by heart the words 'congratulation', 'monkey' and 'what a voice'. (P3D10)

In addition, 18% (n=3) reported on the positive effect of having opportunities to discuss and share learning strategies and experiences, and 18% (n=3) reported they had become more active and motivated to learn English intonation.

Lastly to add to the effects of the training is the participants' awareness of the importance of intonation. While only 18% of the participants wrote in their diary that they supported intonation being an independent subject at university, in the final meeting in Week 12, 100% (n=16) of the participants said that intonation should be integrated into their degree programme as a separate module. This suggestion supports Jeidani (2012) and Goh (1994), which report that Syrian and Malaysian learners respectively are in favour of intonation being taught. Finally, all of the participants in this study said that, following the training, they realised intonation was more important in communication and in English learning than they had thought, and that the subject was equally as important as other English language skills.

6. Discussion

While only a small number of participants took part in this research, the above results demonstrate that training in

intonation perception and production can lead to significant improvement among Vietnamese EFL learners, both in comparison with a control group and in terms of their improvement across the three tests points. This, therefore, makes a valuable contribution to the study of L2 English intonation learning and teaching in tonal L1 environments. The results also indicate that intonation is neither unteachable, as asserted in Taylor (1993), too difficult to learn, as Dalton and Seidlhofer (2004) suggested, nor indeed perceived as too difficult to learn. Quantitative data further indicate that participants felt they benefitted from learning more about intonation, enjoyed developing their intonation skills and trying out new strategies for doing so, and that, if they had their way, there would be more of it on the curriculum.

Participants in both groups performed better at tonicity than tone, and perception scores are higher than the production scores. Tonicity scoring higher than tone is a positive finding in light of Jenkins' (2000) assertion that nuclear stress (tonicity) is important for intelligibility and should, therefore, be part of the Lingua Franca Core, unlike tone. It is also generally predictable from the literature that improvement in perception will be better than in production (e.g., Brazil et al, 1980; Roach, 2009). The results further support those of Goh (1994), de Bot and Mailfert (1981) and McGregor and Sardegna (2014), showing that intonation perception ability can be improved after short-term training, and that intonation perception improvement was accompanied by improvement in production. Although it is not clear if improved perception leads to improved production, as suggested by de Bot and Mailfert (1982), as we know that perception precedes production in typical first language acquisition, and that some early experimental approaches to English language teaching have been predicated on this – see, e.g., Asher

(1966) and Gattegno (1971) – it can be hoped that improved perception will pave the way to increasingly improved production.

One negative issue to report here is that, although the participants in the EG were able to develop skills in producing and perceiving suitable tonicity and tonal patterns, they did not succeed in explaining the differences in meaning in patterns they generated themselves, resulting in an abandonment of this part of the research. Their inability could be because they did not understand the difference in meaning. An alternative explanation, however, is that they simply had not developed the metalanguage, either in Vietnamese or English, to explain what different patterns mean, or were not confident in using it. We would therefore recommend that, should intonation be taught as a much larger component of any English language provision, there be a greater focus on equipping learners with the means to articulate the difference in meaning relayed by manipulating tonicity and tone, so that they may better understand how to use it.

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DẠY NGỮ ĐIỆU TIẾNG ANH CHO SINH VIÊN VIỆT NAM: XÁC ĐỊNH ÂM TIẾT HẠT NHÂN VÀ CÁC KIỂU NGỮ ĐIỆU

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Tóm tắt: Ngữ điệu tiếng Anh được coi là một kỹ năng khó dạy và thường bị bỏ quên trong lớp học ngoại ngữ. Tuy nhiên, nó có giá trị quan trọng đối với hoạt động giao tiếp. Nghiên cứu này áp dụng phương pháp thực nghiệm, điều tra những ảnh hưởng của việc dạy ngữ điệu cho người học tiếng Anh. 27 sinh viên năm thứ hai chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại một trường đại học Việt Nam đã tham gia một khóa dạy ngữ điệu gồm 10 buổi học, 150 phút/buổi (nhóm thực nghiệm (EG, n = 16); nhóm đối chứng (CG, n = 11)). Mỗi buổi học có các phần thảo luận nhóm và luyện ngữ điệu. Dữ liệu định lượng về khả năng nhận biết và tạo ra các kiểu ngữ điệu được thu thập từ EG và CG qua các bài kiểm tra trước và sau khóa học. Kết quả cho thấy sự khác biệt lớn về hiệu quả giữa EG và CG trong cảm nhận và tạo các kiểu điệu. EG cảm nhận ngữ điệu tốt hơn là tạo ra các kiểu ngữ điệu, hiệu quả rõ hơn ở việc xác định âm tiết hạt nhân.

Từ khoá: ngữ điệu tiếng Anh, âm tiết hạt nhân, kiểu ngữ điệu, người học Việt Nam

LINGUISTIC SEXISM IN CURRENT UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS: *TIẾNG ANH 10, TIẾNG ANH 11 AND TIẾNG ANH 12*

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Abstract: This article reports my study on linguistic sexism in current Vietnamese upper secondary school English language textbooks: *Tiếng Anh 10, Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12*. The study was aimed at finding out how often linguistic sexism occurs in these textbooks and uncovering the hidden messages conveyed through this linguistic sexism. The results of the study showed that linguistic sexism occurs rather often in the three English textbooks and through it the messages of women's low status are conveyed.

Keywords: linguistic sexism, textbook, frequency, hidden message

1. Introduction

Once I taught my 11th grade students about Neil Armstrong, a famous American astronaut, a student asked me: 'Why must it be MAN, but not WOMAN' when she read in Textbook *Tiếng Anh 11* Neil Armstrong's quotation: '*That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind*' (*Tiếng Anh 11*, p. 174). Though I tried to explain to this girl that *a man* here in this sentence was not a particular man and that it was used to refer to all the human beings, she still did not accept. After the lesson, I thought more about her question and began to agree with her that the sentence was problematic because the quotation seems to reflect the invisibility of females by containing the words *man* and *mankind*. Neil Armstrong's use of such words as *man* and *mankind* for all the human beings may make people feel that women are not present in the achievement. This is a representation of sexism or sex discrimination in the English language.

Sexism in life is various in forms and different at levels. It is probably most readily

associated with economic issues, such as equal pay for equal work. The fight for equality of both women and men in such domains as politics and economy has worked strongly and successfully but in language it seems to be much weaker and receive far less attention.

There are a variety of ways in which sexism can be defined. The definition of sexism in the Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995) is the belief that the members of one sex, usually women are less intelligent or less capable than those, of the other sex and need not be treated equally. This definition means that women suffer from sexism more often than men. Wardhaugh (1986) explains that sexism is any discrimination against women or men because of their sex, and made on irrelevant grounds. So according to this distinction, not only women but men can also be the victims of sexism. The Oxford English Dictionary (1989) defines sexism as the assumption that one sex is superior to the other and the resultant discrimination practiced against members of the supposed inferior sex, especially by men against women; also conformity with the traditional stereotyping of social roles on the bases of sex. From these

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definitions, it can be inferred that sexism is simply the overestimation of one sex and/ or the underestimation of the other sex. In other words, it is generally considered anything that conveys the idea that one sex is superior to the other.

Sexism may be found in many fields of life such as sexism in business (business sexism), sexism in politics (political sexism) and sexism in language (linguistic sexism). *Linguistic sexism* is also called with other terms like *sexist language*, *gender-bias language* or *sexism in language*.

Many linguists have investigated and given their viewpoints of sexism in language. Cameron (2005) has concluded that 'our languages are sexist: that is they represent or name the world from a masculine viewpoint and in accordance with stereotyped beliefs about the sexes'. This means that language encodes a culture's values, and in this way reflects sexist culture. According to Umera-Okeke (2012), sexist language is considered to be any language that is supposed to include all people, but, unintentionally (or not) excludes a gender - this can be either males or females. Sexist language is especially common in situations that describe jobs - common assumptions that all doctors are men, all nurses are women, all coaches are men, or all teachers are women. This definition seems to be too specific because it just gives one case of linguistics sexism - sex exclusiveness in language. Atkinson (1993) defines linguistic sexism as a wide range of verbal practices, including not only how women are labeled and referred to, but also how language strategies in mixed sex interaction may serve to silence or depreciate women as interactants. This definition appears to be too broad for the purpose of the present study because only the language in the upper secondary school English textbooks used in Vietnam now is investigated in this research.

If sexism refers to attitudes and/or behaviours that denigrate one sex to the exaltation of the other as being mentioned in the previous part, then it follows Miller and Swift's (1988) statement that 'sexist language is any language ... that assumes the inherent superiority of one sex over the other.'

However, for the purposes of the study, it is interesting to note that these definitions have one thing in common: linguistic sexism is the portrayal of women and/or men that intentionally or unintentionally overvalues one sex and/or devalues the other. Any use of words, phrases, and expressions that unnecessarily differentiate between females and males or exclude, trivialize, or diminish one particular sex is clearly sexist in language. The unequal portrayal can be seen through linguistic features in terms of morphology, semantics, syntax and pragmatics.

In Vietnam, some researchers have been interested in the relation between language and gender since 1990s. Nguyễn Thị Thanh Bình (2000) studied some gender differences in children's language while Vũ Tiến Dũng (2002) demonstrated females' politeness in communication. Nguyễn Văn Khang (2000) argued that sex discrimination in language might be found in such categories as words with male factor showing male dominance in society, the use of *he/his* instead of *she/her*, the use of titles like *Mr*, *Mrs* and *Miss*, and stereotype attitudes in phrases like *unwed mother* and *unwed father*.

However, the first Vietnamese linguist who systematically has studied sexism in language is Trần Xuân Điệp (2002). In his works entitled *Sự kỳ thị giới tính trong ngôn ngữ qua cứ liệu tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt (Sexism in language through English and Vietnamese databases)*, he points out that sexism in language can be found not only against females but also against males (2002: 9). However, sex bias against women received

more attention in his study and it was seen in the following categories.

i) *Gender in grammar and its relation with sex in biology*: there are some different points of view on the relation between gender in grammar and sex in terms of biology. Some agree that there must be some relation between them but others do not. But it is worth noting that sexism is displayed in the use of gender in language. The male pronouns like *he*, *his* and *him* are used to include both sexes in some cases. For example, *his* in the following sentence is used although we mention teachers in general: *The teacher is responsible for his own students.*

ii) *Markedness of sex in language*: Many words showing the jobs of females are derived from the words showing the jobs of males. For instance, *actress*, *waitress*, *princess* are formed by adding the suffix *ess* to *actor*, *waiter* and *prince*.

iii) *Imbalance of words related to females and males in terms of meanings*: Words can have different meanings when they are used to describe men or women. For example, the word *professional* has different meanings depending on sex: *he is a professional* means he is excellent in a particular aspect while *she is a professional* means she is a prostitute.

iv) *Sexism in naming/ titles*: names and titles are used to show sex and marital status. In the past, a married woman used to be entitled *Mrs.* while *Miss* was used for an unmarried one. However, thanks to the fight for equality in using titles, *Mrs.* and *Miss* are now replaced by *Ms.*

v) *Stereotypes of sex in language*: Stereotypes in describing females in English can be found in such words/phrases as a gorgeous blonde, wives of, devoted to a husband, looking after husband and children.

Trần Xuân Điệp (2002) has provided a general view on sexism in language but there is a shortage of deep investigation into the phenomenon in a specific type of materials. This has urged me to perform the present research.

Sexism can be found in various materials, especially in teaching and learning materials such as textbooks. In Vietnamese English textbooks, to the author's knowledge, there has never been any study of sexism before. However, this study does not deal with sexism in all the Vietnamese English textbooks. Besides, the study can hardly cover a comprehensive analysis of sexism in these English textbooks because sexism in textbooks may be portrayed in other aspects such as images for illustration. Neither does the research deal with sexism at all levels of word, phrase, sentence and discourse. Therefore, this thesis only focuses on linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels in texts used in three current upper secondary school English language textbooks: *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12* by Hoàng Văn Vân *et al.*

The main aim of the research is to investigate the issue of linguistic sexism in the three textbooks. The aim is specified into specific objectives of the research as follows: (1) to find out the frequencies of linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels exist in the current Vietnamese upper secondary English language textbooks: *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12* and (2) to clarify the hidden message(s) conveyed via the linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels in these textbooks. The research questions central to my study are: (1) How often does linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels occur in the current Vietnamese upper secondary school English language textbooks: *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12*? and (2) What message(s) is/ are conveyed via the

occurrence of linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels in these textbooks?

Hopefully, this study may urge Vietnamese educators and textbook designers take linguistic sexism into serious consideration. They will pay more attention to sexism in language in general and in Vietnamese English language textbooks in particular. The findings of the study could also be beneficial in the school environment because it will help raise awareness of learners and teachers on the issue of linguistic sexism and they will try to avoid sexist language in their lessons, language activities as well as language use.

2. Research methodology

This research is a case study on linguistic sexism in the current upper secondary English language textbooks in Vietnam. The textbooks that have been being used at Vietnamese schools now were officially introduced by Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in 2006. For upper secondary level, there are two sets of English textbooks being used along the country: the standard set, which was written by Hoàng Văn Vân *et al.* and published by Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in 2006 - 2007 and the advanced set, which was written by Tú Anh *et al.* and also published by MOET. Of the two sets, the standard one is in much more widespread use than the other.

Three Vietnamese upper secondary English language textbooks of the standard set were selected to serve as the corpus of the study, including *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12* written by Hoàng Văn Vân *et al.* and published by MOET in 2006 and 2007. For the present study the textbooks would be understood as being the actual books themselves. Thus the materials that were not in the written form, but on a CD, DVD or in a teacher's handbook, were excluded from the research.

This study was carried out by using mixed methods: both quantitative method and qualitative method of content analysis. Content analysis is a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication messages (Cole, 1988). Content analysis can be used to code a text into categories on a variety of levels: word, phrase, sentence and theme. For example, to investigate a phenomenon in a text or a set of texts, the researcher can use content analysis to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within the text(s). Materials in content analysis can be books, book chapters, essays, interviews, discussions, newspaper headlines and articles, historical documents, speeches, conversations, advertisements, and like that. Following Busch *et al.* (2005), to conduct a content analysis on a text the researcher should take the following steps: (1) decide the phenomenon or topic to investigate in the material(s), (2) code or break down the text into manageable categories on a variety of levels - word, word sense, phrase, sentence, or theme, and (3) examine the text using the content analysis' basic methods: conceptual analysis and/or relational analysis. Conceptual analysis is employed if the researcher intends to establish the existence and frequency of concepts, most often represented by words or phrases, in a text. For instance, for the purpose of finding evidence of sex discrimination in language in a reading passage, a researcher can determine how many times words such as *mankind*, *call girl* and *tomboy* appear in the passage. Relational analysis helps to do more than presence by exploring the relationships between the concepts identified.

The framework of content analysis created by Porreca (1984) who investigated how sexism is manifested in ESL textbooks has been most commonly followed in studies on the same topic. In a content analysis of 15 widely-used ESL textbooks, she focused on

the categories of omission (the ratio of females to males) in texts and illustrations, firstness (generally, when two nouns are mentioned, the male will be placed first, for example brothers and sisters), occupational visibility in text and illustrations, frequencies of male nouns to female nouns, female-exclusive masculine generic constructions, and types and frequencies of adjectives for men and women. However, for the purpose to deal with linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels in texts of the standard set of upper-secondary school English language textbook (*Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12*), I adapted the framework with a little change by examining the issue in three categories: in morphology, in semantics and in syntax. This set of the three categories serves as this study's types of linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels and as a starting point for data collection and analysis.

3. Findings and discussion

To achieve the findings for the first research question, the texts of the three textbooks: *Tiếng Anh 10*, *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12* were examined for the use of sexist language at word and phrase levels using content analysis. Each instance of sexist language at word and phrase levels was counted and placed in its appropriate category.

Linguistic sexism in morphology

The representation of linguistic sexism at the morpheme level can be seen in derived words with sex-marked morphemes like *ess*, *ette*, *man* and in words/ phrases with unnecessary elements or gender markers like *woman*, *women*, *lady*, *female*, *women's*, *men's*, which are added to mark that something is for one sex. There is a total of 73 times of words of the kind found in the three textbooks. Of the three books, *Tiếng Anh 11* contains the most instances of linguistic sexism in morphology, accounting for more than a half of the total with 41 instances. *Tiếng Anh 10* has the least with 10 times of occurrences. *Tiếng Anh 12* ranks the second with 22 instances. Words naming animals or things that are related to sexist uses were also found in the books. For example, *Tiếng Anh 10* uses the word *tiger* which means the male animal and can be used to refer to all members of a species. However, the word *tigress* is used only for female animals. Another example is the word *walkman* which is not a person, but with the element *man* in the word there seems to be the presence of male beings here. And what is special is that there is no word *walkwoman*. The results of analysis are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Linguistic sexism in morphology by book

Textbook	Instances (times)	Total
Tiếng Anh 10	air-hostesses (1), firemen (1), hero (1), ambassador (1), fishermen (1), chairman (1), the Browns (1), walkman (1), women professor (1), man-made (1)	10
Tiếng Anh 11	headmaster (1), waitress (1), manned (2), director (1), tiger (1), hero (2), businesswoman (1), policeman (5), Women's World Cup (11), women's football (1), housewives (2), women's karatedo (1), postmen (1), chairman (1), man-made (3), manned (4), mankind (2), newspaperman (1)	41
Tiếng Anh 12	waiter (3), policeman (1), cowboy (1), businessman (2), walkman (1), postman (2), men's football (2), women's football (2), countrymen (2), sportsmanship (1), milkmaid (2), housewives (3)	22
Total		73

Linguistic sexism in semantics

It can be seen from Table 2 that the frequency of occurrences violating linguistic equality in semantics in the three books is much lower than that in morphology. The total number of instances of this type is only 36 times. The numbers of instances of linguistic sexism in semantics in the three textbooks are slightly different. *Tiếng Anh 10* uses the most sexist terms with the frequency of 15 times. Each of the two other textbooks takes nearly the same number of occurrences: 10 times and 11 times for *Tiếng Anh 11* and *Tiếng Anh 12* respectively. In the three books, there are 8 instances using *Mrs.* to refer to a married woman and 12 instances of using *Miss* to refer to a single woman. And 3 times is the frequency that *Tiếng Anh 10* uses the title *Sir* in salutation although the letter receiver’s sex is unknown. *Man* and *men* used as generic nouns to include all human beings are found in all the three books. There is only one word, *honey*, which *Tiếng Anh 10* employs to call a girl with a metaphorical meaning.

In the three textbooks, a total number of 23 instances of generic pronoun uses are found, averaging 8 instances per textbook. *Tiếng Anh 10* and *Tiếng Anh 12* have the highest number of generic pronoun occurrences: 9 times per each textbook. *Tiếng Anh 11* uses generic pronouns only 5 times.

As can be seen from Table 3, 22 out of 23 instances of generic pronouns are masculine. For example, *Tiếng Anh 10* writes ‘A student who can do **his** homework in a quiet and comfortable room is in a much better position.’ It is clear that the word *student* in the sentence is used as a common noun. The student here can be anyone regardless of sexuality. It is hard to accept *his* being employed as a possessive adjective of the noun *student*. What will happen if *his* is replaced by *her* in the sentence?

Another portrayal of linguistic sexism in syntax is the arrangement of words naming the two sexes. As can be seen from Table 4, it is clearly shown that in the three books male nouns are placed first very often when

Table 2. Linguistic sexism in semantics by book

Textbook	Instances (times)	Total
Tiếng Anh 10	Mrs. (2), Miss (5), Sir (3), man (2), men (1), the Browns (1), honey (1)	15
Tiếng Anh 11	Mrs. (3), boy (1), man (6)	10
Tiếng Anh 12	Man (1), Mrs. (2), Miss (8)	11
Total	36	

Linguistic sexism in syntax

Linguistic sexism in the textbooks examined comprises two subtypes: generic pronouns and word orders. The use of generic pronouns can be regarded as the evidence for linguistic sexism in syntax. If generic pronouns such as *he*, *his*, *himself* and *him* are used to refer to everyone, this can be seen as the manifestation of linguistic sexism.

female and male nouns/pronouns are in a parallel structure. Some examples are *Mr. Vy and his wife*, *Mr. Vy and Mrs. Tuyet*, *his or her*, *Mr. and Mrs.*, *John and his wife*, *men and women*, *Tom and Ann*, *Mark and Jenny*, *Keith and Sonia*, *a boy or a girl*. There is a total of 107 phrases like these, of which male-before-female structures are 82, accounting for 76.6% and female-before-male orders are only 25, accounting for 23.4%.

Table 3. Linguistic sexism in syntax (generic pronoun use) by book

Textbook	Instances (times)	Total
Tiếng Anh 10	he (4), his (4), him (1)	9
Tiếng Anh 11	his (3), he (2)	5
Tiếng Anh 12	her (2), him (3), he (2), his (1)	9
Total	23	

Table 4. Linguistic sexism in syntax (word order use) by book

Textbook		Male preceding female	Female preceding male	Total
Tiếng Anh 10	Instances	Mr. Vy and his wife (1), Mr. Vy and Mrs. Tuyet (2), his/her (2), he/she (2), Mr./Ms (2), him/her (2), Peter and Judy (1), Jack Dawson and Rose Dewitt Bukater (1), myself and my wife (1)	her/him (1), Lan and Minh (1), Hoa and Quan (1), Helen and her husband (1), Daisy and Tony (1)	19 (17.8%)
	Total	14	5	
Tiếng Anh 11	Instances	his or her (1), his or hers (1), him or her (3), his/her (6), he/she (4), he or she (1), him/her (3), husband and wife (1), the host and his wife (1), boys and girls (1), younger boys and girls (2), boys' and girls' (1), Sir/Madam (2), males and females (2), Hung, Thu and Nga (1), Mr. and Mrs. (1), John and his wife (1), men and women (1), Tom and Ann (1), Mark and Jenny (1)	she/he (1), Rosa and Luis (6), Helen and her husband (1), ladies and gentleman (1), my wife and myself (1), mum and dad (1),	46 (42.9%)
	Total	35	11	
Tiếng Anh 12	Instances	men and women (8), men & women (4), a man and a woman (1), his/her (3), Paul and Andrea (1) Paul's and Andrea's (1), a boy and a girl (1), the groom and the bride (3), a man and a woman (1), the groom, the bride and their parents (1), his or her (2), Tuan and Lan (1), him/her (2), Mr. and Mrs. (1), male or female (1), Keith and Sonia (1), a boy or a girl (1)	the bride and the groom (2), a wife or a husband (2), wives and husbands (1), mother and father (1), Lan, Tung (2), Sally and Kavin (1)	42 (39.3%)
	Total	33	9	
Total		82 (76.6%)	25 (23.4%)	107 (100%)

An overall look at linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels in the current Vietnamese upper secondary school English textbooks is illustrated in the table below. It can be seen from the data that the total number of occurrences of linguistic sexism at word

and phrase levels is 239. The frequencies of linguistic sexism are greatly different among the textbooks and areas. *Tiếng Anh 11* is the most sexist textbook of all with the percentage of 42.7%. *Tiếng Anh 10* is the least sexist one with the percentage of 22.2%, which is about

half of *Tiếng Anh 11*. *Tiếng Anh 12* comprises a little more than one third of the total instances with 35.1%. Regarding areas, linguistic sexism in syntax is the most common and accounted for more than half of the sum of linguistic sexism instances (54.4%). Linguistic sexism in morphology ranks the second with the percentage of 30.5%. The least common area of linguistic sexism in the three textbooks is in semantics, which makes up the percentage of 15.1%, only about half of the occurrences in morphology.

‘That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind’ (*Tiếng Anh 11*, p.174), and *‘This historical event has proved that step by step man can conquer outer space’* (*Tiếng Anh 11*, p. 187).

Grammatically, *man and most animals* can be understood as *human beings and most animals* but it is hard to neglect the invisibility of women in the sentence above. May there be a feeling that women are not human beings? If considering linguistic sexism, how ridiculous it would be when we could imagine

Table 5. Linguistic sexism by book and category

Textbook	In morphology	In semantics	In syntax	Total
Tiếng Anh 10	10	15	28	53 (22.2%)
Tiếng Anh 11	41	10	51	102 (42.7%)
Tiếng Anh 12	22	11	51	84 (35.1%)
Total	73 (30.5%)	36 (15.1%)	130 (54.4%)	239 (100%)

To answer the second research question, the researcher used qualitative content analysis to examine how the status of the two sexes is reflected via linguistic sexism in the three textbooks. Here are the findings.

Women are exclusive and men are inclusive

The message that women are exclusive from human beings and men are inclusive of all people can be seen through the usage of language in which male words are representatives for both sexes. Generic nouns and pronouns employed in the textbooks can show this. It was found in the three textbooks that the word *man* is many times used as a representative for all people. Some typical examples are *‘Man and most animals need a constant supply of water to live’* (*Tiếng Anh 10*, p.105), *‘Man is constantly doing harm to the environment’* (*Tiếng Anh 10*, p.106), *‘The people of the United States share with the people of the Soviet Union their satisfaction for the safe flight of the astronaut in man’s first venture into space’* (*Tiếng Anh 11*, p.167),

a sentence saying: *Man is a mammal and he feeds his young with his own milk*. The three examples above taken from *Tiếng Anh 11* are about the achievement of bringing human into space. However, the usage of *man* as a generic noun makes people think that this success is of male human beings only and that women are not involved in the event, so they seem to be excluded. This book also uses the saying *‘All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy’* (p.155) to imply that children need playing. The words *Jack* and *boy*, however, may give a feeling that all children are boys and that girls are not children and they may need no playing.

When male pronouns like *he, him, his and himself* are used, they are signals of including men and excluding women. The following examples can illustrate the point: *‘The TV viewer needs to do nothing. He doesn’t even use his legs. He makes no choices. He is completely passive and has everything presented to him’* (*Tiếng Anh 10*,

p.91), 'A **student** who can do **his** homework in a quiet and comfortable room is in a much better position than a **student** who does **his** homework in a small noisy room' (Tiếng Anh 10, p.72), 'What did **an old farmer** say about the effect of the knowledge the young people brought home? What exactly did **he** tell **his** grandchildren?' (Tiếng Anh 10, p.84), 'A **person** who is concerned only with **his** own interests and feelings cannot be a true friend' (Tiếng Anh 11, p.13), 'Why does **the writer** admire **his** uncle?' (Tiếng Anh 11, p.148), and 'If **someone** does phone, ask **him** to call back, or offer to call **him** when dinner's over' (Tiếng Anh 12, p.35).

Looking at all of the sentences above, we may think that the world is all male human beings because there is no particular evidence from the texts of the three textbooks where the sentences appear that *the TV viewer, the student, the old farmer, the person, the writer and the someone* in the sentences mentioned are male.

The invisibility of women is also reflected in the vocabulary used in the textbooks such as *fishermen, walkman, fireman, man-made, countryman, manned and sportsmanship*. These words are used to mean all people of both sexes or being related to human beings. This shows the high frequency of the presence of men and makes women out from the world because there are no words like *fisherwomen, walkwoman, firewoman, woman-made, womaned and sportwomanship* or suppose if there any, they would not have the same connotations with the ones containing *man* elements.

Men are superior and women are secondary

The idea that men are superior and women are secondary is conveyed through the firstness and markedness of word phrases utilised in the three textbooks. Looking at the order of feminine and masculine pronouns, the researcher realised only two instances with

female-before-male orders: *her/him* and *she/he*. The exceeding number of male-before-female orders is 32: *his/her, he/she, him/her, his or her, his or hers, him or her, his/her, he/she, he or she*. In terms of common nouns, there are 7 orders with female firstness: *ladies and gentleman, mum and dad, the bride and the groom, a wife or a husband, wives and husbands, mother and father* while the number of male firstness is 30. The most common pairs of words with male firstness used in the three textbooks are *husband and wife, the host and his wife, boys and girls, younger boys and girls, males and females, men and wome, the groom and the bride, male or female, a boy or a girl*. Proper nouns of males also come first very often in the textbooks: *Peter and Judy, Jack Dawson and Rose Dewitt Bukater, Hung, Thu and Nga, Tom and Ann, Mark and Jenny, Paul and Andrea, Paul's and Andrea's, Tuan and Lan, Keith and Sonia*. Additionally, some other word orders used in the textbooks can convey something. For instance, in a passage about a young couple's party, the sentence '**The host and his wife** moved around to make sure that everyone was having a good time' (Tiếng Anh 11, p.44) may give a sense of the husband, the male host, is important and he is the real host of the party whereas the wife is not the host of the party and she is simply the male host's wife though they are a couple and the party is of them both.

Another manifestation of men's first place and women's second place is the employment of markedness for females. It seems that our language is men's because many words are for both sexes but they are prior used for men. For example, the three textbooks use the phrases like *World Cup* and *professor* repeatedly to imply they are *Men's World Cup* and *male professor*. When hearing the word *World Cup*, people might think about *Men's World Cup* immediately as if it belonged to men naturally, so when expressing *World Cup for women*,

people must mark it by adding *Women's* before the word to form *Women's World Cup*. Similarly, *professor* is used to refer to male so frequently that *woman* or *female* must be added to mark that a professor is not a male person but a female one.

Women are dependent and men are independent

The derivation of female words from male ones and the usage of titles in the textbooks evidently say that women are dependent and men are independent. The derived words or the original words from which the words derived used in the textbooks are *air-hostesses*, *hero*, *headmaster*, *waitress* and *ambassador*. It is ruled that *air-hostess* is formed by turning from *er* in *air-hoster* into *ess*, *hero* from *hero*, *headmistress* from *headmaster*, *waitress* from *waiter* and *ambadress* from *ambassador*. This way of forming words might show that men are the norm and never change but women are the variant and always change depending on men.

Beside sexist derived words, some titles employed in the three textbooks appear to support the point that women are dependent and men are independent. It is easy to see such titles as *Mr. Vy*, *Mr. Lam*, *Mr. Ha*, *Mr. King*, *Mr. Lee*, *Mrs. Tuyet*, *Mrs. Lien*, *Mrs. Smith*, *Miss Phuong*, *Miss June*, *Miss Moon*, *Miss White*, *Mr. Lee* in the textbooks. These instances of using titles indicate that women are somehow different from men because *Mrs.* is used to refer to a married woman and *Miss* to a single woman. That means women use titles to identify their marital status while men use the same title, *Mr.*, regardless of marital status. From the analysis, it is suggested that women's titles are dependent on their marital status while men's are not. When *Mr. and Mrs.* plus a proper name are placed together, they become a phrase addressing a married couple. For example, the phrases *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* in the sentences '**Mr. and Mrs. Smith** looked forward to meeting their children soon' (Tiếng

Anh 11, p.75) and '**Mr. and Mrs. Smith** invited us to dinner' (Tiếng *Anh 12*, p.95) describe a rule of naming which requires a wife to take her husband's name after marriage. This use of titles also illustrates for women's dependence on men.

4. Conclusion

First of all, there is evidence that linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels exists in all the three textbooks. This phenomenon occurs rather often in all of the three categories investigated: morphology, semantics and syntax. This shows that little attention was paid to linguistic sexism during the process of writing the books because many instances of linguistic sexism could have been avoided easily if the textbook writers had been really interested or always alert. Moreover, it is remarkable that the hidden messages conveyed via linguistic sexism at word and phrase levels in the books are much more against women than men. The messages found in the study also support the point that women's status in language has not been equal to men's yet although they are said to be equal to men in every field. Similar inferences could be made to their status in society because Fromkin and Rodman (1993) (cited in Bahiyah et al., 2008) assert that 'language reflects sexism in the society' (p.306).

The results of the current study also suggest that elimination of sexism in textbooks is of great importance. Porreca (1984) claims that the consequences of textbook bias may be serious for their users; they must be infinitely more so for younger ESL learners, whose limited experience gives them little basis for questioning what they read and who generally tend to trust the printed word more than adults do. However, the move to eliminate linguistic sexism not only requires linguistic reforms but also significant changes in the perception of what is to be masculine and feminine in all spheres of the society.

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KÌ THỊ GIỚI TÍNH VỀ NGÔN NGỮ TRONG SÁCH GIÁO KHOA TIẾNG ANH TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG HIỆN HÀNH: *TIẾNG ANH 10, TIẾNG ANH 11 VÀ TIẾNG ANH 12*

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Tóm tắt: Nghiên cứu này đề cập đến vấn đề kì thị giới tính về mặt ngôn ngữ trong sách giáo khoa tiếng Anh THPT hiện hành: *Tiếng Anh 10, Tiếng Anh 11 và Tiếng Anh 12*, nhằm tìm ra tần suất mà kì thị giới tính về ngôn ngữ xuất hiện trong các sách giáo khoa đã nêu, đồng thời hé mở những thông điệp ẩn giấu được truyền tải qua sự kì thị giới tính về ngôn ngữ. Kết quả nghiên cứu chỉ ra rằng kì thị giới tính về ngôn ngữ xuất hiện khá thường xuyên trong các sách này và qua đó thông điệp về vị thế thấp hơn của phụ nữ đã hé lộ.

Từ khóa: kì thị giới tính về ngôn ngữ, sách giáo khoa, mức độ thường xuyên, thông điệp ẩn giấu

APPENDICES: DATA COLLECTION SHEETS

Sheet 1. Distribution of linguistic sexism in *Tiếng Anh 10*

Categories of linguistic sexism	Instances (times)	Page	Total (and notes)
In morphology	air-hostesses (1)	17	10 (<i>walkman</i> : not a person but still shows women's invisibility with morpheme <i>man</i>)
	firemen (1)	18	
	fisherman (1)	20	
	woman professor (1)	33	
	chairman (1)	41	
	man-made (satellite) (1)	61	
	director (1)	71	
	walkman (1)	126	
	hero (1), ambassador (1)	147	
In semantics	Mrs. Tuyet (1)	13	15 (<i>Dear Sir</i> : used though letter receiver's sex is unknown; <i>honey</i> : a boy uses to call a girl)
	Miss Phuong (1)	23	
	Miss Phuong (1)	24	
	Mrs. (1), Miss (1)	28	
	(Dear) Sir (1)	42	
	honey (1)	48	
	(Dear) Sir (1)	51	
	Miss June (1), Miss Moon (1)	60	
	The Browns (1)	71	
	(Dear) Sir (1)	92	
	man (1): man and most animals need a constant supply of water to live.	105	
	man (1): man is constantly doing harm to the environment.	106	
	men (1): Quoc Tu Giam educated thousands of talented men for the country.	167	
In syntax	his (2): A student who can do his homework in a quiet and comfortable room is in a much better position than a student who does his homework in a small noisy room with the TV on.	72	28 (<i>an old farmer</i> : not sure whether this person is female or male but pronoun <i>he</i> is used)
	he (1), his (1): What did an old farmer say about the effect of the knowledge the young people brought home? What exactly did he tell his grandchildren?	84	
	he (3), his (1), him (1): The TV viewer needs to do nothing. He doesn't even use his legs. He makes no choices. He is completely passive and had everything presented to him.	91	
	Mr. Vy and his wife (1), Mr. Vy and Mrs. Tuyet (2)	14	
	his/her (1), he/she (1)	35	
	Mr./Ms (1)	37	
	Mr./Ms (1), him/her (1)	38	
	Helen and her husband (1)	39	
	him/her (1)	50	
	Lan & Minh (1), Hoa & Quan (1)	80	
	Peter and Judy (1)	102	
	Daisy and Tony (1)	109	
	her/him (1)	115	
	his/her (1)	119	
	Jack Dawson & Rose Dewitt Bukater (1)	137	
Myself and my wife (1)	139		
	he/she (1)	154	
Total			53

Sheet 2. Distribution of linguistic sexism in *Tiếng Anh 11*

Categories of linguistic sexism	Instances (times)	Page	Total (and notes)
In morphology	businesswoman (1) headmaster (1) policeman (3) Women's World Cup (4), World Cup (1) Women's football (1), World Cup (1), Women's World Cup (7) housewives (1) housewives (1) director (1) waitress (1) women's karatedo (1) postman (1) tiger (1) policeman (1) policeman (1) hero (1) hero (1) manned (3) chairman (1), mankind (1) man-made (1) man-made (2) manned (spaceship) (1), mankind (1) newspaperman (1)	27 59 75 77 78 95 99 107 110 137 149 150 153 162 167 168 170 174 178 183 187 189	41 (<i>World Cup</i> used many times to mean Men's Football World Cup; a lot of sexist terms are used in a single unit, unit 15 - grade 11)
In semantics	Mrs. Lien (1) Mrs. White (1) Mrs. Smith (1) man (1): Yuri Gararin was the first man who flew into space. boy (1): All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. man (1): man's first adventure man (1): US President Kennedy asked the nation to put a man on the moon. man (1): That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind. man (2): man in space, man can conquer outer space	67 74 75 132 155 167 173 174 187	10 (<i>Jack and boy:</i> representative not for boys only but also all children; <i>put</i> <i>a man on the</i> <i>moon:</i> women are excluded from the job)
In syntax	his (1): A person who is concerned only with his own interests and feelings cannot be a true friend. His or her (1) His or hers (1), she/he (1), him or her (1) His/her (3), he/she (3), he or she (1), him/her (2), him or her (1), Lan and Long (1) Him or her (2), his/her (2) Him/her (1) Rosa and Luis (4), husband and wife (1) Rosa and Luis (2) Helen and her husband (1) The host and his wife (1) (younger) boys and girls (2) Boys' and girls' clubs (1), boys and girls (1) Sir/Madam (1) Males and females (2) Hung, Thu and Nga (1)	13 14 16 17 19 28 33 34 39 44 47 48 52 62 67	51 (many male- before-female pairs of words but some female-before- male pairs like <i>ladies and</i> <i>gentleman, my</i> <i>wife and myself,</i> <i>mum and dad</i>)

	He/she (1)	69	
	(Dear) Sir/Madam (1)	72	
	John and his wife (1)	75	
	Ladies and gentlemen (1), my wife and myself (1)	108	
	his (2), he (2): Why does the writer admire his uncle? How did he collect his fish? Where does he collect stamp?	148	
	Mum and dad (1)	149	
	Men and women (1)	155	
	Tom and Ann (1)	161	
	Her/him (1), Mark and Jenny (1)	177	
	His/her (1)	184	
Total			102

Sheet 3. Distribution of linguistic sexism in *Tiếng Anh 12*

Categories of linguistic sexism	Instances (times)	Page	Total (and notes)
In morphology	waiter (1)	31	22 (<i>cowboy</i> : used for men and both sexes but <i>cowgirl</i> for women only and its synonym is <i>female cowboy</i>)
	waiter (1)	32	
	waiter (1)	66	
	policeman (1)	66	
	cowboy (1)	71	
	businessman (1), walkman (1)	99	
	postman (1)	136	
	men’s football (team) (1), women’s football (team) (1), countrymen (1)	139	
	countrymen (1) men’s football (team) (1), women’s football (team) (1), sportsmanship (1)	140	
	milkmaid (1)	142	
	milkmaid (1)	143	
	postman (1)	150	
businessman (1)	154		
housewife (3)	166		
In semantics	Miss White (2)	43	11 (no need to use <i>a Swiss man</i> , <i>a Swiss</i> or <i>a Swiss person</i> is better)
	Mrs. Smith (1)	95	
	Mrs. Brown (1)	70	
	man (1): The initiative for the Red Cross came from a Swiss man called Jean Henri Dunant.	153	
	Miss Roke (4), Miss Robert (2)	170	
		178	

In syntax	her (2): If we are at a noisy party and see a friend come in the door about 20 metres away, we might raise our hand and wave to her as a signal that we see her.	31	51 (<i>he</i> : used to refer to the old dog, a baby; <i>choosing a wife or a husband</i> shows that the agent of the action as a male is thought first so the female-before-male order here needs looking at the deep structure but not the surface structure)
	him (2): If someone does phone, ask him to call back, or offer to call him when dinner's over.	35	
	him (1): The most impressive of them is the old dog. The journey was the most difficult for him.	124	
	he (2), his (1): What a lovely baby! He certainly... his father, doesn't he?	161	
	men and women (4)	14	
	his/her (2)	15	
	Paul and Andra (2)	17	
	a boy and a girl (1), the bride and the groom (1), (...when choosing) a wife or a husband (1), wives and husbands (1), (...choosing) a wife or a husband (1), a man and a woman (2)	21	
	the bride and the groom (1)	22	
	the groom and the bride (3), the groom, the bride and their parents (1)	24	
	his or her (2)	25	
	his or her (1)	31	
	mother and father (1)	32	
	Tuan and Lan (1), Lan, Tung (2)	36	
	him/her (1)	39	
	Mr. and Mrs (1)	43	
	him/her (2)	95	
	male or female (2)	123	
	men and women (2)	163	
	men & woman (4)	164	
Sally and Kevin (1), Keith and Sonia (1)	169		
(Is the baby) a boy or a girl? (1)	171		
	181		
Total		84	

WORLD ENGLISHES FROM A HOLISTIC VIEW AND CONSIDERATIONS ON ENGLISH EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

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Abstract: The development of English as the mutual language among ASEAN since 2008 and the formation of ASEAN Economic Community since 2015 have set milestones in the social and educational development of each country in this organisation. In English education in Vietnam, understanding the diversity of Englishes in the organisation has become an important task. This article aims to present a holistic view of World Englishes (WE) in research generally and in relation to English education in Vietnam particularly by illustrating the Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions of WE in the Vietnamese teaching context. The data were collected via an online questionnaire using a snowball sampling method from seventy-six respondents who are English lecturers from twenty-six universities or colleges in Vietnam. The data were also collected from focus group interviews with five participants who were doing Master Degree in Applied Linguistics at an Australian university. The article delineates the findings of the Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions towards WE and their experiences in introducing WE in their teaching context. Discussion of English education in Vietnam, including issues in English teaching, English teachers' development and considerations of the policy context, is also presented.

Keywords: World Englishes, English education, English teachers, Vietnam

1. Introduction

Understanding varieties of English, or World Englishes (WE), is considered a crucial task in language teaching and learning to prepare English users for effective and intelligible communication (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Canagarajah, 2006; Ton & Pham, 2010). Specifically, the adoption of English as a medium for communication among ASEAN members in 2008 (Kirkpatrick, 2008) and the formation of ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 are milestones in the social and educational development of each member country. Communication in English is thus not just among Vietnamese with other English native speakers but also among other nationalities within the

region and ASEAN. Therefore, understanding of Englishes from other countries is important in line with the recognition of certain variants of English in the organisation such as Singaporean English or Cambodian English. This article thus aims to present a holistic view of WE in research generally and in the context of Vietnam particularly in relation to English education by illustrating the Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions of WE in the Vietnamese teaching context. Discussion of English education in Vietnam including issues in English teaching, English teachers' development and considerations of relating policies is presented at the end of the article.

2. Discussions on WE

In this article, WE is discussed with respect to its development through the past

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three decades, combined with a review of studies conducted in this field in ASEAN context and Vietnamese contexts.

2.1. Development of WE

The term “World Englishes” is defined variably with a range of meanings and interpretations (Bolton, 2004). According to Bolton (2004), the three most common interpretations of WE include an umbrella label of all English varieties, new Englishes (such as Englishes in the Caribbean or Asian Englishes) and the Kachruvian pluricentric approach with three concentric circles, the norm-providing varieties of the inner circle, the norm-developing varieties of the outer circle and the norm-dependent varieties of the expanding circle (see Figure 1). In accordance with the aim of the study which attempts to explore Vietnamese English teachers’ perceptions of English varieties in general, within this study the term WE is employed as the first interpretation, which presents an umbrella label covering all varieties of English worldwide.

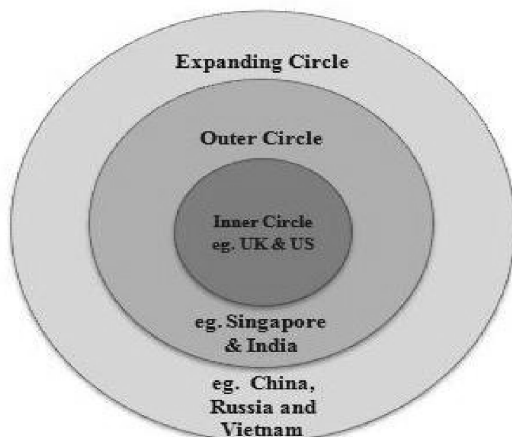


Figure 1. Kachru's 1988 three concentric circles of English varieties

WE has been in the focal discussion in much research. Understanding English varieties other than native-speaker norms has been regarded as necessary for effective communication in contexts where English is

used as a *lingua franca*. Numerous academic articles as well as a number of book-length studies on WE have been widely published in international academic journals such as *Asian Englishes*, *English Today*, *English World-Wide*, and *World Englishes*. Throughout the 1980s, in various branches of linguistics research and publications, WE has brought a paradigm shift in English studies. WE has shown important relations with other language studies. In terms of language variation, WE emphasises the pluricentric view of English study or the diversity of English varieties. “Englishes” also symbolises the functional and formal variation in the language and its international acculturation.

The WE paradigm that has brought together varieties of Englishes (Bolton, 2005) has been widely recognised in the past three decades. Kachru (1988) argues that WE makes three basic claims: 1) there exists a repertoire of models for English, not just the native speaker varieties; 2) localised innovations in English which have their pragmatic bases deserve recognition; and 3) the ownership of English lies with all those who use it. WE has recently been interpreted with more comprehensive characterisation with seven characteristics including diversity, plurality, equality, functionality, inclusivity, appropriateness and variability (Proshina, 2012). In Hamid, Zhu and Baldauf (2014), it is argued that the global spread of English has generated “multiple norms at the local, national and regional levels” in response to socio-cultural and pragmatic needs of speech communities (p. 77). These non-native speaker norms are suggested to be equal to native speaker norms and should serve as criteria in judging the appropriateness of English use in Outer Circle contexts (Kachru, 1988). The exploration of these norms as well as teachers’ perceptions towards these are thus important in English teaching.

2.2. *WE and the benefits of revisiting the field and researching teachers' perceptions of WE*

Firstly, the importance of understanding the teachers' perceptions of WE or varieties of English is in parallel with the rapid increase in the number of non-native English speakers and communication among non-native speaker communities. Honna (1999) points out that non-native speakers overwhelmingly outnumber native speakers of English. Prodromou (1997) estimated that up to 80% of communication in English takes place between non-native speakers. For example, the use of English by Indonesian learners is to communicate with Thais, Koreans, Vietnamese, or Japanese. Developing proficiency in communicating with inner-circle communities or focusing on only American or British English is not enough for effective and efficient communication. As a result, understanding English varieties and exploring the perceptions of English teachers towards English varieties is an important task.

Secondly, teachers have been posited to have important influences on their students' attitudes and perceptions of language use (Crismore et al., 1996). In other words, teachers should equip themselves with an understanding of English issues, in particular WE, to build students' appropriate understanding and attitudes to the importance of WE in English learning and in communication. Exploring teachers' perceptions of WE is thus important for further implications in English teaching and teacher education. Moreover, exploring teachers' perceptions of English varieties is in accordance with Vietnamese English teachers' identity as non-native speakers versus "native-speakerist" elements and native-speaker model (Holliday, 2005). In English teaching in Vietnam, native-speakers still have priority over non-native speakers. This choice of a native speaker model, which is seen as unattainable by students, can also

disadvantage the great majority of students (Cook, 2002). For example, Vietnamese students taking part in the study by Tananuraksakul (2009) revealed their shock when encountering WE and communicating with people from different cultures. Therefore, instead of conforming to a native-speaker model in English teaching with the focus on British and American English in Vietnam, it is important that the perceptions of English teachers towards English varieties (especially non-native varieties) are explored for their influences on teaching practices.

Thirdly, the necessity of researching teachers' perceptions of WE or English varieties is illustrated through the change in teaching and learning policy, the requirements of globalisation and transnational education, and the roles of Vietnam in the regional integration process. First, communication among non-native English learners has led to changes in the policy of teaching and learning. In their book on WE, Melchers and Shaw (2011) posit that although universities and schools used to demand just one inner-circle variety as standard, they are "now increasingly allowing mixed varieties and focusing on communicative value rather than any particular native usage" (p. 203). Thus, exploring the perceptions of English teachers in Vietnam is a necessity of the factual demands in language use and an appropriate process along with other countries or academic institutions.

Additionally, exploring teachers' perceptions of WE or English varieties parallels with globalisation in education or the trend of transnational education. Along with globalisation and transnational education, the number of Vietnamese students studying abroad is increasing. For instance, within the region, Singapore is among the top five attractive destinations with nearly 10,000 Vietnamese students in 2010. Meanwhile,

different varieties of Englishes especially Singaporean English (Kirkpatrick & Bhatt, 2010) or even the mixed code of Singlish has been treated as expressing the local values of Singaporeans in general. Exploring the perceptions and understanding of WE or English varieties such as Singaporean English is thus a vital task in English teaching along with transnational education in globalisation.

Furthermore, researching teachers' perceptions of English varieties or WE is in line with social demands in regional integration process such as integration of Vietnam into ASEAN since 1995. The role of English in ASEAN as a working language since 2007 (Kirkpatrick, 2008) and the current ASEAN Economic Community indicates the necessity of English language teaching curriculum to provide students with varieties of Englishes or cultures of the people they are communicating with. Additionally, along with the recognition of WE or new English varieties in other neighbor countries namely Malaysia (Chan & Wong, 2002), Singapore (Ho & Wong, 2001) or Brunei (O'Hara-Davies, 2010), it is now evident that understanding only Standard English is not sufficient for successful communication. Rather, it is necessary to understand the recognised Englishes from these regional countries for more effective communication purposes. In short, how the teachers perceive World Englishes and its incorporation into their teaching is an important task to be explored.

2.3. Previous studies in Asian context

In line with the importance of varieties of Englishes in English teaching and learning, much research has been done in Asia to explore the perceptions of English teachers. In some Asian contexts, such as India and Pakistan, new Englishes are widely recognised while in others, such as Japan, where English is mainly used as a foreign language, the awareness and acceptance of WE are lower. Suzuki (2011)

investigated three Japanese student teachers' understanding of the diversity in English and their perspectives on introducing WE into English language teaching in Japan. Individual interviews along with student writing were explored in the study. Participants in the study displayed different levels of knowledge about varieties of English, which Suzuki attributed to their prior experiences of social and educational interaction with other second language speakers of English. Nonetheless, only American and British English were regarded as appropriate for English language teaching. The study recommended developing teachers' perceptions of other varieties of English in teacher preparation programs as well as developing skills in teaching English as an international language.

Tsui and Bunton (2000) scrutinised the attitudes of Hong Kong's English language teachers in terms of their discourse and their views on correctness or acceptability of Hong Kong English. Over a thousand electronic messages on language issues of English teachers in Hong Kong through a computer network - *TeleNex* - over a period of two years were analysed. The results showed a preference among Hong Kong's English teachers for Standard English in formal communication rather than Hong Kong English. Nevertheless, the study predicted the change in societal attitudes towards the local variety of English in Hong Kong and towards varieties of Englishes in general given rapid globalisation and the immense impact of the Internet on communication amongst nations.

Among several studies in ASEAN contexts, Moore and Bounchan (2010) examined Cambodian English by employing questionnaires and focus group interviews. The study investigated the perceptions of teachers, administrators, and students as to the status of Cambodian English, and their preferences for different kinds of English.

The recognition of Cambodian English was emphasised in the study in line with the perception of English as a second language or an international language rather than a foreign language or *lingua franca*. Although one particular Standard English variety was preferred in classroom teaching, others were also drawn on as the context dictated. Moore and Bounchan concluded that a balance was needed between teaching Standard English and newer varieties.

Despite the increasing importance of WE in English teaching, very few studies have been conducted in Vietnam to explore the kinds of English used or the perceptions of English teachers towards WE. In line with the recognition of WE among many countries within the ASEAN region, it has been argued that Vietnam should develop an understanding of WE to develop and promote “mutual intelligibility” (Kirkpatrick, 2007, p. 193). Nonetheless, the current trend in English language teaching in Vietnam is to privilege British and American Standard English. Of the few studies that exist discussing WE or issues of different Englishes in the context of Vietnam, Ton and Pham (2010) is directly related to the present study. With the participation of 250 students and 80 university teachers from two universities in Vietnam, the study investigated attitudes towards the preferred kinds of English via a mixed-method approach involving questionnaires and interviews. The study found that although students used English more often with non-native speakers, they still preferred studying British and American English. Ton and Pham also suggested that students should explore more English varieties outside the classroom for more effective communication with non-native speakers. The study is presented in the next section will focus on a broader context of Vietnam with more and deeper insights from the teachers’ perceptions of WE.

3. The study and findings

In light of the importance of WE in English education, especially the necessity of exploring English teachers’ perceptions towards WE in the Vietnamese teaching context, the study aims to answer the following question: What are the perceptions of Vietnamese English teachers towards WE and incorporating WE in their English teaching contexts? Tertiary level was chosen for the study, due to the reason that among Vietnam teaching contexts, university teachers have more autonomy than teachers at other levels in the choice of teaching materials and teaching content. Additionally, their students may have stronger language proficiency and more experience of other kinds of English through overseas studies or workplace requirements. Therefore, at this stage, the exploration of teachers’ perceptions at this level is more valuable than other levels.

The data were collected from the first author’s Master thesis at one university in Australia over six weeks. A mixed-methods approach (involving both quantitative and qualitative data) with the focus on qualitative data was employed to answer the research question. Seventy-six Vietnamese English teachers at the university/college level in Vietnam took part in the first stage of the research conducted using an online questionnaire (see Table 1). Five of the participants, who were Vietnamese English teachers and pursued a master’s degree in Applied Linguistics at an Australian university (see Table 2), participated in the interview stage, including individual semi-structured interviews and a focus group interview, after they had answered the online questionnaire. These were all administered in English for the reason that the participants are all Vietnamese English lecturers at university and college level with good English proficiency. English was also chosen for both data collection and data analysis to avoid gaps, misunderstanding

or difficulties when translating technical terms from English into Vietnamese. The use of English in interviews is thus useful for the participants to express their ideas, although the code-switching is not prohibited.

In analyzing the data, the first author classified the participants into subgroups according to their teaching major and their previous experiences of WE. Quantitative data were analysed for trends and variance by providing frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data were the major focus of the data analysis. Data from open questions on the online survey, as well as from individual and focus group interviews were firstly transcribed and then analysed and interpreted through four stages: reading, coding, sorting, and interpreting. Excerpts from the interview data in the following section are presented in participants' own words, including any non-standard forms and expressions.

In this article, the main findings from the two stages of the study including the online survey and the individual interviews and focus group discussion are presented to grasp a holistic view of the Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions towards WE and introducing WE into their teaching.

3.1. Online survey

This section presents findings from online survey which was designed with both closed questions and open questions. Table 1 provides the general description of the participants based on the findings of closed questions about demographic data.

As for the question exploring the variety of English currently widely used in English teaching in Vietnam, 89% of the respondents presented American and British English. Given that the answer "Others" constituted 12%, it was clarified by the interviewees as "both American and British English". Although the superiority of native varieties such as American or British English was emphasised, non-native varieties such as Hong Kong English and ASEAN English varieties (i.e. Singaporean English) were also recognised by the respondents along with their acceptability of Vietnamese English.

Vietnamese English was widely reported in the survey by the participants as an acceptable term along with its features in terms of pronunciation, grammar, and culture, which were noted in reference to differences between Vietnamese and English. Word order ("house big," not "big house") and the use of articles or plural features ("two book," not "two books") were noted by participants as features of Vietnamese English. This will be further discussed in the discussion section about their acceptability. In addition, Vietnamese cultural norms involving direct questions of a personal nature (e.g., related to age, marital status, or financial status) were included as Vietnamese English features, which is to some extent similar to the results of Srihar (1991) regarding request strategies of Indian English transferred from local languages (as cited in Kirkpatrick, 2007).

Table 1. General description of participants in online questionnaire

Number of participants	Gender		Age range					Total number of universities/ colleges
	Female	Male	Under 25	26-30	31-35	36-40	Above 40	
N = 76	56	20	2	34	24	5	11	26
	(73.7%)	(26.3%)	(2.6%)	(44.7%)	(31.6%)	(6.5%)	(14.5%)	

Native and non-native Englishes were perceived by participants as having different roles and positions in English teaching in Vietnam. Native Englishes were explained as the kinds currently used in course books or English teaching materials used in English courses in Vietnam. These materials include English-language media such as films or game shows which extensively influence daily life in Vietnam. Importantly, international tests, namely IELTS, TOEFL, and TOEIC, were regarded by the participants as an important goal for Vietnamese students. Notably, all these tests currently privilege native varieties of English. The importance of non-native kinds of English was also noted by many teachers in the study. Similarly, non-native varieties were claimed by the participants to contribute to successful communication, which focuses more on fluency than accuracy.

Introducing English varieties in English teaching in Vietnam was also pointed out in the survey with both benefits and challenges although it was widely regarded as an important task in English teaching by the participating teachers. Three main benefits of introducing English varieties were shown from the responses. Firstly, it was noted that introducing WE can prepare students for real-life encounters with different varieties of English. It was emphasised by one teacher that “students will be well-prepared for real-life encounters with varieties of English”. This was in accordance with another opinion that it helps learners to “expose and get familiar with different varieties of English that are used currently in communication outside classroom”. Secondly, introducing English varieties is also considered a beneficial factor for successful communication. One respondent emphasised that “They [the students] are better at communicating with people from

different countries and areas in English...”. Another respondent presented the same idea, “Students are familiar with different varieties of English. They can communicate better”. Thirdly, confidence and awareness of students and English learners and users were stated as the benefit of introducing English varieties. It was posited, “They [the students] are more confident in using their own English which is not really standard”, or “my Vietnamese students can feel more self-confident when they speak English even though they are not native speakers”. Their attitudes towards the influences of native speakers or native varieties in English teaching and learning thus can be changed.

Teaching materials, time and effort consuming as well as students’ reluctance, resistance and confusion were commonly identified by the respondents in the survey as the challenges of introducing English varieties. Firstly, the teachers claimed that teaching materials are a big problem because “there might be insufficient materials for introducing varieties of English for students”, or “lack of proper teaching materials”. Secondly, time- and effort-consuming in class was also shown as one issue that needs to be taken into consideration when introducing English varieties. One respondent said that “they [the teachers] have no extra time for introducing these varieties”. Teachers’ awareness and knowledge of WE or English varieties are also other constraints to Vietnamese English teachers in terms of introducing English varieties. They presented that “The teachers themselves do not know well about the varieties”. Importantly, regarding students’ perspectives, the teachers noted that their students might show their reluctance and confusion when being introduced to these varieties. They stated, “They [English varieties] can make students confused”. Another respondent also said that “students

may feel bored with those non-native Englishes. They just want to listen to native speaker voices only”.

The next section presents main findings from individual interviews and group discussions among the focus-group participants.

3.2. Individual interviews and group discussion

Further insights of the Vietnamese English teachers’ perceptions towards WE and introducing WE into diverse specific teaching contexts were highlighted through individual interviews and a group discussion among the five interviewees as described in Table 2.

later when they are exposing with other varieties of English”. Manh highlighted the importance of introducing English varieties by mentioning the case of his University as one example. With the aim to reduce students’ communication breakdown, a course relating to WE or English varieties is conducted in his university.

However, various difficulties in divergent teaching contexts were presented when the interviewees mentioned the challenges of introducing English varieties. Of those, teaching and learning materials, time and effort consuming, the selection of suitable varieties, and students and parents’ resistant

Table 2. General description of interviewees

Name (pseudonyms)	Gender	Age	City in Vietnam	English teaching major	Semester in university
Manh	Male	26	Hanoi	Major students	2nd semester
Thanh	Female	25	Hue	Major students	3rd semester
Suong	Female	26	Hanoi	Major students	2nd semester
Tu	Female	31	An Giang	Both major and non-major students	2nd semester
Linh	Male	28	Hanoi	Both major and non-major students	2nd semester

First of all, all of the interviewees agreed that introducing English varieties is important to English teaching. Linh emphasised the importance of introducing English varieties and the suggestion for English learners to understand many English varieties for future encounters.

“I think it is really important to help the learners understand and as teachers we should introduce students with varieties of English... English learners should be aware of as many of English varieties as possible”.

Suong supported that “The job of teaching is to prepare students for real-life later so if we can prepare them to avoid the shock

attitudes were generally stated as common challenges. Manh clearly pointed out several important challenges: “Number 1 as I said, lack of materials, number two, that would be very time and effort consuming, and also another major issue is important is the resistance of part of students...”. Linh also pointed out various challenges:

“The first thing is... we have to prepare students to get used to the terminology of WE... and accept this term... And the second thing, to prepare some kind of materials... most of materials... have native-like English... The third one is... which one of varieties we choose and have superiority...”

Suong with the experiences of introducing different English varieties into her teaching raised students' resistance or attitude as an important challenge. She showed that the students took that variety as mistake and blamed on this as the reason they could not complete the listening tasks.

The interviewees also presented varying ideas in line with their different teaching contexts when mentioning their opinions towards their colleagues' attitudes. Suong and Manh noted that their colleagues have proper understanding of WE as they do. In contrast, Tu posited that her colleagues, like her, do not have knowledge of WE or English varieties, "I think that my colleagues have just some general information but not very clear or exactly the term like this." Thanh noted that her colleagues are conservative with native varieties or native-like model and "try to correct the students' pronunciation, intonation to become native speakers.."; meanwhile, she is more open and focused on more communication and fluency in her teaching. Obviously, there existed certain gaps and differences in the interviewees' understanding of WE particularly and in their teaching contexts generally.

When being asked about suggestions that the interviewees would make to introduce English varieties in their English teaching, they presented different ideas. Students' needs analysis, their awareness and attitudes, teacher education investment, teachers' awareness and attitude, and careful preparation for first encounter were commonly presented. First, students' needs analysis along with their purposes of studying English, their emotional and cultural issues should receive attention. The interviewees presented that it would be necessary to have careful needs analysis, especially students' attitudes and interests beforehand. Suong noted:

"I think need analysis is very important

to do here because if we students and teachers both aware of the kinds of English they will use in future, their purposes of learning English or the kinds of English they will encounter later so the attitude may change...."

With a distinct teaching environment from Manh and Suong, Thanh recommended that the change of teachers' attitude and awareness towards English varieties is important. The investment in teacher education, especially teacher study abroad was also emphasised by the interviewees to improve the teachers' knowledge and provide them with opportunities for real communication. Tu suggested the employment of technology and media as the sources of introducing English varieties to get students familiar with these varieties. She noted, "I will use media to let students about more different varieties of English...I think we have to choose one primary English variety to teach English varieties..."

The change of the students' awareness, their students' attitude or resistance to English varieties was also recommended. Manh noted that "Teachers should introduce, inspire students with English varieties because students are still more interested in studying native varieties through add-ons components besides native varieties". He asserted that native-like proficiency should not be the target, but intelligibility and comprehensibility.

Careful preparation for the students' first encounter with different English varieties was also considered an important task. Suong suggested employing teachers' personal experiences as effective example to illustrate the importance of English varieties.

"I think maybe I will tell them a story of how I myself have been shocked and have overcome that kind of initial shock and also remind them to be more open....Preparing students in terms

of cultural knowledge and emotional knowledge is very important”.

In the group discussion, when asked to present their opinions towards the statement: “Introducing English varieties, especially non-native varieties, helps students to be confident with their own English and proud of their own English variety”, the interviewees presented different points of view. Manh agreed with this idea and posited that accent is not really important. He emphasised the importance of students’ tolerant attitude with different accents, which was also supported by Thanh. She clarified, “In my teaching, I focus on more communication, fluency and a bit on accuracy, the accent needs to be accepted to identify identity...”. Linh added the positive prospect that the students’ Vietnamese accent and Vietnamese variety of English might be accepted around the world. Despite having rapport on this statement, Suong took more caution with the word “confidence”. She showed her hesitance: “...That kind of confidence should be taken with caution. It may mislead students into believing that they do not need improvement...” However, they all showed an appropriate attitude towards English varieties, whether they are native or non-native varieties.

The second statement aims to present a discussion of the issue of native-like competence as the main goal of teaching, which deduces the un-necessity of introducing English varieties into teaching. Manh presented his disagreement by noting that, “native-like is most of the time not the target of learning English but the effectiveness on communication”. This was agreed by the other interviewees. Regarding the students’ confusion, Linh said that “they might be confused at the first stage”, but for him, “that’s not important issue”. Tu suggested the level of students should be taken into investigation when introducing English varieties to reduce

students’ confusion.

The third issue related to the exam-oriented purposes of teaching and learning English in Vietnam, which might lead to an emphasis on teaching British and American English only. Discussing this point, all interviewees emphasised the necessity of an analysis of students’ needs to identify the students’ purposes of learning English and choose suitable teaching content and method. They also put an emphasis on the necessity of English varieties on real life communication or encounters of different English varieties. They claimed that introducing English varieties does not aim to change the learners’ goals or targets (exam-oriented) but their awareness and attitudes towards English varieties. Manh added that “No matter how hard we try, we cannot reach the target (Standard English)”. Therefore, he suggested the teachers let the students aim for their targets, but still introduce English varieties to help students better with real-life encounters and communication. “We still focus on those targets, but at the same time, we can change students’ awareness, attitude towards remarkable English varieties (through introducing English varieties)...”.

Overall, through individual interviews and a group discussion among the five focused participants, their perceptions of WE as well as detailed suggestions towards introducing WE into their teaching in line with their working conditions were uncovered. The next section will discuss further considerations in relation to English education in Vietnam.

4. Discussion and consideration

In this section, discussions on the findings of the study are firstly presented. Subsequently, other issues in relation to WE including English teaching, teacher development and relating policies are presented for the current and future English education in Vietnam.

Firstly, the study supported the findings

of previous studies with regard to the role of Standard English and the communication purposes in Vietnam context. Supporting the findings of Ton and Pham (2010), native Englishes were commonly believed by the participants to be widely used and to exert strong influence on English teaching and assessment. Likewise, the current study showed that Vietnamese students are more likely to communicate in English with non-native speakers than native speakers, as noted in Kirkpatrick's (2002).

As the findings delineated in the previous section, with regard to introducing varieties of English, different teaching contexts revealed diverse perceived advantages and challenges. Therefore, to develop a suitable approach to the introduction of these varieties of English, teachers must carefully consider each teaching context to employ appropriate actions in teaching or "clear and consistent learning models" (Swan, 2012, p. 384). In addition, different kinds of English must be introduced carefully, as learners may demonstrate confusion and resistance, or at an appropriate stage, as noted by Sewell (2013). It was also recommended that using workshops or informal presentations based on teachers' personal experiences could help raise students' awareness of this topic and its importance. This was considered as an important step before teachers introduce WE.

It was also posited that once the students were aware of the importance of understanding different English varieties, introducing the varieties must be conducted motivationally, such as through warm-up activities or through engaging media such as YouTube. Introducing different kinds of English through English clubs with students' performance was also suggested as a means of encouraging students to explore WE.

In universities with support for teaching WE, Englishes were recommended to be

introduced through task-based language teaching. This approach may afford students the autonomy to select which varieties of English they may want to explore. Tasks related to real-life situations might also intrigue and stimulate students with the exploration and understanding of different kinds of English, as noted by Matsuda (2003). In universities or colleges with no courses relating to WE, these tasks were suggested to be attached to other courses such as intercultural communication or listening subjects. In these certain circumstances, teachers could also use postcards, YouTube videos, or intercultural movies to introduce different Englishes.

Regarding teachers' knowledge and awareness, changing teachers' conservative attitudes towards other Englishes, including non-native varieties, was also regarded as an important task. Holding workshops, teachers' meetings, and discussions about WE were also recommended. In contrast to Matsuda's (2003) suggestions of bringing in speakers of different varieties into classrooms or changing the recruitment process to include more non-native English teachers, the participants in this study focused more on investment in overseas teacher training such as that provided by the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training. Through their experiences overseas with issues related to other kinds of English, participants noted that they believed that overseas training provides English teachers with real-life experiences to improve their awareness of teaching issues in international contexts.

Besides these above discussed points, other aspects need to be taken into consideration in English education in Vietnam. First, there is a need to provide teacher training to improve teachers' knowledge and awareness. English teachers should also have opportunities to involve themselves in real-life English communication via funded short-term or long-

term overseas courses. Further discussions or workshops should also be held to reach a consensus among teachers regarding the best methods for including WE in specific contexts. A degree of autonomy, for both teachers and learners, is also required so the varieties of English drawn on in the curriculum are most relevant to their current and future needs.

In addition, teaching materials including textbooks and curriculum should be taken into investigation for better teaching and learning outcomes. Teaching materials are important, which influences on the perceptions of English teachers and learners. Therefore, on the one hand, teaching materials should cover the interest and perceptions of English teachers; on the other hand, they should be varied so that teachers and learners can expose to different varieties. From these, students can also choose their own varieties which they aim to explore in details.

Furthermore, the growing recognition of the plurality of English underling WE paradigm has problematised the conventional second language acquisition (SLA) views of errors. If English use in emerging English-speaking contexts is to be judged by local norms, as argued by WE scholars, applying exocentric norms in these contexts can be inappropriate (Hamid, 2014). In SLA, deviations from NS norms, which are believed to result from limited linguistic competence, are called errors. However, these may not necessarily be errors in WE, particularly when an idiosyncratic form appears systematic and is shared by a speech community. On the other hand, despite the significant growth of WE, varieties of new Englishes have yet to develop widely acceptable endocentric norms. Though the introduction of WE might be still at an early stage in the English teaching context in Vietnam, in association with the further development of WE, this issue thus must be

addressed for further consideration in the light of research of this field.

In the case of Vietnam, the current study showed that WE is still new and teaching WE is still an individual teacher choice. In line with the development of WE in English teaching context in Vietnam, further critical questions will be raised that teachers and educational developers might face, such as the question of how TESOL teachers distinguish between errors in the SLA sense and varietal features in the WE sense (Hamid, 2014). As it is claimed, failure to draw clear boundaries between errors and nurture innovations may have academic and social consequences (Hsu, 2012). In other words, since teachers are already involved in the process of judging English as part of their practice, it is important to investigate the processes and criteria for distinguishing between errors and innovations from their perspectives. As noted in the findings of the study, some teachers still consider negative transfer from the first language learning, Vietnamese, to foreign language learning, English, as the features of Vietnamese English (i.e. “house big”, not “big house”. Meanwhile, tenses were pointed out as grammatical features of Indonesian English (Kirkpatrick, 2007). These perceptions will probably influence teachers’ teaching practices, especially in line with the introduction of World Englishes in their teaching contexts. These issues still remained to be further addressed and answered in the context of English teaching in Vietnam not only at individual teacher level but must be at a larger scope of researching.

In accordance with the perceptions of teachers toward WE in the context of Vietnam, in addition to discussions in the field in relation to errors and norms, the development of English in specialised area such as Journalism or Business English needs to be taken into consideration. It is undeniable

that English communications among ASEAN countries, especially after the resolutions of the ASEAN Economic Community, is mainly conducted in the field of business. Therefore, how to teach as well as what or which varieties to be included in Business English in line with the development of different Englishes from other countries of the region or just Standard English are unavoidable questions. Indeed, how to equip students with the understanding and exposure to these Englishes should thus be addressed for further consideration by educators.

Combined with these concerns, policy makers and educators should exercise care in finding suitable approaches for teachers' development, teaching materials and testing and assessment tools. Choosing a suitable assessment tool is one of the important tasks that policy makers and educators need to consider. In fact, besides the international tests widely employed in English teaching and learning in Vietnam such as IELTS or TOEFL, the Vietnamese Standardised Test of English Proficiency (VSTEP) has been constructed and put into effect since 2015. One of the aims of this test is to construct an assessment tool which is more appropriate with Vietnamese English users. In terms of listening, for instance, this assessment tool covers different listening topics close to the context of Vietnamese and non-native speakers perspectives. Rather than testing native speaking ability of native accent, it is noted in the training documents of writing test items for VSTEP that the ability to listen to talks or conversations in different accents such as Singaporean English or Indian English were noted as a feature of this assessment tool. However, how to clarify the test aims to teachers and students, or launch and develop more of this kind of test to the public still need more work from the policy makers at all levels.

5. Conclusion

The study reported here explored Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions of World Englishes as well as their beliefs regarding its introduction. Perceptions, suggestions, and imagined actions of the study's participants provide insights into the current experience of teachers who work in contexts where the variety of English taught is not necessarily representative of the varieties that students may be exposed to living and working in the ASEAN region. The research also adds to the limited amount of literature on WE in Vietnam, and provides evidence of the potential influence of WE in English language education in a region which is becoming increasingly interconnected, and where competence in different kinds of English is destined to become necessary for successful intercultural communication.

While this study has provided the insights outlined above, the findings are limited in terms of generalisability, as well as the participants chosen. First, the short turnaround time and limited numbers of participants in the study, with a focus on university and college teachers only, restricts its generalisability. In addition, though unique traits of the interview participants (studying in Australia) provided an important perspective on the current and imagined future roles of WE in Vietnam, the voices of other teachers are also needed to provide a more in-depth understanding of the findings from the online survey.

Further research thus needs to be conducted over a longer period to grasp the breadth of views expressed. More work is needed into the analysis of Vietnamese English features to provide researchers, teachers, and learners with a clear understanding of what makes this variety of English unique. Finally, there has been inadequate research on teachers' judgments of L2 use from the SLA-WE contrastive perspectives. Questions need to be

raised in terms of whether there is a consensus among teachers in their understandings of errors and varietal features; what criteria they use in judging the status of L2 features; and whether these criteria are different from those suggested in the literature.

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WORLD ENGLISHES TỪ CÁI NHÌN TỔNG QUAN VÀ VIỆC XEM XÉT CHÚNG TRONG GIẢNG DẠY TIẾNG ANH TẠI VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt: Việc lựa chọn tiếng Anh là ngôn ngữ chung của ASEAN từ năm 2008, cùng với sự hình thành cộng đồng kinh tế chung ASEAN vào năm 2015 đã đặt những dấu mốc quan trọng trong sự phát triển kinh tế và giáo dục của mỗi nước thành viên. Đối với giảng dạy tiếng Anh tại Việt Nam, việc am hiểu sự đa dạng của các phiên bản tiếng Anh trong tổ chức này và khu vực được xem là một nhiệm vụ quan trọng. Bài báo trình bày cái nhìn tổng quan về World Englishes (WE) trong nghiên cứu nói chung và trong mối quan hệ với giảng dạy tiếng Anh tại Việt Nam nói riêng, thông qua việc trình bày cách tiếp nhận của giáo viên tiếng Anh đối với WE. Số liệu của bài báo được lấy từ điều tra trực tuyến gồm 76 giảng viên từ 26 trường cao đẳng, đại học tại Việt Nam, cũng như thông qua phỏng vấn và thảo luận nhóm năm giảng viên đang làm thạc sỹ ngôn ngữ học ứng dụng tại một trường đại học ở Úc. Bài báo trình bày những kết quả có được về cách nhìn nhận của giáo viên tiếng Anh ở Việt Nam đối với WE cũng như việc đưa WE vào giảng dạy. Các tác giả cũng thảo luận các vấn đề về giảng dạy tiếng Anh, việc phát triển giáo viên cũng như những xem xét về các chính sách giáo dục liên quan tới tiếng Anh ở Việt Nam.

Từ khóa: World Englishes, giáo dục tiếng Anh, giáo viên tiếng Anh, Việt Nam

POETIC METAPHORS OF LOVE IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

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Abstract: The conceptual metaphor theory states that poetic metaphors are in fact conventional metaphors but they are made novel via four techniques - elaboration, extending, questioning, and combination. Based on this sense, our paper focuses on examining and comparing poetic metaphors of romantic love in English to those in Vietnamese. Contrastive analysis is the main method applied in the study with the data for investigation coming from English and Vietnamese love poems. Also, the metaphor identification procedures by Pragglejaz Group and its extension are employed to minimize the risk of impulsiveness in metaphor collection process. Our findings reveal that the novelty of love metaphors in poetry does not lie in concepts but in linguistic expressions thanks to the four above techniques, among which combination is employed much more than the others in both languages. Furthermore, both conceptual and linguistic metaphors of love are found to be similar between English and Vietnamese poetry, which is supposed to result from the universality of metaphor. However, variations of cultures, lifestyles, and thought bring about some differences of love metaphors between these two languages.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor, poetic metaphor, metaphor of love, English, Vietnamese

1. Introduction

Love is a complex emotion but familiar and closely attached to human life. It is the endless source of inspiration to composers, especially poets. Love in poetry is diverse, plentiful, and mainly manifested by metaphors. Poetic language used to be regarded as unconventional, more imaginative and creative than daily language thanks to rhetoric, including metaphor. However, according to the conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor is pervasive in our everyday language. Poetic metaphorical expressions can be unconventional and novel; but the conceptual metaphor underlying them remains conventional and well-known to most

people in the community (Kovecses, 2010). This matter is once again discussed in the paper where metaphorical expressions of love in English and Vietnamese modern poetry are investigated to find out how novel the poetic metaphors of love are in each language. Then, they are compared to draw out the universalities and variations of these metaphors between the two languages, English and Vietnamese. Although there are several kinds of love, our investigation focuses on just romantic love which is defined as a mix of emotional and sexual desire (Karandashev, 2015).

2. Poetic metaphor

Traditional views treating metaphor at linguistic levels show that metaphors in literature are more creative, unique, impressive, interesting, plentiful, and complex

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than those in non-literary texts (Semino & Steen, 2008). It is believed that the “real” source of metaphor is in literature in general and in poetry in particular (Kovecses, 2010). Challenging traditional views of metaphor, the conceptual metaphor theory confirms the pervasiveness of metaphor in daily life. At the same time, it is said that the locus of metaphor is not just in language but in thought and action (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). The theory consequently distinguishes conceptual metaphors from linguistic metaphors. Conceptual metaphor (or metaphorical concept) refers to a mental representation describing the association of two different domains at an underlying cognitive level through the mapping SOURCE DOMAIN IS/AS TARGET DOMAIN. It is manifested in language by metaphorical expressions. Therefore, a metaphorical expression is a linguistic expression that is used to represent the conceptual metaphor in language. It is also called linguistic metaphor.

For metaphors in poetry, according to the conceptual metaphor theory, most of the poetic metaphors derive from everyday conventional metaphors; therefore, they are neither creative nor original nor imaginative. However, it is possible that the novelty lies in the poetic metaphorical expressions that are manifested in unconventional ways by using four techniques: elaboration, extending, questioning, and combination (Gibbs, 1994; Kovecses, 2010; Lakoff & Turner, 1989).

- (i) *Elaboration* employs already existing elements of the source domain in a new, unconventional way.
- (ii) *Extending* is adding new elements to the source domain through new linguistic means to make the conventional metaphor novel.
- (iii) *Questioning* is calling into question the very appropriateness or pointing out the inadequacy of our common everyday metaphors.

- (iv) *Combination* is the blending of different conventional conceptual metaphors in an expression.

These four techniques will be the foundation on which our investigation into poetic metaphors of love is based.

3. Methodology

Our comparative investigation into English and Vietnamese poetic metaphor of love is constructed by contrastive analysis which is defined as the scientific description and comparison of two or more languages to identify their similarities and differences. The study is carried out with the data collected from 500 love poems (250 poems in each language) composed from the early 20th century to now. Linguistic metaphors are identified by using Pragglejaz Group (2007) and the extension of Pragglejaz’s procedure including four steps: (1) Read the entire text–discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning. Next, (2) determine the lexical units in the text–discourse. Then (3) take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. If yes, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it. If yes, (4) mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

According to Lado (1957, extracted from Johansson, 2008), the scope of a contrastive study includes a comparison of cultures. This step may be applied to make sense of the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese poetic metaphors of love in our investigation.

4. Novelty of love metaphors in English and Vietnamese poetry

Investigating more than 500 English and Vietnamese poems, we discovered 3300 metaphorical expressions of love divided

equally in two languages. They are distributed into 21 conceptual metaphors with the source domains of blindness, captive animal, climate, container, disease, drug, force, game, journey, life, living organism, magic, music, nutrient, object, opponent, plant, rapture, source of energy, time, and unity. Interestingly, a large amount of the novelty does not lie in conceptual but in linguistic metaphors. They are made new by using four techniques - elaboration, extending, questioning, and combination. Among these four techniques, combination is the technique that is employed the most frequently with 24.97 percent in English and 29.40 percent in Vietnamese. Three others account for 5.11 and 6.17 percent in English and Vietnamese respectively.

4.1. Elaboration

Elaboration is a principal mode of poetic thought that goes beyond the ordinary (Lakoff and Turner, 1989). It employs already existing elements of the source domains in a new, unconventional way with more detailed parts. Consider the following example,

(1) love tasted in tears/ is *heady wine* against sorrow. (Harris, *Bittersweet*)

“Wine” is defined as “an alcoholic drink” by Cambridge dictionary. This substance is a fluid applied to love description via the conventional conceptual metaphor LOVE AS A FLUID. The fluid of love here is presented clearly by the word *wine*, which is called elaboration technique in poetic metaphor. Furthermore, the love wine here becomes more detailed with the modifier *heady* which is explained as “having a powerful effect, making someone feel slightly drunk or excited” (ibid.). Depicted as *heady wine*, the expression of love is not just clear but unique. Following is another example.

(2) You’ve brought love/ in the Garden of Eden to my door. (Bryan, *Eden in you*)

According to Cambridge dictionary, the verb “bring” means “to take or carry someone

or something to a place” while love is an abstract concept. As a result, the expression “bring love” is metaphorically interpreted via the conventional metaphor LOVE IS AN ENTITY. Moreover, the metaphorical expression of love in this case is elaborated by inserting the location of the entity (*in the Garden of Eden*) into the source domain, making the expression more detailed and hence novel. Similarly, the elaborating technique of poetic metaphor is also discovered in Vietnamese poetry.

(3) Anh có đi cùng em/ Đến những *miền đất lạ*/ Đến những *mùa hái quả*/ Đến những *ngày thương yêu* (Do you go with me to new places, to harvest seasons, to love days) (Xuân Quỳnh, *Mùa hoa doi*)

These lines express a love journey in which the partners are suggested travelling with each other (*đi cùng*) to their common desired destination (*đến... miền đất lạ, mùa hái quả, ngày yêu thương*). LOVE – AS – A JOURNEY is a conventional metaphor in which the destination of the journey is correspondent to the common goal of the loving relationship. In this case, the destination of the love journey is elaborated via the expressions of *miền đất lạ* (new places), *mùa hái quả* (harvest seasons), and *ngày yêu thương* (loving days). With such manifestation, the love metaphor becomes more detailed; and the expressions of love are fine and novel. Let us look at another instance.

(4) Em *ngon* như rau cải/ Em *ngọt* như rau ngót./ Em *giòn* như củi dừa. (You are as delicious as cabbage, sweet as sweet leaf, and crisp as copra) (Nguyễn Bình, *Ái khanh hành*)

The adjectives *ngon* (delicious), *ngọt* (sweet), and *giòn* (crisp) are normally used to represent food flavour, taste, texture, and the like. Nonetheless in example 4, they are applied to describe the beloved and understood via the conventional metaphor LOVE AS A NUTRIENT. On the one hand, the love expressions here are not only comprehended by

the adjectives *ngon*, *ngọt*, *giòn* but also made clear and elaborate by the details compared *rau cải* (cabbage), *rau ngót* (sweet leaf), and *cùi dừa* (copra). On the other hand, although *ngon*, *ngọt*, *giòn* are typical in food, these characteristics are not conventional in love expressions except *ngọt* (sweetness). Obviously, deliciousness and crispness are new exploitation from the conventional source domain NUTRIENT of love to make the love expression novel and attractive. Moreover, the perception of partner as cabbage, sweet leaf, and copra is further a new discovery, showing the author's fine observation and wording. They are manifestations of another technique of poetic metaphor – extending, which is discussed in the next part.

4.2. Extending

As mentioned above, extending is the employment of new metaphorical expressions to make the conventional metaphors novel by exploiting new elements or aspects of the source domain. Let us consider the following verse.

(5) this is where love tends/ the flowers of desire,/ even the big *smelly* ones/ that bloom late at night. (Spring, *Love doesn't care*)

In these lines, love is conventionally represented as flowers that “bloom late at night”. Talking about flowers' smell, people often think of its fragrance. However, the flowers of love here are not sweet-smelling but *smelly* or have an unpleasant smell, which brings the abnormality to the image of love flower. In addition, the description denotes that flower is always attractive though its smell is fragrant or malodorous. With *smelly*, the lines seem to send a message to the couples that love should always be respected at all costs. It may not be as perfect as expected but it is fruitful and acceptable. Following is another instance of using extending technique for love conventional metaphor.

(6) Love is a pair of handcuffs. (Miller, *Excerpts from the lost dairy of the black Houdini*)

The meaning of *handcuffs* is “metal rings that a police officer puts round a prisoner's wrists to stop them from using their hands or arms” (Macmillan dictionary). It depicts the unpleasant feelings of confinement that the partners experience in their relationship. *Love is a pair of handcuffs* is hence a metaphorical expression under the conventional metaphor LOVE IS AN OPPONENT. Yet, describing love as *a pair of handcuffs* is really unusual. This unconventional image is added to the source domain OPPONENT, helping the metaphorical expression unique. Such similar uniqueness is also found in Vietnamese.

(7) *Một cành chụm nở hoa hai đóa/ Ôi cái đêm đầu hợp giữa ta.* (Two flowers on a stalk bloom in our first night) (Xuân Diệu, *Hoa ngọc trâm*)

It is obviously seen that love in the lines is interpreted in terms of a plant with the expressions of *đóa hoa* (flower) and *nở* (bloom). There is no newness when the source domain of a plant is applied to love representation. However, in this case, there is an unusual image, *một cành – hai đóa hoa* (two flowers on one stalk). It is a rare phenomenon in nature, an unconventional element that is exploited and added to the source domain PLANT of love, making the metaphorical expression of love original. Following is another instance.

(8) Em muốn *thoát ra/ Trận bát quái* tình yêu anh bày đặt/ Em tìm chóng mặt chẳng *đường ra*. (I want to escape from your labyrinthine battle array of love laid on the eight-sign figure's pattern but I cannot find the exit) (Hoàng Kim Dung, *Lỡ hẹn*)

Love in the lines is conceptualized as a war underlying the expressions *thoát ra* (escape), *trận bát quái* (labyrinthine battle laid on the Bagua or Pa Kua eight trigrams pattern), and *đường ra* (exit). The metaphor LOVE AS A WAR is conventional but the expression *trận bát quái tình yêu* is unconventional. The

image is a new discovery that is employed to describe a confusing situation in the loving relationship; at the same time, the partners also feel uncomfortable and worried about their relationship. It is obviously seen that the love expression, in this case, is really imaginative via extending technique.

4.3. Questioning

Besides elaboration and extending, another technique that makes conventional metaphors new in poetry is questioning. It indicates the problems or the doubt of the very appropriateness of the common metaphors.

(9) Gifts are not always free/ Burdens can be sources of intense pleasure [...]/ *Love is a gift/* Each of us wants to know: Am I a *burden* or a *gift*? (Gordon, *Gift are not always free*)

Gift is commonly thought as “something good that you are grateful to have” while *burden* with the meaning of “something heavy that you have to carry” refers to a negative feeling that is difficult to deal with or to get rid of (Macmillan dictionary). Also in a common way of thought and expression, love is considered as a gift. However, the question here is that “gifts are not always free” and “burden can be sources of intense pleasure”; therefore, the partners have some doubt about the definition “love is a gift” and about their role, a gift or a burden, in the loving relationship. It is evident that the metaphoric images of love are not strange but the problem is pointed out here is really uncommon. A similar way of using love metaphors is found in Vietnamese poetry.

(10) *Ví chẳng nhớ có như tơ nhỉ/ Em thử quay xem được mấy vòng?* (If love is silk, how much can you spin it?) (Nguyễn Bính, *Nhớ*)

According to Vietnamese dictionary, “nhớ” means thinking of someone or something with a great desire to meet them again. It is one of the manifestations of love that is represented as a silk thread in (10). In fact, *sợi tơ* (silk thread) is a popular and familiar image used for love in Vietnamese culture with the meaning of a linking or connecting thing. With such significance, the partners in the loving

relationship are understood as being tied together by a silk thread. However, if it is a silk thread, it can be span. The calling into question if the silk thread of love could be span is against the common awareness of the silk thread in the loving relationship, creating a highlight of the expression, and making it novel.

Discussing the problem of the appropriateness of metaphors in poetry, poets do not only call into question but also give out a premise whereby the metaphor is interpreted. Let us look at the example below.

(11) *Mùa hạ mát trong mưa/ Trái tim mát trong tình yêu ngọt lịm/ Những giọt tình đầu anh dành tặng riêng em* (Summer is cool by rain. My heart is cooling in your sweet love. Your first drops of love is reserved just for me) (Nguyễn Vũ Thủy Tiên, *Mưa*)

It is easy to see from the verse that love is metaphorized in terms of climate underlying the expression *mát* (cool). The description is a reference to the image of “mưa” (rain) mentioned in the previous line where the premise of the understanding the expressions of *mát* and *giọt tình* (drops of love) in the next lines is pointed out. It is the way to eliminate the question of the appropriateness of using metaphors, an aspect of question technique mentioned above, helping metaphorical expressions to be apparent, and avoiding confusions for readers.

4.4. Combination

Combination is regarded as the most effective technique in making human everyday conceptual system rich and novel. It is triggered by using the materials of several conventional metaphors at the same time. For example,

(12) What happened to our love’s a mystery/ *I rummage through our empty past in vain* (Gordon, *I must accept but can’t what cannot be*)

Past is the period before and until, but not including, the present time. Past is time; but *our past* in (12) does not simply tell the

past time. It is clearly employed to talk about love, which no longer exists. The love here is interpreted as time and expressed as the past that happened before the time of *rummage*. As “rummage” means “to search for something among a lot of other things”, its appearance in the expression evokes an image of a container that is detailed via the information of its emptiness. The past time here is evidently understood in terms of a container and represented by the verb *rummage* and the adjective *empty*. So far, it can be seen obviously that love in (12) is comprehended via a combination of the metaphors LOVE IS TIME and LOVE (TIME) IS A CONTAINER. Similarly, combination of metaphors is found in Vietnamese poetry.

(13) *Trời tình thom mãi bao la, / Đóa
trăng rằm, vĩnh viễn hoa ái tình.* (The sky of
love is immense and fragrant forever; a full
moon flower, the flower of love is everlasting)
(Xuân Diệu, *Aragông và Enxa*)

Love in these two lines is successfully formed by a unique combination of several images such as *trời tình*, *đóa trăng rằm*, *hoa ái tình* with the qualities of being *thom*, *bao la* and *vĩnh viễn*, which may be interpreted as follows.

+ *trời tình* (the sky of love): LOVE AS A CONTAINER

+ *đóa trăng rằm* (a full moon flower): THE MOON AS AN ENTITY, LOVE AS THE MOON, LOVE AS A PLANT

+ *hoa ái tình* (a flower of love): LOVE AS A PLANT

+ *trời – trăng* (sky – moon): LOVE AS A UNITY

+ *thom* (fragrant), *bao la* (immense), *vĩnh viễn* (everlasting): LOVE AS AN ENTITY

Impressively, only in two lines of fourteen words, there are five conceptual metaphors used. Although they are completely conventional but their mixture makes the uniqueness of the expression, bringing the

distinctive features to love that cannot be found in daily conventional language. It can be said that the image of flower used for love is not new in our language, but the way of using this image as in (13) is quite different, unconventional, more creative and perhaps more romantic.

In short, as an investigation based on poetry which is famous for the richness of imagination and creation, the metaphors of love are expected to be original and diverse. According to our findings from investigation, poetic metaphors are found to be new and imaginative in both English and Vietnamese. The novelty lies in the ways of expressing and using conceptual metaphors which bring new respiration, new life and new appearance to love and love expressions, helping to confirm the poets' talents.

4.5. *A comparison between English and Vietnamese poetic metaphors of love*

The conceptual metaphor theory supposes that metaphor is universal, and the same metaphors can appear in different languages. This statement is once again reconfirmed in our investigation when almost all the conceptual metaphors of love are present in both English and Vietnamese poetry. For example, the LOVE AS A PLANT metaphor with the image of flower is applied to love description in these two languages, namely in examples 5 in English and 7 in Vietnamese. Moreover, as discussions above, the four techniques of making poetic metaphors novel are also found in these two languages. In addition, the combination technique is used the most frequently in both English and Vietnamese. However, as an investigation of metaphors expressed in different languages, it is expected to find out some differences between English and Vietnamese poetic metaphors of love.

Firstly, in spite of the same conceptual metaphors of love, a large part of metaphorical expressions are not the

same. One of the typically differences in conceptualizing love between English and Vietnamese perhaps lies in the PLANT metaphor. Our findings show that the number of metaphorical expressions of love under PLANT metaphor in Vietnamese is 7.15 percent, nearly triple that of English (accounting for 2.61 percent). The phenomenon may be explained by cultural differences. Vietnam is a country of rice-based civilization (Trần Ngọc Thêm, 1996). The Vietnamese living environment closely attaches to their farmland, plants and crops. Consequently, these images are always in their minds and enter their linguistic expressions naturally. It is also the reason to account for some images just occurring in Vietnamese but not in English, such as *rau cải* (cabbage), *rau ngót* (sweet leaf), and *cùi dừa* (copra) in (4).

Secondly, all four techniques that make poetic metaphors of love more special than conventional metaphors are employed in both English and Vietnamese, but the ways of their manifestation are different. Returning to example 13, we can see that love here is conceptualized in terms of five source domains - container, plant, entity, moon and unity. Furthermore, just in an expression of three words, *đóa trăng rằm* (full moon flower) in the context of this example, there are three metaphors including THE MOON AS AN ENTITY, LOVE AS THE MOON, and LOVE AS A PLANT. In addition, besides the combination of several conceptual metaphors, the blending of several techniques is also discovered in Vietnamese love poetic metaphorical expressions, which is illustrated in example 4. Meanwhile, the combination technique in English is not as complex as in Vietnamese. It often consists of two metaphors underlying one expression like in example 12.

Thirdly, it is revealed from our data that the

ratio of the novel metaphorical expressions is higher in Vietnamese with 35.57 percent than in English (making up 30.08 percent).

Finally, it is of questioning technique. It can be seen from example 11 that the appropriateness of metaphor is based on the premise given out before, which cannot be found in English poetry. Meantime, our data provide evidences for the existence of metaphors as premise for the understanding of the metaphorical expressions following; for example,

(14) Fire is love and love is fire;/ [...] This fire in our hearts that will burn forever... (Laset, *Fire of love*)

Obviously, the “fire burning in our hearts” expressed at the second part of the extract would not be comprehensible without the metaphorical expression “love is fire” under the LOVE AS FIRE metaphor. Regretfully, this phenomenon does not appear in our Vietnamese data.

In brief, poetic metaphors of love are found popular in both English and Vietnamese. They are similar in both conceptual metaphors and the ways of expressions via four techniques – elaboration, extending, questioning, and combination. However, deep in the language used for love, there are some differences. Some of them are emergent as the result of different cultures. Some others should be studied further to draw out a conclusion that can convince readers.

5. Conclusion

Our study of poetic metaphor of love is carried out in the light of the conceptual metaphor theory raised by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The investigation shows much of the evidence of the strangeness or novelty of love metaphors in English and Vietnamese poetry. The novelty mainly lies in the expressions where four techniques – elaboration, extending, questioning, and combination are

employed in both languages. Among these techniques, combination is emergent as the most forceful technique to make metaphorical expressions novel with the highest frequency of using. Thanks to metaphor, love becomes diverse. Thanks to these four techniques, the expressions of love are more attractive, creating fascination for readers. However, love metaphors manifested in terms of these techniques in each language are not quite similar between English and Vietnamese. It is possible that the distinctions in culture, lifestyle and thought are the causes of the differences in metaphorically expressing love between these two languages.

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ẨN DỤ THI CA TÌNH YÊU TRONG TIẾNG ANH VÀ TIẾNG VIỆT

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Tóm tắt: Thuyết ẩn dụ ý niệm cho rằng ẩn dụ thi ca thực ra là ẩn dụ thông thường. Nhờ vào bốn kỹ xảo: *trau chuốt*, *mở rộng*, *đặt vấn đề* và *kết hợp*, chúng trở nên độc đáo mới lạ. Trên cơ sở đó, chúng tôi thực hiện khảo sát và so sánh các ẩn dụ tình yêu đôi lứa được thể hiện trong thơ tình giữa tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Phân tích đối chiếu là phương pháp chính dùng trong nghiên cứu này. Để giảm thiểu nhầm lẫn trong quá trình thu thập dữ liệu, chúng tôi sử dụng phương pháp xác định ẩn dụ của Pragglejaz Group. Kết quả thu được cho thấy sự độc đáo của các ẩn dụ tình yêu trong thơ không nằm ở ý niệm mà ở các diễn đạt ẩn dụ thông qua việc sử dụng bốn kỹ xảo này. Trong đó, *kết hợp* là kỹ xảo được dùng nhiều nhất ở cả hai ngôn ngữ. Đồng thời, chúng tôi cũng tìm thấy một số điểm tương đồng trong cả ý niệm và cách diễn đạt ẩn dụ thi ca tình yêu giữa tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Sự tương đồng này có thể do tính phổ quát của ẩn dụ. Tuy nhiên, các diễn đạt ẩn dụ này cũng có nhiều điểm khác nhau giữa hai ngôn ngữ do xuất phát từ các nền văn hóa khác nhau.

Từ khóa: ẩn dụ ý niệm, ẩn dụ thi ca, ẩn dụ tình yêu, tiếng Anh, tiếng Việt

VERBAL STRATEGIES USED IN OPENING A CONVERSATION IN OFFICE SETTINGS BY ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE STAFF AND MANAGERS

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Abstract: In interaction, an appropriate opening may help participants create good impression on their interlocutors and make the conversation more effective; however, producing a polite and smooth opening may be a remarkably challenging task. The study, therefore, aims at yielding insights into the process of conversational opening with focus on the description of verbal strategies. The collected data are 60 English and 60 Vietnamese opening sections in scripted dialogues between staff and managers. The method of qualitative content analysis is applied to expose categories of verbal strategies emerging from the data. The results reveal that, compared with English subjects, Vietnamese ones create a much lengthier opening with the use of more number of verbal strategies. Especially, through the process of opening a conversation, English subjects display a formal relationship with work-oriented exchanges whilst Vietnamese ones show a close but respectful relationship with rapport-oriented exchanges.

Keywords: conversational opening, verbal strategies, content analysis, opening strategies, conversational opening strategies

1. Introduction

Behaving appropriately, politely and effectively in face-to-face interaction with others is extremely essential because, for a long time, people have employed face-to-face interaction to create, re-create and maintain social relationship (Goffman, 1963; Kendon, 1977; Maynard & Zimmerman, 1984; Schegloff, 1986). However, it is rather challenging for many people to produce a smooth conversation, especially the opening process. Opening a conversation in one's mother tongue is difficult, and it becomes even more difficult and exceedingly challenging in a foreign language due to language and cultural diversity. With the aim to find out verbal opening strategies utilized by English and Vietnamese subjects, the study seeks answers to two research questions, (1)

what verbal strategies are used by English and Vietnamese staff and managers to open a conversation in office settings? and (2) how are these verbal strategies employed by English and Vietnamese staff and managers to open a conversation in office settings?

2. Theoretical background

To examine conversational opening strategies, it is vital to clarify the meaning of the concept "opening". Although many investigators have used the term "opening" in interchange with the term "greeting" (Omar, 1989; Youssof, Grimshaw & Bird, 1976; Firth, 1972; Kendon & Ferber, 1973; Duranti, 1992), these two concepts are definitely different. Greeting can be an initial part of a conversation or just a ritual exchange or a passing-by salutation which may or may not be followed by further conversational moves while opening is always the first part of a conversation. Conversational opening occurs

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when a speaker wants to raise a topic for discussion and it may include greeting as one of its parts (Schegloff, 1968). Conversational opening, in this study, is understood as the initial part of a conversation, beginning from the participants' gathering to the initiation of the first topic of concern.

Historically, Schegloff (1968) is regarded as the pioneer and groundbreaker in the field of conversational opening with his research conducted on 500 telephone calls. After that, numerous researchers around the world have drawn their keenness in this area. Among them, Krivonos and Knapp (1975), Duranti (1992), Schiffrin (1977), Omar (1992) and Pillet-Shore (2008) are remarkable in their approach to the area of conversational opening in various aspects. With the aim to compare conversational openings between acquainted and non-acquainted participants, Krivonos and Knapp (1975) introduce categories of verbal and non-verbal greeting behaviors. The verbal and non-verbal behaviors are ranked and analyzed in terms of the frequency of occurrence and then the effects of acquaintanceship on greetings are drawn out and assessed. Also approaching participants' verbal and nonverbal behaviors in greetings, Duranti (1992, p. 663) claims that verbal content changes from one language to another and from one situation to another within the same language, which creates numerous obstacles for partners coming from different cultures in interaction. According to him, a conversation can be typically opened with the physical or spiritual well-being of the interactants such as "how are you?" or "may peace/ God/ health be with you" (Duranti, p. 663). Particularly keen on social organization of opening encounters, Schiffrin (1977), in his dissertation, suggests a base form for opening sequences. From his base form, various adaptations are introduced and applied to particular situations. Unlike Krivonos and

Knapp (1975) and Schiffrin (1977), Omar (1992) and Pillet-Shore (2008) examine conversational opening from pragmatic and conversation analysis perspectives respectively. From pragmatic perspective, Omar (1992) investigates conversational opening in Kiswahili performed by native and non-native speakers and concludes that the opening in Kiswahili is lengthy and often includes several phatic inquiries and phatic responses (p. 18). From conversation analysis perspective, Pillet-Shore (2008), in her dissertation, concentrates on the process of creating and maintaining social relationships through the opening of face-to-face interactions. She employs naturally occurring video- and audio-recorded encounters as the data for analysis. Especially, both verbal and body-behavioral aspects performed by the acquainted and non-acquainted in opening sections of face-to-face conversations are explored in the scope of her research.

Whilst the field of conversational opening flourishes with various studies around the world, it has hardly seen any scholarly interest in Vietnam with the exception of an M.A thesis of Tram (2002). This thesis laid foundation for this area by comparing English and Vietnamese conversational opening in the light of pragmatics. The study starts with examining strategies used to open a conversation and then it draws out similar and different pragmatic aspects of conversational opening in English and Vietnamese based on the analysis of data collected from various sources like textbooks, listening tapes and films.

This study of mine hopes to help lessen such scarcity of conversational research in the country, especially conversational openings in office settings, and following is how the study was conducted.

3. Methodology

The present study makes use of scripted conversations as the data for analysis. The

exploitation of scripted conversations instead of naturally occurring ones is due to two reasons. For the first reason, the process of recording natural conversations in office settings is infeasible. In offices, business information must be kept confidential so any attempts to secure consent are likely to be rejected. Additionally, putting recorders in offices without permission is regarded as illegal unless this bugging is allowed by the court or police or the like for criminal or similar investigation. For the second reason, despite the artificiality of film and soap dialogues, scripted conversations strongly resemble natural conversations. The language of television is a reflection or representative of real conversations because it is normally written by skilled scriptwriters, with their underlying cultural background knowledge, enacted by professional actors and/or actresses who, with their own talents, try to perform as exactly as in real life and accepted by viewers.

The data of the present study include 120 conversations (60 English and 60 Vietnamese). To achieve equivalent contents and forms, English and Vietnamese films selected have to follow some common criteria such as broadcast channels, production time and contexts. From these criteria, two English films - "House of cards" and "Suits", and five Vietnamese films - "Đội thủ kỳ phùng", "Cảnh sát hình sự - Chạy án", "Lập trình cho trái tim", "Mưa bóng mây" and "Câu hỏi số 5" are selected. These films discuss current social issues in official contexts such as working environments of businessmen, politicians, congressmen, and police. Similar features of these films can enhance the validity and reliability of data collected from them. From the chosen films, conversations are gathered. Selected conversations must have opening sections and be between two

participants – a staff and a manager aged from 20 to 60.

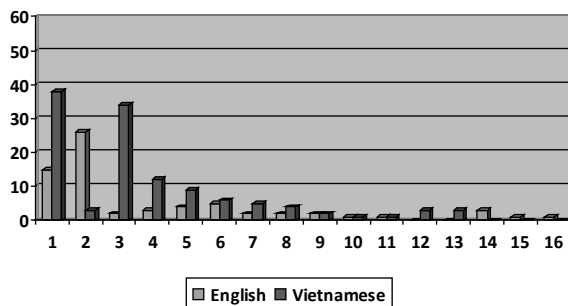
In terms of data analysis procedure, the method of qualitative content analysis is utilized to analyze the collected data. The data are coded inductively. Any verbal strategies occurring in the data are noted down and then these strategies are grouped into appropriate categories regarding similar features. In other words, with the method of qualitative content analysis, the researcher allows the categories to flow from the data and new insights to emerge or patterns are constructed inductively. After this stage, the categories of verbal strategies employed by English and Vietnamese subjects are built. Then, the frequency of occurrence of each strategy is calculated in relation with 60 collected conversations. Based on the frequency of occurrence, the process of comparing and contrasting between English and Vietnamese subjects can be conducted. Finally, in the findings and discussions part, verbal strategies performed by English and Vietnamese staff and managers are deliberated from the most to the least popular ones regarding their frequency of occurrence in relation with 60 collected conversations.

4. Findings and discussions

4.1. Verbal strategies by English and Vietnamese subjects

The findings indicate that English and Vietnamese subjects utilize 16 categories of verbal strategies to open a conversation in office settings. The distribution of each group of strategies in English and Vietnamese is significantly different. The occurrence of these categories is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Verbal strategies by English and Vietnamese subjects

**Notes:**

1: Greeting	9: Talking about current task
2: Calling the other's name/ title	10: Referring to external circumstances/ objects
3: Initiating the topic	11: Apologizing
4: Inviting the other to sit down	12: Referring to self
5: Referring to the other's state	13: Talking about life at home
6: Talking about previous task/ action	14: Asking for the other's availability for talking
7: Offering the other some wine/ tea	15: Talking about the third person
8: Asking confirmation question	16: Offering help

Table 1 illustrates a considerable difference in the use of verbal strategies by English and Vietnamese subjects to open a conversation in office settings. In general, compared with English subjects, Vietnamese ones are inclined to produce a lengthier opening with more number of verbal strategies. Factually, the total number of verbal strategies exploited by Vietnamese staff doubles that of English ones with 150 and 76 respectively. On average, Vietnamese subjects make use of more than two verbal strategies while English subjects only need one strategy to open a

conversation in office settings. Specifically, the ways English and Vietnamese subjects employ each strategy to initiate a conversation are different. To depict the similarities and differences in the ways English and Vietnamese subjects open a conversation verbally, strategies are analyzed regarding their frequency of occurrence.

4.2. The most frequently used strategies by English and Vietnamese subjects

It is revealed from the findings that three strategies including *greeting*, *calling the other's name/ title* and *topic initiation* are most frequently used by English and Vietnamese subjects. Whereas the strategy of greeting is preferred by both subjects, the strategy of calling the other's name/ title is chosen by English subjects and the strategy of topic initiation is selected by Vietnamese ones. The employment of these three strategies can account for the most common ways of initiating a conversation in office settings.

Firstly, the strategy of greeting occurs in 38 Vietnamese conversations, accounting for 63.3% and 12 English conversations, making up 25%. Its extremely high frequency of occurrence in Vietnamese conversations can be attributed to the culture of greeting. According to Phạm Văn Tình (2000, p. 225), Vietnamese people highly appreciate "greeting" because it has a big role in initiating a conversation and it influences the rest of the conversation. For this reason, greeting seems to appear in every Vietnamese conversation. In Vietnamese, a greeting utterance is constructed by the following components:

Formula	Polite particle (Đạ)	Subject (chủ thể)	"greet" (chào)	object (đối tượng chào)	polite particle (ạ)
Examples	Đạ,	cháu	chào	chú	ạ
	Đạ,	em	chào	anh	ạ

Normally, Vietnamese subjects produce a greeting utterance by using one or combining several components or all components above depending on the level of intimacy as well as social status between interlocutors. The most common structure of greeting is produced by the combination of the verb “*Chào*” (greet) plus an object (đối tượng chào). The object (đối tượng chào) can be addressed in two ways, either by *kinship terms* or *titles*. Accordingly, the most common greeting structures are (1) “Greet” (chào) + a kinship term and (2) “Greet” (chào) + a title. Depending primarily on the gap of age between interlocutors, different kinship terms are chosen, for example, *chú* (uncle), *bác* (uncle), *cô* (aunt), *anh* (elder brother), *chị* (elder sister), *em* (younger sister), *cháu* (niece - nephew), etc. Kinship terms are normally used between or among relatives. However, when these terms are used by staff and managers in offices, they make the relation between interlocutors closer and consequently help the conversation to be more effective.

Instead of using kinship terms, a speaker can perform a greeting utterance by combining the verb *Chào* with a title which refers to the hearer’s social status. Some typical titles commonly used in offices are *sếp* (boss), *thủ trưởng* (boss), *giám đốc* (manager), *tổng giám đốc* (managing director), etc. The occurrence of these titles in the examined conversations is due to the office settings and parties’ relationships. The findings show that social titles tend to be employed by the persons of lower status – the staff towards the persons of higher status – the managers as a way of expressing the respect of a person in lower position towards a person of higher position.

Additionally, in combination with kinship terms or titles, polite particles “*ạ*” may also be added at the beginning and “*ạ*” at the end of a greeting utterance to make the greeting more polite and respectful. For example, in

(1), a Vietnamese staff greets his manager by using the kinship term “*Em*” (younger brother) to refer to the subject himself and “*Anh*” (elder brother) to refer to the object (his interlocutor) in combination with the polite particles “*ạ*” (yes) at the beginning and “*ạ*” (yes) at the end of the utterance. Thanks to the combination of the kinship term and polite particles, the greeting utterance appears both close and respectful.

(1) Staff: (Knock at door)
 Manager: Mời vào!
 “Come in!”
 Staff: **ạ, em chào anh ạ!**
 PoP⁽¹⁾ younger brother
 greet elder brother PoP
 “Hello, brother.”

[Đối thủ kỳ phùng, episode 8 – 27:50]

In some cases, a greeting utterance can also be performed without the verb “*Chào*” (greet). Speakers may greet simply by calling out the kinship terms referring to the object (đối tượng chào) or kinship terms plus his/ her name. Speakers may also use polite particles “*ạ*” (yes) at the beginning and/or “*ạ*” (yes) at the end of the utterance to increase politeness in interaction. For example, in (2), a staff greets his manager with a kinship term combined with the polite particle “*ạ*” (yes):

(2) Staff: **Chú ạ.**
 Uncle PoP
 “Hello.”

[Cảnh sát hình sự - Chạy án, season 1, episode 3 - 10:38]

Whilst greeting strategy occurs extremely frequently in Vietnamese, it only appears in 12 English conversations. Furthermore, the ways of greeting by English subjects are rather simple in comparison with those of Vietnamese ones. The most common

¹ PoP stands for *polite particle* in Vietnamese. From now on, to save space, we will mostly give the literally, roughly-equivalent English translation of the Vietnamese examples. Gloss is provided only when highly necessary.

formulaic expression of greeting used by English subjects is “Hi/ Hello” + “first name”. This formulaic expression is employed by an English manager in greeting in example (3) below:

(3) Manager: **Hello, Nancy.**

Staff: Welcome back, sir. Linda Vasquez called for you

[House of cards, season 1, episode 3 – 47:26]

Besides the use of “Hi/ Hello”, English subjects also greet each other with the expression of the time of the day. An English greeting utterance can be constructed as “Good morning/ afternoon/ evening” + “first name”/ “title”. The findings further display that first names are usually employed by managers whereas titles are often used by staff. This difference may be justified by the power distance between two interlocutors. Normally, calling out the partner’s first name expresses the closeness and power while calling out the partner’s title shows respect and negative politeness.

The results indicate that greeting strategy is notably different in English and Vietnamese in terms of its frequency of occurrence and its formulaic structures. Compared with greeting utterances in English, those in Vietnamese appear to be more complicated with regard of various aspects such as appropriate choices of kinship terms, titles and polite particles (đạ)/ (ạ). Especially, the use of kinship terms and polite particles (đạ)/ (ạ) is rather typical in Vietnamese greetings whilst these terms do not occur in English greetings among my data. The occurrence of these terms in Vietnamese greeting may be accounted as a way to express politeness among parties.

Secondly, while Vietnamese subjects prefer greeting, English subjects are inclined to *call the other’s title/ name* to get the other’s attention. Calling the other’s name/ title is the most favorite strategy of English subjects with its occurrence in 26 conversations, accounting for 43%. In contrast, it occurs in only three

Vietnamese conversations, making up 5%. This strategy can be seen as a way for parties to get attention from their interlocutors and open a conversation as quickly as possible. Especially, calling out the title is often employed by staff as a way to express their respect whereas calling out the first name is normally used by managers as a way to show closeness and intimacy.

Instead of calling the other’s name or title like English subjects, Vietnamese subjects tend to choose different kinship terms to address their interlocutors. For example, in (4), a Vietnamese staff calls his manager by the kinship term “*Anh*” (brother) while in (5), an English manager greets his assistant just by calling out his first name.

(4) Staff: **Anh!**
“Brother!”

Manager: Û.
“Yes.”

Staff: Công ty Hoàng Quân đang có cuộc đình công to lớn.
“There is a very big strike in Hoang Quan Company.”

[Cảnh sát hình sự - Chạy án, season 1, episode 8 - 24:22]

(5) Staff: (Knock at door and open the door)
Manager: **Meechum.**

[House of cards, season 2, episode 10 – 25:03]

Lastly, the strategy of *topic initiation* is present in 34 Vietnamese conversations with 56.7% but it occurs in only two English conversations, accounting for 3.3%. In Vietnamese, this strategy is regarded as an assistance for the topic of concern to be raised smoothly. Topic initiation strategy is typically performed by the utilization of a performative verb combined with an object. Regarding performative verbs, basing on the content of the topic which is going to be raised, the initiators of the conversation choose appropriate performative verbs to help their interlocutors catch the topic easily. The findings expose that Vietnamese staff

and managers employ different categories of performative verbs. Some typical performative verbs used by Vietnamese staff such as *báo cáo* (report), *trình bày* (present) and *tranh thủ ý kiến* (ask) and some others exploited by Vietnamese managers like *vào chuyện* (begin), *bàn* (discuss) and *thông báo* (inform). The difference in the choice of verbs is due to the difference of social status because through the verb choice, staff express respect but managers show power on their interlocutors.

In addition, parties can choose kinship terms or titles to address the objects. As normal, staff and managers choose different kinds of kinship terms or titles because of the power distance between them. If this strategy is utilized by staff, the particle (*ạ*) is often put at the beginning of the utterance. For example, in (6), the employment of the particle (*ạ*) increases the degree of politeness of the utterance whilst the utilization of the kinship term “*chú*” (uncle) referring to the object – the manager – makes the relationship between them more intimate.

(6) Staff: (Knock at door)
 Manager: Mời vào!
 “Come in, please!”
 Staff: Dạ báo cáo chú, cháu
 mời chú đi họp
 ạ.
 PoP report uncle I
 invite uncle go meet
 PoP

“It is time for you to attend the meeting.”
 [Đối thủ kỳ phùng, episode 26 – 5:41]

4.3. The less frequently used strategies by English and Vietnamese subjects

In connection with the group of less popular strategies, five strategies including inviting the other to sit down, offering tea/ wine, referring to the other’s state and talking about previous task/ action are occasionally utilized by both subjects in initiating a conversation in office settings. Firstly, the strategies of inviting the other to sit down

and offering tea/ wine appear in twelve and five Vietnamese conversations (20% and 8.3%) but only occurs in three (5%) and two English conversations (3.3%). The rather high frequency of occurrence of these two strategies in Vietnamese conversations may be explained by the low pace of interaction in this culture. It can be inferred that Vietnamese subjects do not initiate the topic of concern right after they get the other’s attention or right after they greet each other. Instead, they are inclined to exchange some phatic communication with some polite or ritual behaviors such as inviting the others to come in, to sit down and to drink some tea. The act of inviting the other to sit down is rather typical in Vietnamese culture and as observed from the data, Vietnamese subjects are inclined to sit rather than stand while discussing matters which take time to finish. Inversely, in quick exchanges, such as presenting files or informing of the guest’s coming, the strategy of invitation to sit down is unnecessary. The staff may have a quick conversation and then leave the room. In example (7) below, the strategy of inviting the other to sit down is utilized by the manager before he initiates the main topic of concern with his staff.

(7) Staff: (Knock at door)
 Manager: Mời vào!
 “Come in, please!”
 Staff: Dạ em chào anh ạ.
 “Hello, brother”
 Manager: **Cậu ngồi đi.** Kế này, chuyện
 hôm nọ cậu đánh thằng Cu
 xảy ra chuyện lớn rồi.
 “**Sit down.** Ke, that you bit
 Cu last time caused a big
 problem.”

[Đối thủ kỳ phùng, episode 8 – 27:50]

Especially, the strategy of inviting the other to sit down is often followed by the strategy of offering drink. By offering the other party some tea or water, Vietnamese

subjects express politeness, enhance closeness with their interlocutors and take time to find appropriate strategies to raise the topic of concern. Let's look at example (8) below.

- (8) Staff: (Knock at door)
 Manager: Vào đi!
 "Come in!"
 Staff: Chào thủ trưởng.
 "Hello boss."
 Manager: Cậu ngồi đi!
 "Sit down, please!"
 Staff: Vâng ạ
 "Yes."
Mời thủ trưởng
uống nước ạ!
Invite boss
drink water PoP
 "Drink water with me,
 please!"

[Câu hỏi số 5, episode 7 –20:00]

In example (8), the manager invites the staff to come in, to sit down, then he pours tea into a cup to offer the staff. The manager accomplishes the act of inviting the staff to drink nonverbally. However, when the staff takes the cup of tea to drink, he invites the manager to drink together. This act is not actually an invitation but just a Vietnamese ritual behavior and also a way of thanking for the offer. Habitually, before eating or drinking, Vietnamese people often produce a ritual invitation as a way to inform their interlocutors that they are going to eat or drink. With this way of informing, Vietnamese people express politeness towards their interlocutors. The acts of invitation of sitting and drinking can be regarded as phatic communication which are just to enhance and promote the relationship between interlocutors. From the literature review, it can be seen that the opening sections in Vietnamese are like ones in Kiswahili which are lengthy and often include several phatic inquiries and phatic responses (Omar, 1992, p. 18).

In contrast, the infrequent occurrence of the strategies of inviting the other to sit down

and offering the other tea/ wine in English conversations may be due to the fast pace of English interaction. Habitually, English subjects intend to lead in the main topic as soon as possible, often right after they get the other's attention. Hence, the acts of inviting the other to sit or drink appear unnecessary and ineffective in interaction in office settings. Specifically, the data also reveal that unlike Vietnamese subjects, English subjects often stand to exchange information with their partners regardless their partners are standing or sitting. Furthermore, instead of inviting their interlocutors to drink tea or coffee like Vietnamese subjects, English ones may invite them other beverages, for instance, Whiskey, as illustrated in example (9).

- (9) Manager: **Drink?**
 Staff: Sure, what do you get?
 Manager: Whiskey. Blends.
 Staff: If you're offering.
 Manager: So, how are things in the City of Brotherly Love?

[House of cards, season 1, episode 1 – 44:29]

Secondly, the strategy of *referring to the other's state* occurs in nine Vietnamese conversations (15%) and four English conversations (6.7%). This strategy is employed to express concern towards the others. However, its usage is a bit different between English and Vietnamese subjects. Although English subjects make use of this strategy to show regards towards their interlocutors, it is not because they care about them, but because their current state influences the common task. For example:

- (10) Staff: Jesus, Peter. **What happened? You're drunk.**
 Manager: I'm fine.
 Staff: I can smell it on you.
 Manager: Okay, I had a drink or two.
 It was nothing crazy.
 Staff: We can't do this interview.

[House of cards, season 1, episode 10 – 43:02]

As depicted in example (10), the staff refers to his manager's state by confirming that he is drunk. However, the purpose of the staff is not to express the concern or care about his manager's health. He cares about his manager's state just because the manager's bad state may create bad effects on the interview which he is going to take. In contrast, Vietnamese subjects exploit this strategy just to express concern and care about their interlocutors as in example (11) below:

- (11) Staff: (Knock at door)
 Manager: Vào đi!
 "Come in!"
 Staff: Chào thủ trưởng.
 "Hello boss."
 Manager: Cậu ngồi đi!
 "Sit down, please!"
 Staff: Vâng ạ.
 "Yes."
 Mời thủ trưởng uống nước ạ.
 "Drink water with me, please"
 Manager: **Tay cậu sao rồi?**
"Is your hand better?"
 Staff: Đạn chỉ sướt qua thôi ạ
 "Just a small wound."
 Manager: Do Linh công tử làm?
 "Shot by Linh?"

[Câu hỏi số 5, episode 7 –20:00]

It can be seen from example (11) that after several exchanges of greeting, invitation of sitting down and invitation of drinking, the manager expresses his concern towards his staff by asking about the wound on his hand. Thanks to his regard, the staff feels better and their relationship becomes closer. The effectiveness of the conversation, accordingly, is enhanced.

Finally, the strategy of *talking about previous task/ action* appears rather equally in the two languages. It is present in six Vietnamese conversations (10%) and five English ones (8.3%). The employment of this strategy is due to the typical settings and particular

relationship in which the conversations occur. The examined conversations take place in office settings between a staff and his/ her manager; hence, the use of this strategy is appropriate and useful in initiating a conversation. For example, in (12), an English manager asks his staff about his previous action before raising the main topic of the talk.

(12) Manager: **Where you been?**

Staff: Hi. **Um... Getting drug tested, actually.**

Manager: The deposition's this afternoon. Before they get here, I want you to grill this woman about her background for anything they might use against her. You got it?

[Suits, season 1, episode 1 – 58:08]

4.4. The rarely used strategies by English and Vietnamese subjects

Among strategies rarely employed, some are used by both subjects, some only by English subjects and some only by Vietnamese ones. In the first place, the group of strategies utilized by both subjects includes *asking confirmation question, talking about current task, referring to external circumstances/ objects* and *apologizing*. Factually, these strategies are only present in one or two conversations in both languages, except for the strategy of confirmation question that appear in four Vietnamese conversations. From their rare appearance, it can be inferred that it is not habitual for both subjects to make use of these strategies in initiating a conversation. Despite their exceedingly rare appearance, these strategies have particular meanings. For example, English parties use the strategy of asking confirmation question not to ask for information but just to inform their presence as in example (13) below.

(13) Staff: **You wanted to see me?**

Manager: Did you go see Joy after I told you not to?

[Suits, season 1, episode 5– 24:34]

Thanks to the confirmation question “*you wanted to see me?*”, the staff can get the manager’s attention and inform him about his coming. Unlike English subjects, Vietnamese subjects do not make use of this strategy to get the other’s attention but to help their interlocutors raise the main topic as in (14).

- (14) Staff: (Knock at door)
 Manager: Mời vào!
 “Come in, please!”
 Staff: Anh Thiết.
 “Mr. Thiet.”
 Manager: Chào anh.
 “Hello.”
 Staff: **Anh cho gọi tôi à?**
 “You wanted to see me?”
 Manager: Vâng, mời anh ngồi.....
 “Yes, sit down, please!”

[Đối thủ kỳ phùng, episode 29 – 5:40]

As seen in (14), because the confirmation question is produced after several exchanges such as summons-answer, invitation of coming in and greeting, its function is not to get the other’s attention. Factually, the confirmation question “*Anh gọi cho tôi à?*” performed by the staff can be understood as “I’m here and what you want to talk to me”. As usual, this strategy helps the other interlocutor to initiate the main topic of the talk right after it.

Furthermore, the strategies of *talking about current task, referring to external circumstances/ objects and apologizing* can be exploited as a hint for initiating a conversation. These strategies can be regarded as phatic communication which helps the conversation proceed smoothly. Vietnamese subjects often make use of these strategies to maintain participants’ relationship or to avoid an abrupt opening. However, English subjects utilize these strategies to get the other’s attention or to lead in the main topic. For example, a party may talk about a current task which his/ her interlocutor is doing as in (15) or refer to an external object as in (16).

- (15) Staff: Anh ạ.
 “Hello.”
 Manager: **Ồ, cậu đang làm số mới đấy à?**
“Yes. You are printing the new issue?”
 Staff: **Vâng ạ.**
“Yes.”
 Manager: **Mấy giờ thì ra phim?**
“When will the film be coated?”
 Staff: **Báo cáo anh 11 rưỡi.**
 “11:30, sir.”
 Manager: À, cậu đưa lại cho tôi bài viết về công ty Hoàng Quân
 “Ah, give me the article on Hoang Quan Company”

[Cảnh sát hình sự - Chạy án, season 1, episode 6 – 23:50]

- (16) Manager: **What’s that?** (Looking at the newspaper the staff is holding)
 Staff: **It’s an article where Clifford Danner took his plea. Do you want me to read it to you?**
 Manager: No.
 Staff: Clifford Danner had a history of violence.

[Suits (season 1, episode 12 – 6:11)]

It can be seen that in (15), the Vietnamese manager knows that his staff is printing a new issue, but he still asks “*Cậu đang làm số mới đấy à?*” After this question, the staff and manager exchange several turns relating to the staff’s current task before the manager initiates the topic of concern. The exchanges on the current task in (15) function as phatic communication which helps the conversation to be raised more smoothly. Differently, in (16), an English staff makes use of a newspaper as an external object to open a topic with his manager. The staff is holding a newspaper, standing by the door and when the manager comes in, she asks him “*what’s that?*” with the reference to the newspaper he is holding. Thanks to the newspaper, the staff is successful in getting the manager’s attention and raises the topic of concern appropriately.

In the second place, the group of strategies only utilized by English subjects includes *asking for the other's availability for talking, talking about the third person and offering the help*. The act of asking for the other's availability for talking is a polite way of initiating a conversation. Normally, this strategy is used by English staff – the partners of lower status to ask for the permission from the managers – the partners of higher status to have a conversation with him. Example (17) displays the way this strategy is employed.

(17) Staff: Mr. Vice President, **do you have a moment?**

Manager: I'm sorry. The President asked to see me.

Staff: No, he didn't. You requested the meeting, and I took it off the schedule.

[House of cards, season 2, episode 8 – 27:13]

In (17), the question “*do you have a moment?*” is not to find out whether the manager is busy or not, but it is to ask for the manager's permission for talking with him. The negative politeness strategy is exploited in this situation because the staff does not want to make an imposition on the manager. Instead, the staff lets the manager decide whether to talk to him or to go away.

In the last place, the group of rarely used strategies by Vietnamese subjects includes *referring to self and talking about life at home*. In Vietnamese culture, these two strategies are regarded as phatic communication and only often employed by participants of close relationship. Referring to self is utilized to talk about the speaker's health or feelings while talking about life at home is to ask about participants' personal life. Normally, Vietnamese people only reveal their health status or feelings and personal life at home to their relatives or close friends. However, examined conversations are between a staff and his/ her manager and occur in office settings, which leads to the low frequency

of occurrence of these two strategies. The utilization of referring to self can be illustrated in example (18) below.

(18) Staff: Chị ơi!

“Hey, sister!”

Manager: **Chị đau đầu quá, gì hả em?**

“**I have a headache. What's up?**”

[Mưa bóng mây, episode 20– 4:00]

Customarily, the issues of health and feelings are only told to the members of family or close friends. However, in this situation, the manager expresses her health problem to her staff when initiating a conversation. This strategy, in this situation, creates a special effect on the talk. Thanks to it, the manager wants to convey that she regards the staff as her relative or her close friend. In this way, not only the purpose of the interaction can be achieved but also participants' relationship can be maintained and promoted.

5. Conclusions

The results display that English and Vietnamese subjects share slight similarities but make notable differences in the way they employ their verbal strategies to open a conversation in office settings. From the findings, it can be concluded that there emerge three significant differences in the ways English and Vietnamese subjects initiate a conversation in office settings. First of all, in contrast to English subjects, Vietnamese ones create a much lengthier and more complicated opening with the utilization of more number of verbal strategies. As indicated, on average, to open a conversation, Vietnamese subjects take at least two strategies while English ones need only one strategy. Typically, a Vietnamese opening section follows several turns of exchanges before the main topic is initiated. Example (11) illustrated above can be regarded as a typical opening of Vietnamese subjects. In (11) the staff and manager produce some turns of exchanges such as invitation of coming in, greeting, invitation to sit down, offering a drink,

referring to the other's state before raising the main topic of the conversation. Inversely, English subjects have a tendency to initiate the topic of concern right after they get attention from their interlocutors. Despite a wide range of verbal strategies, English subjects may choose such as greeting, calling out their name, asking confirmation questions, asking about current activities and so on, their purpose is just to get the other's attention. This indicates that unlike Vietnamese subjects, English ones tend to initiate a conversation in a straightforward manner. In other words, while Vietnamese subjects are roundabout and indirect to avoid an abrupt or hasty opening, English ones attempt to build a brief opening with great focus on the effectiveness of the work.

Additionally, besides the difference in the number of strategies exploited, the distribution of each strategy is exceedingly different in the two languages. To initiate a conversation, Vietnamese subjects tend to utilize the strategies of greeting and topic initiation while English ones prefer calling the other's title/ name. As illustrated, the strategy of calling the other's title/ name by English subjects is just to get the other's attention. Nevertheless, the strategy of greeting is to express the politeness and respect towards the others while the strategy of topic initiation is just to make the act of raising a topic lengthier and less abrupt. Furthermore, after some ritual exchanges like greeting or calling the others' names or titles with the aim to get the others' attention, some phatic exchanges may be produced before the main topic is raised. These phatic exchanges are mainly work-oriented with inquiries and responses on current or previous tasks by English subjects but chiefly rapport-oriented with concern on interlocutor's feelings, health, clothes, travelling, life at home by Vietnamese subjects. The over-exploitation of greeting and topic initiation strategies in combination with rapport-oriented phatic exchanges suggests

that in the process of opening a conversation, Vietnamese subjects attempt to both exchange information and maintain the rapport between participants. Inversely, the focus on getting the other's attention combined with work-oriented phatic exchanges indicates that English subjects just target at exchanging information rather maintaining their relationship.

Finally, unlike English subjects, through the employment of verbal strategies, Vietnamese staff and managers reveal a close but respectful relationship. On the one hand, although these examined conversations are between staff and managers in office settings and discuss work-related issues, Vietnamese subjects make use of kinship terms such as "chú", "anh", "chị", "cháu", "em" in most opening sections. The use of a variety of kinship terms which are polite rituals of the Vietnamese helps increase the intimacy between parties by regarding them as members of their family and express the hierarchy between two parties (Trần Ngọc Thêm, 1999, p. 159). On the other hand, in initiating a conversation, the staff – the partners of lower status show respect towards the managers – the partners of higher social status via the use of such polite particles as "ạ" and "ạ" and performative verbs such as "báo cáo", "trình bày", "thưa". Via this exploitation, the power distance between Vietnamese staff and managers is rather obvious. On the contrary, instead of utilizing polite particles and kinship terms, English subjects call the others' titles or names directly. This can suggest that English subjects may not care about maintaining rapport in the process of opening a conversation, they mostly concentrate on raising the topic of concern.

In conclusion, the paper yields the findings and discussions on verbal strategies used by English and Vietnamese staff and managers in initiating a conversation in office settings. The similarities and differences in the utilization of each verbal strategy by both

subjects are deliberated. The study is hoped to help Vietnamese learners and users to initiate a conversation with English native speakers smoothly, effectively and politely.

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CHIẾN LƯỢC NGÔN TỪ ĐƯỢC SỬ DỤNG BỞI NHÂN VIÊN VÀ NGƯỜI QUẢN LÝ ĐỂ KHAI THOẠI Ở VĂN PHÒNG TRONG TIẾNG ANH VÀ TIẾNG VIỆT

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Tóm tắt: Trong giao tiếp, một khai thoại phù hợp sẽ giúp tạo ấn tượng tốt và tăng hiệu quả của cuộc thoại; tuy nhiên, rất khó tạo ra một khai thoại lịch sự. Do đó, nghiên cứu này nhằm tìm ra và miêu tả những chiến lược ngôn từ được sử dụng bởi nhân viên và người quản lý trong khai thoại ở tiếng Anh và Việt. Phương pháp phân tích nội dung định tính được sử dụng để phân tích 120 đoạn thoại trên phim (60 Anh và 60 Việt). Kết quả chỉ ra rằng đối tượng Việt sử dụng nhiều chiến lược mở thoại hơn đối tượng Anh. Đặc biệt, khi khai thoại, đối tượng Anh có vẻ giữ khoảng cách với những trao đổi về công việc nhưng đối tượng Việt lại thể hiện sự gần gũi và tôn trọng với những trao đổi nhằm gìn giữ mối quan hệ.

Từ khóa: khai thoại, chiến lược khai thoại, chiến lược ngôn từ, chiến lược ngôn từ trong khai thoại, phân tích nội dung

SPEECH ACT TYPES IN CONVERSATIONS IN THE “NEW INTERCHANGE” SERIES

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Abstract: This is a study of speech acts in the conversations of *New Interchange 1, 2, and 3*. The aim of the study is to examine *speech act types* in the conversations investigated. Both *quantitative* approach and *qualitative* approach are employed with the assistance of *descriptive, contrastive, analytic, and synthetic* methods to help work out the best possible findings. The data consist of a total of 784 turns comprising 8126 words in 97 conversations of *New Interchange 1, 2, and 3*. The study shows interesting results concerning *speech act types*. To be more specific, although there is a strong tendency for combination of different speech act types, *single speech act* groups are preferred with the predominance of *representatives*.

Keywords: speech act types, New Interchange series, conversations

1. Introduction

Let's begin with “*Hello*”, which can be performed in the three following ways:

- (1) *Hello.*
- (2) *Hello!*
- (3) *Hello?*

It can be easily realized that there are three different punctuation marks after “*Hello*” (and of course three different tunes), possibly leading to different classifications of speech acts. For example, as regards speech act types, (1) and (2) are greetings, belonging to the larger group of *expressives* with (2) expressing the speaker's stronger emotion, while (3) shows the signal of an offer to help which can be classified as a *commissive*.

As a matter of fact, studying speech acts is one of the core issues in studying languages. According to Nguyễn Quang Ngoan and Nguyễn Tiến Phùng (2007: 26-29), there have been a number of studies on speech acts,

following several trends. The first trend is concerned with studies of a single speech act across cultures, such as: greeting, requesting, or apologizing from different aspects, including indirectness, politeness strategies, and so on. There have also been studies in which several speech acts such as requesting and refusing a request are investigated at the same time. The second trend is distinguished by studies of speech acts from the perspective of conversational analysis which are less common than the first trend. Those studies have helped language researchers, teachers, learners and users have better insight into language in use, especially the speaker's meaning or pragmatic meaning in different contexts across cultures.

However, there has been a lack of studies, especially those conducted in Vietnam, focusing on all speech acts in a single textbook or a textbook series to facilitate teachers and learners in their teaching and learning language. It is for this reason that the researchers have decided to conduct a study

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of “*Speech act types in conversations in the ‘New Interchange’ series*”.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Speech acts and relevant concepts

According to Austin (1962), speech acts are actions intended to perform by a speaker on saying something. That means when a speaker produces utterances, he/she often intends to perform actions via those utterances. Typical speech acts are greeting, apologizing, disagreeing, thanking, complimenting, and so on. For example, when a speaker utters “*I’m sorry for being late*”, not only does he/she produce a meaningful utterance but he/she also intends to do the act of apologizing. Austin’s (1962) definition was later accepted and clarified by his followers, including Searle (1969, 1976), Yule (1996), among others. To some extent, they all seemed to agree that speech acts are actions intended to do by a speaker through utterances he/she performs in conversations with others.

According to Austin (1962), clarified by Searle (1969), and Yule (1996), a speech act could be analyzed on three different levels, namely: *locution*, *illocution*, and *perlocution*. The first level of analysis is *locution*, which is the act of saying something meaningful. To be more specific, when one makes a meaningful utterance in terms of lexis, grammar, and pronunciation, he/she performs a *locutionary act*. In other words, it is concerned with what is said by a speaker. The second level, *illocutionary act*, lies in what is intended by the speaker, or in other words, the intended meaning of the utterance. Eventually, one utterance can be used to convey different illocutionary forces. The last level of analysis is the result of the words. This is known as the *perlocutionary act*, which means what is done by uttering words. To be more exact, it is effects of an utterance on the hearer or the hearer’s reaction to an utterance. The three

levels of speech act are, however, closely related because according to Bach & Harnish (1979: 3), “*S says something to H; in saying something to H, S does something; and by doing something, S affects H*”. The authors completely agree with the concise comment made by Clyne (1996: 11) that *locution* is the actual form of an utterance, *illocution* is the communicative force of the utterance, and *perlocution* is the communicative effect of the utterance.

Of the three dimensions, as stated by Yule (1996: 52), the most essential act that counts is the *illocutionary act* because the same utterance can potentially have quite different *illocutionary forces*. For instance, the utterance, “*I’ll come back soon*” can count as a *prediction*, a *promise*, a *statement*, or a *warning* in different contexts. At the same time, the same *illocutionary force* can be performed with various utterances. Take *directives* for example. If you want to ask somebody to close a door, you may say “*Close the door, please!*”, “*Could you please close the door?*”, “*Would you mind closing the door?*”, and so on. That helps to explain why Yule (1996: 52) stated that the term “*speech act*” is “*generally interpreted quite narrowly to mean only the illocutionary force of an utterance*”.

2.2. Classification of speech acts as speech act types

One popular way of classifying speech acts among others is doing that by function. Searle (1976) introduced one of the most influential and widely-accepted classification of speech acts. Searle’s classification mentions five broad types: *commissives*, *declarations*, *directives*, *expressives*, and *representatives*. They can be summarized as follows:

- **Declarations:** These are words and expressions that change the world by their very utterance. They usually need to be uttered by a speaker of a special institutional

role. Examples include: “*I hereby pronounce you man and wife*” or “*This court sentences you to ten years in prison*”.

- **Representatives:** These are acts in which the words state what the speaker believes to be the case. These allow the speaker to assert, confirm or describe something. Typical functions of this group include *describing, claiming, hypothesizing, insisting, and disagreeing*.

- **Commissives:** This group includes acts in which the speaker commits him/herself to doing something with words. Typical functions of this group are *promising, offering, threatening, refusing, vowing, and volunteering*.

- **Directives:** This category covers acts in which the words uttered by the speaker are aimed at making the hearer do something. For example, directives can be used to perform *commanding, requesting, inviting, forbidding, suggesting, advising, and questioning*.

- **Expressives:** This last group includes acts in which the words state what the speaker feels. In other words, it is used to express the speaker’s strong emotion. Representatives of the group include *apologizing, praising, congratulating, regretting, accepting, rejecting, and so on*.

2.3. Recent studies of speech acts related to the “*New Interchange*” series

Internationally, a study which the authors could get access to was conducted by Moradi (2013) at Islamic Azad University in Iran for the purpose of evaluation of language functions in high school English textbooks, as compared to those in *New Interchange* series. The series, thus, just served as a source of comparison, while the focus was on the high school textbooks for evaluation and adjustment. It is for this reason that only little quantitative information concerning the types of single speech acts in the series was found.

In Vietnam, Nguyễn Thị Phương Loan (2010) examined the language in “*New Interchange Intro*” to adapt it for flexible use in her teaching. However, only the first book of the *New Interchange* series with very simple, artificial language was investigated, leaving the other textbooks of the series uninvestigated.

Recently, Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Dung (2014) examined types and structures of speech acts in the conversations in the “*New Interchange*” series for her M.A. Thesis. It was a thorough study of speech act types and structures with the detailed, processed data attached to the appendix. This article is written to publish part of the results of her study.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Aim and research questions

The study aims at investigating speech act types in the conversations presented in the student’s books of *New Interchange 1, 2, and 3* from the pragmatics perspective for better understanding, teaching and learning of the textbook series.

The research question to be answered is: What types of speech act are frequently used and how are they realized in the conversations of the *New Interchange series*?

3.2. Data sources and samples

The source of the data is the *New Interchange series*, written by Richards et al., first published in 1997 and introduced to Vietnam in 2005. The version in Vietnam is printed and distributed by the system of Fahasa Bookshops.

The course components include the Student’s Books, Teacher’s Editions, Workbooks, Videos, and so on. However, only the Student’s books were used and only *New Interchange 1, 2, and 3* were selected since the language in *New Interchange Intro* is too simple, artificial, and unnatural.

From the three student’s books selected, only the parts of conversations were chosen for

investigation. According to the introduction in those textbooks, “the conversations introduce the new grammar of each cycle in a communicative context and present functional and conversational expressions” (2005: iv).

The samples of the study consist of 97 conversations comprising a total of 784 turns and 8126 words all together, with *New Interchange 1* having 33 conversations and *New Interchange 2* and 3 having 32 each. *New Interchange 1* consists of 33 conversations, of which two (conversations 2 and 3) are performed by three speakers and the rest by two. The total turns are 280 (35.71%) and words are 2369 (29.15%). *New Interchange 2* consists of 32 conversations, of which one (conversation 44) is performed by four speakers, five (conversations 38, 40, 54, 58, and 60) by three, and the rest by two. The total turns are 242 (30.87%) and words are 2720 (33.47%). *New Interchange 3* consists of 32 conversations, all performed by two speakers. The total turns are 262 (33.42%) and words are 3037 (37.38%).

As a matter of fact, the number of turns in *New Interchange 1* is the biggest, accounting for 35.71% as compared to 30.87% in *New Interchange 2* and 33.42% in *New Interchange 3*, but it is *New Inter change 3* and 2 that have more words in conversations than the first (33.38 and 33.47 versus 29.15, respectively).

The language functions used in the *New Interchange* series are varied in each textbook and across the series. The language proficiency

levels range from low-intermediate to high-intermediate level, covering conversations for various communicative purposes in a variety of contexts. The speech acts in each textbook are investigated separately for comparison and contrast of their speech act types in the three textbooks of the series.

3.3. Data Analysis

Studying speech acts, Yu (1999: 15-16) discussed some major concerns. First, the classified types of speech acts fail to cover all the communicative functions of an utterance in different contexts. Second, speech act analysis is normally of isolated utterances taken out of context, so it fails to fully explain the illocutionary act(s) of an utterance. Third, speech act theory seems to ignore the fact that utterances are inherently ambiguous and might convey more illocutionary forces as it places special emphasis on assigning a single act to each isolated utterance.

These concerns for studying speech acts have lead the authors of this research to the final decision of studying speech acts by *turn* with the speaker’s complete thought and in context, especially the linguistic context, of the investigated conversations to interpret the speech acts thoroughly with supplementary functions added to Searle’s (1976) framework.

3.3.1. Analytical framework

The analytical framework for the analysis of speech act types is presented in Table 1

Table 1. Framework for the analysis of speech act types

Single speech act types					Combined speech acts
Declarations	Representatives	Expressives	Directives	Commissives	
Declaratives	Assertives	Apologize	Requestives	Promises Offers Predictives	Rep+Exp
	Descriptives	Condole	Questions		Rep+Dir
	Ascriptives	Congratulate	Commands		Rep+Com
	Informatives	Greet	Requirements		Exp+Dir
	Confirmatives	Thank	Prohibitives		Exp+Com
	Assentives	Bid	Permissives		Dir+Com
	Dissentives	Accept	Advisories		Rep+Exp+Dir
	Disputatives	Reject	Suggestives		Rep+Exp+Com
	Responsives				Rep+Dir+Com
	Supportives				...

The analytical framework employed in the study is based on the one suggested by Searle (1976) with adjustment to cover more communicative functions or sub-types of speech act.

3.3.2. Analytical methods

analyzing the speech act types in the present study, speech acts are classified as two groups, namely: *single speech acts* and *combined speech acts*. The percentages of the given groups in each textbook as well as in the whole series are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of single and combined speech act types in total

	Single speech act types		Combined speech act types		Total of speech act types	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
New 1	175	63.2	102	36.8	277	100
New 2	139	57.7	102	42.3	241	100
New 3	166	64.8	90	35.2	256	100
Total	480	62.0	294	38.0	774	100

In our study, a combination of different methods for data analysis was applied, and they include the *analytic*, *synthetic*, *descriptive*, and *contrastive* methods. Among them, analytic method is used to clarify and justify certain linguistic features of speech acts; contrastive method is to compare and contrast different types and structures of various categories of speech acts in each book as well as across the series; descriptive method is to describe the key features of the speech acts investigated; and synthetic method is to help the researchers synthesize the findings and draw out conclusions of the study.

4. Findings and discussion

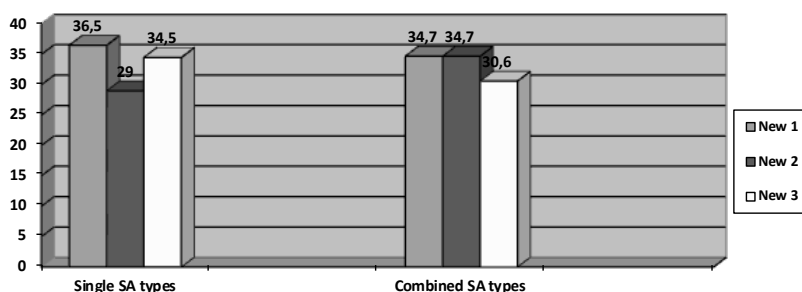
4.1. Single speech act types versus combined speech act types

Based on the analytical framework for

As shown in Table 2, in the whole series, single speech acts account for a much higher percentage than combined ones, with 62.0% compared to 38.0%, respectively. Besides, in each textbook of the series, this tendency can also be observed.

Specifically, as regards single speech acts, *New Interchange 1*, *2*, and *3* in turn make up 63.2%, 57.7%, and 64.8%. The corresponding rates for combined speech acts are 36.8%, 42.3%, and 35.2%. It can obviously be seen that the biggest difference lies in *New Interchange 3* where the rate of single speech acts is almost twice as much as that of the combined ones.

Overall, the results show that single speech acts are preferred in the textbook series although there is a strong tendency for the combination of speech act types in the conversations investigated.



Graph 1. Percentages of single speech act types and combined speech act types in the series

Turning now to the proportion of single speech acts in each textbook of the whole series, among the 480 single speech acts under investigation, *New Interchange 1* contributes the biggest part at 36.5%, closely followed by *New Interchange 3* at 34.5% and *New Interchange 2* at 29%. As regards the combined group consisting of 294 combinations, *Interchange 1* and 2 share the same proportion at 34.7%, while the other 30.6% goes to *New Interchange 3*. As all shown in Graph 1, an almost equal distribution of the two groups of speech act types can be observed.

4.2. Realizations of single speech act types

It is now time to take a closer look at the single speech act group which is further divided into *Rep*, *Exp*, *Dir*, *Com*, and *Decn* which in turn represent *representatives*, *expressives*, *directives*, *commissives*, and *declarations*.

Table 3 reveals the distribution of rates of different single speech acts in the whole series as well as in each textbook.

For the second most frequently-used speech act, *directives*, the items contributed by *New Interchange 1*, 2, and 3 to the total of 152 items are in turn 61, 42, and 49. Not being used as frequently as the first two types of single speech acts, the 72 items of *expressives* are divided into 28 for *New Interchange 1*, 21 for *New Interchange 2*, and 23 for *New Interchange 3*.

If single speech acts are examined in each textbook separately, as shown in Table 3, in *New Interchange 1*, the highest percentage goes to *representatives* at 48.6%, followed by *directives* at 34.8% and *expressives* at 16%. The other two textbooks follow a similar fashion with the corresponding rates being 53.2%, 30.2%, and 15.1% for *New Interchange 2*, and 54.9%, 29.5%, and 13.9% for *New Interchange 3*. Eventually, just a very small percentage of *commissives* and no percentage of *declarations* are found in each of the three textbooks.

Following is the discussion of each single speech act type in detail with the functions it

Table 3. Distribution of single speech act types in detail

	Rep		Exp		Dir		Com		Decn		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
New 1	85	48.6	28	16.0	61	34.8	1	0.6	0	0	175	100
New 2	74	53.2	21	15.1	42	30.2	2	1.5	0	0	139	100
New 3	91	54.9	23	13.9	49	29.5	3	1.7	0	0	166	100
Total	250	52.0	72	15.0	152	31.7	6	1.3	0	0	480	100

As can be seen from Table 3, the whole series of *New Interchange* is realized with the predominance of *representatives* accounting for 52%, followed by *directives* and *expressives* at 31.7% and 15.0%, respectively. *Commissives* are just rarely used at 1.3% and, as predicted, *declarations* are even not used.

As regards *representatives*, the most frequently-used single speech act in the series, among 250 items in total, *New Interchange 3* contributes 91, while *New Interchange 1* and 2 comprise 85 and 74, successively.

performs illustrated by the examples sorted out from the collected data of the study.

4.2.1. Representatives

As a matter of fact, throughout the *New Interchange* series, *representatives* are used to perform a variety of functions. All the underlined utterances in the following examples are for the emphasis of the categories under discussion.

a. To perform an informative

A *representative* can be used to provide the hearer with necessary information. Paulo

in (4) informs Tom about where his parents are from and why they are in Paulo's place.

(4)

- Mrs. Tavares: *Nice to meet you, Tom.*

- Paulo: *My parents are here from Brazil. They're on vacation.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 1, p. 3)

b. *To perform a confirmative*

A *representative* can be used to confirm whether some information is right or not. In (5), for instance, it is used by Paulo to confirm that he is studying English.

(5)

- Sarah: *Oh, are you studying English?*

- Paulo: *Well, yes, I am. And engineering, too.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 1, p. 5)

c. *To perform an assertive*

A *representative* can be employed to state firmly that something is true, good, valid, and so on. This is illustrated by example (6) where Soo Mi asserts her point of view, emphasizing that in Korea, most couples stay together.

(6)

- Ryan: *Is it the same in Korea?*

- Soo Mi: *I don't think so. In Korea, some marriages break up, but most couples stay together.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 5, p. 31)

d. *To perform a descriptive*

Describing things, people, or states is another key function of a *representative*, which is illustrated in example (7) concerning Sarah's description of a person.

(7)

- Raoul: *Judy? Which one is she? Is she the woman wearing glasses over there?*

- Sarah: *No, she's the tall one in jeans. She's standing near the window.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 9, p. 57)

e. *To perform an assentive*

To assent is to show approval of or agreement on something. The *representative* is used in (8) to show Sue's agreement with

Dave on David Copperfield's ability to do incredible things.

(8)

- Dave: *Yes, I have. I saw his show in Las Vegas last year. He's terrific.*

- Sue: *Yeah, he does some incredible things.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 10, p. 62)

f. *To perform a supportive*

A *supportive* is a subtype of *representative* used to show the speaker's encouragement, sympathy, or approval to another speaker. To illustrate, in (9), Sam supports Lynn's question on the bus frequency.

(9)

- Lynn: *Why is there never a bus when you want one?*

- Sam: *Good question. There aren't enough buses on this route.*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 2, p. 8)

g. *To perform a dissentive*

To dissent is to disagree with somebody on something. The *representatives* used in (10) is to show Ron's disagreement with Laura, the previous speaker in the adjacency pair of the investigated conversations.

(10)

- Laura: *Maybe it means he doesn't understand you.*

- Ron: *No, I don't think so.*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 14, p. 86)

h. *To perform a responsive*

A *representative* can be used as a response to a previous question, and in this case it is named *responsive* which is demonstrated with example (11) in which Laura's response to Ron's question is "No, I haven't".

(11)

- Ron: *Have you met Raj, the student from India?*

- Laura: *No, I haven't.*

i. *To perform a disputative*

To dispute is to argue and disagree with somebody on something. Example (12)

describes how Mrs. Dean and Jenny use a *disputative* to argue and disagree with each other on the apartment they want to hire.

(12)

- Mr. Dean: *What do you think?*

- Mrs. Dean: *Well, it has just as many bedrooms as the last apartment. And the living room is huge.*

- Jenny: *But the bedrooms are too small. And there isn't enough closet space for my clothes.*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 3, p. 14)

j. To perform an ascriptive

An *ascriptive* is a *representative* used to claim that something is caused by a particular person or situation. For instance, in example (13), Andy blames the factory outside their town for discharging chemicals into the river.

(13)

- Andy: *You know, there's factory outside town that's pumping chemicals into the river.*

- Carla: *How can they do that? Isn't that against the law?*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 7, p. 43)

4.2.2. Expressives

Expressives are used in the conversations investigated for expressing people's various psychological states and feelings. They include people's likes and dislikes, joy, surprise, pleasure, excitement, and so on.

a. To express one's likes/dislikes

As shown in the following examples, an *expressive* is used in (14) to express Brad's dislikes of working on Saturdays and Sundays. Other expressions in use are "want", "be interested in" "be fond of", "be keen on", "dislike", "can't stand" "be crazy for", and so on.

(14)

- Sue: *Well, there are a lot of retail jobs – selling clothes and stuff. But you have to work Saturdays and Sundays.*

- Brad: *Hmm. I hate working on weekends.*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 10, p. 60)

b. To express one's pleasure

One's pleasure to meet somebody, to be somewhere, or to do something can be well expressed by an *expressive*. One example is Tom and Mrs. Tavares's pleasure to be introduced to each other in (15).

(15)

- Paulo: *Mom and Dad, this is Tom Hayes. Tom, this is my parents.*

- Tom: *Pleased to meet you, Mr. and Mrs. Tavares.*

- Mrs. Tavares: *Nice to meet you, Tom.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 1, p. 3)

c. To thank

Another function of an *expressive* is to express one's thanks or gratitude to others by expressions like "thanks", "thanks a lot", "many thanks", "thanks a million", "thank you", and so on. This is clearly demonstrated with example (16).

(16)

- Rod: *Um, yeah. That's OK, I guess. I don't think I'll need it for anything.*

- Jack: *Thanks a million.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 3, p. 14)

d. To express one's surprise

How one is surprised is usually expressed by "wow!", "really?", or a word or phrase repeated from the previous speaker's with a rising intonation in the end, such as: "A barber shop?" in (17).

(17)

- Woman: *By the way, there's a barber shop in the shopping centre, too.*

- Jack: *A barber shop?*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 8, p. 46)

e. To accept

An *expressive* is also used to accept something made by a previous speaker. It can be used to accept an invitation, an offer, a suggestion, or a request. For example, an *expressive* is used in example (18) by Rod to accept a request.

(18)

- Jack: *Yeah, a couple of times. Would it be OK if I picked it up on Friday night?*

- Rod: *Fine. No problem.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 3, p. 14)

f. To greet

Greeting somebody is another function of *expressives* realized with common expressions like “hi”, “hey”, “hello”, “good morning”, and so on with a comma, a full stop, a question mark, or an exclamation mark in the end, depending on the speaker’s intention. These are clearly illustrated with examples (19).

(19)

- Secretary: *Good morning, Parker Industries.*

- Mr. Kale: *Hello. May I speak to Ms. Graham, please?*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 15, p. 94)

g. To say goodbye

Similar to greeting, saying goodbye is another common function of *expressives* realized with “bye”, “bye bye”, “good bye”, “good night”, and so on. Example (20) is just one of the many examples of this function.

(20)

- Mr. Kale: *Thank you. Goodbye.*

- Secretary: *Good-bye.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 15, p. 94)

h. To reject

Contrary to accepting, rejecting is a function of *expressives* used to express a speaker’s decline of an invitation/offer or refusal to a suggestion or a command/request made by a previous speaker. To illustrate, in example (21) Eric declines the previous speaker’s invitation.

(21)

- Alice: *Exactly! Do you want to go some night?*

- Eric: *I thought you’d never ask!*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 12, p. 75)

i. To apologize

Expressives in English are also used to express a speaker’s psychological state

of feeling ashamed, unhappy, regretful, or uncomfortable to do or to have something. Take (22) for example. Amy apologizes to Jeff for calling him by a wrong name.

(22)

- Amy: *All right, Peter. I’ll give her the message.*

- Jeff: *No, this is Jeff, not Peter.*

- Amy: *Oh, I’m sorry.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 3, p. 17)

j. To express one’s interest/excitement/admiration ...

Finally, an *expressive* can be used to express a speaker’s strong feelings, such as: great joy, interest, excitement, or admiration. Common expressions for these are “Great!”, “Wow!”, “Fantastic!”, “Terrific!”, “How + Adj + (...)!”, “What + N + (...)!”, and so on. (23) is just a typical example among many of this function.

(23)

- Kim: *Yeah. That’s me in front of my uncle’s beach house. When I was a kid, we used to spend two weeks there every summer.*

- Jeff: *Wow, I bet that was fun!*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 1, p. 5)

4.2.3. Directives

Directives in our data are realized to perform various functions, including asking for information, commanding, requesting, suggesting, inviting, and advising.

a. To ask for information

The most common function of *directives* is, perhaps, asking for information. This is usually realized in the form of questions of all types, ranging from *yes-no questions*, *statement questions*, *tag questions*, *alternative questions*, to *wh-questions*. They are, of course, indirect speech acts partially illustrated with examples (24).

(24)

- Jason: *Where do you work, Andrea?*

- Andrea: *I work for Thomas Cook Travel.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 2, p. 9)

b. To command

To command is a major function of *directives* usually in form of direct speech acts with the general format being “*Do something*” or “*Don’t do something*”. At the end of this type of *directive* is either a full stop or an exclamation mark. Example (25) illustrates this function.

(25)

- Ryan: Look at this headline, Soo Mi.

- Soo Mi: *Wow! So many people in the United States get divorced!*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 5, p. 31)

c. To request

Making a request is also a main function of *directives*. However, to ask somebody to do something, a speaker usually makes a polite request instead of a direct command. Common expressions include “*Can/Could/Would you do something?*” and “*Would you mind doing something?*”. These are illustrated with example (26).

(26)

- Jeff: And would you ask her if she’d like to go with me?

- Amy: *All right, Peter. I’ll give her the message.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 3, p. 17)

d. To suggest

Directives are also frequently used for making suggestions. These suggestions are normally realized with such expressions as “*Let me/us do something*”, and “*Let’s do something!*”, “*How/What about (doing) something?*”, “*Why don’t we/you do something?*”, or “*You can/could do something*”. A typical example of suggestion can be observed in (27).

(27)

- Kim: Hey. Let’s trade places one weekend!

- Dan: *OK. Great idea!*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 8, p. 49)

e. To invite

As shown in example (28), *directives* used to make invitations are usually realized

in several structures, including “*Would you like to do something?*” “*Do you want to do something?*” and “*How/What about (doing) something?*”

(28)

- Sandy: Say, do you want to go out to dinner tonight?

- Bob: *Sure. Where would you like to go?*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 13, p. 80)

f. To advise

To advise somebody to do something is one more function of *directives*. Advice can be realized with several structures, such as: “*You should do something*”, “*You’d better do something*”, “*If I were you, I would do something*”, or “*It’s helpful/important/necessary/essential/advisable/a good idea to do something*”. (29) is given as an example of this function.

(29)

- Mom: And you’d better talk to your father first.

- Lucy: *I already did. He thinks it’s a great idea. He wants to come with me!*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 5, p. 31)

4.2.4. Commissives

Commissives are speech acts which a speaker uses to commit himself to doing something like a promise, a plan, a prediction, or a pledge. In the conversations of the *New Interchange* series, two functions of *commissives* which are realized as single speech acts are making a *predictive* and making an *offer*. Other functions appear in the combined speech act types.

a. To make a predictive

In (30), Kathy and John make predictions of what the world and life will be like in the next twenty years.

(30)

- Kathy: *Within 20 years, I bet all our news and information will be coming through computers.*

- John: By then, maybe even newspapers will have disappeared!

(New Interchange 3, Unit 10, p. 63)

b. *To make an offer*

An offer to help or to do something is a common function of *commissives*. As can be seen, in example (31) the clerk offers to help the other speaker, Helen.

(31)

- Clerk: *Can I help you?*

- Helen: *Yes, I'd like to return this jacket.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 6, p. 34)

4.2.5. Declarations

As predicted, no *declarations* can be found in our data. It is, perhaps, because they are a special speech act type that not only requires the speaker to have some sort of institutional role but also calls for special felicity conditions for which an utterance can be realized as it is intended.

4.3. Realizations of combined speech act types

Apart from the group of single speech acts, as stated, the utterances in the data are also divided into the other group of combined speech acts realized as five sub-groups *Rep+Exp*, *Rep+Dir*, *Exp+Dir*, *Rep+Exp+Dir*, and *others* illustrated in Table 4.

directives, *representatives* plus *directives* plus *expressives*, *expressives* plus *representatives* plus *directives*, *expressives* plus *directives* plus *representatives*, *directives* plus *representatives* plus *expressives*, and *directives* plus *expressives* plus *representatives*.

The *others* group consists of all the other minor ways of combining speech acts realized in the conversations investigated. They represent *Rep+Com*, *Exp+Com*, *Dir+Com*, *Rep+Exp+Com*, and *Rep+Dir+Com*. Similar to the major combinations discussed above, each minor one is used to cover all the possibilities for combination. For example, *Exp+Com* stands for not only *expressives* plus *commissives* but also the reverse.

Turning now to the distribution of combined groups of speech acts, in the whole series, as possibly seen from Table 4.3, *Rep+Dir* ranks the first at 36.1%, followed by *Rep+Exp* at 24.8%, *Exp+Dir* at 23.8%, and *Rep+Exp+Dir* at only 6.8%. The last 8.5% goes to *others* comprising all the five minor combinations of speech acts in the study.

Table 4. Distribution of combined speech act types in detail

	Rep +Exp		Rep +Dir		Exp +Dir		Rep+Exp +Dir		Others		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
New 1	21	20.5	38	37.3	27	26.5	9	8.8	7	6.9	102	100
New 2	26	25.5	35	34.3	20	19.6	7	6.9	14	13.7	102	100
New 3	26	28.9	33	36.7	23	25.6	4	4.4	4	4.4	90	100
Total	73	24.8	106	36.1	70	23.8	20	6.8	25	8.5	294	100

Rep+Exp stands for *representatives* plus *expressives* as well as *expressives* plus *representatives*, *Rep+Dir* for both *representatives* plus *directives* and *directives* plus *representatives*, and *Exp+Dir* for both *expressives* plus *directives* and *directives* plus *expressives*.

Rep+Exp+Dir comprises all the possibilities for combination in any order. It includes *representatives* plus *expressives* plus

As far as combined speech acts in each textbook are concerned, a similar trend to the whole series can be observed. To be more specific, in *New Interchange 1*, *Rep+Dir* takes the first position at 37.3%, leaving 20.5% for *Rep+Exp*, 26.5% for *Exp+Dir*, and only 8.8% for *Rep+Exp+Dir*. *Rep+Dir* also ranks the first in *New Interchange 2* and 3, at 34.3% and 36.7%, followed by *Rep+Exp* at 25.5% and

28.9%, *Exp+Dir* at 19.6% and 25.6%, and *Rep+Exp+Dir* at only 6.9 and 4.4%, respectively. In all the three textbooks, *others*, comprising five minor combined groups, accounts for very small percentages with just 6.9% going to *New Interchange 1*, 13.7% to *New Interchange 2*, and 4.4% to *New Interchange 3*.

Following is a specific investigation into each combined group with all the possibilities for combination illustrated by examples sorted out from the collected data.

4.3.1. *Rep+Exp*

Rep+Exp representing *representatives* plus *expressives* occurs very often in the conversations investigated and, as described, takes the second highest percentage (24.8%) of combined speech act types in the series. The reverse order, *expressives* plus *representatives*, is also recognized and illustrated with example (32).

(32)

- Tom: *The Cranberries. I love their music. How about you? Do you like them?*

- Liz: *No, I don't. I can't stand them!*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 4, p. 21)

4.3.2. *Rep+Dir*

Standing for *representatives* plus *directives*, *Rep+Dir* takes the highest rate (36.1%) of the combined speech act type in the series. The order can be reversed with *directives* plus *representatives* and realized in (33) as a typical example.

(33)

- Jason: *Maybe. What are they offering?*

- Paula: *Well, here's the course catalog. Take a look.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 8, p. 46)

4.3.3. *Exp+Dir*

Representing *expressives* plus *directives*, *Exp+Dir* appears quite often in our investigated data of the whole series (23.8%). The reverse order, *Dir+Exp* standing for *directives* plus *expressives*, is also popular and can be observed in examples (34).

(34)

- Carol: *When I was a kid, I was kind of rebellious.*

- Alan: *You? Really? What was the turning point?*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 11, p. 66)

4.3.4. *Rep+Exp+Dir*

Example (35) is a typical example of the combination *Rep+Exp+Dir* referring to *repressives* plus *expressives* plus *directives*.

(35)

- Daniel: *Oh, hi. How are things?*

- Albert: *Just fine, thanks. Uh, are you doing anything on Saturday night?*

(New Interchange 2, Unit 16, p. 100)

4.3.5. *Others*

a. *Rep+Com*

Rep+Com representing *representatives* plus *commissives* is the first sub-type of the *others* group. The combination is also realized in the reverse order, *Com+Rep*, demonstrated by (36) as a typical case.

(36)

- Rod: *Well, all right. I'm not very good.*

- Keith: *No problem, Rod. I won't play too hard.*

(New Interchange 1, Unit 6, p. 37)

b. *Exp+Com*

Representing *expressives* plus *commissives*, *Exp+Com* is realized in the series with just this order without being reversed. It can be demonstrated with example (37).

(37)

- Jeff: *And would you ask her if she'd like to go with me?*

- Amy: *All right, Peter. I'll give her the message.*

(New Interchange 3, Unit 3, p. 17)

c. *Rep+Exp+Com*

The third sub-group of the *others* is *Rep+Exp+Com* representing *representatives* plus *expressives* plus *commissives*, realized in example (38).

(38)

- Mr. Kale: *And would you ask her to call me this afternoon? My number is 356-4031.*

- Secretary: 356-4031. Yes, Mr. Kale. I'll give Ms. Graham the message.

d. Rep+Dir+Com

Rep+Dir+Com is the last sub-group of the *others* illustrated with example (39).

(39)

- Julia: *I'm so excited! We have two weeks off! What are you going to do?*

- Nancy: I'm not sure. I guess I'll just stay home. Maybe I'll catch up on my reading. What about you? Any plans?

(New Interchange 2, Unit 5, p. 28)

5. Implications

5.1. To designers of English textbooks

It is expected that designers of English textbooks can take advantage of the results of the study in designing textbooks. For example, they can pay more attention to a variety of aspects, such as: the number of participants, turns, and words, the topics and situations, as well as the speech act types in the *New Interchange* series when design a new series of textbooks concerning conversations.

Alternatively, similar studies can be conducted by textbook designers to help them compare and contrast speech act types in some existing textbooks of English in Vietnam with those in the present study for necessary adjustment.

5.2. To teachers of English

Teachers of English are expected to be aware of the important role of speech act analysis in their teaching job, especially their teaching of conversations. It is because good knowledge and skills of speech act analysis are believed to help English teachers do a better job in teaching English in general and teaching conversations in particular.

Analysis of speech acts should be done in class with respect to *speech act types*. Especially the significant role of context

should be taken into consideration when speech acts, especially indirect speech acts, are analyzed and interpreted. It is because the same utterance in different contexts may convey different intended meanings which may be far different from its literal meaning.

The analyzed conversations of the *New Interchange* series and the discussion of the realizations of speech act types in the study can be applied to teaching conversations in English. Alternatively, similar analysis of speech act types can be assigned to learners on conversations of other textbook series.

5.3. To learners of English

Learners of English are suggested bearing in mind that good knowledge of and regular practice in speech act analysis certainly help them better their understanding, interpretation, and performance of speech acts in English.

It is for this reason that the researchers suggest they study the analysis of speech act types and practise applying them to interpreting and performing speech acts in their study and communication in English.

6. Conclusions

Following is the summary of major findings in our study:

- To begin with, the distribution of speech act types in each separate textbook almost follows the same fashion of the whole series, reflecting the unity of this set of textbooks.

- Overall, it is shown by the results that single speech acts (62.0%) are preferred in the textbook series although there is a strong tendency for the combination of speech act types (38.2%) in the conversations investigated.

- As regards the proportion of speech act types in each textbook compared to the whole series consisting of 480 single speech acts and 294 combined ones, an almost equal contribution of each volume to the whole can be observed.

- Turning now to the group of single speech acts, the whole series of *New Interchange* is realized with the predominance of *representatives* (52%), followed by *directives* (31.7%) and *expressives* (15.0%). *Commissives* are just rarely used (1.3%) and *declarations* are even not used.

- More specifically, *representatives* are used to make *informatives*, *confirmatives*, *assertives*, *descriptives*, *assentives*, *supportives*, *dissentives*, *responsives*, *disputatives*, and *ascriptives*. *Expressives* are used to express *likes/dislikes*, *pleasure*, *surprise*, and *interest/excitement*. They are also used to *greet*, *thank*, *accept*, *reject*, *apologize*, and *say goodbye*. *Directives* are used to *ask for information*, *to command*, *request*, *suggest*, *invite*, and *advise*. And *commissives* are used to make *predictives* and *offers*.

- With regard to the distribution of combined groups of speech acts in the whole series *Rep+Dir* ranks the first (36.1%), followed by *Rep+Exp* (24.8%), *Exp+Dir* (23.8%) and *Rep+Exp+Dir* (only 6.8%). The last 8.5% goes to *others* comprising all the five minor combinations of speech acts in the study. In each sub-group there are various possibilities of combination in different orders.

From the findings, certain things should be considered when speech acts are studied, taught, performed, and interpreted.

First, a variety of sub-types of speech acts are realized in different contexts expressing different language functions. This proves that supplementary types of speech acts should always be added to the ones suggested by Austin (1962) or Searle (1976) when speech acts are studied in different contexts. In other words, the system of speech acts should be an open-ended system to be developed.

Second, as the tendency of combining different speech acts to express the speaker's multiple intended meanings is so common, studying speech acts by *turn* seems to be a

suitable choice as it allows researchers to cover all the speech act types performed in any turn of speaking. Studying separated speech acts may fail to interpret all the speaker's intended meanings in context.

Third, it is essential that teaching conversations include teaching speech act types expressing different language functions as it is of great importance for students' success in performance and interpretation of speech acts in real communication. Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Dung (2014) with detailed analysis of the speech act types and structures in conversations of the *New Interchange* series can serve as a good reference for this.

Last but not least, context plays a crucial role in interpreting speech acts. It is for this reason that speech acts should be studied and interpreted with sufficient context clues, including all the socio-cultural context, physical context, and linguistic context.

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HÀNH VI NGÔN NGỮ TRONG CÁC HỘI THOẠI TỪ BỘ GIÁO TRÌNH “NEW INTERCHANGE”

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Tóm tắt: Bài báo trình bày kết quả nghiên cứu kiểu hành vi ngôn ngữ trong hội thoại từ bộ giáo trình *New Interchange 1, 2 và 3*. Mục đích của nghiên cứu là nhằm khảo cứu các kiểu hành vi ngôn ngữ trong các hội thoại được nghiên cứu. Nghiên cứu tiếp cận theo cả hai hướng định tính và định lượng với sự vận dụng các phương pháp thống kê, mô tả, đối sánh và tổng hợp. Dữ liệu nghiên cứu gồm 784 lượt lời chứa đựng 8126 từ trong 97 mẫu đàm thoại thu thập từ bộ giáo trình *New Interchange*. Kết quả nghiên cứu đã chỉ ra rằng dấu khuynh hướng kết hợp các kiểu hành vi ngôn ngữ là phổ biến thì nhóm hành vi ngôn ngữ đơn lẻ vẫn được sử dụng nhiều hơn, với sự vượt trội của hành vi mô tả.

Từ khóa: hành vi ngôn ngữ, bộ giáo trình *New Interchange*, hội thoại

A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF MATHEMATICAL DISCOURSE IN ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract: Of multiple discourses where the Vietnamese young learners are increasingly engaged to develop their English proficiency, English mathematical discourse (MD) has proved to be more and more popular. This paper explores the materials in this realm from multisemiotic perspective. In particular, it deals with two questions: (1) to what extent each of the three semiotic resources - language, visual images and mathematical symbolism - is represented in the materials of learning mathematics in English (ME) developed for young learners (YL) and (2) how many words the YLs need to know to comprehend the language component of these materials. Data for illustrations and discussions are withdrawn from the printed resources currently accessible in the Vietnamese context. The results offer insights into the functions of other resources in constructing meanings apart from the well-established role of language as well as the vocabulary load of these materials. The paper concludes with a discussion of pedagogical significance of this study for material designers, teachers and learners and implications for further research.

Keywords: mathematical discourse, multisemiotic discourse, high frequency word list

1. Introduction

Mathematic Discourse (MD) is referred to as multisemiotic as it is constructed from more than one semiotic resource - language, visual images and mathematical symbolism (O'Halloran 2004, p.21). The view of mathematics as a multisemiotic discourse is significant in a pedagogical context as a better understanding of the functions of mathematical symbolism and visual images permits a re-evaluation of the role of language in the construction of meaning in this naturalized domain. Such an understanding proves to be even more essential in the case of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) in a foreign context, where the learners have to cope with both mathematic problems per se and a foreign language.

This study is an attempt to investigate MD written in English for primary school learners.

Specifically, the present study examines the following research questions: (1) To what extent is each of the three semiotic resources represented in the materials of learning mathematics in English (ME) developed for young learners (YLs)? and (2) How many words do YLs need to know to understand the vocabulary in ME and to what extent can these materials enhance incidental vocabulary learning? Two major areas of interest are the lexis specific to the field of Mathematics and that to children's everyday world.

2. Mathematical discourse

O'Halloran's (2004) study can be best viewed as a first step towards a comprehensive Systemic-functional Grammar for MD. The major concern of this study is to investigate the multisemiotic nature of MD. She developed theoretical frameworks for mathematical symbolism and visual display.

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As reviewed in O'Halloran's (2004, pp. 13-15) the multisemiotic approach, where language, visual images and mathematical symbolism are considered semiotic resources, originally stems from O'Toole's (1994, 1995, 1999) extensions of Halliday's (1978, 1994) Systemic-functional approach to displayed art, and Lemke's (1998, 2000, 2003) early work in mathematical and scientific discourse. Following are the central tenets which are relevant to the present study.

(1) MD is considered as 'multisemiotic' construction; that is, discourses formed through choices from the functional sign systems of language, mathematical symbolism and visual display.

(2) MD involves language, mathematical symbolism and visual images. The functions of each semiotic resource may be summarized as follows. Patterns of relations are encoded and rearranged symbolically for the solution to the problem. Due to the limited functionality of the symbolism, language functions as the meta-discourse to contextualize the problem, to explain the activity sequence which is undertaken for the solution to the mathematics problem. Visual images in the form of abstract and statistical graphs, geometrical diagrams, and other types of diagrams and forms of visual display, mirror our perceptual understanding of the world, showing the relations in a multi-dimensional spatio-temporal format. They thus connect and extend common-sense experience to the mathematical symbolic descriptions.

(3) MD depends on both intrasemiosis and intersemiosis. As the types of meaning made by each semiotic resource are fundamentally different (p.16), and thus the three semiotic resources fulfil individual functions, the success of mathematics depends on utilizing and combining the unique meaning potentials of language, symbolism and visual display in such a way that the semantic expansion is greater than

the sum of meanings derived from each of the three resources. Intersemiosis refers to meaning which arises from the relations and shifts across the three semiotic resources; Intrasemiosis is meaning within one semiotic resource. Royce (1998, p. 26, cited in O'Halloran, 2004: 159) refers to intersemiosis as '*intersemiotic complementarity*' where '*visual and verbal modes semantically complement each other to produce a single textual phenomenon*'. As Royce and Lemke (1998, cited in O'Halloran 2004, p. 159) explain, the product is '*synergistic*' or '*multiplicative*' in that the result is greater than the sum of the parts.

Language, symbolism and visual images function together in mathematical discourse to create a semantic circuit which permits semantic expansions beyond that possible through the sum of the three resources. Following this view, the success of mathematics as a discourse stems from the fact that it draws upon the meaning potentials of language, visual images and the symbolism in very specific ways. That is, the discourse, grammar and display systems for each resource have evolved to function as interlocking system networks rather than isolated phenomena. (O'Halloran 2004: 159)

(4) Mathematical printed texts are typically organized in very specific ways which simultaneously permit segregation and integration of the three semiotic resources (p. 11). The systems of meaning for language, symbolism and visual images are integrated in such a way that the behaviour of physical systems may be described. Choices from the three semiotic resources function integratively. That is, the linguistic text and the graphs contain symbolic elements and the symbolic text contains linguistic elements. The symbolic elements may also be either spatially separated from the main body of the linguistic text or embedded within the linguistic text.

3. Methodology

3.1. Materials

The books which served as the data of the present study comprise two sets. The first set consists of two books published by Vietnam Education Publishing House - *Math ViOlympic 4* (Đặng Minh Tuấn & Nguyễn Thị Hải, 2016) and *Math ViOlympic 5* (Đặng Minh Tuấn & Nguyễn Thị Bích Phương, 2016); the second is two books published by Singapore Asia Publishers - *Learning Maths 1B* (Tan, A. 2016a) and *Learning Maths 2A* (Tan, A. 2016b). *Math ViOlympic 4* and *Math ViOlympic 5* are the only two published in Vietnam so far in this realm. From the series published by the foreign publisher, these two books were chosen for analysis as these two are for the children of the same age groups as those in the first set. The number of problems and of running words of the verbal texts in each book is shown in Table 1.

vocabulary repetition across the books within each set and across the sets.

3.3. Procedures

To achieve the aims, the texts were typed and computerized. The data was first closely analyzed in terms of the distribution of the verbal, visual, and symbolic components. Whereas the statistics of the linguistic and symbolic components were computationally performed, the images were manually calculated. To analyze the vocabulary of the books, the raw data were processed to omit the proper nouns. This is because many researchers have taken the approach that proper nouns may be easily understood by readers (e.g. Nation, 2006); how proper nouns are handled makes a big difference to an output profile (Cobb, 2010). The symbolic components and numbers, which are inherent and pervasive of this genre, were also omitted. The data were then submitted to the vocabulary profile after being converted to text files, using the BNC-20 wordlist.

Table 1. Number of problems and words in individual books analysed

Book	No. of Problems	Running words
Learning Maths 1B	381	3488
Learning Maths 2A	393	1589
Math ViOlympic 4	555	5578
Math ViOlympic 5	400	5141
Total	1,729	15,796

3.2. Instruments

The sets of materials were analysed using *Compleat Lexical Tutor* developed by Tom Cobb (available at <http://www.lex tutor>). *VocabProfile* gives all the information regarding vocabularies of a text - the number of type, token, word families, type-token ratio, function and content words and even breaks any English text into its frequency levels according to the thousand-levels scheme, Academic and off-list words, indicated by colours. *Frequency* extracts frequency lists from the corpora. *TextLexCompare* is used to tract the amount of

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Distribution of the three semiotic resources

As explicated above, the organisation of mathematical printed texts, typically involving three semiotic resources, simultaneously permit segregation and integration of these componential elements. An in-depth analysis of the data, both computationally and manually, yielded insightful findings on the distribution of the resources, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of three semiotic resources

	<i>Language</i>	<i>Symbolic elements</i>	<i>Images</i>		<i>Total of Problems</i>
	<i>No. (%)</i>	<i>No. (%)</i>	<i>Illustrative</i>	<i>Integral</i>	
	<i>No. (%)</i>	<i>No. (%)</i>	<i>No. (%)</i>	<i>No. (%)</i>	
<i>Learning Maths 1B</i>	30 (7.87%)	20 (5.24%)	4 (1.04%)	351(92.12%)	381
<i>Learning Maths 2A</i>	158 (40.20%)	301(76.59%)	2 (0.50%)	31 (7.88%)	393
<i>Math ViOlympic 4</i>	555 (100%)	241 (43.42%)	26 (4.68%)	33 (5.94%)	555
<i>Math ViOlympic 5</i>	400 (100%)	214 (53.5%)	5 (1.25%)	37 (9.25%)	400

The most noticeable feature is the presence of all the resources in all the books analysed. However, whereas the *Learning Maths* series tends to favor symbolic and imageries, the *Math ViOlympic* series displays an overwhelming predominance of language. All the problems in the *Math ViOlympic series* are represented via language (100%); by contrast, images account for less than 10 percent, of which approximately a half are just for the illustrative purpose rather than functioning as an integral component of the problems in question. In other words, these images can be omitted without any inhibition to understanding on the part of the learner.

In the meantime, visuals are always contextualized in relation to the linguistic text and/or the symbolic component in the *Learning Maths* series. Another significant finding from the data is the particularly high proportion of images in *Learning Math 1B*, which is likely to result from an awareness of the meaningful function of this means in MD in general and its motivating role to YLs of language in particular. Accordingly, in this book, the two other resources make up a mere 7.87% and 5.24%. Finally, the symbolic component is moderately high in all the three other books (76.59%, 53.5%, and 43.42%). This result is obviously due to the function of this semiotic resource in MD, as described in the third section.

4.2. Features of the linguistic text

To answer the second research question—to what extent doing mathematics in English can

be beneficial to the YLs' vocabulary growth, the verbal data were submitted to *VocabProfile Frequency*, and *TextLexCompare*. Table 3 and 4 summarize the data in terms of tokens, types, and families of the two corpora, *Learning Maths* and *Math ViOlympic*, respectively; the cumulative coverage for each book is shown in Table 5.

Tables 3 and 4 show that the tokens spread over the 20 most frequent 1,000 word families of the BNC. The importance of knowing the most frequent word families is clearly demonstrated in the first rows of these three tables. The first 1,000 word families from the BNC account for up to approximately four-fifths of tokens in the problems in all these books – 76.29%, 84.02%, 84.06%, and 81.13%. For example, regarding *Math ViOlympic 4*, the first row indicates that 424 different word forms (types) are the source of these 4689 tokens. These 424 types reduce to 303 word-families. Similarly, as for *Learning Maths 2A*, the first 1,000 word families account for 1335 of the tokens, 225 of the types, and 173 of the families. It is useful to consider the output in terms of word families because similarity in forms and meanings for tokens from the same family may facilitate understanding and retention. It is also clear that after the second 1,000 word-families, the decreasing rate of the tokens tend to be approximately the same across the four books. From the third-1,000 onwards, the numbers of families thin out rapidly, which

suggests that the number of low frequency words is few and far between. first 1,000 word-families, the number of function words tends to double that of the

Table 3. Tokens, types, and families at each level in *Learning Maths 1B* and *2A*

Word list (1,000)	<i>Learning Maths 1B</i>			<i>Learning Maths 2A</i>		
	Tokens (%)	Types (%)	Families	Tokens (%)	Types (%)	Families
1	2661 (76.29)	303 (57.71)	231 (55.66)	1335 (84.02)	223 (76.63)	173 (75.22)
2	415 (11.90)	101 (19.24)	80 (19.28)	153 (9.63)	37 (12.71)	31 (13.48)
3	35 (1.00)	19 (3.62)	16 (3.86)	29 (1.83)	7 (2.41)	6 (2.61)
4	161 (4.62)	32 (6.10)	27 (6.51)	16 (1.01)	7 (2.41)	6 (2.61)
5	75 (2.15)	20 (3.81)	18 (4.38)	8 (0.50)	5 (1.72)	5 (2.17)
6	59 (1.69)	14 (2.67)	12 (2.89)	33 (2.08)	3 (1.03)	2 (0.87)
7	40 (1.15)	14 (2.67)	14 (3.37)	6 (0.38)	3 (1.03)	2 (0.87)
8	4 (0.11)	4 (0.76)	4 (0.96)			
9	4 (0.11)	2 (0.38)	2 (0.48)	4 (0.25)	2 (0.69)	2 (0.87)
10	6 (0.17)	3 (0.57)	2 (0.48)			
11	6 (0.17)	3 (0.57)	3 (0.72)	4 (0.25)	3 (1.03)	3 (1.30)
12	1 (0.03)	1 (0.19)	1 (0.24)			
13	1 (0.03)	1 (0.19)	1 (0.24)			
14	2 (0.06)	1 (0.19)	1 (0.24)			
15						
16						
17	4 (0.11)	1(0.19)	1 (0.24)			
18						
19	4 (0.11)	2. (0.38)	2 (0.48)			
20						
Off-List	10 (0.29)	4. (0.76)	??	1 (0.06)	1 (0.34)	??
Total	3488 (100)	525 (100)	415+?	1589 (100)	291 (100)	230+?

Table 4. Tokens, types, and families at each level in *Math ViOlympic 4* and *5*

Word list (1,000)	<i>Math ViOlympic 4</i>			<i>Math ViOlympic 5</i>		
	Tokens (%)	Types (%)	Families	Tokens (%)	Types (%)	Families
1	4689 (84.06)	424 (70.78)	303 (69.82)	4171 (81.13)	290 (67.29)	226 (65.89)
2	482 (8.64)	92 (15.36)	72 (16.59)	529 (10.29)	77 (17.87)	65 (18.95)
3	109 (1.95)	23 (3.84)	22 (5.07)	105 (2.04)	17 (3.94)	15 (4.37)
4	51 (0.91)	17 (2.84)	11 (2.53)	120 (2.33)	16 (3.71)	11 (3.21)
5	78 (1.40)	11 (1.84)	8 (1.84)	51 (0.99)	11 (2.55)	9 (2.62)
6	86 (1.54)	6 (1.00)	4 (0.92)	72 (1.40)	6 (1.39)	5 (1.46)
7	5 (0.09)	4 (0.67)	2 (0.46)			
8				1 (0.02)	1 (0.23)	1 (0.29)
9	11 (0.20)	5 (0.83)	5 (1.15)	63 (1.23)	4 (0.93)	3 (0.87)
10	3 (0.05)	1 (0.17)	1 (0.23)	5 (0.10)	3 (0.70)	3 (0.87)
11	43 (0.77)	3 (0.50)	3 (0.69)	8 (0.16)	2 (0.46)	2 (0.58)
12						
13						
14						
15	1 (0.02)	1 (0.17)	1 (0.23)	8 (0.16)	1(0.23)	1 (0.29)
16				7 (0.14)	2(0.46)	2 (0.58)
17	1 (0.02)	1 (0.17)	1 (0.23)			
18	1 (0.02)	1 (0.17)	1 (0.23)			
19						
20						
Off-List	18 (0.32)	10 (1.67)	??	1 (0.02)	1 (0.23)	??
Total	5578 (100)	599 (100)	434+?	5141 (100)	431 (100)	343+?

As shown in Table 6, it is also important to note that of these huge coverages of the content words throughout the data. Assuming that proper nouns and

Table 5. Cumulative coverage (%) for each book

Word list	<i>Learning Maths 1B</i>	<i>Learning Maths 2A</i>	<i>Math ViOlympic 4</i>	<i>Math ViOlympic 5</i>
1,000	76.29	84.02	84.06	81.13
2,000	88.19	93.65	92.70	91.42
3,000	89.19	95.48	94.65	93.46
4,000	93.81	96.49	95.56	95.76
5,000	95.96	96.99	96.96	96.78
6,000	97.65	99.07	98.50	98.18
7,000	98.80	99.45	98.59	
8,000	98.91			98.20
9,000	99.02	99.70	98.79	99.43
10,000	99.19		98.84	99.53
11,000	99.36	99.95	99.61	99.69
12,000	99.39			
13,000	99.42			
14,000	99.48			
15,000			99.63	99.85
16,000				99.99
17,000	99.59		99.65	
18,000			99.67	
19,000	99.70			
20,000				
Off-List	99.99	100.00	99.99	100.00
Tokens	≈100.00	≈100.00	≈100.00	≈100.00

Table 6. K-1 sub-analysis in terms of content and function words for individual books

K1 Words	<i>Math ViOlympic 4</i>	<i>Math ViOlympic 5</i>	<i>Learning Maths 1B</i>	<i>Learning Maths 2A</i>
Function words	59.27%	52.69%	46.40%	50.16%
Content words	27.54%	31.24%	31.17%	34.36%

mathematical symbolism are repeatedly present, the findings suggest that only a small vocabulary is needed for YLs to comprehend these mathematic problems. The number of word-families a learner would meet when s/he finished *Math ViOlympic 4*, *Math ViOlympic 5*, *Learning Math 1B*, and *Learning Math 2A* is 434⁺, 343⁺, 415⁺, and 230⁺, respectively. The data was shown to contain not only a small number of word-families but also a high frequency rate of encounter of each word, which is strikingly similar across the two series. A small number of these word families are met from as high as 592 to six times (64.32%, 86.94%, 76.28%, and 70.35%). The overall and unexpected finding from a close analysis of the lists of frequency indicates that these soaring high percentages are typically represented by function words and technical words. By contrast, a substantial majority occur

merely once or twice in each book (Table 7). It should also be noticed that tokens from this low-frequency group typically lie with everyday common vocabulary for YLs' world, namely family, school, animals, and fruits.

Incidental learning theory indicates that if unknown words are repeatedly encountered in meaningful contexts, their meaning will gradually be acquired (Nagy et al., 1985). Research into L2 reading suggests that if unknown words are encountered six or more times, there is the potential for incidental learning (Rott, 1999). Acquisition of word meaning is also dependent on the contexts of encounters (Webb, 2008). If words repeatedly occur in highly informative contexts, their meanings may be learned after a small number of encounters. By contrast, in less informative and/or misleading contexts, it could take as many as 20 encounters for unknown words to be learned (Webb, 2010). Therefore, it is

possible to deduce from the findings that the chance for vocabulary growth in common age-specific topics via doing ME is minimal.

offering penetrating insights into the functions of the semiotic resources, individually and integrally.

Table 7. Number and percentage of encounters with word families (WF) in each book

	Math ViOlympic 4		Math ViOlympic 5		Learning Math 1B		Learning Math 2A	
	%	No. of WF	%	No. of WF	%	No. of WF	%	No. of WF
6 times & >	64.32	165	86.94	153	76.28	146	70.35	64
5-3 times	26.75	111	7.9	108	12.44	121	14.95	67
2-1 times	8.93	370	5.15	214	11.28	299	14.7	167

Table 8. Recycling index over each set

	<i>Math ViOlympic 4 & Math ViOlympic 5</i>	<i>Learning Maths 1B & Learning Maths 2A</i>
Token	84.84%	74.94 %
Type	55.46%	49.47%

A further analysis by means of TextLexCompare yields the percentage of recycled vocabulary in each set of data, summarized in Table 8. The output shows that the recycling index does not go above 85% for either set. This means that many or most words throughout the two successive books of each set are being met in density environments of around 3 unknown words in 10, which doubles the density that learners can handle. Research indicates that for learners to be able to guess words in context and gain adequate comprehension of written text it is necessary to know at least 95% of the words (Laufer, 1989). Moreover, comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning through reading are likely to increase if the percentage of known words in a text is 98% (Nation, 2001). This result significantly supports the finding that there may be very little incidental vocabulary learning from doing ME for primary school children.

5. Conclusions

The study is inspired by an appreciation of the multisemiotic nature of MD. This is essentially a new approach to mathematics for teachers and students of mathematics,

Overall, although all the three semiotic resources are manipulated in all the books analyzed, the distribution of each tends to be unequal between the two series analyzed. The visual component fails to be paid due attention in the *Math ViOlympic* series, which displays an overwhelming predominance of the linguistic text. An opposite extreme can be found in the *Learning Math* series. As indispensable as symbolism is in MD, this resource is represented by a moderately high percentage in all of the books analyzed.

Lexical profile analysis shows that learners who finish both these books are likely to encounter frequent words (at the 1000 level) enough to make significant gains in vocabulary knowledge, with particular reference to technical mathematic-specific terms; however, Frequency analysis indicates that around one half of the word-families will not be met sufficiently for incidental learning of vocabulary to occur. Text comparison analysis further shows that the rate of new word introduction in the higher-level book in each set is more than most L2 learners will be able to cope with.

5.1. Pedagogical implications

The results of the close analysis from a multisemiotic perspective have immediate pedagogical implications as follows.

First, the test-orientated books published by Vietnam Education Publishing House are claimed “help students familiarize with the fascinating test format, thinking stimulation and computer practice before competition. [...] to get the best competition score” (Đặng Minh Tuấn & Nguyễn Thị Bích Phượng, 2016, p.3). The market-driven practices have also resulted in these materials with a predominance of the linguistic and symbolic components. The findings therefore indicate an urgent need for producing research-informed graded materials beyond those presently available in which we should not lose sight of the multi-semiotic nature of MD. Mathematical symbolism and visual images have evolved to function in co-operation with language. As “*the visual image plays an increasingly important role in different branches of mathematics*” (O’Halloran, 2004, p.148), with the impact of increased computational ability, colorful computer-generated visual images can now be generated with minimal effort. Captivatingly presented, these materials for primary-school children may be of greatest importance to get learners accustomed to MD in English as a foreign language and to help them meet the initial challenge in content-language integrated learning that ME may at first present.

Second, for the Vietnamese YLs, although incidental vocabulary learning may occur through finishing the two books, the number of words outside this specific domain which can be acquired is likely to be limited. Thus, teachers and learners should not consider vocabulary learning as the primary goal of doing ME. Learners may undoubtedly benefit from other explicit ways to learn vocabulary than through doing ME. To

facilitate understanding, it may be necessary for teachers either to encourage guessing from context or to provide glossaries so that learners can check L1 translations quickly when necessary.

5.2. Implications for further research

The data we have looked at in this article suggest the following considerations for further studies.

First, given the dearth of graded materials in this area, there should be more research to select and sequence resources, integrating text-based with Internet-based texts, and to provide smooth, principled access to them. In addition to the obviously primary goal of systematically targeting the field-specific needs, efforts can be made to help facilitate vocabulary growth opportunities that these materials can offer. Frequency profiling software can be used to modify and create texts to pre-specified lexical profile and coverage; and text comparison software can be used to ensure degree of lexical recycling over a series of chapters, books, and series.

Second, the results of the present study suggest there may be potential for incidental learning of the first 1,000 word-families through engaging the YLs in doing mathematics in English. However, while this is a useful finding, further research to examine experimentally through a controlled treatment with the learners to provide a more accurate assessment of the extent of transferring new word learning to novel contexts is needed. In addition, the sub-dimensions to the basic learning condition, such as the spacing between encounters should be taken into consideration.

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PHÂN TÍCH ĐA THỨC DIỄN NGÔN TOÁN BẰNG TIẾNG ANH DÀNH CHO LỨA TUỔI TIỂU HỌC

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Tóm tắt: Trẻ em Việt Nam ngày càng được tiếp cận nhiều thể loại nhằm phát triển năng lực tiếng Anh, trong số đó có các môn khoa học tự nhiên như môn Toán. Bài viết này khảo sát thể loại diễn ngôn này từ góc nhìn đa tín hiệu. Cụ thể, công trình này nghiên cứu: (1) phân bố của ba loại tín hiệu trong các tài liệu giải toán bằng tiếng Anh dành cho học sinh tiểu học; và (2) số lượng từ vựng yêu cầu đối với người học để giải các bài toán bằng tiếng Anh dành cho học sinh tiểu học. Dữ liệu nghiên cứu là các sách luyện toán bằng tiếng Anh đang được sử dụng phổ biến ở Việt Nam. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy ý nghĩa giao tiếp của hai loại tín hiệu ký hiệu và hình ảnh đối với thể loại diễn ngôn khoa học này, bên cạnh tín hiệu ngôn ngữ, và các cấp độ từ vựng tiếng Anh đối với người học để có thể hiểu được các bài toán đặt ra. Cuối cùng là một số thảo luận về ý nghĩa thực tiễn đối với công việc biên soạn tài liệu, dạy và học toán bằng tiếng Anh đối với lứa tuổi tiểu học.

Từ khóa: diễn ngôn toán, diễn ngôn đa thức, danh sách các từ thông dụng

MAJOR CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS OF THE VIETNAMESE SIMPLE CLAUSE

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Abstract: Clause as a grammatical category has been at the centre of attention throughout most of the history of linguistics in Vietnam and has caused a lot of troubles for analysis and interpretation. Great efforts have been made to shed light on this matter. There is, however, no consensus among Vietnamese linguists on clause analysis and interpretation because each of them seems to work on clause analysis in a variety of approaches using different frameworks. In this paper, we aim at investigating some major contemporary approaches to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause with our critical appraisals of each approach to provide readers with an overview of Vietnamese clause studies. The study reveals that at present structural approaches influenced by European and American structuralists such as Saussure and Bloomfield, and functional approaches influenced by Dik's functional grammar and Halliday's systemic functional grammar seem to be the dominant grammatical models for the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause.

Keywords: contemporary approaches, simple clause, structural approach, functional approach

1. Introduction

In recent years there has been a dramatic revival of interest in Vietnamese clause analysis. Many approaches are applied to analysis and interpretation of Vietnamese clauses. Yet, there is by no means a consensus among scholars and researchers. According to Nguyễn Văn Hiệp (2012), there is disagreement about Vietnamese clause interpretation since each linguist deals with clause analysis in a variety of approaches with different frameworks. There have been two major distinctive existing approaches, namely structural approach and functional approach, to Vietnamese clause analysis.

Structural approach is influenced by European traditional grammar, especially French grammar. Its analysis is based on *Subject-Predicate* structure. Many Vietnamese linguists like Phan Khôi (1955), Bùi Đức Tịnh (1952), Trương Văn Chính and Nguyễn Hiến Lê (1963) applied this traditional *Subject-Predicate* structure to analysis of Vietnamese clauses while functional approach is based on *Functional Grammar* by Dik (1989) and *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* by Halliday (1994, 2004, 2014). The late 20th century witnessed the flourishing of systemic functional grammar (SFG) and its great influence on language research and teaching in Vietnam. This is a new trend in modern Vietnamese grammar which helps us solve some problems in interpreting and analyzing

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a clause that traditional grammar cannot do. This analysis of the clause is based on *Theme-Rheme* structure (clause as message), *Mood structure* (clause as exchange) and *Transitivity system* (clause as representation). In addition, many studies have been carried out to interpret Vietnamese clauses on the account of functional grammar. This paper aims at exploring and critically discussing these two contemporary approaches to the analysis of Vietnamese simple clauses and an attempt is made to distinguish between areas in which there is unanimous agreement about principles and analyzes and areas in which there is considerable disagreement.

Although many studies have focused on analyzing the Vietnamese clause both in terms of syntax (form) and meaning (function) (e.g. Phan Khôi, 1955; Bùi Đức Tịnh, 1952; Diệp Quang Ban, 2006, 2013; Hoàng Văn Vân, 2002, 2012; Cao Xuân Hạo, 1991; Nguyễn Văn Hiệp, 2009; and Bùi Minh Toán, 2012), each analyzes and interprets the clause in a different way, using a different theoretical framework. The result is that clause analysis appears to be a very complex process. Bearing in mind the complexity of the problem, in this study, an attempt is made to explore how structural and functional approaches are utilized to analyze the Vietnamese simple clause. As a way of start, we will first discuss the structural approach to the analysis of the clause. Then two functional approaches: Dik's approach and Halliday's approach applied to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause are presented in more detail.

2. Structural approach to clause analysis

According to Hoàng Văn Vân (2012: 25), the study of Vietnamese grammar is divided into three periods: (i) Proto-grammatics of Vietnamese (1850s-1930s); (ii) pre-structuralist and structuralist description of Vietnamese (1930s-1980s) and (iii) functionalist description of

Vietnamese (1980s-present). It is found, however, that not much of the literature on the proto-grammatics of Vietnamese is currently available. Therefore, in the section that follows, we will focus on the second period which saw great influences of French, American and European structural interpretation of Vietnamese simple clauses.

2.1. French structural approach to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause

The structural approach to the Vietnamese clause analysis is strongly influenced by European traditional grammar, especially French grammar. In this tradition, the clause is divided into what are referred to as *Subject* and *Predicate*. Many Vietnamese traditional linguists like Phan Khôi (1955), Bùi Đức Tịnh (1952) applied this *Subject-Predicate structure* to analyzing Vietnamese clauses. According to Nguyễn Văn Hiệp (2012), traditional grammar has achieved a dominant position in Vietnamese grammar for a long time. It is no exaggeration to say that, in the early period (1850-1935), most Vietnamese grammarians adopted the model of grammar given by French scholars. Throughout the country, a great number of grammatical textbooks written under traditional perspective were used in schools at all levels, from primary to tertiary. Because of its pedagogical advantages, traditional grammar is also labeled as “school grammar” or “pedagogical grammar”, traditional grammar developed a great deal of grammatical terminologies to name not only grammatical units but also their grammatical functions such as word, phrase, clause, sentence and subject, predicate, object, direct object, indirect object, adverb, modifier and many others. Concerning grammatical functions one can see that *Subject* and *predicate* are seen as the main elements of the clause whilst *object*, *direct object*, *indirect object*, *adverb*, *modifier* belong to optional and supportive elements. At lower level,

modifier, object, direct object and indirect objects are embedded in the *Subject-Predicate* structure. *Adverb* and *thematic elements* are within *Subject-Predicate* structure while *conjunction, exclamation, modal* and *apostrophe (vocative)* are completely isolated from structure of clauses. The elements of structural analysis of the Vietnamese clause can be illustrated in Figure 1.

in Vietnamese. However, making a distinction between clause (*cú*) and sentence (*câu*) is fairly problematic and debatable. The term *sentence (câu)* is preferably used at that time. Trần Trọng Kim et al (1940: 27) define sentence as being “formed by a proposition expressing a complete thought or by two and more propositions.” They classify three kinds of propositions: *independent, main* and

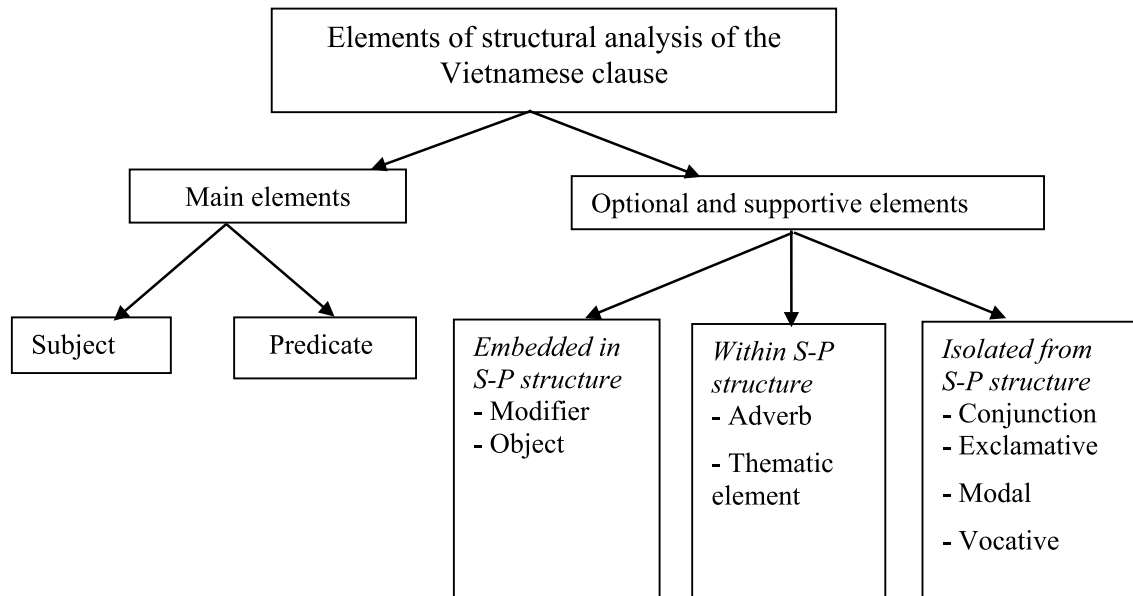


Figure 1. The elements of structural analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause

It is arguable that French structural approach pays more attention to morphology than syntax and it focuses on the methods or rules of sentence construction rather than definition of sentence (see Hoàng Văn Vân, 2002, 2012). There do exist translation equivalents of clause (*cú*) and sentence (*câu*)

subordinate. Sentence in their view is seen as a composition of a cluster of propositions with a main proposition preceded and /or followed by one or more subordinate propositions.

According to Đào Minh Thư et al (2009), the structural analysis of clauses can be shown like the following:

(1)

Một gói thuốc lá thơm và một bao diêm A packet tobacco fragrant and a box match	đặt put	ở bên cạnh cái đĩa gạt tàn thuốc. next to ashtray cigarette ends
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Predicate</i>	<i>Adverb – place</i>

‘A packet of fragrant tobacco and a box of matches were put next to an ashtray’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(2)

Tôi I	nghĩ đến think of	mấy quyển sách quý của tôi. some book precious of I
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Predicate</i>	<i>Object</i>

‘I think of my valuable books.’

(Nam Cao, 1965)

(3)

Thưa ông, Sir	bốn cháu của con four PRN of PRN	nhờ trời thanks god	vẫn still	khỏe mạnh fine strong	cá. modality
Apostrophe	Subject	Modal element	Modifier	Predicate	Modifier

‘Sir, thank god, all my four children are still fine.’

(Ma Văn Kháng, 1985)

These examples in (1) and (2) show that *Subject* and *Predicate* are the main and compulsory elements in Vietnamese simple clauses whilst adverbs and objects are available and optional. According to Nguyễn Hồng Côn (2009), the viewpoint that the syntax of Vietnamese simple clauses must have *Subject-Predicate* elements is commonly shared among Vietnamese linguists. Moreover, some researchers like Nguyễn Kim Thân (1964), Hoàng Trọng Phiến (1980), Diệp Quang Ban (1984) Lê Xuân Thái (1995) also

other terms even if we face challenges of analyzing Vietnamese empty words (see Trần Kim Phụng, 2010). However, structural approach has its own shortcomings in analyzing Vietnamese simple clauses. Let us consider the following examples:

(4) Giữa nhà treo một lá cờ đỏ sao vàng.

(5) Ở trong thấp hàng trăm hàng nghìn đèn đèn nến.

Structural analysis of these two examples is illustrated as follows:

(4’)

Giữa nhà Middle of house	treo hang	một lá cờ a flag	đỏ sao vàng. red star gold
Subject	Predicate	Object	Modifier

‘In the middle of the house, there is a red flag with a gold star.’ (Bùi Minh Toán, 2012: 264)

(5’)

Ở trong Inside	thấp light	hàng trăm hàng nghìn đèn nến. hundreds thousands lights candles
Subject	Predicate	Object

‘Thousands and thousands of candles were burning in countless rows inside.’

(Bùi Minh Toán, 2012: 264)

show their interest in this approach. Structural approach applied to analyzing the Vietnamese simple clause has its own strengths and shortcomings. To a certain extent, the subject and predicate elements are very familiar to students and researchers. This approach is early studied and it is possible to build up a comprehensive framework to interpret Vietnamese simple clauses in terms of *Subject*, *Predicate*, *Object*, *Modifiers*, *Adverbs* and

Nguyễn Văn Hiệp (2012) offers two approaches to interpreting these two clauses, namely structural and functional approach. In the former approach, “giữa nhà” (in the middle of the house) and “ở trong” (inside) function as *Subject*, “treo” (hang) and “thấp” (light) function as *Predicates*. In contrast, in the latter approach “giữa nhà” (in the middle of the house) and “ở trong” (inside) function as *Circumstance – Location* and the two clauses

can be considered *Existential processes* – processes of existence. We will discuss functional approach in details in Section 3. We completely agree with his functional analysis seeing these two clauses as *Existential clauses*. Nevertheless, to a certain extent, we are not satisfied with his structural interpretation. Since it is important to note that “giữa nhà” (in the middle of the house) and “ở trong” (inside) are prepositional phrases and it does not make sense to interpret them as subjects in (4) and (5). Trần Kim Phụng (2010), on the other hand, suggests that on account of structural approach, they should be considered as Vietnamese special clauses in which giữa nhà” (in the middle of the house) and “ở trong” (inside) are interpreted as *Adverbs*, “treo” (hang) and “thấp” (light) function as *Predicate* and they are Vietnamese typical special clauses without subjects. We share a common view on this matter with Phụng. It is clear that there are controversial debates and unsatisfying interpretation of these cases if structural approach is applied to analyze Vietnamese clauses. Consider other Vietnamese simple clauses:

(6)

Ông thầy Man teacher	ngắm nghĩa look at	cái đầu tóc đỏ. head hair red
Subject	Verb	Object

‘The fortune teller is staring at his red hair.’

(Vũ Trọng Phụng, 1938)

(7)

Tôi I	bấm bụng nhịn cười press belly suppress laugh	thầy đồ Cóc teacher Coc
Subject	Verb	Object

‘I suppress my laughter at the teacher Coc’

(Tô Hoài, 1941)

Vietnamese scholars and researchers taking stances on structural approach consider (6) and (7) identical in terms of Vietnamese syntax with Subject-Verb-Object framework. In other words, in (6) and (7), what is seen is the syntactical representation of S-V-O.

However, what will occur if we use syntactic behavior (Nguyễn Văn Hiệp, 2012) to rewrite (6) and (7).

(6’) Cái đầu tóc đỏ được ngắm nghĩa bởi ông thầy.

(Vũ Trọng Phụng, 1938)

‘His red hair is being stared by the fortune teller’

(7’) Thầy đồ Cóc được bấm bụng nhịn cười bởi tôi.

(Tô Hoài, 1941)

‘The teacher Coc is suppressed my laughter by me’

The rewritten examples (6’) and (7’) are known as Vietnamese passive voice. In Vietnamese, we quickly see that (6’) is probably acceptable while (7’) sounds completely odd and unnatural. From structural approach, it is impossible to offer a satisfying and comprehensive explanation since both “cái đầu tóc đỏ” (his red hair) and “thầy đồ Cóc” (teacher Coc) are interpreted as objects in these two examples above. Efforts to figure out an adequate explanation for these two examples are made by functionalists. According to semantic functions, “cái đầu tóc đỏ” (his red hair) and “thầy đồ Cóc” (teacher

Coc) should be interpreted in terms of *Target* and *Cause* respectively. “cái đầu tóc đỏ” (his red hair) plays a role as a *Target* whilst “thầy đồ Cóc” (the master Coc) is considered *Cause*. Functionalists base themselves on its different semantic functions of *Subjects* and

objects to offer their explanation. They are examples of common linguistic phenomenon in Vietnamese that similar surface structures may reflect different semantic functions and in fact, there is never any such thing as complete paraphrase. As discussed above, despite its strengths, structural approach is somewhat limited and functional perspective appearing as a matter of fact makes some great contributions to clause analysis. We will look at functionalise approach to Vietnamese clause analysis in the next section.

2.2. American structural approach to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause

There was an increasing interest in Vietnamese in the United States during the World War II. If we do not count their interest meant for the military purposes during World War II, then Cornell, Georgetown, Yale and Columbia were the first universities offering Vietnamese as an academic course in the 1950s. 1951 onwards has seen strong impacts of American descriptive structuralist approach with such representative linguists as: Emeneau (1951), Thompson (1965), Nguyễn Đình Hòa (1997). In his *Studies in Vietnamese (Annamese) Grammar*, Emeneau (1951) discusses Vietnamese phonology, morphology and syntax. With the scope of this study, our attention is paid to his description of Vietnamese syntax. With respect to Vietnamese syntax, Emeneau uses the term “sentence” and his description of the Vietnamese sentence is primarily influenced by the eminent American structuralist-descriptivist linguist Bloomfield (1887-1949). Emeneau states that predication has nucleus, namely: *a predicate* which may, but need not, be preceded by *a subject*. In other words, *a predicate* and *subject* are the two core elements of a sentence. It is suggestive that his descriptive approach is principally based on Bloomfield’s account. Bloomfield (1933: 173) argues that “in a predication, the more

object-like component is called the subject, the other part the predicate.” Viewing Vietnamese grammar from Bloomfield’s viewpoint, Emeneau notes that predicate is classified into two types: *Substantive* (including substantive or a substantive phrase) and *Verb* (including a verb and a verb phrase).

(8)

Hắn He	nuốt ừng ực. swallow hard
Subject	predicate

‘He swallows hard.’

(Nam Cao, 1957)

The other impacts of the American descriptive/structuralist approach to the study of Vietnamese grammar can be seen in the American linguist Thompson’s work *A Grammar of Vietnamese* in 1965 and his second edition named *A Vietnamese Reference Grammar* in 1987. Thompson employs immediate constitute analysis as the main method in his second edition for isolating components of the sentence as well as constituents of each component. Thompson (1987) argues that an utterance is analyzed into two or more parts which balance one another in the make-up of the whole. Each of these parts is then subjected to similar analysis, and so on until the level of single morphemes is reached and no further grammatical/ morphological division can be made.

Sentences, in Thompson’s view, are subclassified into two main types: independent and dependent. Independent sentences are ones which occur in at least some environments as opening sentences in independent utterances, and dependent sentences are ones which occur only as second or later sentences in utterances or as opening sentences in responsive utterances. Thompson also discusses the notion of clause. According to Thompson, a clause is a predicate viewed as a sentence constituent. In other words, a clause is considered as an element of the sentence and a clause is

either head or complement. When a clause occurs as head or as the whole of a certain sentence, it is the main clause. Conversely, when a clause appears as complement to other sentence elements, it is a subordinate clause.

In sum, Emeneau and Thompson made great attempts to interpret Vietnamese syntax from the viewpoints of the American structuralist/descriptivist approach. Their analysis of Vietnamese sentences involve subject and predicate. According to Hoàng Văn Vân (2012), their works are fairly comprehensive and descriptive at that time and Nguyễn Đình Hòa (in Thompson 1985: xv) states that “it remains far and away are the best thing available in English and this, most useful work for the greatest number of potential users.”

2.3. European structural approach to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause

The publication of the work *Khảo luận về ngữ pháp Việt Nam* (a Treatise on the grammar of Vietnamese) by Trương Văn Chỉnh và Nguyễn Hiến Lê (1963) marked a change in the influence of European structuralism upon the study of Vietnamese syntax. Trương Văn Chỉnh và Nguyễn Hiến Lê offer the definition of sentence as follows:

Câu là một tổ hợp tiếng dùng để diễn tả một sự tình hay nhiều sự tình có quan hệ với nhau; tổ hợp từ này tự nó tương đối đầy đủ ý nghĩa, và không phụ thuộc về ngữ pháp vào một tổ hợp nào khác. (A sentence is a complex of words used to express a state of affairs or many states of affairs which are closely related to one another; this complex of words is by itself relatively complete in meaning and is not grammatically dependent on any other complex of words)

(Trương Văn Chỉnh và Nguyễn Hiến Lê, 1963: 476)

According to Trương Văn Chỉnh và Nguyễn Hiến Lê (1963), a single sentence may consist of seven elements: (i) Subject, (ii) Predicate, (iii) Topic, (iv) Complement, (v)

Appositive (of the sentence), (vi) Subordinate and (vii) Sentence connector.

The study of Vietnamese grammar in North Vietnam in this period was primarily influenced by Saussure (1983)'s theory of language. Saussure, the founding figure of modern linguistics, made his mark by distinguishing *langue* from *parole*. *Langue* encompasses the abstract, systematic rules and conventions of a signifying system; it is independent of, and pre-exists, individual users. *Langue* involves the principles of language, without which no meaningful utterance, “parole”, would be possible. *Parole* refers to the concrete instances of the use of *langue*. This is the individual, personal phenomenon of language as a series of speech acts made by a linguistic subject.

Hoàng Trọng Phiến (1980: 19) defines the sentence as follows:

Câu là ngữ tuyến được hình thành một cách trọn vẹn về ngữ pháp và ngữ nghĩa với một ngữ điệu theo các quy luật của một ngôn ngữ nhất định và là phương tiện diễn đạt, biểu hiện tư tưởng về thực tế và về thái độ của người đối với hiện thực. (A sentence is a linguistic unit which has an independent grammatical structure (internal and external) and a terminal intonation; it expresses a relatively complete thought and may contain an evaluation of reality by the speaker which helps to convey ideas.)

Diệp Quang Ban (2005: 16) in his work *Ngữ pháp tiếng Việt* makes a sharp distinction between the notion of cú (clause) and that of câu (sentence). He figures out the following three features characterizing the sentence:

- a. Định vị câu (câu đơn) ở bậc cao nhất của hệ thống ngữ pháp của một ngôn ngữ, tức là về ngữ pháp không có đơn vị nào lớn hơn câu. (A simple sentence is ranked as the highest level in grammatical system of a language; i.e. grammatically, no other grammatical units are higher than the sentence.)

- b. Câu có cấu tạo ngữ pháp là một khúc đoạn ngôn ngữ tập trung chung quanh một vị tố, tức là lấy vị tố làm trung tâm, không lấy hai thành phần chủ ngữ và vị ngữ làm cơ sở, để tránh lặp lại cấu trúc của mệnh đề logic. Đây cũng chính là nói về cái tổ chức từ vựng – ngữ pháp của câu. Nhờ tổ chức từ vựng – ngữ pháp này mà một ý nghĩ, một nội dung sự việc và ý định của người nói được định hình, được kiến tạo nên. (A sentence has a grammatical structure; it is a syntagm centering around a verb, taking the verb, not the subject and the predicate as its centre to avoid the repetition of the subject-predicate structure in logic. This is the lexico-grammatical structure of the sentence. It is due to this lexico-grammatical organization that the speaker's idea or intention is formulated and constructed.)
- c. Câu có mặt ý nghĩa là phần diễn đạt một sự thể. Nghĩa sự thể là cái được dùng để giải thích cho tổ chức từ vựng-ngữ pháp của câu. (A sentence has a meaning expressing a state of affair. This kind of meaning is used for interpreting the lexico-grammatical organization of the sentence)

It can be seen that these above definitions reflect at least three features of the sentence: (i) a sentence is a linguistic unit which belongs to *Parole* in the sense of Saussure; (ii) it has a grammatical structure and a terminal intonation; and (iii) it has a meaning and its function is to express an idea, a complete thought or a message. Since sentences are examined from various perspectives, it is not surprising that the criteria and interpretations of them vary. However, it is worthy noting that the definitions and interpretations of sentences in this post-structural period saw a shift from “state” to “dynamic” aspect, from “structure” to “semantics” and “pragmatics”.

I have provided a brief discussion on the pre-structuralist and structuralist approaches to Vietnamese syntax. Our study reveals that the structural approach has come into existence over a span of 155 years and greatly influenced the study of Vietnamese syntax. Clearly, southern linguists were

influenced by American descriptivist/structuralist (particularly the grammatical models of Emeneau and Thompson) while Northern linguists have heavily relied on the framework of European structuralism. However, no matter how different these approaches are, they share the same syntactic pattern, analyzing the simple sentence into Subject-Predicate. It was not until 1980s that semantics and pragmatics became a major concern for Vietnamese grammarians. And it is to the functional approaches to Vietnamese simple clauses that I now turn.

3. Functional approaches to the analysis of the Vietnamese simple clause

Although the study of Vietnamese grammar from functional approach began much later as compared with structural approach, functional approach has attracted a lot of attention of scholars and linguists. Our study points out that Dik's functional grammar and Halliday's systemic functional grammar are two major contemporary functional linguistic theories to clause description.

3.1. Dik's functional grammar

We have had a detailed discussion on structural approach with its strengths and shortcomings. This section is devoted to functional analysis of Vietnamese simple clauses. In 1991, Cao Xuân Hạo published a grammar book entitled *Tiếng Việt: Sơ thảo Ngữ pháp Chức năng* (An Outline of Vietnamese Functional Grammar). This book, according to several Vietnamese grammarians, makes a turning point in the study of Vietnamese grammar, shifting the analysis of the clause from traditional approach to what is referred to as functional approach by Dik (1989)'s *Functional Grammar* and states that Dik's grammar is functional because the conceptual framework on which it is based is a functional one rather than a formal one. From this point of view, grammar becomes a study of how

meanings are built up through the wording in Vietnamese. However, Cao Xuân Hạo just reviews Dik's account of the functions of language instead of employing it to analyze and interpret Vietnamese grammar.

Dik's functional grammar is representative of the functional paradigm in linguistic theory in which language performs the function of communication for human beings. Dik (1997: 27) puts an emphasis on the functions of language and states that "functions are also needed because functions and categories do not stand in one-to-one relation to each other. The same category may occur in different functions and the same function may apply to constituents with different constituents with different categorical properties." Dik (1997: 49) states that "any natural language text can be divided into clauses and extra-clausal constituents. By 'clauses' I mean the main and subordinate clauses of traditional grammar." Extra-clausal constituents are constituents which neither clauses nor part of clauses. For example

(9) Well, John, I believe that your time is up.
(Dik, 1997: 49)

"Well" (interpreted as "Initiator") and "John" (labeled as "Address" or "Vocative") are extra-clausal constituents while "I believe that your time is up" is the main clause where "your time is up" is the subordinate clause. Clauses in Dik's functional grammar are treated and analyzed in terms of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic functions.

Syntactic functions: Subject and Object

Semantic functions: Agent, Goal, Recipient, Beneficiary, Instrument, Location, Time

Pragmatic functions: Theme, Topic, Focus, Non-focus

Dik's account of syntactic functions which involves with *Subject-Object structure* to a certain extent bears some similarities to structural approach to the analysis of clause

syntax. Therefore, syntactic functions are not discussed in the next section. Instead, attention will be paid to semantic and pragmatic functions.

Semantic functions

Vietnamese clauses are interpreted in terms of semantic functions with entities, phenomena and processes. Nevertheless, criteria used for assigning and labeling entities, phenomena and processes with their semantic functions are complex. This is what Nguyễn Văn Hiệp (2012: 47) has to say: "Trong việc phân định và trừu xuất vai nghĩa như vậy, cần một nguyên tắc mang tính phương pháp luận" (in assigning such semantic functions to entities, phenomena and processes, we need a methodological approach). In their semantic functions, both Halliday (1994) and Dik (1989) take processes ("verbs" in traditional grammar) as the core role of clauses and the other participants are labeled respectively. However, Halliday classifies processes into six categories namely *material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential* while Dik (1989) divides them into two main types of States of Affairs namely *Event* (subtypes: *action= activity or accomplishment* and *process = dynamism or change*), *Situation* (subtypes: *position* and *state*) with five parameters \pm dynamic [\pm dyn], \pm telic [\pm tel], \pm [mon] momentaneous, \pm [con] control and \pm [exp] experience. Diệp Quang Ban analyzes and labels Vietnamese processes as action and state with parameter [\pm dyn]. The author states that "Sự việc vốn diễn biến hoặc tồn tại dưới những dạng nhất định, nhờ đó có thể phân biệt được sự việc động, sự việc tĩnh (không động). Tính động, tính tĩnh là thể trạng của sự việc (States of Affairs, viết tắt: SoA) gọi tắt là sự thể." (Processes might be dynamic or static. The dynamic or static state of processes can be coded as States of Affairs (SoA)). Let us consider Diệp Quang Ban's interpretation of the clause in light of Dik's semantic functions.

(10)

Cậu bé The little boy	vẽ paint	con cá. fish
Actor	Action - [+dyn]	Factive

‘The little boy paints the fish.’

(Diệp Quang Ban, 2013:34)

(11)

Con mèo Cat	ốm. sick
Sensor	State – [-dyn]

‘The cat is sick.’

(Diệp Quang Ban, 2013:34)

According to Diệp Quang Ban (2013: 29-34), there are thirteen kinds of semantic functions of subjects and three types of

predicates in a clause in terms of semantic functions in Vietnamese shown in the following tables.

Table 1. Thirteen kinds of semantic functions of subjects in the Vietnamese clause

No	Semantic functions of subjects	Examples
1	Động thể (actor)	<i>Chiếc lá rơi nhanh.</i> (The leaf is falling down quickly.)
2	Tĩnh thể (inactive agent)	<i>Bức tranh treo ở trên tường.</i> (The painting was hung on the wall.)
3	Cảm thể (sensor)	<i>Cậu bé nghĩ về bài tập toán.</i> (The little boy thinks of his math homework.)
4	Phát ngôn thể (sayer)	<i>Cậu bé hỏi đường ra bến xe.</i> (He asks the way to the station.)
5	Đích thể (goal)	<i>Tì được khen.</i> (Ti was praised.)
6	Recipient (tiếp thể)	<i>Thuyền đã được lắp máy mới.</i> (The ship was equipped with new machines.)
7	Đắc lợi thể (beneficiary)	<i>Em bé được bạn chép bài hộ.</i> (The child has her class notes written by her friend.)
8	Bị hại thể (patient)	<i>Ngư dân bị bão đánh đắm thuyền.</i> (The fisherman's boat was hit and sunk by the storm.)
9	Đích đến (target)	<i>Cầu bị bom ném trúng.</i> (The bridge was hit by bombs.)
10	Vị trí (location)	<i>Thùng đầy nước.</i> (The bucket is full of water)
11	Phương tiện (instrument)	<i>Chìa khóa này mở phòng số 4.</i> (This key opens room 4.)
12	Nguyên nhân (cause)	<i>Bão làm đổ cây.</i> (The storm makes the trees fall down.)
13	Chủ thể quan hệ (relational agent)	<i>Ông này là thợ mộc.</i> (This man is a carpenter.)

Table 2. Three types of semantic functions of predicates in the Vietnamese clause

No	Semantic functions of predicates	Examples
1	Sự thể động (dynamic state)	<i>Cậu bé đứng dậy.</i> (The boy stands up.)
2	Sự thể tĩnh (inactive state)	<i>Ruộng ngập nước</i> (The paddy-field is flooded with water.)
3	Quan hệ trừu tượng (relation)	<i>Ông này là giám đốc</i> (This man is a director) <i>Ngôi nhà ấy của Ông X</i> (That house belongs to Mr.X)

As for the semantic functions of predicates, although Diệp Quang Ban (2013)'s interpretation is far simpler than Dik's, readers would still be confused about a wide variety of semantic functions of subjects and might wonder why Diệp Quang Ban offers so many semantic functions. We believe that a lot of Vietnamese learners, scholars have many troubles interpreting and analyzing Vietnamese clauses. The more detailed he suggests, the more complex his interpretation is.

Pragmatic functions

Subject-Predicate description is by no means comprehensive when clauses are examined and interpreted from functional perspective. Theme-Rheme interpretation is adopted as an alternative although Theme-Rheme studies are controversial with a variety of terms, concepts and frameworks to analyze Vietnamese clauses. In many cases in Vietnamese, the first initial elements are not the psychological entities (actors, sayers, sensors, and behavers) to be labeled as subjects and do not correspond to the predicates (subject-predicate structure). These first elements are interpreted as “Khởi ngữ” (thematic elements) by Nguyễn Kim Thân (1964) and as “chủ đề” (topical themes)

(12)

Thất vọng, disappointed	chị Dậu Ms. Dậu	rũ người ngồi im. tired people sit quiet.
Theme	Topic	Focus

“Being disappointed, Ms. Dậu was tired out and sat quietly.” (Ngô Tất Tố, 1937)

by Trương Văn Chính and Nguyễn Hiến Lê (1963) and Nguyễn Văn Hiệp (2012). In addition, Halliday's conception of theme as initial elements is shared by many Vietnamese linguists such as Cao Xuân Hạo (1991), Đào Thanh Lan (2002), Diệp Quang Ban (2013), Nguyễn Văn Hiệp (2012), Trần Kim Phụng (2010), Nguyễn Hồng Cẩn (2009) and others. It is noted that Theme-Rheme analysis seems

to have advantage over subject-predicate analysis in case first elements of clauses are not real subjects and do not correspond to predicates. Obviously, Theme-Rheme analysis might overcome shortcomings of subject-predicate analysis.

To some extent, Dik's pragmatic function assignment is similar to Halliday's textual function but not equivalent. Dik (1989:129) states that notions such as *Topic vs Comment*, *Theme vs Rheme*, *Given vs New*, *Focus vs Presupposition* can be interpreted as pragmatic functions. Dik (1989:130) sees that Theme does not fall into predication but connects to it in virtue of its pragmatic character. In contrast, *Topic* and *Focus* are considered as constituents of the predication proper:

A constituent with Topic function presents the entity about which the predication predicates something in a given setting. A constituent with Focus function presents the relatively most important or salient information with respect to the pragmatic information of the Speaker and the Addressee.

Theme-Topic-Focus structure is utilized on the account of Dik's functional grammar while Theme-Rheme structure is adopted in Halliday's systemic functional grammar. For example:

Dik (1989:31) states that “Theme can not be regarded as being part of a predication”. In (12) “thất vọng” – ECC (extra-clausal constituent) may fulfill the function of Theme and “chị Dậu” and “rũ người ngồi im” are labeled as “Topic” and “Focus” respectively. Our study reveals that Dik's Theme-Topic-Focus cannot work when interpreting Vietnamese clauses. Vietnamese scholars, linguists and grammarians show their more

interest in Halliday’s Theme-Rheme structure. (See 3.2)

3.2. Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar

Based on three metafunctions or three lines of meanings suggested Halliday (1994); Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, 2014), Vietnamese simple clauses are analyzed in terms of three aspects of meanings: the first is ideational meanings realized in transitivity system: *Participant–Process–Circumstance*, *Interpersonal* meaning realized in *Mood*, *Modality* and *Textual* with *Theme and Rheme*, *Given and New*. Hoàng Văn Vân (2002, 2012) adopts Halliday’s functional grammar’s

framework to describe the experiential grammar of Vietnamese clauses and Thái Minh Đức (1998) attempts to analyze the Vietnamese clause in terms of all three lines of meanings as developed by Halliday.

Experiential metafunction

Vietnamese contemporary functional approaches to clause analysis are almost influenced by either Halliday’s or Dik’s approach. Let us illustrate how Vietnamese simple clauses are analyzed in terms of experiential (ideational) meaning first in light of Halliday’s functional grammar.

(13)

Hôm sau The following day	lão Hạc Elderly Hac	sang come	nhà tôi. my house
Circumstance	Actor	Process: material	Scope: entity

‘The following day Mr. Hac drops by my house.’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(14)

Chí Phèo Chi Pheo	không là not is	anh hùng. hero
Identified	Process: relational	Identifier

‘Chi Pheo is not a hero.’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(15)

Lão Elderly	kể talk	nhỏ nhẹ và dài dòng thật. soft and lengthy real
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Circumstance – manner

‘He says in a soft and lengthy manner.’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(16)

Tôi I	thấy see	vẻ buồn sadness	trên khuôn mặt của bà. on face of her
Senser	Process: mental	Phenomenon	Cir– location

‘I recognize a deep sadness on her face.’ (Bùi Minh Toán, 2012: 40)

(17)

Thình Thinh	cười laugh	khánh khách. peals of laughter
Behaver	Process: behavioral	Circumstance-manner

‘Thinh burst into peals of laughter.’ (Tô Hoài, 1941)

(18)

Ngày xưa Once upon a time	có have	anh học trò nghèo. student poor
Circumstance – time	Process: existential	Existent: entity

‘Once upon a time, there was a poor male student.’ (Tô Hoài, 1941)

According to Hoàng Văn Vân (2002, 2012), in terms of experiential meaning, there are also six kinds of clauses in Vietnamese, namely *material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential*. *Participants* in general or *Actor, Senser, Behaver, Sayer* in particular are realized by either pronouns or noun groups while *Processes* are realized by verbal groups or adjective groups.

Interpersonal metafunction or modality

In this section, Vietnamese simple clauses are examined in terms of *Modality and Mood*. It seems possible to recognize a simple but very basic aspect in terms of modality, one which considers clauses as utterances and examines them in light of social role function. An utterance often has an element of content and should be seen as exchange of information in a particular context. Many Vietnamese linguists and teachers have had increasing awareness of Modality in Vietnamese but with different viewpoints. However, there is a general consensus among Vietnamese linguists about the Mood types namely, *affirmatives (declaratives); imperative; interrogatives and exclamatives*. Let us consider the following examples.

(19) Từ sáng đến giờ, chị chỉ long đong chạy đi chạy về. (affirmatives)

‘She spent all morning running errands.’

(Ngô Tất Tố, 1937)

(20) Bây giờ chị Tý đâu rồi? (interrogatives)

(Ngô Tất Tố, 1937)

‘Where is Ms. Ty now?’

(21) Ông không thiếu tiền!
(exclamatives)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Listen! I am not short of money!’

(22) Con hãy nín đi, cho em nó ngủ.
(imperatives)

(Ngô Tất Tố, 1937)

‘Please stop crying, let your baby sister sleep’

It should be noted that besides tone, Vietnamese imperatives are often accompanied by mood adjuncts “*hãy*”, “*đừng*”, “*thôi*” and “*đi*” (Diệp Quang Ban, 2013: 119) as in:

(23) Anh *đừng* đi vội! (Don’t leave in a hurry!)

(24) Anh *hãy* ngồi xuống đây đã! (Please take a seat, here!)

(25) Ta đi *thôi*! (Let’s go!)

(26) Cậu nói *đi*! (You should speak out!)

According to Diệp Quang Ban (2013:120), In (24) (25) and (26), these adjuncts “*hãy*”, “*thôi*” and “*đi*” are considered as “functional/empty words” rather than lexical ones. English exclamatives have the WH-element as *what* or *how*, in nominal or adverbial group (What a darling you are! Or how secretive you are!) (Halliday, 2004: 137), while Vietnamese exclamatives go with mood adjuncts like “*ôi; ô hay, ôi chao, lạ, thật, quá, ghê, thế, dường nào, biết mấy, sao mà, chết đi được and the others*” and rising tones. (Diệp Quang Ban, 2013:120).

Unlike English, Vietnamese is monosyllabic and words do not change their forms with prefixes or suffixes. Bùi Minh Toán (2012:68) shows that Modality in Vietnamese is expressed by rising-falling tone and many other functional elements shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Functional elements and words serving their functions

No	Functional elements	Examples
1	Modal particles (Temporal operators)	đã, đang, sẽ, vừa, từng, mới, không, chưa, chẳng, hãy, đừng, chớ, đi, nào, chợt, etc.
2	Modal verbs	muốn, toan, định, dám, cố, được, bị, phạt, nên, cần, etc.
3	Interrogative adjuncts	ai, gì, nào, sao, đâu, thế nào, có...không, đã...chưa
4	Modal particles at the end of the clauses	à, ư, nhi, nhé, thôi, chứ, đi, mất, thật, nghe, xem, đây, đấy
5	Exclamatives	ôi, chao ôi, ái chà, eo ôi, ủa, trời ơi, hỡi ơi...
6	Vocatives	Bà con ơi!, Ông giáo à!
7	Modal expressions	nói gì thì nói, đằng thẳng ra, lẽ ra, nói trộm bóng vía, thảo nào, ngó bộ, kể ra, nào ngờ, may ra, chẳng may, tiếc là, quả nhiên là, xem chừng hóa ra, xem chừng có lẽ, phiền một nỗi, làng nước ơi!
8	Comment adjuncts	tôi nghĩ..., tôi cho rằng..., tôi e rằng..., tôi sợ rằng ..., may là, đáng buồn là, mừng là
9	Conjunctive adjuncts	nếu...thì..., giả sử ... thì..., giá mà ...thì..., có...mới...

For examples:

(27) Thì ra lão **đang** nghĩ đến thằng con
lão. (temporal operators)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Then he is thinking of his son.’

(28) Tôi **sẽ cố** giữ gìn cho lão. (temporal operators)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘I will try my best to keep it safe for him’

(29) Hấn nhặt một hòn gạch **toan** đập đầu.
(modal verbs)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘He picks up a piece of brick, intending to hit his head.’

(30) - Chí Phèo **đấy hờ ?** (interrogative adjuncts)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Is that you there, Chi Pheo?’

(31) - Phúc đời nhà mày, **con nhé**.
(vocatives)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Boy! You are very lucky.’

(32) Có lẽ tôi bán con chó đấy, **ông giáo a!** (vocatives)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘I will probably sell this dog, Sir!’

(33) - Mừng **à?** Vẫy đuôi **à?** (modal particles at the end of the clauses)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Happy? Wag your tail?’

(34) **Hình như anh muốn** nói thêm một câu gì đó (comment adjuncts)

(Vũ Trọng Phụng, 1938)

‘It seems that he wants to say something else.’

(35) **Ôi làng nước ôi!** Bố con thằng Bá Kiến nó đâm chết tôi! (modal expressions)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Oh my god! Ba Kien and his son have stabbed me!’

(36) **Ấy thế mà** tôi cũng bán! (modal expressions)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Yet I also sell it!’

(37) **Hỡi ơi lão Hạc!** Thì ra đến lúc cùng lão cũng có thể làm liều như ai hết. (exclamatives)

(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Oh dear! My best friend! When you were driven into a corner, you dared to kill yourself.’

(38) **Còn cô** Tuyết, người yêu của *Xuân Tóc Đỏ* cũng phải cảm động **mà** liếc ... (conjunctive adjuncts)

(Vũ Trọng Phụng, 1938)

‘And Ms. Tuyet, Red haired Xuan’s lover, was touched and stared.’

It is safe to say that modality should be interpreted in contexts where speakers and listeners play crucial roles in exchanging information. In Vietnamese, a modality is expressed via either verbal channel or non-verbal one. The former is concerned with words and tones while the latter is related to gestures, facial expressions and others. In fact, modality particles at the end of the clauses cause several problems to both Vietnamese and foreign learners to recognize and interpret them.

Three major concerns over Vietnamese modality will be discussed in this section: One is closely related to modal particles (temporal operators) and modal verbs, another is associated with modality particles at the end of the clauses, and the other is relevant to analyzing clauses in terms of mood and residue suggested by Diệp Quang Ban (2013). Firstly we will examine modal particles (temporal operators) and modal verbs as well as show some marked differences between them (see Nguyễn Văn Hiệp, 2012). Consider the following examples:

(39) Hấn **vừa** đi **vừa** chửi. (modal particles)
(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘He went and cursed.’

(40) Lão **đừng** lo gì cho cái vườn của lão.
(modal particles)
(Nam Cao, 1965)

You shouldn’t worry too much about your yard.’

(41) Lão Hạc **không** lo được. (modal particles)
(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘Old Mr. Hac can’t handle that’

(42) Cụ chỉ **muốn** cho tất cả những thằng trai trẻ đi tù. (modal verbs)
(Nam Cao, 1965)

‘He just **wants** all young guys to be put into prison.’

(43) Chúng mình ch**ả nên** nuôi một thằng đé ồm. (modal verbs)

(Tô Hoài, 1941)

‘We shouldn’t feed a weak cricket.’

“Vừa...vừa” (both...and), “đừng” (don’t), “không” (no) in (39); (40) and (41) are examples of modal particles and they are distinguished from modal verbs “muốn” (want) and “nên” (should) in (42) and (43). In Vietnamese, modal particles outnumber modal verbs (Nguyễn Văn Hiệp, 2012: 141) and it is helpful to list them. To a certain extent, both modal particles and modal verbs are within predicators.

Secondly, modality particles at the end of the clauses play crucial roles in terms of modality. In Vietnamese, modality is expressed by modal particles such as *à, chứ, nhỉ, nhé, hả, chứ gì, được không, đừng không, được chứ* or by using couples of modal particles such as “*có...không*”, “*đã...chưa*”, “*có phải...không*”, “*có...chưa*”. General questions in Vietnamese do not use any intonation as well as any operators and inversions. Let us consider the following examples:

(44) Thắp đèn lên chị Liên **nhé?**

(Thạch Lam, 1938)

‘Let’s light up the candle.’

(45) Phúc đòi nhà may, **con nhé.**

(Nam Cao, 1957)

‘Great luck smiles on you.’

The question is: why do they differ in terms of modality? Here it is vital to take into account the modality functions of modal particles. In Vietnamese, modal particles are sometimes either “functional/empty” words or “lexical/full” words based on different patterns of clauses as well as particular contexts. We need to draw a distinction between “*nhé*” in (44) and (45). This is the distinction between the purpose of the speakers as well as modality (interpersonal metafunction). The former is an example of question in Vietnamese whilst the latter is a statement. Likewise, there is a difference in terms of modality as in:

(46) Sao hôm nay chị dọn hàng muộn *thế?*
(Thạch Lam, 1938)

‘Why are you open for business late today?’

(47) Mẹ còn bận làm gạo *cơ mà.*
(Thạch Lam, 1938)

‘Our mum is still busy processing rice.’

It can be seen that both Diệp Quang Ban’s and Nguyễn Văn Hiệp’s suggested analysis and models leave many unsolved problems like troubles in analyzing clauses in the view of interpersonal meaning and their interpretations are still controversial among Vietnamese linguists and scholars.

Textual metafunction (theme-rheme analysis)

Theme-Rheme analysis is not an exception in this respect in Vietnam. Textual metafunction looks inwards to the text itself and sees clause as message (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Textual metafunction (Theme-Rheme) is a new framework of analyzing clauses in modern Vietnamese grammar which helps us deal with some difficulties in interpreting and analyzing a clause that traditional grammar cannot tackle. Drawing on Halliday (1994), Diệp Quang Ban (2013) sets out an interpretation of the clause in the function as

(51)

Tiếng vậy, Rumour has it	làm tổng lý being local authority	không phải việc dễ not easy
Interpersonal theme	Topical theme	Rheme
Theme		

‘Being a local authority is not as easy as people think.’

(Nam Cao, 1965)

(52)

Nhưng kia But	cụ ông the old man	đã về came
textual theme	Topical theme	Rheme
Theme		

‘But the old man came home’

(Nam Cao, 1965)

(53)

Có lẽ Maybe	tôi I	bán con chó đấy, sell the dog	ông giáo ạ. teacher
Interpersonal theme	Topical theme	Rheme	
Theme			

‘Sir, maybe I’ll sell my dog.’

(Nam Cao, 1965)

a message with two part structures *Theme* and *Rheme*. Since then some modern linguists have paid their attention to it. However, hardly any newly born theory is more popular than those already in existence. The following are examples of Theme-Rheme analysis according to Diệp Quang Ban:

(48)

Bọn trẻ The kids	đang học toán. studying maths
Theme	Rheme

‘The kids are learning maths.’

(49)

Có lẽ Maybe	mưa đấy. rain Modality
Theme	Rheme

‘It is likely to rain.’

(50)

Thế là	mưa được rồi!
Theme	Rheme Modality

‘Finally, it starts raining’

(Diệp Quang Ban, 2013: 131)

According to Diệp Quang Ban (2013:131) *Theme* is classified into three categories namely “*đề-đề tài*” (Halliday’s topical theme), “*đề tình thái*” (Halliday’s interpersonal theme) and “*đề văn bản*” (Halliday’s textual theme) as in:

According to Diệp Quang Ban (2013), like English, the most common type of topical theme in a Vietnamese clause is a nominal group functioning as a Subject labeled as *unmarked theme*. Nevertheless, in many cases, there are some adverbial groups for

ấy” (at that time) as “khung đề” (thematic frame) and “không đợi anh ấy trả lời” (not waiting for his reply) as “xác minh ngữ” (identification expression) whilst Diệp Quang Ban sees them as marked themes, and subjects “Bá Kiến” and “cô” as parts of Rheme. It s

(54)

Hồi ấy, At that time	Bá Kiến mới ra làm lý trưởng. Ba Kien just be a ly-truong
Marked theme	Rheme

‘At that time, Ba Kien was a newly appointed local authority.’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(55)

Không đợi anh trả lời No wait he answer	cô cất giọng hát she voice sing
Marked theme	Rheme

‘Not waiting for his reply, she starts to sing.’ (Trần Kim Phụng, 2010: 2)

example “*hôm qua*” (yesterday), “*ở ngoài sân*” (in the yard), “*với món tiền này*” (with this amount of money) and others functioning as *adjuncts* interpreted as *marked theme*. In a simplex clause, there is only one topical theme. Therefore, whenever an adjunct is interpreted as marked theme, the real subject corresponding to the predicate must be labeled as rheme. It is illustrated in the following examples.

(54')

Hồi ấy, At that time	Bá Kiến Ba Kien	mới ra làm lý trưởng. just be a ly-truong
Thematic frame	Topical theme	rheme

‘At that time, Ba Kien was a newly appointed local authority.’

(55')

Không đợi anh trả lời No wait he answer	cô she	cất giọng hát voice sing
Identification expression	Topical theme	rheme

‘Not waiting for his reply, she starts to sing.’

There is an alternative *Theme-Rheme* analysis of these two examples. Trần Kim Phụng (2010) suggests another interpretation of marked theme as well as Rheme as shown in the following:

Trần Kim Phụng (2010) considers “hồi

boundary of Theme and Rheme (Cao Xuân Hạo, 2006) as in:

Last but not least, the element which is typically chosen as Theme in Vietnamese clauses depends on the choice of mood: declarative, interrogative, or imperative.

(56)

Làm quái gì What the hell!	một con chó a dog	<i>mà</i> lão có vẻ băn khoăn quá thế. but he seem concerned too Modality.
Interpersonal theme	Topical theme	
Theme		Rheme

‘What the hell! It is just a dog but he seems to be too concerned about it.’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(57)

Ở tù thì hắn coi In prison THI he consider	<i>là</i> thường LA normal
Theme	Rheme

‘It doesn’t *matter* if he is in *prison*.’ (Nam Cao, 1965)

(1) *Theme in declarative clauses.* In a Vietnamese declarative clause, theme is either *unmarked* or *marked*. *Unmarked theme* refers to subject corresponding to predicate while *marked theme* is related to adjuncts (adverbial groups). Examples:

(58)

Tôi I	cũng không buồn. too not sad
Unmarked theme	Rheme

‘I am not sad either.’

(Tô Hoài, 1941)

(59)

Từ đây, From now on	tôi bắt đầu vào cuộc đời của tôi I start into life my
Marked theme	Rheme

‘From now on, I start my life.’

(Tô Hoài, 1941)

(2) *Theme in interrogative clauses.* Like English, in Vietnamese there are two main types of questions: one where what the speaker wants to know such as “rồi, dạ rồi, có, phải” (yes) or “chưa xong, chưa rồi, không, dạ không” (no), etc., e.g. “Họ về chưa” (have they left yet?) “Bạn có mệt không” (Are you tired?); the other where what the speaker wants to know is the identity of some elements in the content, e.g. “Anh tìm cái gì?” (What are you looking for?) “Ai gõ cửa?” (Who is knocking at the door?) “Điều gì khiến bạn vui?” (What makes you happy?). It is noticeable that in Vietnamese WH-interrogatives, WH-elements that express

the nature of the missing information: *who, what, where, when, etc.*, can stand either at the beginning or at the the end of the clauses. Particularly, WH-elements functioning as subjects always precede predicate and they are labeled as theme whereas they are interpreted as Rheme when they stand at the end of the clause and function as object. Consider the following examples.

(60)

Chị Cốc béo xù Ms. Coc fat	đứng trước cửa nhà ta ấy hả? stand front door house I Modality?
Theme	Rheme

‘The Fatty Ms.Coc standing in front of the door of my cave?’ (Tô Hoài, 1941)

(61)

Anh Chí Mr. Chi	đi đâu đấy? go where
Theme	Rheme

‘Where are you going, Brother Chi?’

(Nam Cao, 1965)

(62)

Đứa nào Who	cạnh khoe gì tao thế? mock what me THE
Theme	Rheme

‘Who is mocking at me?’

(Tô Hoài, 1941)

(3) *Themes in imperative.* Imperative expressions like “đi”, “hãy” “đi thôi” (Let’s) are often available in Vietnamese imperatives as in “hãy đi tìm Tị đi!” (look for Tị please!) or “đi đi thôi!” (Let’s go!) and they are interpreted in terms of Theme-Rheme as follows.

(63)

Hãy đi tìm Let go look for	Tị đi! Ti go
Theme	Rheme

‘Let’s look for Ti!’

(64)

Đi Go	Đi thôi! Go Modality
Theme	Rheme

‘Go now’

(Diệp Quang Ban, 2013: 136)

As discussed above, there are two major contemporary approaches namely *structural* and *functional* to the analysis of Vietnamese simple clauses. Each of these approaches has its advantages and disadvantages. However, there is no general consensus among Vietnamese teachers and linguists about the frameworks and models to analyze Vietnamese simple clauses. As a matter of fact, approaches and frameworks vary according to the particular linguistic theory.

Our discussion reveals that although the strength of functional approach lies in its main tenets of communication, there are a considerable number of terms and some indeterminate cases (Nguyễn Thị Tú Trinh et al, 2016) to label the semantic roles of clausal elements in the area of functional grammar. It appears likely that a lack of self-consistency in criteria results in the problematic of identification of the clausal elements and therefore leads to the debatable functional adequacy of the analysis. (Butler, 1990: 13, 1991:507).

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have focused on investigating major contemporary approaches to the analysis of Vietnamese simple clauses. Our study reveals that structural approach has the longest history since it seems to have been introduced in Vietnamese schools since the invasion of the French. Despite its shortcomings, structural approach or

traditional grammar with *Subject-Predicate* forms the backbone of linguistic study in general and clause analysis in particular. However, structural approach with its main tenets of grammatical rules and disciplines, syntactic and structural description is no longer dominant. Not until the 1990s, Cao Xuân Hạo (1991) published his book marking the advent of the functional approach to the analysis of the Vietnamese clause “Tiếng Việt: Sơ thảo Ngữ pháp chức năng”. The prominent feature of the functional approach is that it sees language as a means of communication but not a set of rules. This can help to shoot a lot of troubles in clause analysis which traditional grammar cannot. It can also be seen from my discussion that most major contemporary approaches to the analysis of the Vietnamese clause have had their foreign origins developed by eminent Western linguists and grammarians such as Saussure, Bloomfield, Dik, Halliday.

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CÁC CÁCH TIẾP CẬN ĐƯƠNG ĐẠI TRONG PHÂN TÍCH CÚ ĐƠN TIẾNG VIỆT

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Tóm tắt: Cú với tư cách là một phạm trù ngữ pháp đã và đang là trung tâm thu hút sự chú ý của các nhà ngôn ngữ học Việt Nam, và gây rất nhiều khó khăn cho việc phân tích và giải thích. Đã có nhiều nỗ lực để làm sáng tỏ vấn đề này. Tuy nhiên, chưa có sự đồng thuận giữa các nhà Việt ngữ về phân tích và giải thích cú đơn bởi vì mỗi nhà nghiên cứu dường như phân tích cú theo một cách tiếp cận khác nhau, sử dụng các khung lý thuyết khác nhau. Trong bài báo này, chúng tôi nghiên cứu một số cách tiếp cận hiện đại chính yếu trong việc phân tích cú đơn Việt Nam kèm theo đánh giá có phê phán từng cách tiếp cận để cung cấp cho độc giả một cái nhìn tổng quan về các nghiên cứu cú trong tiếng Việt. Nghiên cứu cho thấy hiện tại, các cách tiếp cận cấu trúc chịu ảnh hưởng bởi các nhà nghiên cứu theo chủ nghĩa cấu trúc châu Âu và châu Mỹ như de Saussure và Bloomfield, và các cách tiếp cận chức năng chịu ảnh hưởng bởi ngữ pháp chức năng của Dik và ngữ pháp chức năng hệ thống của Halliday dường như là các mô hình ngữ pháp chi phối các cách phân tích cú đơn trong tiếng Việt.

Từ khóa: cách tiếp cận đương đại, cách tiếp cận theo cấu trúc, cách tiếp cận theo chức năng

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE BRAINSTORMING TRAINING PROCEDURES AT PRE-WRITING STAGE IN INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH CLASSES

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Abstract: This article reports a qualitative action study that emerged from the author's reflective teaching practice in an intermediate English class. The research investigated the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming training procedures on students' ideas expressed in their written papers and on students' learning of writing skills through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, students' written papers and students' journals. The study indicates that collaborative brainstorming training with additional brainstorming rules can significantly improve quantity and quality of ideas in paragraph writing, but not remarkably in letter writing. Besides, training has had positive effects on students' learning of writing skills. The findings of the study, therefore, make important contributions to the implementation of collaborative brainstorming in the English language teaching practice.

Keywords: brainstorming, collaborative/ group brainstorming, writing skills, brainstorming rules

1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale

To intermediate level, writing skills were becoming more challenging to students as besides familiar writing forms like letters, they needed to learn new types like stories, film reviews and articles. The author and several colleagues shared in a teacher meeting that a lot of students had difficulties generating ideas and/or arranging ideas logically for their writing. In fact, the researcher had suggested and discussed ideas for writing topics with the whole class. However, through the researcher's observations, this technique did not have much effectiveness on improving idea generation and organization in student's writing. When she discussed with the students, several students suggested that they should be provided with more chances

to work with their peers before consulting the teacher.

From reflective teaching practice, the researcher read about idea generation in groups, and became interested in group brainstorming. Brainstorming allows writers to quickly generate a large numbers of ideas and have good ideas to write because students can create lists of words or ideas related to a topic, and then choose ideas for their writing (Berne, 2009). However, some researchers argue that group idea generation could be less effective than individual (Mullen et al, 1991). Many studies had been carried out to explain for the productivity loss in this type of group work and to search for solutions (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987; Mullen et al, 1991; Brown & Paulus, 1996; Brown & Putman, 2006; Putman & Paulus, 2009). Especially, there was a module to train people to generate more ideas and higher quality of ideas in problem

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solving (Baruah & Paulus, 2008). Regarding training students to generate ideas for writing topics, the researcher supposed that there would be similarities to the literature of group brainstorming, yet changes should be made to suit the students and the teaching context.

With all reasons above, the researcher developed procedures to train her students on collaborative brainstorming, and investigated influences of collaborative brainstorming on the ideas expressed in their writing. The training sessions and the techniques were applied in letter and paragraph writing, two genres of writing at this level.

1.2. Research questions

1. How does collaborative brainstorming influence the quality and quantity of ideas in students' writing?

2. How do students perceive the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming activities?

2. Literature review

For decades, people have used brainstorming to generate ideas, and to come up with creative solutions to problems. One among such solutions came from Madison Avenue advertising executive Alex Osborn who developed the original approach to brainstorming (Osborn, 1953). Since then, brainstorming has been a popular activity in many organizations and in various fields for generating ideas (Paulus, 2000).

In language learning, specifically writing, Bauer (2009) states that brainstorming is the way a writer visually organizes information for the writing. It expresses free associations with the topics through words, phrases or possible perspectives. In brainstorming, the writer conducts exploration of the topic, and it offers several advantages.

2.1. The advantages of collaborative brainstorming

Brainstorming is considered a useful strategy to prepare learners to write (Berne,

2009). Brainstorming could be applied individually or collaboratively. However, some literature has revealed that the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming on idea productivity should be taken into consideration (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987; Diehl & Stroebe, 1991; Mullen et al, 1991; Paulus et al, 1995; Nijstad & Stroebe, 2006, Brown & Paulus, 2002; Putman & Paulus, 2008).

Many researchers believe that collaborative brainstorming could improve idea productivity (Osborn, 1963; Paulus et al, 1998; Baruah & Paulus, 2008). It is explained that collaborative brainstormers can benefit from different perspectives and abilities of their peers because people in a group can cognitively stimulate each other to generate ideas and group members can support each other to produce more ideas.

2.2. The drawbacks of collaborative brainstorming

Despite advantages mentioned above, a number of researchers have found that collaborative brainstorming could lead to idea productivity loss due to at least four following factors: free riding, evaluation apprehension, production blocking and performance matching. First, *free riding* occurs when group members feel that their individual contributions to the group are less significant than when they work alone (Diehl & Stroebe, 1991). Hence, the feeling that their ideas add little to the group outcome demotivates group members to produce ideas. Moreover, in collaborative brainstorming, brainstormers may not be confident or comfortable to speak out their ideas because of their concern about possible evaluations of their peers (Diehl & Stroebe, 1991). In this case, *evaluation apprehension* can limit their contributions to the group, which causes group productivity loss. The next factor is *production blocking* that refers to opportunities for group members to raise their ideas. In group, one member can speak at a time;

but when waiting for their turn, people may forget the ideas that have previously occurred in their mind. If a person tries to keep the ideas in his/her mind, he/she may not think of further ideas. Both individual and group productivity in idea generation will be reduced as a result of this (Diehl & Stroebe, 1991). Last, *performance matching* is the comparison of performance level of group members. When brainstorming in a group, individuals may not want to outperform others (Brown & Paulus, 1996). Therefore, they may decrease their performance of raising their ideas if they perceive that other members are not working as hard as they are. Consequently, the group productivity may be affected. These factors are of high importance to understand the nature of collaborative brainstorming, and to find how to improve group brainstorming techniques accordingly.

2.3. Solutions to improve the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming

There have been several solutions to improve collaborative brainstorming including (1) sequencing individual brainstorming and group brainstorming, (2) brainwriting, (3) electronic brainstorming, (4) training sessions on group brainstorming and (5) adding more rules to group brainstorming.

2.3.1. The sequence of individual and group brainstorming

Osborn (1957) believes that effective brainstorming should consist of individual and group sessions. Osborn (1963) proposes that the best order may be working individually before working in group. In fact, there have been different perspectives on the effectiveness of the sequence of the two sessions (Baruah & Paulus, 2008).

On the one hand, many researchers believe that the order of group to individual brainstorming session is effective. For instance, Dunnette, Campbell and Jastad (1963) support that this sequence is best to enhance generation of ideas. That is because

ideas and unexpected associations generated in groups can suggest additional ideas to individuals (Nagasundaram & Dennis, 1993). Furthermore, data from a study of Paulus et al (1996) show that group brainstorming before individual brainstorming on the same topic can produce more ideas than the reverse process. The reason is that collaborative brainstormers are facilitated cognitively and this facilitation continues to the individual session when brainstormers generate ideas without production blocking (Brown & Paulus, 2002). Brown and Paulus (2002) also find that a person who brainstorms collaboratively to individually can generate more ideas than a similar person brainstorming in two individual sessions. Therefore, according to these studies, the order group to solitary brainstorming could be more useful.

However, some other research reveals converse findings about this sequence. Stein (1975) claims that the individual-to-collaborative brainstorming sequence is best because it allows individuals to prepare for the group session by first generating and reflecting on their own ideas. Baruah and Paulus (2008) conduct an experiment and its results indicate that the sequence solitary to group brainstorming could be effective to improve quantity of ideas generated in group. They explain from the theory that because people brainstorming individually can generate more ideas than brainstorming in group, the pace of solitary session may be maintained in the group session. If the sequence is group to individual, the slower pace of generating ideas in group might affect the pace of the subsequent session. Therefore, the sequence individual brainstorming to group brainstorming is better in terms of number of ideas (Baruah & Paulus, 2008).

2.3.2. Brainwriting

A solution to production blocking, one of the factors that lead to productivity loss in

collaborative brainstorming (Diehl and Stroebe, 1987), is that group members brainstorm by writing and reading instead of speaking and listening. This way of brainstorming is called brainwriting (Brown and Paulus, 2002). When each member of a group of brainstormers in turn writes his/her ideas on a piece of paper without verbal interaction, group members may not be distracted. However, brainwriting is not often a choice because people tend to communicate orally in face-to-face contexts (Brown and Paulus, 2002). In addition, if individuals do not intend to read or do not have chances to read other people's ideas, brainwriting will not be beneficial to them (Brown and Paulus, 2002).

2.3.3. *Electronic brainstorming*

Electronic brainstorming is the way individuals brainstorm by typing ideas on networked computers. Brainstormers can write their ideas and see others' ideas without oral or face-to-face interactions among group members. Electronic brainstorming is believed to increase quantity of ideas generated because production blocking is greatly reduced (Brown & Paulus, 2002). Brown and Paulus (2002) also argue that the sequence solitary to group brainstorming might result in better idea generation in groups doing electronic brainstorming.

2.3.4. *Training on idea generation in group*

Further to studying brainstorming procedures, Baruah and Paulus (2008) conduct a research on the effects of training on idea generation in group. In fact, that study investigates the effects of training and the sequence of individual and collaborative brainstorming sessions on idea generation (Baruah & Paulus, 2008). Participants are divided into groups of individual brainstormers and collaborative brainstormers. Then they participate in either training or no-training on idea generation sessions. In the study, the participants in the individual-to-collaborative sequence produce more ideas than those in the collaborative-to-individual sequence. The results indicate that

training can increase quantity of ideas generated in groups and that group brainstorming session preceded by solitary one can be effective (Baruah & Paulus, 2008).

2.3.5. *Additional rules*

Putman and Paulus (2009) carry out a study on additional rules in group brainstorming. Besides the Osborn rules, some rules are added to better interaction. The additional rules are as follows: "stay focused on the task; do not tell stories; do not explain ideas; keep people talking, possibly by bringing up previous ideas; encourage others to contribute" (Putman & Paulus, 2009, p. 24). These additional rules are found to be able to encourage group brainstormers to generate more ideas (Putman & Paulus, 2009).

In this research (2009), Putman and Paulus study the effects of additional rules on group brainstorming through comparing two groups (groups of individual brainstormers vs collaborative ones) by two (Osborn vs additional rules). The participants brainstorm on the topic "ways to improve the university". Two of the significant results are that the groups given the additional rules generate more ideas than those who are given only the Osborn rules, and the type of rule hardly affects the idea quality.

From the study, it is seen that the additional rules can increase brainstorming performance in terms of quantity of ideas, which is an important effect of the rules. Indeed, these rules help keep participants highly concentrate on the task. The rule "do not tell stories" eliminates extra talking time among group members, and "do not explain ideas" saves time for other ideas rather than specifically focus on one idea. The last two rules "keep people talking" and "encourage others to contribute" aim at maintaining interaction and contribution among group members. Through the rules, more opportunities are created for group members to raise ideas. Also, the roles of group members in sharing ideas are more significant. Therefore, the rules contribute to

reducing some factors that lead to productivity loss in group brainstorming like free riding, evaluation apprehension and blocking (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). The research is evidence that additional rules enhance the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming.

In conclusion, there have been explanations for productivity loss in group brainstorming, and researchers have found five main ways to improve group brainstorming: sequencing individual sessions and group brainstorming ones, writing ideas rather than talking (brainwriting), using computers to brainstorm (electronic brainstorming), training for idea generation skills and adding some rules.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research design

The study is action research aiming at training students to improving idea generating, planning and organizing at pre-writing stage.

3.2. Participants

The participants in the study included 20 non-majored English students (18 females and 2 males) who were learning at intermediate level in a class at VNU University of Social Sciences and Humanities and the teacher was also the researcher.

3.3. Research instruments

Students' written papers (pre-intervention and post-intervention)

For each type of writing, the researcher had students' pre-intervention and post intervention written papers. To be specific, before training, students wrote individually on a topic and after training, students wrote individually on a different topic. These two papers would be analysed and compared to investigate the effects of training procedures.

Students' journals

Each student wrote a journal about 100 words in Vietnamese to reflect on activities in training procedures. Students could use some suggestion questions that the researcher gave.

Classroom observations

A colleague was invited to observe the class and take notes of the process. Before the observation day, the researcher discussed with her about the research plan and the lesson plan when the process took place.

While training procedures were applied in class, a recorder was placed in each group to record students' activities.

Interviews

After training, interviews were conducted with nine students to find out students' perspectives on influences on group brainstorming activities. The colleague was also interviewed to reflect on the process.

Training procedures

Below is summary of a training procedure.

Table 1. Summary of a training procedure

	Activities	Time (minutes)
Part 1	Group setting	5
Part 2	Group brainstorming practice 1	
	Step 1: Solitary brainstorming	5
Part 3	Step 2: Group brainstorming	10
	Group brainstorming practice 2	
Part 4	Step 1: Solitary brainstorming	5
	Step 2: Group brainstorming	10
Part 5	Actual brainstorming for the writing test	15
	Writing for the test	25
		75

This training procedure was based on the results of a study carried out by Baruah and Paulus (2008) that training could enhance the quantity and quality of ideas generated in group and the sequence of individual to group brainstorming session could be useful. Baruah and Paulus (2008) carried out the research to examine how training sessions and the sequence of individual to group (or group to individual) brainstorming affected the quality and quantity of ideas generated in brainstorming solutions to problems. In Baruah and Paulus (2008)'s study, the quality of ideas was measured on the originality of ideas, and quantity was measured on the number of ideas generated in an amount of time. The author applied the results of that study. However, she did not aim at training students to brainstorm ideas for problem solving, but she created writing topics that were familiar with the students in learning English. She would investigate how useful group idea generation was to her students in learning writing in English. This was the new point of the training procedures, as they were implemented in the context of the English language teaching and learning.

Part 1: Firstly, students were divided into groups of three or four by the teacher. Strong, average and weak students were mixed so that in group work they could assist one another.

Part 2 & Part 3: These two parts were for students to practise group brainstorming. There was a topic for a part in which students brainstormed individually and then came to group discussion. When brainstorming alone, students were asked to note down as many ideas as possible, and students were told to follow the rules:

- work individually, do not discuss with other people;
- use simple words or phrases, not necessarily complete sentences;
- do not worry about grammar or spelling;

- write in English, but could use Vietnamese if necessary;
- write as many ideas as possible.

When coming to group brainstorming, students brought their paper to discuss with their partners. Each group would write down their ideas on another sheet of paper. During this process, students could discuss verbally with each other. In this session, students were reminded of the rules and asked to follow additional rules. All the rules were as follows:

- feel free to offer any ideas;
- generate as many ideas as possible;
- do not criticize any ideas of others;
- can combine and improve previous ideas;
- stay focused on the task: do not tell stories;
- give chances for every group member to express their ideas;
- with ideas you find strange (or unique), you may ask others to clarify;
- use simple words or phrases, not necessarily complete sentences;
- not to worry about grammar or spelling;
- use English, but could use Vietnamese if necessary.

Several rules were added to the brainstorming process aiming at supporting the students to increase the number of ideas and be able to benefit from peers' ideas. For example, if students did not understand other people's ideas, they could ask for clarification. This rule made members pay more attention to others' ideas and understand more about others' perspectives (Brown & Paulus, 2002). The other rules related to language used to express ideas could help students feel free and be more focused on generating ideas.

At the end of part 3, teacher discussed with the students on the ideas for the two topics, and reminded students of the rules. Students were also told that they were going to brainstorm for another topic which was for writing.

Part 4: Students did group brainstorming for the topic of the writing test. The same sequence was followed, individual to group brainstorming.

Part 5: Students used the ideas to write about the topic.

In one procedure, after the students were trained on group brainstorming, they did real practice on group brainstorming and did a written test.

3.4. Data analysis

Sorting and categorizing data

The collected data were classified according to the research questions. To be specific, the answer for the first question was found through the students' pre- vs. post-intervention written papers, students' journals and interviews. The second question was answered based on the triangulation of students' journals, observations, and interviews with the students.

All the interviews were transcribed verbatim. In reporting the results, data from the interviews, students' journals and observations were translated into English by the researcher with no intention of producing grammatical errors.

Analyzing data for meaning

As for the first questions, students' pre-intervention written papers and post-intervention ones were compared. Quantity of ideas was measured through counting the ideas in students' writing; quality of ideas was compared based on two IELTS writing marking criteria including Task Response and Coherence and Cohesion. Tables were formed to compare quantity and quality of ideas of each student to see if there were changes after training procedures. Then, charts were formed to describe the remarkable results of the whole class. In addition, the researcher analysed student's journals and interviews to check reliability of the results of comparing the two student's written papers.

As for the second question, students' perspectives on the effects of the activities were analyzed on how well they worked with their group, how the activities prepared them to write and other benefits or effects of group brainstorming as pre-writing activities. Tables were formed to illustrate the ideas of students. Besides, the results were compared with the observations for consistency.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Research question 1: How does collaborative brainstorming influence the quality and quantity of ideas in students' writing?

4.1.1. Paragraph writing

Quantity of idea

Performance in terms of number of ideas was measured by counting the number of main ideas and supporting ideas in each student's written paper. There were two sets of students' written papers: pre-intervention papers when students wrote a paragraph about "How to stay healthy" and post-intervention ones when students wrote about "Possible reasons for the break-up of a love" after being trained with group brainstorming activities. The Mean (M) was accounted to compare the average number of ideas in the two papers. The High shows the highest number of ideas and the Low shows the lowest number of ideas in students' papers. The results are showed in the following charts:

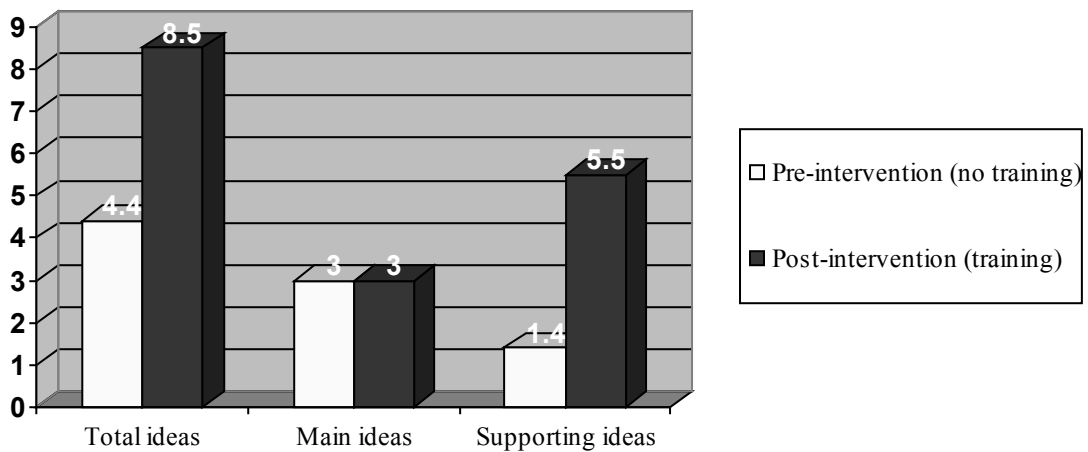


Figure 1. Average number of total ideas, main ideas and supporting ideas in paragraphs in students' written papers

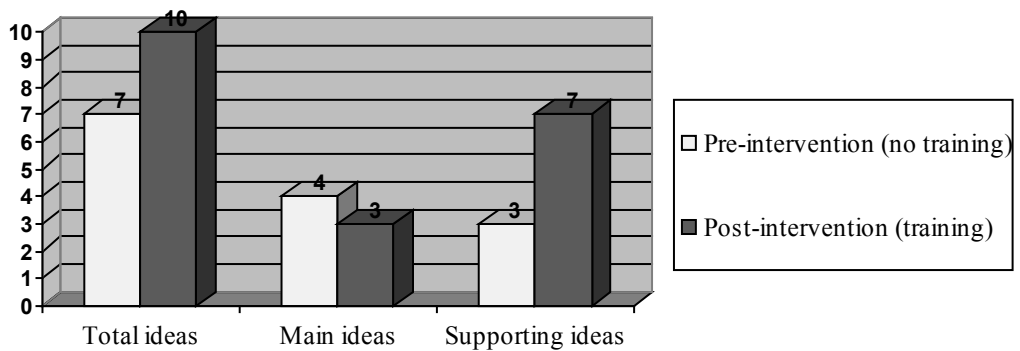


Figure 2. The highest number of ideas (High) in paragraphs in students' written papers

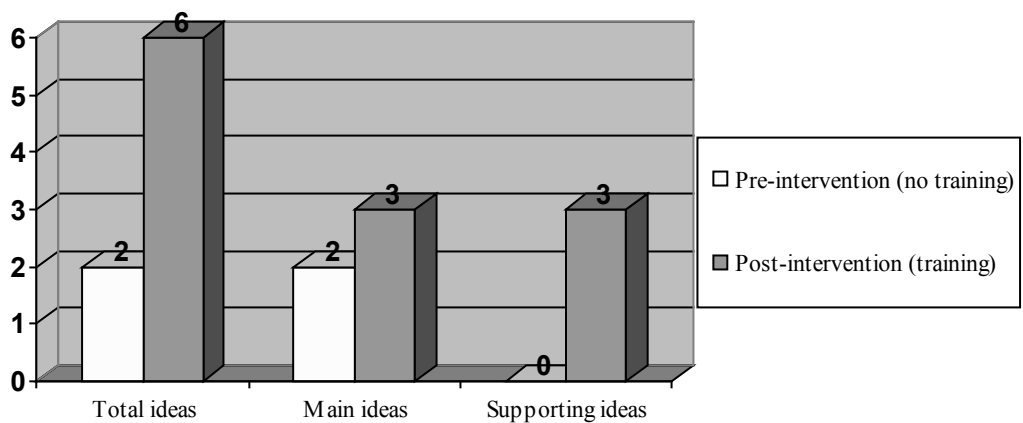


Figure 3. The lowest number of ideas (Low) in paragraphs in students' written papers

It is seen from the charts that there was a significant improvement in the number of ideas in post-intervention writing.

The average numbers of main ideas converge in both writing (M=3) which means that on average students could write three

main ideas for the topic. However, in the first topic, there was difference in number of main ideas among students while in the second topic there is no difference. Concerning the first writing, some students (six students) produced four main ideas while others (seven students) just had two (High = 4, Low = 2). In the second topic, all students wrote three main ideas for the topic. Though there were a lot of ideas generated and written in the group brainstorming notes, students selected just some of them for writing.

In terms of supporting ideas, students in the class produced more ideas (approximately four times) in the second topic than the first one, with $M_2 = 5.5$ versus $M_1 = 1.4$. The difference between the number of ideas among each student was not so remarkable. However, it was worth noting that in the first topic, some students (four students) did not write any supporting ideas (Low = 0) but in the second one, students wrote at least three ideas (Low = 3). These figures of supporting ideas showed that students could make a progress in developing details for the writing topic.

In general, after training and working in group, students improved their performance in terms of the number of ideas in their written papers ($M_1 = 4.4$ vs. $M_2 = 8.5$).

However, the two writing topics were different (the first was “how to stay healthy” and the second was “possible reasons for the break-up of a love”), so the better performance in the number of ideas in written papers was not sufficient to show that group brainstorming activities were effective on improving number of ideas. The reason was that idea generating capacity of each person could vary on different topics. For example, the second topic might be more interesting to the students, and they could generate more ideas to write. If a single topic was used for two times of writing, the capacity of generating ideas would also vary on different

times. Therefore, students’ comments in their journals and post-interviews were analyzed to check the influences of group brainstorming activities on the number of ideas in paragraph writing.

Interestingly, students commented that working in group brought more ideas. Some typical comments were as follows:

“I can share my ideas and other members in the group also share their ideas, which helps us to have much more ideas than working individually” (Tung Anh – Journal)

“When working alone, the number of ideas will be limited; while working in group, there will be a lot of ideas for a topic. When brainstorming on a topic together, all members in my group have chances to contribute ideas. These ideas may be the same or different, and the group have more ideas” (Ninh – Journal).

“All members work together to develop ideas for the writing” (Tinh – Interview)

“When working in group, all members in my group are eager to contribute ideas, so we have lots of ideas” (Ly – Interview)

As seen above, students explained why working in group helped them to have a lot of ideas. For example, according to Tung Anh, Ninh and Tinh, more people could help to increase the number of ideas. In addition, from Ly’s opinion, it can be seen that groupwork could stimulate members to contribute ideas.

More important than the increased total number of ideas generated in a group, individuals benefited from working in group in terms of building more ideas for themselves:

“I can have more ideas from ideas of others in the group. Sometimes, the ideas of other people help me to think of other ideas.” (Trang – Journal)

“When brainstorming together, I can share my ideas and listen to ideas of other members in my group, which is very good to develop ideas for my writing.” (Nhung – Interview)

“When brainstorming in group I have opportunities to share my ideas with my peers. It helps me to learn ideas from other people. Therefore, group brainstorming helps me to write more easily because I have time to develop ideas before writing.” (Hue – Journal)

“I can share my ideas with other group members and if my ideas are not clear enough for the topic, my peers can help to clarify. Such group work makes me write better with more ideas and vocabulary” (Hanh – Journal)

With the rule “write ideas in English, but could use Vietnamese if necessary”, students were free to generate and wrote down as many ideas as possible. This was also the reason why some students spoke out ideas in Vietnamese and discussed in Vietnamese. In fact, students in a group told each other to write in Vietnamese:

“...uhm how to say “vì người kia thay đổi” – I don’t know, just write the idea down first” (Recording – group 3)

“Who knows “không hợp/ ở xa” in English? – May be “not suitable/ far”, just write both Vietnamese and English and check later” (Recording – group 1)

In group 3, when a student asked for the English expression of “vì người kia thay đổi” [because a person changes], the other student did not know and told her to write the idea in Vietnamese. In group 1, a student guessed how to express the idea in English, but she was not sure so she decided to write the idea in both Vietnamese and English. By doing this, the original idea was maintained and its translation was kept as well. This helped to save time, save the ideas and increase the

number of ideas for the whole group.

However, the ideas of students in writing could be influenced by the teacher’s changed instructions. In fact, in the second writing test, students asked how to write the paragraph from lots of ideas generated in group, and the teacher told the students to select three to five ideas that they thought were more important or easier to develop or simply they preferred and explained why. Then, they took one piece of blank paper and folded it into three to five parts corresponding with the number of ideas they had chosen. They would write each chosen idea in a part of the paper. In paragraph writing, these ideas would be main ideas and they needed to think of supporting details to fill in the blank after each main idea. When developing the training procedures, the teacher did not intend to guide students to select ideas. However, in real teaching, as students asked, the teacher decided to add more instructions for students to write. In fact, in real teaching practice, teachers can make changes to lesson plans. Hence, the implementation of the techniques is appropriate with teaching methodological theories.

The changed instructions were also noted by the critical colleague, and in interview, the researcher and she discussed the effects of changed instructions. In fact, the changed instructions might have some positive effects on students’ writing performance. First, students were guided to select the number of ideas to write among many ideas generated. For example, in paragraph writing lesson, the lowest number of reasons for the break-up of a love generated in group was twelve and the highest was eighteen. Being asked to select ideas, students would pay more attention to the ideas and tend to use the selected ideas for writing afterwards. Second, students were asked to support main ideas with more details. By folding a blank piece of paper into corresponding parts and writing each main

idea selected in a part, it would be clearer that they needed to write supporting ideas in each part of the paper. Therefore, the techniques helped clarify ideas for students to make their choice to write, and facilitated them to produce supporting details.

To sum up, training with group brainstorming activities before writing could increase the number of ideas in individual's written papers. Despite two different writing topics, the analysis of pre-intervention written papers and post-intervention ones, observations, students' journals and interviews indicated that the number of ideas was improved, and the teacher's additional instructions might contribute to the improvement.

Quality of ideas

The quality of ideas in students' written papers was measured on idea development criteria including Task response, coherence and cohesion on IELTS writing marking scheme for task 2. From the analysis, there were two improvements on quality of ideas in the second written papers: *the main ideas are identified more easily* and *the main ideas are better supported and more organized*.

For the first topic, it could be difficult to identify main ideas in some students' written papers. The ideas were identified through some key words in the sentences. For example, in Hoa's paper, the first idea of staying healthy was "I cook is healthy, eatn't food has fat, fast food and eat vegetable, meat, fish". The idea of eating healthy food was expressed through some words like "healthy...eat vegetable". In Ninh's paper, she wrote "I allway action for good healthy as: go to walk or play sport". Based on "go to walk or play sport", the reader could understand her idea of doing exercise for good health. Another example was Ngoc Ninh's paper when she wrote "you should have entertain time". This was the idea of spending time relaxing or entertaining, which was guessed based on "entertain time".

However, in other written papers (four papers), there were some good main ideas, which were clear and closely related to the topic. For instance, Ly wrote "you should exercise for 20 minutes every morning or afternoon" and "you should have the time relax after the work or school". Tung Anh also explained quite clearly in his writing "You must eat fresh food and don't eat too much the fast food.", and "You must play sports every day."

For the second topic, after group brainstorming and discussion on ideas, it was noted that nearly all students (nineteen out of twenty) could produce clearer main ideas for the topic. For example, Tung Anh wrote the three main ideas "money is the first reason for the break-up of a love... Family is the next reason... The last and most important reason make couple split up is personality". In Ninh's paper, she wrote "family is a reason for the break-up of a love... Job is a reason for the break-up of a love... They do not get on well because they have different personality". Compared with her paper on the first topic, the ideas were clearer. Another case is Nhung's ideas: "You do not understand your boyfriend or girlfriend... Romance can keep love... In love we do not accept a bad person". Some typical examples above indicate that main ideas in the second written papers are more clearly expressed. In other words, main ideas are identified more easily.

Compared with main ideas in pre-intervention written papers, main ideas in post-intervention ones were also better supported with more details for each idea. Some examples are shown in the following table:

Table 2. Extracts of students' writing before and after intervention

Student's	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
Hoa	Firstly, I cook is healthy, eatn't food has fat, fast food and eat vegetable, meat, fish. Secondly, I often go to walk (and play tennis), it is help me comfortable. I play tennis for good healthy	Money is one of the reasons for the break-up of a love. Have a lot of money you may forget your girlfriend. Family is the second reason for the break-up of a love. It is the conflict between mother in law and daughter in law. The rich family do not like the poor family.
Ninh	First and most importantly, you should full eats such as: vegetable, fish, met... It's good healthy. You shouldn't eats ready-prepared food. It very oil so I can fat. I allway action for good healthy as: go to walk or play sports	The job is a reason for the break-up of a love. Her job is busy, so she don't have enough time for boyfriend. He earn a few money, so he can't go shopping, or go to the cinema with girlfriend. So they break up. The job is reason make break-up of a love because they do not together.
Thuong	Next, breakfast is very important and you should eat three meals, vegetable and milks. Finally, you should sleep from six to eight hours one day.	Next, family is the second reason for the break-up of a love. Wealthy families often do not like poor families or intellectual family does not like unlettered family. The final, one reason is money. Because money is the necessary means of life, do not have money they can not pay daily things. So they argue and split up.

Some above examples indicated that group brainstorming activities could improve quality of ideas in students' papers. This was also consistent with the analysis of students' journals and interviews.

"I think that I can write more supporting sentences because when we share our ideas, we explain the ideas so that other people can understand." (Thuong – Interview)

"If someone has a different idea, she needs to explain it or other members can help to explain. If the ideas are the same, we explain the ideas together." (Ninh – Journal)

"We develop ideas together and individuals can learn from these ideas to write. I don't remember to use linking words, but one person in my group tells the others." (Tinh – Journal)

"I feel that my writing is better, because I have more ideas when sharing and discussing with my peers. I choose better ideas to write and use linking words, because in group we tell each other and remind each other to do so." (Tung Anh – Journal)

4.1.2. Letter writing

Quantity of ideas

The quantity of ideas in letter writing was measured by counting different ideas there were in each student's paper. The first topic was "a letter to apply for an internship position" and the second one was "a letter to apply for a position to work for the forthcoming Olympic Games". The Mean (M) and SD (standard deviation) were accounted to compare the number of ideas in the two written pieces. The High shows the highest number of ideas and the Low shows the lowest number of ideas in students' papers. The results are showed in the following chart:

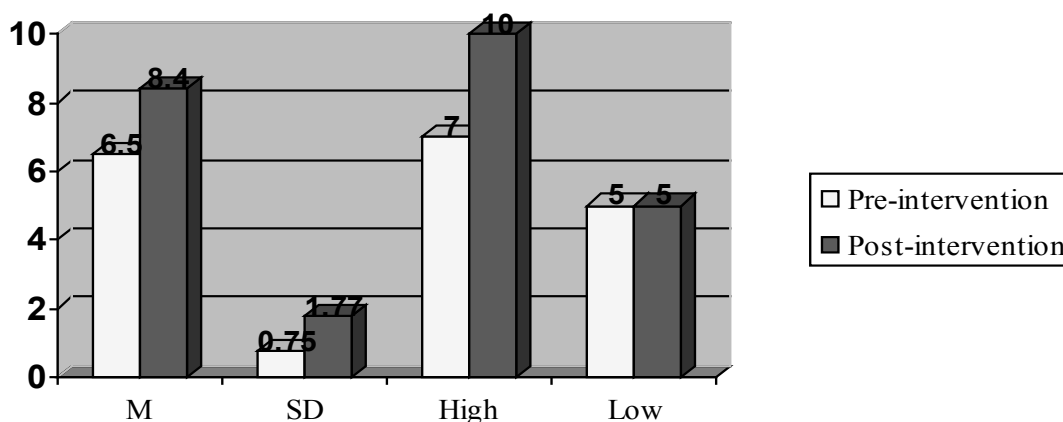


Figure 4. Ideas in students' letters

The graph shows that after training students produce more ideas in their written papers, with a rise from average 6.5 to 8.4 ideas (1.3 times). The highest number of ideas on the first writing topic is seven and the lowest is five, which shows that the difference of number of ideas among students is not much ($SD = 0.75$). In fact, most students (seventeen students) produced seven ideas including stating the position (“I am writing to apply for the receptionist in IA Hotel”), experience (“I am a qualified...and I have been working at... since...”), languages (“I have good level of English and I also speak...”), and the closing of the letter (“I enclose you my covering letter as requested. I look forward to hearing from you”), which was highly influenced by the sample in the text book. This was consistent with post-interviews with the students:

“I think the letter is a bit short, but I don't know to write other ideas and I'm afraid that the ideas I think more are not suitable, so I just imitate the sample” (Nhung)

“Many of us imitate the sample and make some changes by replacing some words like the position or working place. It's like the form for us to follow, and I think it's safe for us.” (Ly)

There was only one piece of writing (Oanh's) in which she mentioned some characteristics of personalities “I am active and enthusiastic” in response to some required personalities from the company advertisement “looking for dynamic, enthusiastic and hardworking people...”

For the second letter writing, before writing students were asked to brainstorm in group on personalities and experience they might need for the position. When comparing the second papers with the first ones, there were more ideas concerning personalities. Students described their personalities needed for the job with one or two sentences which included three to five adjectives of personalities. On the other hand, there were no notable changes in the idea of experience. Similar to the first letter, all of the students wrote one sentence including the job and length of time they did it. An example is “I have worked as a receptionist at ABC hotel for six months”. It could be seen that the number of ideas in parts like the introduction, experience, language, and closing of the letter remained similar to those in the first letters.

Quality of ideas

When comparing two letters written by the students on quality of ideas, it was seen that there were no important differences in the

quality of ideas. The comparison of ideas was analyzed as follows.

The first idea was to introduce the position that the applicant is applying for, and all the students could express this idea clearly in both writing. The way students wrote this idea was highly influenced by the one in the sample.

The idea of experience could be supported with some details in the second letters. For instance, in the first letter, most students (fifteen students) just wrote “I have been working as a receptionist since 2013”, “I have been working at Thuong Hai Restaurant since December 2011”, “I am a tour guide and I have been working at a famous tourism company since June 2011”, or “I am a qualified interpreter and I have been working at Galaxy Hotel since 2012”. Meanwhile, in the second letter, some students (six students) added details such as “I am the reception of the ABC restaurant in 2009. I have a lot of experience about the services and communication with customer”, “I have been working part-time during the summer and I have lots of experience in my job. It is to welcome guest at the hotel.”, “I used to work part-time as a waitress. I have experience and I feel confident and comfortable with the job.” However, many other students’ ideas were still highly influenced by the sample.

The idea of language could be clearer in some students’ letters. In the first letter, most of the students (seventeen out of twenty students) wrote “I have good level of English”; some students (six students) added “and I know Chinese/ Russian/ a little Korean”. In the second letter, some students wrote supporting ideas. For example, Ly wrote “I have a good level of English. I passed level B1 excellently. I can speak and communicate quite fluently”, Quan “I have a good level of written and spoken English. I passed level B1 and I am getting a course of level B2”, Trung “I can speak English quite well and I can

speak a little Korean”. However, it was noted that in many other letters, the expressions were similar to those in the first ones.

The ideas to close the letter: “I enclose you my CV as requested. I look forward to hearing from you” were the same in both letters. They were also the same as those in the sample letter.

Although there were some differences, the improvements in the quality and quantity of ideas between the two letters were not so significant. In other words, in letter writing, the influences of group brainstorming activities on quantity and quality of ideas in the letters were not clear. In fact, these results were in agreement with analysis of students’ journals and post-interviews.

“I hardly make changes to the introduction and the closing of the letter. I don’t know how to change so I just remain them, but I think there are no problems with them” (Hoa – Interview)

“I think many parts of this type of letter such as the introduction and the closing can be the same. The introduction is to state the position, so just the name of the position can be replaced.” (Quan – Interview)

“I think that the letter has its format so we can follow it.” (Nhung – Journal)

Students like Hoa and Quan admitted that they did not make changes to some parts of the letter. Quan even thought that just some words (like the position) needed changing. In addition, Nhung realized that this type of letter had a fixed format, so they could follow it. In fact, application letter is a type of formal letters which has its typical structure and layout. This type of letter requires appropriate language and content with condense, exact and clear information. Group brainstorming did have some effects on letter writing lesson,

but not important effects on idea generation. Other effects of group brainstorming activities would be discussed in the next part.

4.2. *Research question 2: How do students perceive the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming activities?*

Students’ perceptions on the effectiveness of group brainstorming activities were synthesized through analysis of students’ journals, observations and interviews. The results showed that group brainstorming had some other positive effects on learning.

4.2.1. *Paragraph writing*

Students’ perceptions on the effectiveness of group brainstorming in paragraph writing lesson were summarized in the table below. There were twenty students in the class and students’ perceptions were analyzed through students’ journals and interviews.

Table 3. Students’ perception of the effectiveness of group brainstorming in paragraph writing lesson

No	Effects of group brainstorming	Percentage of students
1.	Prepare more vocabulary, grammar structures and expressions for students to write.	100%
2.	Make students stay motivated and interested in the lesson.	100%
3.	Make students more focused and work faster.	75%
4.	Make students understand more about each other and improve solidarity among classmates.	60%
5.	Help students make better outline for writing.	50%
6.	Improve creativity and thinking skills for individuals.	25%

All students in the class liked group brainstorming activities and everyone gave some positive feedback on the lesson. In paragraph writing, group brainstorming prepared more vocabulary, structures and expressions for students to write. This feedback is the most popular, as it was mentioned in all students’ journals, and even confirmed by interviewees:

“Group work helps me to have

more vocabulary, grammar and expressions to apply into my writing.” (Tung Anh – Interview)

“I don’t know how to express some ideas in English and my group members helps me.” (Ninh – Interviews)

“It’s very good for us to learn and revise vocabulary and sentence structures.” (Nhung – Journals)

“I can learn new words from whom I work with.” (Hue – Journals)

“My vocabulary to write would be increased if I could continue such group work.” (Hanh – Journals)

4.2.2. *Letter writing*

Students’ perceptions on the effectiveness of group brainstorming on letter writing lesson were summarized in the table below. There were twenty students in the class and students’ perceptions were analyzed through students’ journals and interviews.

Table 4. Students' perception of the effectiveness of group brainstorming in letter writing lesson

No	Effects of group brainstorming	Percentage of students
1.	Make the lesson more interesting.	100%
2.	Make students focus on the lesson.	70%
3.	Revise vocabulary and grammar.	60%
4.	Create interactive learning.	60%
5.	Create relaxing learning environment.	50%
6.	Improve thinking skills.	55%
7.	Improve team work skills.	55%

In letter writing, the most popular feedback was making the lesson more interesting, which was shown in all journals and post-interviews with the students. Next came making the students stay concentrated on the lesson with 70%. It was understandable because when students liked the lesson, they would focus more on the lesson. Other effects of group brainstorming were improving thinking skills and team work skills, creating interactive learning and relaxing learning environment.

4.2.3. Problems in group brainstorming

Besides positive feedback, students mentioned several problems when brainstorming in group.

Firstly, group members did not agree on the choice of words to express ideas in English:

“In my group, when we choose words to express ideas in English, we did not agree with each other about some words. For example, I like the word “hobbies” but others like “favourite”. However, we think together how to use each word and when writing the person can use the word she likes” (Hanh – group 2)

“Because we are not sure how to use some words, to express some ideas there could be different words from members. But we write all the words, we think that we could ask the teacher later.” (Ly – group 1)

Students were encouraged to express ideas in English, but they could write in Vietnamese. When working together about ideas, group members had different choices of English words to express the ideas. However, they solved the problems by writing all the choices then in individual writing they could choose the word they prefer, or they could consult the teacher. In this case, the rule “no criticizing” could help students to avoid argument.

The next problem was that some members did not work enthusiastically:

“In my group, a member did not take part in group work enthusiastically for a while. However, he was reminded by other members so he worked better.” (Hoa – group 1)

One more problem that students mentioned was the time limit of group work sessions:

“I think that the time to work in group is a bit short. I also think that we should have more time to write in group so that weak students can learn more.” (Mung)

“If we have more time, we can write in group after combining ideas. I think it will be better.” (Lan)

Some students like Mung felt that the group work time was short because students had time to do group brainstorming on ideas but not to write together. Therefore, students suggested that they should have chances to write together in group after group brainstorming. In deed,

according to the procedure, students wrote individually instead of collaboratively. After the lesson, the students' idea raised another issue of applying collaborative writing after collaborative brainstorming.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary of major findings

Collaborative brainstorming training procedures had significant effects on quantity and quality of ideas in students' written papers, and on student's learning of writing skills. Group brainstorming activities remarkably improved quantity and quality of ideas in paragraph writing. However, in letter writing, the changes were not noticeable as students were influenced by models of application letter with its typical expressions. Training also had positive effects on student's learning.

The present study reinforces the findings of previous studies. Training can increase quantity of ideas and the order of brainstorming sessions solitary to group brainstorming is effective (Baruah & Paulus, 2008). In addition, additional rules, for example writing ideas in Vietnamese, contribute to improving the number of ideas generated in group (Putman & Paulus, 2009). Students also benefit from paying attention to other's ideas during brainstorming process, increasing overall productivity of the group (Brown & Paulus, 2002). Regarding learners' perspectives, students find group brainstorming useful and effective in preparing them to write (Rao, 2007; Christmas, 2008). Furthermore, brainstorming could enhance learning motivation and improve learning performance as well as other soft skills for students (Blatchford et al, 2003; Gillies, 2003; Dooly, 2008; Saed, 2011).

The research also makes significant findings about the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming. The most important one is that training can increase

quality of ideas in students' written papers. To be specific, in paragraph writing, intermediate students can improve cohesion and coherence. Next, training students with group brainstorming can enhance quantity and quality of ideas in just some specific writing task type. In the study, group brainstorming had worth noting effects on paragraph writing, but not letter writing. Besides, with the rules in the collaborative brainstorming procedures, free riding and performance matching could be reduced, as group members encourage each other to take part in discussion. Other factors like evaluation apprehension and blocking were not mentioned as problems in group brainstorming. Last, teacher's changed instructions to the lesson plan may contribute to better students' learning performance. These findings may be important for practitioners and further researchers to consider.

5.2. Contributions of the study

In terms of methodology, triangulation of different sources of data was essential to analyze the results. In the research, students' written papers were not sufficient to conclude the effectiveness of group brainstorming on the quantity and quality of ideas. The students' journals were valuable sources to investigate student's perceptions on the group brainstorming activities; and the interviews with the students helped to check the consistency and reliability of students' views. Especially, the involvement of a critical colleague is necessary in action research. In my study, the critical colleague helped me to take notes during the lessons and then give feedback on the lessons. More importantly, she discussed some changes to the original lesson plan that contributed to the effectiveness of group brainstorming. From that, group idea selection for writing was raised for further studies.

In terms of pedagogy, the study explored the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming procedures as pre-writing activities in a specific teaching context, teaching writing to an intermediate English class. It contributed a model of idea generation training for writing which could be implemented in similar situations. Thus, it helped foster collaborative brainstorming in the field of English language teaching.

5.3. Limitations of the study

Despite the researcher's efforts, the study still has some short-comings because of time limitation and other unexpected factors. First, the number of participants was quite small in comparison with the whole number of intermediate students at the university. In fact, since action research is carried out in a class, the number of student participants is limited. Possibly because of this reason, the rates or percentages of students counted in the feedback on the effectiveness of group brainstorming need to be interpreted as statistics in a class with twenty students. In other words, the results should be understood with caution to avoid overgeneralization. Secondly, because of time limitation, group brainstorming procedures were implemented in two writing genres at this level (paragraph writing and letter writing). Thus, the results should not represent all writing task types at intermediate level. If other writing types of the course like story writing, film review were involved in the research, the effectiveness of collaborative brainstorming would be more comprehensive with all specific types.

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TÍNH HIỆU QUẢ CỦA QUY TRÌNH RÈN LUYỆN PHÁT TRIỂN Ý TƯỞNG THEO NHÓM TRƯỚC KHI VIẾT CHO SINH VIÊN TRÌNH ĐỘ TIẾNG ANH TRUNG CẤP

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Tóm tắt: Bài viết này trình bày kết quả của một nghiên cứu cải tiến sư phạm định tính xuất phát từ thực tiễn giảng dạy tiếng Anh của tác giả cho sinh viên trình độ trung cấp. Nghiên cứu khảo sát ảnh hưởng của quy trình rèn luyện việc thảo luận và phát triển ý tưởng theo nhóm đến khả năng phát triển ý tưởng cho bài viết và việc học kỹ năng viết của sinh viên thông qua phỏng vấn, quan sát lớp học, bài viết và bài báo phản hồi của sinh viên. Nghiên cứu chỉ ra rằng quy trình thảo luận ý tưởng theo nhóm được bổ sung một số quy tắc động não có thể cải thiện số lượng và chất lượng ý tưởng trong bài viết đoạn văn, nhưng không có tác dụng đáng kể đến viết thư. Ngoài ra, thảo luận ý tưởng theo nhóm trước khi viết có tác động tích cực tới việc học kỹ năng viết của sinh viên. Bởi vậy, kết quả của nghiên cứu có đóng góp quan trọng vào việc áp dụng quy trình thảo luận ý tưởng theo nhóm khi dạy tiếng Anh.

Từ khóa: động não, thảo luận ý tưởng theo nhóm, kỹ năng viết, quy tắc động não

THE EFFECT OF BRAINSTORMING ON EFL READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: This study investigates the effect of brainstorming techniques on EFL learners' reading comprehension. The experiment in this study involved a treatment group and a control group, both of which were following an English course at a language centre in Vietnam. The treatment group were trained in brainstorming techniques during reading lessons whereas the control group were not. Comparisons between the two groups' average scores on pre-test and post-test and their comprehension improvement during the course showed that the treatment group outperformed the control group and thus confirmed that brainstorming has a positive impact on EFL reading comprehension.

Keywords: brainstorming, EFL reading, reading comprehension

1. Introduction

Brainstorming has been considered an effective method in teaching (Fernald & Nickolenko, 1993). The principles and rules for using brainstorming techniques in teaching have been discussed in a few studies (Osborn, 1953; Feather, 2004). These techniques allow learners to generate and express their ideas in a systematic way that in turns facilitate the learning process. Yet little research has attempted to examine the benefits that brainstorming techniques may bring to the teaching of specific language skills. Previous research has only focused on how brainstorming works and investigated its relationship with critical thinking. Regarding the teaching of reading skills, although several studies have reported that training in brainstorming facilitates reading comprehension (Richards, 1990; Ghabanchi and Behrooznia, 2014), there is still insufficient data to confirm that this technique can be effectively used as a pre-reading

activity. This indicates a need to understand the relationship between brainstorming activities used in reading lessons and EFL learners' comprehension level.

This study intends to examine the impact, if there is any, of brainstorming on EFL learners' reading comprehension in order to provide English language teachers in Vietnam a closer look at the use of brainstorming in teaching the reading skill. This paper first gives a brief overview of reading comprehension. The central idea of this part is that background knowledge is one of the most crucial factors to determine how much the reader understands a text. Based on this, it is suggested that using brainstorming techniques before reading will help readers comprehend the text better since this technique activates readers' background knowledge. The paper also provides review of literature on brainstorming in teaching and learning the reading skill. The second section of the paper is concerned with the methodology used for this study. The third section presents the findings of the research, and the last sections give discussion and conclusions drawn from the study.

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2. Literature Review

2.1. Reading comprehension

Past research has attempted to analyze the nature of comprehension in reading. Some researchers see it as a process by which readers link and utilize what they know about the world to what they already have as information to get things clear with no misunderstanding (Smith, 2004). While reading, they keep making predictions, or questions based on their theories about the world, and if the questions are answered while or after reading, comprehension is achieved (Smith, 1978). In other words, comprehending is a process of “*understanding a written text by extracting the required information from it as effectively as possible*” (Grellet, 1981, p.3).

In their attempt to examine what affects EFL reading comprehension, researchers have found that the level of comprehension in reading is dependent on a number of factors. Text factors such as vocabulary (Coady & Huckin, 1975), genre (Davies, 1995), cohesion (Trimmer, 1995), and syntax (Erickson, 2003), influence the reader’s comprehension. Reader factors such as reading purposes (Donoghue, 2009), reading interest (Donoghue, 2009), cultural familiarity (Alptekin, 2006), the reader’s prior knowledge (Alexander & Jetton, 2000) and reading automaticity (Hawkins, 1991) also play a role in deciding how much the reader comprehends a text. Of all these factors, researchers have focused on the reader’s prior knowledge (Hailikari et al., 2008). Studies have found that student’s background knowledge is crucial in determining how the printed text will be generated during the process of reading. Through schematic representation, readers begin to fine-tune their comprehension as they make connections with their background knowledge and the text at hand (Kang, 2004).

2.2. Brainstorming for reading

Reading instructors have used pre-reading activities as devices to support their L1 readers’ interpretation of text and to prevent any possible failure in reading process (Karakas, 2002; Ringler & Weber, 1984) as these activities can help building new schemata, activating existing schemata, and informing the teacher what the students know. Brainstorming is probably one very popular kind of pre-reading activity (Wallace, 2001). This activity usually involves students’ calling out words and concepts that they associate with a key word. Some teachers and instructors have provided their students with a chart of three columns so that the students can write down what they already know about a subject in the first column, indicate what they want to know about the subject in the second column, complete the third column after reading about the subject by writing answers to the questions that they asked in the second column (Ogle’s, 1986).

Brainstorming has been seen as a tool that helps L1 readers to activate his prior knowledge and facilitates the reading process (Feather, 2004). This technique enables readers to create and share their prior knowledge to solve problems to reach the goal. While brainstorming, they have to think to generate the ideas from their mind toward the topic that they are going to read, thus bring their storm many different meanings that they have already known about the subject matter of the text (Isaksen, 1998). In addition, brainstorming states a purpose for reading. After recording the brainstormed ideas in a list, readers start reading and verifying whether what was brainstormed is correct or wrong. Thus, they will be reading with a purpose in mind (Feathers, 2004). Brainstorming can also encourage creative thinking and create a working atmosphere (Osborn, 1953).

Although there has been a consensus that brainstorming, as a pre-reading activity, is an effective technique to activate L1 readers' prior knowledge for reading comprehension, little research has focused on the effect of this technique in EFL reading comprehension. Richards (1990) found that brainstorming helps learners develop their cognitive skills that are necessary for generating and organizing ideas. Along similar lines, Ghabanchi and Behrooznia (2014), Navaee and Asadi (2015) reported that brainstorming has positive effect on learners' reading comprehension.

This study sets out to see if brainstorming facilitates EFL learners' reading comprehension and examines the extent to which it helps them to comprehend the text better.

3. Research question

This study aimed to answer the following research question: Do brainstorming techniques help EFL learners to comprehend texts better?

4. Material and methods

The participants of the study were Intermediate EFL learners who were following an English course at a language center in Vietnam. Their ages ranged from 19 to 25 at the beginning of the study. Initially, the control group had 25 learners and the treatment group had 23 learners. However, five learners in the control group and three learners in the treatment group dropped class during the experiment time. Therefore, the result analysis only included the data for 20 participants in the control group and 20 participants in the treatment group. All of the participants in the two groups had been studying English for seven years and never had any experience in brainstorming techniques.

In the experiment, both groups followed the English course, which lasted three months and delivered by one and the same teacher.

The course included eight lessons of reading, in which brainstorming was used, eight lessons of speaking, eight lessons of writing and eight lessons of listening. Each lesson lasted 90 minutes and the classes met three times a week.

In each of the lessons for both groups, the teacher did the same procedures, except for the pre-reading stage. For the treatment class, the teacher first provided them with guiding questions, and then let them brainstorm ideas in groups. After that, representatives of the groups reported their groups' opinions and the whole class together collectively arranged ideas into a logical structure. Next, the students were asked to read the text and answer the ten comprehension questions. Finally, the class did some post-reading activities. For the control group, no brainstorming activities were carried out. During the pre-reading stage, the teacher introduced the topic and pre-taught vocabulary. The participants' scores in each of the eight lessons were recorded.

The texts used for the reading lessons for both the control group and treatment group were taken from the textbook named *Smart Choice 3* (Wilson & Boyle, 2010). Each text consisted of approximately 300 words and was written at the intermediate level. Ten comprehension questions were made for each of the texts.

5. Results

The participants' reading comprehension ability was measured by counting the number of correct answers out of the 10 multiple-choice comprehension questions for each text. In order to determine whether brainstorming had an effect on reading comprehension, three measurements were made. First, the groups' average scores in the eight sessions were calculated and compared. Second, the groups' average score in the first session was compared with their average score in the last session.

Third, the groups' average score in the first half of the course was compared with their average score in the second half of the course.

Regarding the average scores in all the eight reading lessons, the results indicated that the treatment group outperformed the control group. As it can be seen in Table 1, the treatment group made an average score of 7.27 points while the control group made an average score of only 5.79. There was a significant difference of 1.48 between the two groups.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of comprehension in all lessons for both groups

	Treatment group	Control group
Mean	7.27	5.79
SD	0.40	0.30

An examination of the scores by each of the participants in the eight lessons showed that the mode of the treatment group's scores was 8, which repeated 48 times. Meanwhile, for the control group, the mode was 6 and it repeated 63 times. Table 2 presents how many students in each group scored over 7, under 7, under 6 and under 5 for the whole

Table 2. Numbers of participants falling in each score category for both groups

	Over 7	Over 6	Over 5	Under 5
Treatment group	17/20	3/20	0	0
Control group	0	6/20	14/20	0

Altogether, those results show that the use of brainstorming techniques in reading lessons significantly affected the participants' reading comprehension. In other words, the participants trained in brainstorming techniques were more likely to achieve better reading comprehension than those who did not use this kind of technique.

Regarding the comparison between the group's average score on the first session and the last session, the study found that the treatment group made a bigger difference between the first lesson and the last lesson. As shown in Table 3, the treatment group increased their average score by 3.15 points by the end of the course, outperforming the control group, whose average score only increased by 0.90 point.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations of comprehension scores on the first session and the last session for both groups

	Treatment group			Control group		
	First session	Last session	Difference	First session	Last session	Difference
Mean	5.60	8.75	3.15	5.30	6.20	0.90
SD	0.68	0.44	0.81	0.47	1.00	1.11

p<0.05

course. The data indicated that almost all the participants in the treatment group made an average score of over 7 out of 10 while none of the participants in the control group reached this point. Most of them had an average score of over 5 but under 6.

Table 3 also shows that for the first session, the treatment group and the control group had a similar average score in comprehension with a difference of only 0.30 point between the two groups. This may be explained by the fact that neither group had any experience with brainstorming techniques previously, thus the treatment group, even though trained with this

technique in the first session, did not outperform the control group. However, after the eight weeks of training, the treatment group made a much bigger increase in

4, the treatment group made an increase of 2.01 points from the first half to the second half. Meanwhile, the control group made only a slight increase of 0.18 point.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations of comprehension scores on the first session and the last session for both groups

	Treatment group			Control group		
	First half	Second half	Difference	First half	Second half	Difference
Mean	6.38	8.16	1.78	5.65	5.93	0.28
SD	0.55	0.36	0.39	0.68	0.68	0.81

$p < 0.05$

comprehension than the control group, and their average score in the last session (8.75) was significantly higher than that of the control group (6.20). An examination into the increases that each of the participants in the two groups made during the course showed that two thirds of the treatment group gained an increase of 3 to 4 points. On the contrary, only one out of the 20 participants in the control group obtained this achievement.

Using one-way ANOVA, we tested the null hypothesis that the mean increases of the two groups were equal. We found that the groups' mean scores were significantly different, $F(1, 38) = 53.62$, $p = 0.000$. Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the control group ($M = 0.90$, $SD = 1.11$) was significantly lower than the mean score for the treatment group ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 0.81$).

Another way to determine the effect of brainstorming on the participants' reading comprehension was to compare the groups' average score in the first and the second half of the course. This is to eliminate the possibility that some students might have had a good day or bad day on the first day and/or last day of the course, thus having abnormally high scores or low scores, which in turns, distort their results. As can be seen from Table

Using one-way ANOVA, we found that there were significant differences between the control group's mean score and the treatment group's mean score for the first half of the course, $F(1, 38) = 20.99$, $p = 0.000$ and between the control group's mean score and the treatment group's mean score for the second half of the course, $F(1,38) = 34.15$, $p = 0.000$.

A one way ANOVA comparing the gain scores (first half to second half) of the two groups results showed the mean scores of the two groups were significantly different, $F(1, 38) = 52.61$, $p = 0.000$. The mean comprehension gain score for the treatment group was 1.78 ($N=20$, $SD = 0.39$). The mean comprehension gain score for the control group was 0.28 ($N=20$, $SD = 0.81$).

Taken together, these results suggested that there was a positive relationship between the use of brainstorming techniques and EFL learners' reading comprehension.

6. Discussion

The study set out to determine the effects of brainstorming on EFL learners' reading comprehension. In order to fulfill this purpose, an experiment was carried out. In this experiment, the treatment group and the control group were following an English course, which

included eight reading lessons. In each of those lessons, both groups had almost the same procedure except that the treatment group was trained in brainstorming techniques before reading the text. Three kinds of measurements were made in order to determine the effect of training in brainstorming techniques. First, the comparison between the groups' average scores for the whole course showed that the treatment group was generally better at comprehending the texts. Second, a comparison between the last session score and the first session score indicated that the treatment group not only did better than the control group during the course, but also increased their comprehension level to a great degree. Third, the comparison between the second half session score and the first half session score showed that the treatment group had a higher score than the control group in both halves of the course, thus reinforcing the reliability of the earlier mentioned results. It can, therefore, be suggested that brainstorming has a positive impact on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

The findings emerging from this experiment enhanced our understanding of the benefits of brainstorming in English language teaching. It seems that this kind of technique promotes reading comprehension to some extent. Most participants in the treatment outperformed the participants in the control group, and they even made significantly bigger increases in reading comprehension over the course. A possible explanation for this may be that their prior knowledge had been activated through brainstorming before they started reading the text. In other words, they were better prepared to enter the texts and therefore comprehended them better. It may also be possible that the brainstorming activities facilitated the participants in this group to generate ideas, organize their thoughts, and helped them be more reflective and creative, which in turn, fostered reading

comprehension.

The findings, while preliminary, suggest that EFL teachers should encourage learners to activate their background knowledge by brainstorming before reading texts. This technique seems both mentally and psychologically beneficial. In addition, it can increase learners' motivation to read. Once they have brainstormed about the topic of the text, they will be more enthusiastic to read it and thus enjoy the reading process more. It is, however, advisable for teachers not to impose ideas from the text on learners or criticize the ideas that learners generate as this may demotivate them.

7. Conclusions

To conclude, the main goal of the current study was to determine the effect of brainstorming techniques on EFL learners' reading comprehension. The study has shown that training in brainstorming enhances EFL readers' comprehension to a great extent. It was also found that learners who were given chances to use this technique before reading also gradually improved their reading comprehension level through the training time. These findings complement those of earlier studies and suggest that English language teachers should consider designing brainstorming activities for the pre-reading stage in order to boost their students' reading ability.

In future studies, the same procedure can be replicated with a larger sample size to increase the reliability of the results. Researchers can also look at the impact of brainstorming on the development of other language skills. It is possible that brainstorming techniques are a useful strategy in the planning stage of writing for the fact that they facilitate idea generation and creativity. Moreover, since brainstorming establishes a communicative mode of work in the classroom, it may also be that prior

knowledge activation through brainstorming is a variable affecting speaking and listening skills.

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ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA HOẠT ĐỘNG ĐỘNG NÃO ĐẾN MỨC ĐỘ ĐỌC HIỂU CỦA NGƯỜI HỌC TIẾNG ANH NHƯ MỘT NGOẠI NGỮ

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Tóm tắt: Nghiên cứu này xem xét giá trị của hoạt động động não đối với mức độ đọc hiểu của người học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ. Trong nghiên cứu này, thí nghiệm được thực hiện trên một nhóm thực nghiệm và một nhóm đối chứng. Cả hai nhóm đều đang theo học một khóa học tiếng Anh ở trung tâm ngoại ngữ ở Việt Nam tại thời điểm thực nghiệm. Nhóm thực nghiệm được học với các hoạt động động não ở các buổi học Đọc còn nhóm đối chứng không được học với các hoạt động này. Các so sánh giữa điểm trung bình của cả hai nhóm ở bài kiểm tra tiền thực nghiệm và sau thực nghiệm cũng như kết quả đọc hiểu trong suốt khóa học cho thấy nhóm thực nghiệm có kết quả tốt hơn nhóm đối chứng. Điều này khẳng định hoạt động động não có ảnh hưởng tích cực tới mức độ đọc hiểu của người học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ.

Từ khóa: hoạt động động não, đọc trong học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ, mức độ đọc hiểu

DISCUSSION

LANGUAGE AND GENDER STUDIES: PAST AND CURRENT APPROACHES AND DEBATES

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Abstract: This study looks at the different approaches in language and gender research since its emergence in the early 1970s. These approaches, namely the dominance, the difference and the post-modernist approach, are reviewed in a chronological order together with sample studies reflecting the tenets of each approach. A comparison across the approaches is also provided to offer profound understanding of the approaches. Current trends in language and gender studies are also highlighted to inform potential researchers in the field of the updated foci in literature.

Keywords: language and gender, gender difference, gender dominance, post-structuralism, language and sexuality

1. Introduction

Language and gender as a domain of linguistics emerged in the 1970s and has been growing vigorously up to now. Research in this domain has been influenced by both theories and approaches in linguistics as well as those in social studies and political movements such as feminism, gender study, philosophy, media studies and so on. Because studies in this domain are diverse in political and theoretical stance, a review of those studies is necessary to offer interested researchers a map of existing debates from which they can launch their own novice arguments.

2. Methodology

This is a secondary research which aims to chronologically review studies in language and gender as a domain of linguistics.

The methods of study include researching published sources such as books, monographs, journals and categorizing studies under different approaches. The study also tries to describe the main tenets and characteristics of different approaches, then compare and contrast between approaches. The study also consults and bases itself on existing studies on the same topic and offer critical comments where possible. Latest studies in language and gender presented at IGALA 2016 (International Gender and Language Association) are also reviewed to show the directions in which research in the domain is heading.

3. Findings

3.1. The starting point and the dominance approach

Research in language and gender emerged in the 1970s with Lakoff's 'Language and women's place' (Lakoff, 1975). This study was

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seen as the starting point of different debates on how men and women differed in their language use. In explaining the differences that they found in men and women's language use, those studies fall into two approaches: the *dominance* and the *difference* approach.

In the dominance approach, some authors argued that differences between men and women's speech arose because of male dominance over women and persisted in order to keep women subordinate to men. This trend of studies was known as (male) dominance approach with many noted names such as Zimmerman and West (1975), Eakins and Eakins, Crosby and Nyquist, Mulac et al, and Fishman (see Coates, 1998). They analyzed conversations in college communities, staff meetings, and conversations between husbands and wives, or they considered the length of time it took men and women to describe pictures, etc. Their findings included different styles of using language, differences in turn taking, length of speech, word use, tag questions, hedges, etc. (see figure 1).

Studies in language as a system even pointed out that language was created by men in order to sustain a patriarchal order; hence, English is sexist by nature (Spender, 1980). If language can be shown to influence or determine thought, then sexist language will influence speakers in the direction of sexist thought. Changing sexist language will change sexist attitudes and will raise awareness about sexist assumptions. This understanding led to language reform or political correctness from which many anti-sexist terms were introduced to replace their counter-parts such as *Ms*, *spokesperson*, *chairperson*, etc. However, this movement soon experienced a backlash because theorists realized that removing sexist language did not entail elimination of gender discrimination; rather, sexist assumptions were embodied by linguistic choices made by language users (Cameron, 1992:18).

To offer a clearer view on how studies in this approach were carried out, the study includes in this section a summary of two typical studies focusing on the differences

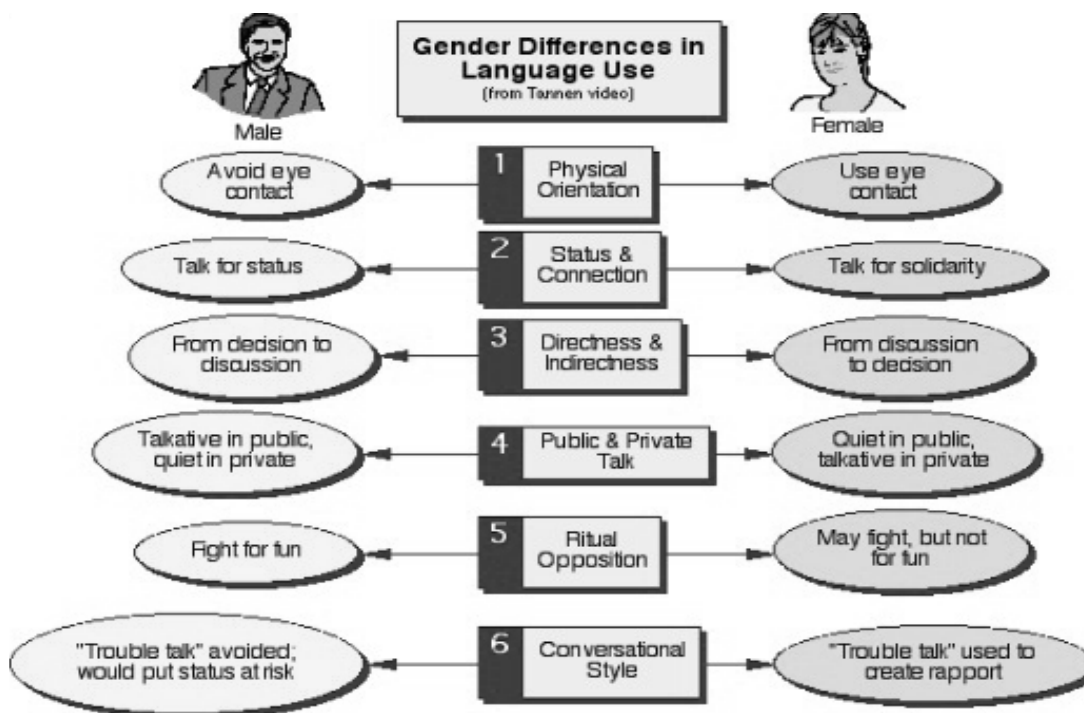


Figure 1. Gender differences in language use (Tannen, 1985)

between men and women's language use. As a first example, *When the doctor is a lady*, by West (1984), was a conversational analysis of doctor-patient talks. The study found that male doctor interrupted patients disproportionately, while female doctors were interrupted by their patients as much as or even more than the doctors did. This suggested that gender outweighed social status in this case. These results were supported by Woods (1989), who found that in the work setting, gender was more important than status in predicting linguistic behavior, with female bosses regularly interrupted by male subordinates. Another study in this approach was DeFrancisco (1991): *The Sounds of Silence: How Men Silence Women in Marital Relations*. The author focused on non-cooperation in interaction in domestic environments. She asked seven married couples to record themselves at home for a week or more, then she interviewed the participants. She found out that women talked more than men and introduced more topics: this was associated with dominance. However, women were less successful than men in getting their topics accepted. Men used various non-cooperative strategies to control conversations, for example, no response, interruption, and silence. From these findings, the author proposed that men had the power to establish the norms of everyday conversation in the home, and women had to adapt to these norms. Various studies in this approach can be found in Coates (1998).

3.2. *The difference approach*

Some other researchers later saw the difference between men and women in speech as the result of the fundamental differences in their relation to their language, perhaps due to the different socialization and experiences early on (Tannen, 1994). This was known as (cultural) difference approach, whose followers were mostly influenced by the Western European feminist idea (Beasley,

1999:16) that men and women just were different, which entailed a concern of separatism, a deliberate choice by women to remain separate from men in some way. Though limited in number, studies in this approach gained huge readership and many critics; typical studies included *A cultural approach to Male-Female Miscommunication* by Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker's (see Coates, 1998), *That's not what I mean* (Tannen, 1986), *You just don't understand: Men and women in conversation* (Tannen, 1990) and *Men are from Mars, women are from Venus* (Gray, 1992). In *That's not what I mean*, Tannen (1986) analyzed fictions, transcription from other research and conversations recorded by herself and her friends. She concluded that women and men belong to different sub-cultures, and interactional problems between men and women are cross-cultural miscommunication.

According to Cameron (1992), as quoted in Sunderland (2004), both cultural difference and male dominance approaches represented different moments in feminism. Dominance was the moment of feminist outrage, of bearing witness to oppression in all aspects of women's lives, while difference was the moment of feminist celebration, reclaiming and revaluing women's distinctive cultural traditions. Both the dominance and difference approaches drew on essentialist notions of gender, seeing gender as naturally determined, stable and pre-existing discourse.

The two approaches were later criticized on many counts. First, language reform (political correctness) was superficial and trivial (Sunderland, 2004). Removing sexist language did not entail elimination of gender discrimination. We need to challenge the particular 'discourse practices' in which sexist assumptions are embodied by linguistic choices rather than to keep on asserting 'language' was sexist in itself (Cameron,

1992). Second, the methods used were mainly introspection and researchers' or native speakers' intuition so they were not systematic and reliable. Third, the two approaches see men and women as homogenous groups and they cannot successfully separate gender from other social variables such as power, age, context, etc. Fourth, there seems to be a simple mapping from linguistic forms and functions (Tannen 1994; James and Clarke, 1993). Five, these studies tend to exaggerate the differences, while ignoring overlaps and similarities.

Though now these two approaches are not seen as popular as they used to be in the mid-seventeen and eighteen centuries and they have received much criticism by postmodernist researchers, no one can deny their enormous contribution to the understanding of the complicated gender issues in relation to language.

3.3. *The post-modernist approach*

The 1980s and 1990s saw the emergence of a new approach to language and gender studies, namely 'post-modernist approach' (Gibbon, 1999:11), as a result of the influence of post-structuralism. However, there does not seem to be a consensus in the naming of this approach; hence, some other authors call this approach 'performance approach' (Cameron and Coates, 1989), 'post-structuralist approach' (Baxter, 2003) or 'third-wave feminist linguistics' (Mill, 2008). Underlying the difference in referring to this approach is the choice of referring terms like post-modernism or post-structuralism. As commonly understood, post-modernism refers to the general philosophical movement incorporating all fields of knowledge such as art, architecture, and also feminism. Post-modernism is best characterized by a sense of skepticism towards all universal causes, its questioning of what 'true' or 'real' knowledge is and its loss of certainty about

all absolutes (Baxter, 2003). As a branch of post-modernism, post-structuralism has a particular interest in language as a site for the construction and contestation of social meanings. So in the domain of feminism as a field of social knowledge, the term *post-modernist* seems to be more appropriate and in reality, the third way feminism (arising in the 1980s) is termed *post-modernist feminism* (following and developing from modernist feminism or the second way feminism in the 1960s and 1970s). However, when talking about the discursive approach of feminist studies, 'post-structuralist' is the more appropriate choice as post-structuralism is the theory particularly related to language study. Cameron and Mills chose to avoid using both terms in naming this approach. While Cameron highlights just one aspect of post-modernism, which is 'performance' originated from the idea of 'performativity' by Butler (1990), Mills prefers the chronological order-based name of feminism, which was the third wave feminism.

An example of studies illustrating the post-modernist approach is Deborah Cameron's *Performing Gender Identity* (Coates, 1998). In this work, she studied a conversation of a group of male students to show how gender was performed through talks, drawing on Butler's notion of performativity. The conversation was recorded while they were watching sports. Those boys talked about topics of sports, women, alcohol and other boys. Cameron argued that for men, it was as important to demonstrate that they were not gay as they were not women. That meant they performed heterosexual masculinity. Cameron showed how the talk of these men involves several features normally associated with 'cooperative' women's talk such as hedges, overlapping speech, but it also displayed more competitive features – two speakers dominated the talk, and speakers

vied for the floor. She argued that competition and cooperation as styles of talking could not be simplistically attributed to one gender or the other (like what people had claimed in the other two approaches).

While the dominance and difference approaches, seen as influenced by the second wave feminism, assume that gender pre-exists interaction and affects the way that interaction develops, post-modernist approach, influenced by the third wave feminism and post-structuralism, sees gender as constructed and the way that participants perform in conversations bring about their gender identity (Mills, 2008). The category of gender is clearly distinguished from the category of sex, in which the former should be socially developed and the latter is biologically dependent. While sex characteristic of a person is determined at birth as either female or male, and is more or less fixed, gender is fluid and keeps changing in the process of a person's development and socialization. Gender should be seen as a continuum towards femininity and masculinity, and gender is highly culture-dependent.

This new approach turns to the role of discourse generally seen as social practice, which reflects and creates how we see the world including assumptions about gender and gender inequalities. This perspective assumes that language does not simply reflect social reality but it is also constitutive of such reality. Language is constitutive rather than indexical (language simply to encode reality); then, it has the potential to help establish and maintain social and power relations, values and identities (Litosseliti, 2006). Hence, research in the post-modernist approach focuses on language *used by* men and women (to construct their own gender identities) and also, language *to talk about* them (to discursively construct gender relations, gender assumptions, etc.)

The shift in theorization of gender in relation to language entails a shift in the research methodology. While studies in the earlier two approaches were mostly done with introspection and observation (Lakoff, 1975; Spender, 1980), sociolinguistic survey and conversation analysis (Zimmerman and West, 1975; Coates, 1998), Litosseliti (2006) noted that current thinking led to an emphasis on discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis as valuable frameworks for exploring a range of text types for their contribution to the construction of gender. Since 'many proposals and basic assumptions of feminist linguistics relate to and overlap with principles of critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis' (Wodak, 1997 as quoted in Sunderland, 2004: 59) the marriage between feminism and CDA seems reasonable and inevitable. Sunderland also stated that CDA was theoretically well placed to seek and identify gendered discourses of a damaging kind. While CDA aims to show non-obvious ways in which language is involved in social relations of power and domination, feminist linguistics seeks to unveil the unequal gender relation prevalent but hidden in discourse. In fact, many feminist linguists have used CDA fruitfully in their feminist research and Lazar (2005) was the first book to explicitly bring together achievement of this theoretical approach (Sunderland, 2004).

Some examples of studies on gendered discourses include Nguyen (2011) in which she explored how Vietnamese women were represented by the print media on the International Women's Day. What she found was a number of gender assumptions that disadvantaged women in many counts, in which the 'double role' ideology prominently was argued as a social practice of a damaging kind. She challenged the gender-role assumptions and opined that the media was disseminating ideologies that went against

political efforts for gender equality. In the context of Hong Kong, Lee (2004) examined news discourse about successful female officials. The general finding of the study was that in the media discourse, female officials' career success did not prevent them from being good mothers, wives and daughters. Such a representation suggested that a woman could take care of her different roles by 'keeping the balance' and using time efficiently. The implication of such positive coverage was that if some women could make it, then all women could, and if some of them could not, then it was their fault. Another example is Lazar (2005b), in which she investigated the hegemonic forms of masculinity as revealed in a national "Family Life" advertising campaign in Singapore. The author found two contending discourses: one of egalitarian gender relations and the other of conservative gender relations. In the first place, Singaporean men were depicted as equal parents in taking care of the children. They were also caring, sensitive, nurturing, which was far different from the stereotype of men as 'authoritarian' or 'distant breadwinner'. However, there was still a gender differentiation in the roles of the mother and father in the domestic sphere. Also, when father's care was depicted, it was just limited to fun and physical play. Other mundane aspects of care such as towel-drying children and cooking for the family fell on mothers.

3.4. *Current topics for debates*

Recent research has revealed a proposal that since there are differences among groups of men as well as groups of women, less emphasis is now put on the differences between men and women as homogeneous groups. The aims of current studies are moving towards exploring how different social categories cut across the category of sex to form different groups of men and women and how the identity of these groups are being

constructed through their own language use and through particular discourses that talk about them. In IGALA 2016 (International Gender and Language Association – the best known biannual conference for language and gender studies), various presented papers were seen investigating the (problematic or disadvantaging) discursive construction of the homosexual population. In this case, the category of sexuality cuts across the category of gender to form groups of gays, lesbians and straight men and women. For example, Sunderland (IGALA 9, 2016), in *Language textbooks and sexual identity: Representation and consumption*, opined that students would not identify with the relentless hetero-normative textbook portrayals of mum-dad families and boy-girl romance. However, sexuality representation is complex and no one expects equal numbers of gay and straight characters; in many contexts, the only possible textual representation of sexuality is heterosexuality, so she proposes that teachers may be able to interrogate hetero-normative texts, opening up previously closed readings. An interesting study by Man Yu (IGALA 9, 2016) was on the representation of 'leftover women' in the Hong Kong reality television show. 'Leftover' women in this study were defined as single women in their 30s – 40s, and she found that the programme framed the participants finding partners as a battle/ race and characterized them as different types of women. This shaped views on different types of women vis-à-vis their marriageability. Other studies in this trend include Lazar's (IGALA 9, 2016) on the Pink dot campaign in Singapore, Rowlett's (IGALA 9, 2016) on same sex relationships and the practice of 'sponsorship' in Cambodia, and Cooke's (IGALA 9, 2016) on queering ESOL – towards a cultural politics of LGBT in the ESOL classroom. Apparently, in exploring gender relations and gender assumptions

in discourse, the current trend is towards focusing on sub-groups of men and women in the society. More of such studies can normally be found in *Gender and Language* journal and *Discourse and Society* journal.

4. Conclusion

Research in language and gender has been thriving nonstop and has been experiencing different debates as presented in this study. The debates can never be said to be over, though the trend has been moving from seeing language as reflection of gender towards language as construction of gender, and from seeing men and women as two homogenous groups to focusing on different groups of men or women. People have also started to move from discourse produced by men and women to discourse about them. These moves have been enabled, influenced and supported by emerging philosophical as well as linguistic theories. Researchers who are interested in language and gender studies, hence, need to see where and how they wish to position their studies in this 'language and gender debate map'.

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NGÔN NGỮ VÀ GIỚI: CÁC HƯỚNG TIẾP CẬN TỪ TRƯỚC ĐẾN NAY

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Tóm tắt: Nghiên cứu này trình bày và phân tích các hướng tiếp cận khác nhau trong lĩnh vực ngôn ngữ và giới, một lĩnh vực thuộc ngôn ngữ học bắt đầu hình thành từ những năm đầu của thập kỷ 70 của thế kỷ trước. Các đường hướng thống trị giới, khác biệt giới và hậu hiện đại được phân tích và trình bày theo trình tự thời gian cùng với những nghiên cứu điển hình nhằm minh họa cho những đặc điểm của từng đường hướng. Ngoài ra, tác giả cũng đưa ra các nhận định, so sánh đặc điểm của các đường hướng để người đọc có thể hiểu rõ hơn về những đường hướng này. Bài báo cũng nhấn mạnh những chủ đề và những tranh luận hiện nay trong lĩnh vực ngôn ngữ và giới được thể hiện trong các hội thảo ngôn ngữ và giới (IGALA) gần đây nhất.

Từ khóa: ngôn ngữ và giới, khác biệt giới, thống trị giới, chủ nghĩa hậu cấu trúc, ngôn ngữ và xu hướng tình dục

HOMOPHONY RE-VISITED

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Abstract: Homophony is a common phenomenon in languages and various studies on homophony have been conducted. However, homophones are just generally understood as different lexical units with similar or identical pronunciation but different meanings. This paper analyzes different views on homophones in existing literature and presents a comprehensive, complete and scientific view on homophony in languages.

Keywords: homonym, homonymy, homophone, homophony, homograph

1. Statement of the problem

Homophony is phonetic duplication of at least two linguistic units. Homonyms, pursuant to the most conventional and common understanding, are words having the same pronunciation, but different meanings. Homophony occurs in all languages as a natural necessity, since linguistic signs (the signifiers) are limited while what they represent of the real world (the signified) is infinite.

Although all authors in existing literature have the same understanding of homophony, there has not been a uniformed definition of homonyms. The most general definition, among dozens of these, recognizes uniformity of language units in terms of representation and their difference in terms of meanings. However, there is serious disagreement as to which elements of the signifier and the signified should be regarded as fundamental causes of homophony and how they are related to each other. There could be an alternative solution: homophones may be considered words or linguistic units of different levels.

Bally's definition of homophones was one of the earliest, which states, "two signs sharing the same signified but represented by different signifiers are homophones"

(Bally, 1955). There cannot be agreement to the contrary, but this definition seems too broad compared to all other definitions of homophones, as it encompasses signs at all language levels. In addition, it is too generic, since it does not clarify which elements of the signifier and the signified can be reliable for identifying homophony. How to interpret "the same signified" is not an easy question as the signifier of linguistic signs can be either sound or writing. In languages of different types, at lexical level, there always exist:

- Linguistic units sharing the same phonetic (i.e. the same pronunciation) and spelling forms (i.e. homonyms, in the strictest sense of this term);

- Linguistic units sharing the same phonetic form (i.e. the same pronunciation) but having different spellings (i.e. homophones);

- Linguistic units sharing the same spelling, but having different phonetic forms (i.e. different ways of pronunciation, or homographs).

In dealing with homophony, how should we treat this situation? Could we treat homophones as linguistic units of different levels? These are the questions to which this paper aims to respond, apart from presenting different views of homophony, including our own position.

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2. Different views of homophony

Not only Bally (1955) but several other authors also talk about homophony. Bloomfield (1968) deals with homophony of “different language forms”, while Richter (1926) mentions homophony of several “sound sequences”, and Smirnitskij (1948) talks of homophony of “linguistic units”. It is possible to interpret homophony as such (Maslove, 1963), but most other authors (Slitterlin, 1907; Il’ish, 1948; Filin, 1960; Tauli, 1968; amongst others), define homophones as words or morphs, or they finally end up dealing with homophony at word level (Moloshnaja, 1960; Korovina, 1962; Pacak, 1963). Perhaps, then, the term “homophones” can only be used to refer to words as units at lexical level.

Next, it is necessary to clarify what can be understood as the identity among the signifiers, and what are differences in the signified. In existing literature, the identity of the signifiers is primarily interpreted as the identical sounds of homophones (Shajkevich, 1950; Marujio, 1960; Stepanov, 1966). Several authors also claim that identical spelling cannot be regarded as signals of secondary homophony because written language is merely a product of spoken language (Smirnitskij, 1956; Levkovskjaa, 1956; Shajkevich, 1962; Prorokova, 1966; Tyshler, 1988). That is not accurate. Phenomena in written language are apparently related to linguistic phenomena in general, so they must be considered linguistically as phenomena of spoken language (Leont’ev, 1964; Amirova, 1977). Therefore, it is clear that definitions of homophony cannot but consider the sameness in the written forms of words and those words that only share the same spelling (e.g. *tear*₁ / *tir*/ [a drop of clear saline fluid secreted by the lacrimal gland and diffused between the eye and eyelids to moisten the parts and facilitate their motion] and *tear*₂ [teə]- [to separate parts of or pull apart by force],

which do not need to be excluded from the list of homophones.

Other contrastive views also exist, which posit that the sameness of the signifiers is merely graphic identity (spelling/writing) while words’ phonetic forms are disregarded. This seems to enjoy very little support, as it only pays attention to the written forms of language (Saranda, 1968). However, this position seems to linger vaguely in most applied research works, primarily studies on text automation. Those studies seem to rely largely on data of written language, general or specific dictionaries in which language is accessed in written forms, and homophones are considered only when they share the same spelling. This view is incomplete as it does not consider a major element of the signifier – the phonetic forms of words. Consequently, homophones as acoustic variants of language do not enjoy identical spellings in written forms (e.g., *pale* & *pail* in English; *chong* (*đèn*) (lit. leave the light on late at night) - *trong* (*ngoài*) (in vs. out), *châu* (*báu*) (*pearl*) - *trâu* (*bò*) (*buffalo*), *giong/rong/dong* in Vietnamese, and they will be excluded from homophonic relations.

Recognition of the independence of the spoken and written forms of language reveals that the signified of linguistic signs can appear in either form – the phonetic form of words (among various acoustic variations of language) and the graphic form of words (in spelling/writing). Therefore, these possibilities must be considered when dealing with identity of the signifiers. Most authors acknowledge the identity in both sounds and spellings of the words in question, and consider them signals of homophony.

Nevertheless, there remain unclear issues, e.g. how these signals correlate, whether both of them must always simultaneously exist, or it suffices if only one of them appears.

Some authors believe that identical

spelling is a compulsory signal and must accompany identical pronunciation (Il'ish, 1948; Shanskij, 1964; Akhtiamov, 1966; Arnold, 1959). They believe that the two formal signals of homophony are phonetic and spelling identity of the signified. These signals are inter-related. However, if this approach held, words that share the same pronunciation (e.g. *pale* vs. *pail*) or the same spelling (e.g. *tear* vs. *tear*), i.e. they are only similar in terms of sound or spelling, would not be included in the lists of homophones.

Still, other authors believe that identical spelling is unnecessary. It only adds to the compulsory requirement that the words must share the same phonetic forms (Gleenough, Kittredge 1961). This, in essence, is no different from the earlier approach that underestimates the importance of identical spelling, which, again, excludes words sharing the same spelling from the list of homophones.

Finally, some authors attach the same importance to both phonetic and spelling identity. According to these authors, formal signals of homophony seem to exist in an *or-relation*. However, they do not clearly explain that *or-relation*, or whether it is a strict (exclusive) relation or a normal one. In the former case, possibly only one of these signals, i.e. phonetic identity, or graphic identity, is sufficient rather than both for the identification of homophones. One example is by Arakin (1958), who defines homophones as words "sharing the same sounds or the same graphic representations (spelling)". This definition would exclude words that are identical in both sounds and spellings such as *deal*₁ (quantity) and *deal*₂ (contract), i.e. words that cannot be suspected as non-homophones. In the latter, i.e. when the *or-relation* is normal and weak, only one of these two formal signals is sufficient for identifying homophones, whatever it is. Yet the simultaneous occurrence of both these

signals is not taken into consideration. This view is also reflected in Koonin's definition (1940), which states that homophones are words sharing the same pronunciation and spelling. Such interpretation of the signifiers is the only accurate one since it allows for inclusion of homophones in both sounds and spellings. The correspondence of formal signals of homophony in this approach can be captured in this logical formula: I = P O S, where I stands for Identical form of words, P for Phonetic identity, S for Spelling, and O is the *or-relation*; homophony occurs when both P and S are present. It should be added that while all authors agree on the same explanation of spelling identity, they seem to differ in their views to acoustic identity. Some call acoustic identity phonetic identity (Bloomfield, 1968) or phonemic identity (Tauli, 1968) or superficial sounds (Smirnitskij, 1948) of word forms, while others call them identity of "sound structure" of words (Vinogradov, 1960) or of allophones of words (Durovic, 1953), or "superficial coincidence of sounds" (Akhmanova, 1957), or "the same acoustic impression of series of sounds" (Richter, 1926), or merely similar sounds (Smirnitskij, 1956) or similar pronunciation (Greenough, Kittredge, 1961; Il'ish 1948). In communication, homophony could be the first barrier to the listener rather than the speaker, so such definitions need to pay attention to acoustic identity, i.e. the phonetic form of words and their sounds rather than how they are articulated or uttered. In this line, spelling identity must also be interpreted as spelling (graphic) identity, or the sameness of the letters that represent the words.

Definitions of homophones contain one point that relates to the difference in the signified. It is strange that a number of authors do not pay attention to this point. However, in most cases, definitions

also include differentiation of meanings. Moreover, they only deal with differences in lexical meanings (denotation) and these differences are sometimes directly mentioned in definitions (Skeat, 1978; Marrujo, 1960) or drawn out of contexts (Budagov, 1958). In this approach, only one of the elements of the signified is paid attention – that is, the lexical meanings, while grammatical meanings are underestimated. Thus, words like *fall* (*v*) and *fall* (*n*), or *round* (*adj*) and *round* (*adv*), *lợi* (*n.*, *gum*) - *lợi* (*adj.*, *beneficial*); *lang* (*n.*) [as in *khoai lang* (*sweet potato*)] - *lang* (*adj.*, *promiscuous* or *having white patches on skin, hair or fur*) are not considered homophones. These words are apparently identical in form, and differ only in their grammatical meanings (General Linguistics, 1972).

In some works, differences in the signified are merely regarded as differences in grammatical meanings – by and large, these are differences in terms of parts of speech (Moloshnaja 1960; Korovina 1962). Disregarding differences in lexical meanings will ultimately result in words which are identical in form and different in lexical meanings (e.g. *palm*₁ (*part of a hand*) and *palm*₂ (*a kind of tree*); *đường*₁ (*sugar*) and *đường*₂ (*way, road*) being excluded from homophones.

Other works, however, regard differences in both lexical and grammatical meanings are signals of homophony. Pacak (1963), for instance, points out “meanings that are completely different and can be different syntactic functions”. Nevertheless, this definition does not make very clear the features of relations among these signals. While both lexical and grammatical meanings are included in the conceptualization of the signified, differences in words’ grammatical meanings should be regarded as less important signals than differences in lexical meanings in the consideration of homophony. The occurrence of

either of these two signals, or their simultaneous presence must be considered characteristics of homophony. The reciprocal relations among these signals are clearly presented in Durovic’s definition (1953) who defines homophones as *two or more words with identical phonetic sequence but with semantic or grammatical differences or both*.

Thus, content signals as well as formal signals of homophony are in non-corresponding relation. This relation can be represented by the formula $D - M_1 R M_n$ where D stands for differences in content, $M_1 M_n$ differences in corresponding lexical and grammatical meanings, and R represents selective relation. The above accounts clarify 4 major signals of homophony: 2 in form (identity in sounds and spellings) and 2 in content, which are lexical and grammatical differences). On such a basis, it is clear that the 4 signals are necessary and sufficient for identifying the existence or non-existence of homophonic relation among words. However, on the one hand, it is necessary to clarify features of relations among formal signals of homophony, and on the other hand, relations among content signals. Homophonic relations among words can only arise in case they are identical in terms of the signifier while differing in terms of the content (the signified).

3. A scientific understanding of homophones

Thus, definitions of homophones are based on both formal identity as well as meaning differences among words under investigation. Homophony, in conventional interpretation, is a phenomenon which is subject to rigorous control within a language system. Homophony among languages, i.e., the similarity of words in different language systems, is concerned with a completely different aspect. This phenomenon is specially studied in a subfield of linguistics – contrastive linguistics – and definitely this subfield of linguistics must have

its own terminology for various concepts. Homophones, in the strictest sense of the word – concern words of the same language.

Homophones can also be words related to different historical periods of the same language (cf., *ngặt* meaning *poor* in old Vietnamese and *ngặt* meaning *rigorous, well-supported [argument]* in modern Vietnamese). Also, it is impossible to contrast the phonetic forms of words of different periods. They do not occur in speech simultaneously and cannot be in any relation to one another. Signals of homophony at lexeme level and word level differ, so it is impossible to produce a single definition for both.

Considering all the above, it is possible to define homophones (at lexeme level) as words of the same language at the same period of existence which are identical with regards to elements of the signifier, i.e. identical sound and writing in all representations but differ in elements of the signified, i.e. lexical and grammatical meanings. Based on this definition, homophones can be identified in accordance with the following criteria:

a. Words are considered homophones when they have identical signifiers (including both sound and spelling) but differ in one of the elements of the signified, i.e. word's lexical and grammatical meanings;

b. Differences in lexical meanings are interpreted as the absence of derivative relationship between the signified, i.e. when one of the meanings of one word is not in any derivative relation with one of the meanings of the other word. Differences in lexical meanings form a basis for homophony.

c. Differences in grammatical meaning are differences in common grammatical features of the whole class of words, i.e. in parts of speech.

Like synonyms and other lexicogrammatical groups, homophones fall into a correlative category. A word can be in homophonic category only when it

correlates to another (or others) which has/have the same form but different meanings. Thus, homophones occur in language not as individuals but as groups. Also, the fundamental structural units having homophonic relation are not isolated words but a group of words which enjoy homophonic relation and form a homophonic sequence (just like synonyms that make up a synonymous sequence rather than individual words).

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TRỞ LẠI HIỆN TƯỢNG ĐỒNG ÂM

Hà Quang Năng

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Tóm tắt: Đồng âm là một hiện tượng phổ biến trong ngôn ngữ và nhiều nghiên cứu về hiện tượng đồng âm đã được thực hiện. Tuy nhiên, đồng âm nói chung chỉ được hiểu là các đơn vị từ vựng khác nhau có cách phát âm giống hệt nhau hoặc tương tự nhau nhưng ý nghĩa khác nhau. Bài báo này phân tích các quan điểm khác nhau về đồng âm trong các công trình hiện có và trình bày một quan điểm toàn diện, hoàn chỉnh và khoa học hơn về đồng âm trong ngôn ngữ.

Từ khoá: đồng âm đồng tự, hiện tượng đồng âm đồng tự, đồng âm dị tự, hiện tượng đồng âm dị tự, đồng tự dị âm

INFORMATION

READING IMAGES - THE GRAMMAR OF VISUAL DESIGN

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1. Introduction



“Print- and screen-based technologies” have innovated the definition of *literacy*. The traditional definitions are no longer comprehensive enough in a world where texts are becoming increasingly multimodal - they communicate to us through graphics, pictures, layout techniques as well as through words. In fact, “*it is difficult these days to find a single text which uses solely verbal English*” (Goodman, 1996). *Visual literacy*, as its name suggests, denotes the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image. This notion extends the meaning of *literacy*,

which commonly signifies interpretation of a written or printed text.

Visual images, like all representations, “*are never innocent or neutral reflections of reality...they re-present for us: that is, they offer not a mirror of the world but an interpretation of it*” (Midalia, 1999, p. 131). For that reason, several questions are posed to the viewers. Some common ones might be “*How can we come to justified and grounded meaning(s) of the picture?*”; and “*How can we understand the basic structure of an image text?*” (Hermawan, 2011, p.147). The path of seeking answers to these questions suggests that there should be an underlying pattern or structure that people can rely on to interpret the meaning of visual texts.

To this direction, **Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design (second edition)**, by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, offers “*a usable description of major compositional structures which have become established in the course of the history of Western visual semiotics, and to analyse how they are used to produce meaning by contemporary image-makers*” (p.1). Building on the reputation of the first edition (1996) as “the first systematic and comprehensive account of the grammar of visual design” (https://books.google.com.vn/books/about/Reading_Images.html?id=wprZmJFXUXIC&redir_esc=y), this second publication (2006) updates its data

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source with new materials on moving images, colours, web and web-based images, as well as anticipates the future of visual communication. Taking Hallidayan social semiotic approach to language as the framework, **Reading Images** offers a model of three accounts for images: representational meaning, interactional meaning, compositional meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen consider the model of three accounts works well not only for language but also for thinking about all modes of representation, hence images (p.20). They also claim to provide the readers of the book with a handy “tool-kit” for reading images throughout the explanation of theory and sample visual analysis. The book consists of eight chapters and a complimentary postscript, each of which is summarized in the following part.

2. A journey of the book

The journey of **Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design (second edition)** starts with justification of the authors on what they really mean by “grammar” and why they use “the grammar of visual design” as a subtitle of the book. As followers of the Hallidayan School, they see grammatical forms as resources for encoding interpretations of experience and forms of social (inter) action. Their “visual grammar” is a “*general grammar of contemporary visual design in “Western” cultures, an account of explicit and implicit knowledge and practices around a resource, consisting of the elements and rules underlying a culture-specific form of visual communication*” (p.3). Also in this **Introduction** section, the authors explain how the Social Semiotic Theory of Representation lays a solid theoretical framework for their work on visual representation. They exemplify several child-drawings in order to clarify what is meant by sign-making, the signifiers and the signified. Kress and van Leeuwen notice that visual design, in their belief, fulfils the

three metafunctions – ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function as in Halliday’s terms.

Chapter 1, *The semiotic landscape: language and visual communication*, discusses in detail the themes that the two authors have touched upon in the Introduction. Kress and van Leeuwen would like to treat images as seriously as linguistic forms in communication; and by doing so, they refuse Barthes’ argument that “*the meaning of images (and of other semiotic codes) is always related to, and in a sense, depended on verbal text*” (Barthes, 1967, cited in Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.17). Basing on their analysis of several examples of visual literacy from books for young children, Kress and van Leeuwen prove the need for redrawing the boundary between the mode of writing and the visual arts as well as introducing the concept of design to education. The chapter ends with a note on social semiotic theory of communication where the authors summarize key points about each metafunction and note on which chapter(s) readers can find specific explanations and example analysis for each. The next two chapters deal with *patterns of presentation* which the “grammar of visual design” makes available, and therefore, “*with the way we can encode experience visually*” (p. 15).

Chapter 2, *Narrative representations: Designing social action*, addresses the issue of narrative representation. The chapter labels those involved in the messages exchange as *represented participants*, i.e. what/who are in the visuals, and *interactive participants*, i.e. who participate in the act of communication. A large proportion of this chapter is then devoted to narrative processes which are categorized into different types according to the kinds of vector and the number and kind of participants involved. Examples for analysis in this chapter are taken mostly from newspapers and photographs. The authors finish the chapter with a table giving

the correspondences between linguistic and visual narrative processes.

The issue of conceptual representation is elaborated in **Chapter 3 – Conceptual representations: Designing social constructs**. In this chapter, Kress and van Leeuwen categorize processes into classificational, analytical, symbolic, and embedding. The authors complete the chapter by discussing “*the points of contact between the way conceptual structures are realized in language and images*”. For example, they explain that the Visual Classificational and Analytical structures may be similar to Intensive and Possessive Attribute clauses respectively. They also note that there are more differences than similarities since in many cases we cannot figure out the linguistic equivalence of the visual semiotic.

Chapters 4 and 5 deal with patterns of interaction, or in other words, “what we can do to, or for, each other with visual communication, and with the relations between the makers and viewers of visual texts which this entails” (p.15).

Chapter 4, **Representation and interaction: designing the position of the viewer**, shifts to the interaction between the image and the viewer. Here Kress and van Leeuwen explicate how images place the audience into a given position. They also explain that since the producers are absent from the place where the actual communication is completed, social relations and the relations between the producer and the viewer are “*represented rather than enacted*” (p.116). The direction of the look, the gaze of represented participant, the size of frame, and the viewing angle all play important roles in identifying the relation between the represented participants and the interactive participants.

Chapter 5, **Modality: designing models of reality**, looks for how to evaluate the credibility of the images and thus the messages offered by the images. Kress and van Leeuwen remind readers that modality markers in the messages and textual cues are what we rely on to weigh

the reliability of the information we receive. The authors go on reasoning why modality should be “interpersonal” rather than “ideational”, and basing on such justification, concluding that in visual communication, modality judgements are dependent on “*what is considered real (or true, or scared) in the social group for which the representation is primarily intended*” (p.156). Colours, hence, serve as “a marker of naturalistic modality” in terms of three scales: *colour saturation, colour differentiation, and colour modulation*. Other key markers of visual modality include contextualization, representation, depth, illumination, and brightness. Producers of visuals can configure the modality choices to express specific meanings.

While Chapter 6, **The meaning of composition**, works with the “textual” function, the way in which “*representations and communicative acts cohere into meaningful whole*” (p.15), Chapter 7, **Materiality and meaning**, specifies the materiality of visual designs – the tools to make them with and the materials to make them on. Both of them are hence devoted to the discussion of meanings. Chapter 6 details the compositional meaning of the design and takes examples from a variety of sources to illustrate how compositional meaning can be built through factors of information value, salience and framing. Meanwhile, in chapter 7, the authors discuss the role of technology and further elaborate the function of colours.

Chapter 8, **The third dimension**, is in fact a courageous effort of the authors to try out the application of visual grammar for three-dimensional visual and moving images.

The journey of Reading Images closes with the postscript of the authors, which presents a final example of a child’s painting. Here they analyse the painting in all three meanings: representational, conceptual and compositional in order to prove that “*the cognitive and the affective are not antithetical but inevitably always co-present.*”

3. Evaluation and application

3.1. Contribution

Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design provides a systematic and comprehensive account of grammar of visual design. Built on a strong foundation of social semiotic theory, the book serves as insightful notions and detailed information on how to understand visuals. It is of particular interest to graphic designer researchers since it has established frameworks to understand the ways in which theoretical design questions can be asked and answered. The book is also valuable to linguistic researchers whose research interests are within the field of multimodal discourse.

This publication has also been designed in a user-friendly mode, with chapters following quite the same organization: starting with an introduction into the theoretical background for the issue, extending into arguments for the framework, followed by detailed analysis of example visuals with constant reference to the framework, and ending with a charted summary of the framework. The ready-made “tool-kit” for understanding visuals proposed in the book is of practical application for those who want to break down the images into observable tiny pieces to comprehend their meanings. To me, **Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design** proves an excellent source of knowledge to study visual designs, without which, it must be very challenging, elusive and nearly impossible to make meaning of. Its authors, Kress and van Leeuwen, are indeed pioneering a largely unexplored territory.

3.2. Critique

While being considered as the first systematic and comprehensive account of grammar of visual design, the series of **Reading Images** in general are not flawless, according to a number of researchers. However, little critique can be found regarding the 2006 edition of **Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design**. In this section, I will try to draw on reviewing articles of the first edition

and compare the reviewers’ viewpoints with what I can observe in the second edition.

Forceville (1999) expresses his concern about a number of problems relating to methodology and perspective in the approach of Kress and van Leeuwen. According to Forceville, though defining the eight markers of visual modality and saying sensible things about each of these markers, Kress and van Leeuwen “*have not provided enough discussion on how some of them relate to one another, and how they can be used in the practical analysis of specific pictures*”. In the 2006 edition, I also question the relation between the named visual modality markers, and observe a lack of thorough analysis of given colored photos (Plate 1 to Plate 8).

Forceville (1999) asserts that in the 1996 book there are a substantial number of pictures whose interpretations are debatable, and he quotes several visual analyses in the book to illustrate. When comparing the two editions, I realize that in the new one, Kress and van Leeuwen do remove a number of images with questionable interpretations; however, for those that they have decided to keep, they persist on the existing explanations. Yet, there is no official reasoning from the authors as for on what criteria they decide to retain or omit certain images.

Haught (2012) doubts the reliability of many hypotheses presented in the book. He adds that though he places beliefs in most hypotheses, there should be qualitative and quantitative research being done to test them. Haught (2012) mentions, for example, Kress and van Leeuwen’s argument that visuals provide a rich and unique mode of communication for humans. While he accepts that this might be true, he calls for visual communication researchers to “*build theory regarding representation and rhetoric based in what is seen, and not what is said*”. Haught also remarks that in his opinion, the idea that social semiotics can be used for modal symbol analysis “*requires an additional layer of rigor to attach the correct societal mode to its symbolism*” and

looks for Kress and van Leeuwen's rationale for using social semiotics in the first place. In the 2006 edition, the two authors have noted that the new version "offers a much more comprehensive theory of visual communication", and they have dedicated a significant proportion of the Introduction and Chapter 1 to explain how a social semiotic theory works for visual communication.

4. Application

For people with linguistics background, the accounts of visual grammar presented in the book help break down images into more accessible, interpretable objects for studying.

The book offers a framework for still image analysis in "Western culture", which is perfectly what I am looking for to frame my research. The most valuable part of the book to my work lies in Chapters 1 to 7 since Chapter 8 concentrates on 3-D and moving objects. I believe to benefit a great deal from the charted summary of each chapter since the highlighted points here can function as the key to direct my analysis. Also, I learn from the way the authors analyse still images, especially those depicting maps (Figure 2.13), residence (Figure 5.9), food (Plate 4), to name but a few. As for analyses of fine arts like sculpture, surrealism works and such, though my research does not concern with the area, they still prove excellent examples to understand the theory.

There are challenges in applying the presented theory into practice, though. Seen from the book, each image offers so many aspects to study on. Therefore, I am considering either to focus on one or two metafunction(s) only or to narrow down the number of images being included in my research inventory. Besides, there is an urgent need to trace back to Social Semiotics Approach by Halliday so as to map the concepts for textual analysis to the appropriate ones for visual analysis.

I would highly recommend **Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design (2006)** to anyone interested in communication,

the media and the arts as well as those who are fascinated by the strong migration of plain written texts to the multi-semiotic Internet-based texts. As we move from a culture dominated by language to one in which visual literacy becomes increasingly important, this book provides an invaluable "tool kit" for comprehending images.

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