

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG



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NGÀNH: NGOẠI NGỮ

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**HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVESITY
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

GRADUATION PAPER

**A STUDY ON HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE
PRESENTATION FOR THE FOURTH-YEAR ENGLISH
MAJORS AT HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITY**

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HAI PHONG - 2010

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG

Nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

Sinh viên:Mã số:.....

Lớp:Ngành:.....

Tên đề tài:

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Nhiệm vụ đề tài

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp
(về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI

Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Người hướng dẫn thứ hai:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 12 tháng 04 năm 2010

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 10 tháng 07 năm 2010

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010

HIỆU TRƯỞNG

GS.TS.NGŨT *Trần Hữu Nghị*

PHẦN NHẬN XÉT TÓM TẮT CỦA CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN

1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp:

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2. Đánh giá chất lượng của khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...):

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3. Cho điểm của cán bộ hướng dẫn (ghi bằng cả số và chữ):

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Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010

Cán bộ hướng dẫn

(họ tên và chữ ký)

NHẬN XÉT ĐÁNH GIÁ
CỦA NGƯỜI CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

1. Đánh giá chất lượng đề tài tốt nghiệp về các mặt thu thập và phân tích tài liệu, số liệu ban đầu, giá trị lí luận và thực tiễn của đề tài.

2. Cho điểm của người chấm phản biện :

(Điểm ghi bằng số và chữ)

Ngày..... tháng..... năm 2010

Người chấm phản biện

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Student

Nguyen Thi Thu

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Nowadays, English is the most widely used language in the world and plays an important role together with the development of society and technologies. English is not only the effective means of communication but also show its progressive effects on many aspects of life.

Once upon a time, when the civilization of mankind was not appeared, our father knew basing on natural phenomena to create and sum up into many idioms which was short, stable but had a full meaning to help the children could remember, think and do them. Up to now, idioms have kept a big role both in producing agriculture and daily life of English and Vietnamese people. It becomes more and more perfect to contribute to mankind.

Moreover, idioms bring more plentiful culture of its own nations. Most of us always concern the idioms related to the weather. Those are representative idioms in literature which both English and Vietnamese people interest, pay much attention to in all activities which they take part in such as: doing outside activities, traveling, doing agriculture, etc.... Specially, weather is a major factor to participate in creating a main crop more abundant than usual.

Bearing it in my mind, the author desires to raise readers' awareness of and broaden their vocabularies of weather – related idioms. It is the nature beauty and the former generations' precious experience and educating lessons that cause readers' interest and love for idioms. I hope that learners will understand the using of weather idioms in English-Vietnamese idioms. That is also the main reasons motivating me to carry out this research: **“English – Vietnamese idioms related to the weather.”**

2. Aims of the study

Being aware of the fact that idioms are extremely difficult topic for foreign learners and native speakers. My research is aimed at:

- Providing the description of English – Vietnamese idioms to realize their similarities and differences.
- Comparing and contrasting some certain English – Vietnamese idioms related to the weather to find out the similarities and differences in their meaning and usage as well as in the two countries' culture and society.
- Helping the learners use right idioms in right situations.

3. Scope of the study

During the study process, I have been attracted by the weather in English and Vietnamese idioms. Due to time allowance and limited knowledge, all the weather idioms in English - Vietnamese can not be covered, therefore, some main points will be discussed:

- The importance of English - Vietnamese idioms related to the weather in daily life.
- The similarities and differences in the people's feeling, attitude and experience towards the weather in English – Vietnamese idioms, partially reflecting the two nations' culture and society.

4. Method of the study

To carry out this research, some methods have been used.

- Data collection through reference books, internet, dictionary, etc...
- Data analysis
- Discussion with friends, teachers and supervisor.

5. Design of the study

This paper consists three main parts, helping an easy exploration and practical benefits.

Part I: Introduction

Part II: Development

Chapter 1: Theoretical background

Chapter 2: English – Vietnamese idioms related to the weather.

Chapter 3: Some difficulties for English learners to English idioms related to the weather.

Part III: Conclusion.

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter I: General theoretical background

1. Definition of idioms

An idiom is an expression whose meaning is not compositional – that is, whose meaning does not follow from the meaning of the individual words of which it is composed (website: wikipedia.org/wiki/idiom-22k).

In the English expression to *kick the bucket*, for example, listener knowing only the meaning of *kick* and *bucket* would be unable to deduce the expression's actual meaning, which is to *die*. Although it can refer literally to the act of striking a specific bucket with a foot, English native speakers rarely use it that way.

Idiom is a speech form or an expression of a given language that is peculiar to it grammatically or can not be understood from the individual meaning of its elements. (Website: www.answer.com/topic/idiom).

For instance, *to fall out* mean to quarrel, but neither *fall* nor *out* has a sense of quarrel. Another example is *a feather is one's cap* which means *an honor or a success, of which one can be proud*. The meaning of this idiom is metaphorical one. *Under the rose* is also very difficult to understand from the literal meaning of its component words, its true meaning is *secretly*.

An idiom is a word or phrase which means something different from what it says – it is usually a metaphor. Idioms are common phrases or term whose meaning are not literal, but are figurative and only known through their common uses. (<http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idiom>)

Idiom is a phrase or sentence whose meaning is not clear from the meaning of its individual words and which must be learnt as whole unit. (in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary).

The Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics regards an idiom as “an expression which function as a single unit and whose meaning can not be worked out from its separate parts.”

- Thành ngữ là những cụm từ hay câu có nghĩa không rõ nếu cộng nghĩa của các từ riêng biệt; do vậy thành ngữ phải được coi là một đơn vị hoàn chỉnh. An idiom is a phrase or sentence whole meaning is not clear from the meaning of its individual words; therefore, it must be considered a whose unit. (Xuân Bá.2006-p98.*Trau dòì ngữ pháp và từ vựng tiếng anh*.NXB Đại học Sư Phạm.)

- *Thành ngữ* hoặc là những cụm từ mang ngữ nghĩa cố định (phần lớn không tạo thành câu hoàn chỉnh về mặt ngữ pháp), (không thể thay thế và sửa đổi về mặt ngôn từ) và độc lập riêng rẽ với từ ngữ hay hình ảnh mà thành ngữ sử dụng trong việc tạo thành những câu nói hoàn chỉnh. An idiom is a meaningful stable phrase (most of them do not make a full sentence in tern of grammar), (cannot be replaced and modified in terms of language), and separated and independently from the language or images which idioms are used to create complete sentences.

(From www.vi.wikiquote.org/wiki/thanh_ngu_viet_nam)

From the above definitions of English idioms, it can be defined that English idioms are some special language structure units- phrases, words groups and expression, their meaning always can not be inferred from the literal meaning of the constituting- words of idioms, their meaning should be understood from the conventional form of whole idioms. From the broad sense, the English idioms include the phrases, common saying, proverbs, and idiomatic

phrases, slang a two- part allegorical saying and allusion and so on.

2. The Origins of Idioms

2.1 Idioms from cognition of animals

Human beings are not the only animated objects in the world. There are all kinds of animals throughout the world. Some animals live far away from human beings, such as polar bears. Because they live so far that common people are not familiar with them, the unfamiliar animal terms are seldom used in languages. But some other animals live near to human beings, such as domestic animals. Human beings raise them as pets, keep them for food or make them guards to protect people. As a result, relatively, human beings clearly know their habits and characteristics. Such animal terms occur in human language more frequently as in “*cats and dogs*”, “*let the cat out of the bag*”, “*as wise as an owl*”. It is clear that people often associate certain qualities with certain creatures. These qualities often arouse certain reactions or emotions. For example, the beaver is chiefly a North American animal. Its constant activity, its habit of gnawing down trees and building complex “homes” and its skill and ingenuity in doing this have earned for the animal the name eager beaver, which describes a person who is anxious to get something done, works hard, and is somewhat impatient.

2.2 Idioms from cognition of natural environment

The natural environment also left deep imprints in culture. Britain is an island; it is located on the British Isles. To its south, it is the English Channel and the Straits of Dover. To its east, it is the North Sea. There are many idioms connected with sea, fish, sailor, trade and navigation, for example, “*go by the board*”. This idiom originated from the Boat Age. “The board” refers to the side of a boat. In the storm, if the rail is broken, the captain will have two choices.

One is to fix it, and the other is to let it go by the board and fall into the water. The former will offer people the slim chance of survival but the later will lead to death. Now people use this idiom to mean “failure of a plan”. There are other examples: take someone down a peg; steer clear of; tide over; as close as an oyster; cast an anchor to windward; hoist sail while the wind is fair; like a ship without a rudder; between the devil and the deep blue sea.

2.3 Idioms from cognition of weather

Weather is very important in our life, from many years ago, people have based on it to develop economy. People observe and interest in the natural phenomena and they have summed up into many idioms. That is the reason why I want to make this research. Some idioms about the weather such as: brass-monkey weather, lovely weather for ducks, etc...

2.4 Idioms from cognition of amusement

English idioms connected with amusement show adventurousness, teamwork spirit, mobility and violence. In card game, each important move involves risk. Americans are ready to venture for a winning, especially from bad luck. When you play cards with other, you are eager to win so you maybe “*have a card up one’s sleeve*”. At the end of each round, the winner “throws up the cards” and other players follow suit. In this way, the cards, which are held by each player, are shown to all. There is no secret in this. There is a sense of frankness and openness. There are many idioms from baseball, such as, “*to not get to first base*”. This idiom means “failing early or at the beginning of an attempt”.

2.5 Idioms from cognition of culinary art and food

There are some idioms containing diet terms in English. Bread, cheese and butter are the staple diet in Anglo-American culture. And many idioms are related to them such as “*baker’s dozen*”. This idiom originated from England in 15th century. At that time, there were some rules on weight of bread for sale. But it was not easy to keep the same weight due to poor production condition. In order to avoid being punished because of lack of weight, the bakers often added another one in a bag of bread with a ruled dozen. They thought more were better than less. So “*baker’s dozen*” became thirteen instead of twelve. Englishmen don’t like the number “thirteen”. Then, they usually use “*baker’s dozen*” to substitute the number thirteen. With bread, they would not be hungry. But men could not live by bread alone. They needed spiritual culture. So the rulers provided circus for common people to keep people peaceful and get people’s support. Then the idiom “bread and circuses” was formed. Pudding and pie are popular pastry. Some idioms are from them, such as “The proof of the pudding is in the eating”. Making pudding is not easy and different people may have different flavors. Only when you eat it can you know its quality. So as an idiom, “The proof of the pudding is in the eating.” means “practice is the best way to test something”. “*As easy as pie*” originated from ease and enjoyment in eating pie. Some diet-related idioms are from cooking. Besides idioms related to traditional food such as bread, butter, cheese, some idioms are connected with beverage. Tea is popular beverage. In 17th century, the Dutch brought tea to Europe. From then on, European people especially Englishmen are fond of tea. Afternoon tea has become traditional habit. Many idioms are related with this custom, for example, “*high tea*”, “*low tea*”, “*for all the tea in China*”.

2.6 Idioms from cognition of laboring

In English, many idioms reflect the importance of agriculture and

industry because the geographical location provides them possibility. From the earliest days, the sight of farmers working the land has been at the heart of the American experience. Agriculture provides the sustenance that meets people's most basic needs. Agriculture represents a bond of continuity between present and past, linking new generations with the rhythms and dreams of generations of long ago. American agriculture assumes a richness and variety unmatched in most other parts of the world. In part, this is due to the vastness of the nation itself; in part, it is due to the generosity of nature. Large areas of level or gently rolling land especially in the eastern Great Plains provide ideal conditions for large-scale agriculture. Therefore, many idioms reflect agricultural work in Anglo-American culture, such as, "*sow one's wild oats*", "*As you sow, so will you reap.*", "*as like as two peas in a pod*". In English, idioms also show a detailed division of social labor. Idioms come from all trades and professions, for example:

A tailor says, "*Cut the coat according to the cloth.*"

A farmer says, "*As a man sow, so shall he reap.*"

A fisherman says, "*The best fish swim near the bottom.*"

A housewife says, "*A stitch in time saves nine.*"

3. Some common features of idioms.

The definitions of English idioms have been discussed in the above; an English idiom has its different characters from other words and expressions. Thus, English idioms mainly have two aspect characters.

First of all, being phrases or sentences, idioms each consist at least two or more constituents, but each is a semantic unity. Through the various words which make up the idiom have their respective literal meanings, they have lost

their individual identities in the idiom. That is to say, their meanings are not often recognizable in the meaning of the whole idiom. Likewise, the part of speech of each element is no longer important for quite often the idiom functions as one word.

For example: **Black and white**

Literal meaning: to say that something is in black and white means that there is written proof of it.

Idiomatic meaning: it's an obligation. It's written in black and white in your contract.

Second of all, the idioms have the character of structural stability. The structure of an idiom is to a large extent invariable, unlike free phrases.

The constituents of idioms can not be changed or replaced. For example, “*as white as snow*” (*trắng như tuyết*) can not be changed as “*as white as cotton*”

Idiom is syntactically anomalous. It has an unusual grammatical structure. For example, “*diamond cuts diamond*” two parties are equally matched is grammatically incorrect, for normally the verb “*cut*” should take the third person singular “-s” as the subject *diamond* is singular.

The constituents of an idiom can not be deleted or added to, not even an article. Take the “*out of the question*” (impossible). If the article “*the*” is deleted, the idiomatic will be lost and it will signify “*no question*” instead.

The word order can not be inverted or changed. For example, “*by twos and threes*” are not being turned into “*by threes and twos*” (**ăn miếng trả miếng**).

4. Classification of idioms

Idioms can be classified by different ways but on this paper idioms are classified into two main ways: syntactic classification and semantic classification.

4.1. Syntactic classification

According to the syntactic classification, idioms can be classified into 6 groups: Verb phrases, Prepositional phrases, Adverb phrases, Noun phrases, adjective phrase and sentence.

4.1.1. Verb phrases

Definition: An idiom which works as a verb phrase or begins with a verb.

For example: “He *sits on the fence*”

In the example, “*sit on the fence*” (trung lập) refers to someone not oppose or not agree.

“*keep the bone green*” (giữ sức khỏe tốt).

“Doing exercises can *keep your bone green*”.

So this sentence gives an advice that you should do exercises so that you will have a good health.

“She’s not hesitating; he’s just *biding her time*. She’s waiting for the price to drop”.

“*Bide someone’s time*’ (chờ cơ hội tốt nhất) means someone wait for a good opportunity to do something.

4.1.2. Prepositional phrases

Definition: An idiom which works as prepositional phrase or begin with a preposition.

For example: *Up to the eyes in* (ngập đầu trong công việc, nợ nần)

“He looks so miserable. He’s *up to the eyes in* his debt”. This sentence means the man looks miserable because he is deep mean in debt. So the phrase “*up to the eyes in*” means someone has a lot of work or to be deep in debt.

Under the eye of somebody (dưới sự giám sát của ai): supervise someone.

“He works *under the eye of his boss*”. It means he works under the supervision of his boss.

In the dust (chết)

“When he went across the forest, he saw a man lying on the ground; he reached the man and found that he was *in the dust*”. “He was in the dust” doesn’t mean the man lied in the dust. It means the man was dead. So the phrase “*in the dust*” means “to die”.

4.1.3. Adjective phrases

Definition: an idiom which works as adjective phrase or begin with an adjective.

To be green with envy (ghen tị)

“Lan is a selfish person. She *is* always *green with envy* with her sister when she has anything new”. Thus, “*green envy*” expresses the extreme envy. This sentence means Lan is always envious with anything her sister has.

To be red-letter day (ngày đáng nhớ)

“It was a red-letter day when my sister received her graduation diploma”. Here, “*tobe red-letter day*” expresses a day that is memorable because of some important event

To be drunk as a fish (say bí ti)

“Yesterday, he took part in his best friend birthday party and *drunk as a fish*”. Fish is an animal living in the water. “*drunk as a fish*” implies that someone drinks too much that he can’t remember anything. People said that is dead drunk.

To be well off (giàu có)

He drives an expensive car and has a lot of money. He is seem very well off.

4.1.4. Adverb phrases

Definition: An idiom which works as adverb phrase or begin with an adverb

Once and for all (đứt khoát)

“*Once and for all*, he decided not to visit his friend”. This sentence means firstly he decided to visit his friend but finally he changed his mind and didn’t want to visit his friend. “*Once and for all*” means finally or absolutely.

For my money (theo ý kiến của tôi)

“*For my money*, he is a good person”. For my money” means give someone’s idea or opinion about something. It is similar to “in my opinion” or “I think”

As a matter of fact (thực ra): really, actually (also: on fact)

“*As a matter of fact*, she didn’t love him any more”. This means she actually

didn't love him any more.

4.1.5. Noun phrases

Definition: An idiom which works as noun phrase or begin with a noun

The man in the moon (người mơ mộng vớ vẩn)

“He always thinks about unpractical things. People call him as *the man in the moon*”. The phrase “*the man in the moon*” implies the person who is unpractical, dreaming.

Bull in a china shop (người vụng về lóng ngóng)

“He broke another vase again. He likes a *bull in a china shop*”. “*Bull in a china shop*” doesn't mean that there is a bull in the china shop but it refers to a person who is awkward. This sentence refers to the man who is so awkward that he break a vase again.

4.1.6. Sentences

Definition: An idiom which works as a sentence

It rains as dogs and cats (trời mưa như chút)

“Look! *It rains as dogs and cats*”. Dogs and cats are incompatible animals. People use the images of dog and cat in this idiom to show that it rains heavily.

The coast is clear (không có khó khăn, trở ngại gì)

“I think that you can do this work because *the coast is clear*”. Thus, “*the coast is clear*” means there isn't any difficulty. So the sentence means that the job is not difficult so that you can do it.

Life is vale of tears (cuộc đời là bể khổ)

“You shouldn’t be too desolate about this problem. People say *life is a vale of tears* so that you should try to overcome”. This idiom means that life is a series of miseries and difficulties.

Beauty is only skin deep (nhân sắc chỉ là bề ngoài)

It means that characteristic is better than appearance.

4.2. Semantic classification

Many idioms seem to be compositional if we consider that the words in the idioms have non-standard meaning. Thus, in this analysis, we assume that these idioms, known as semantically decomposable idioms, can be paraphrased in a way that assigns a meaning to individual words; even if some of them are non-standard, as for example *spill the beans*, where *spill* is paraphrased as *reveal* and *beans* as *secrets*. Then, using compositional processes, the meaning of the idiom can be derived from the meaning of its elements.

There are some idioms which can be realized their meaning when we see it

For example

- *Life is a vale of tears* (cuộc đời là bể khổ): “a vale of tears” means that there are a lot of tears, miserableness, and difficulties.
- *Eaten bread is soon forgotten* (ăn cháo đá bát): you are unfriendly or do harm to someone who is kind for you.
- *To die like a dog* (chết khỗ chết sớ): die disgracefully, insignificant death
- *To be beyond belief* (không thể tin được): unbelievable

Chapter II

English- Vietnamese idioms related to the weather

1. The role of idioms in daily life

Weather always plays a very important role in our life, however we are very busy with our own business, we hardly pay attention to it. The fact is that weather is an objective factor that can affect partially or totally fight it because it is a natural force that is beyond man's control. So that, people observe and interest in the natural phenomena and they have summed up into idioms to predict weather which we use very wisely in our life.

In English – Vietnamese idioms treasure in general and idioms related to the weather in particular, all of them have the education value and reflect the people's experience and comment on all dimensions of life. Moreover, it also mentions the people's daily habits, traditional customs, religion, attitude, belief as well as geographic condition and surrounding environment. That is the reasons why idioms related to the weather are very useful in life. We have to understand and use them reasonably because it affects directly on many angles in life such as: traffic, marine, agriculture, etc...

Today, although technological science have improved a lot, people

have forecasted many natural phenomena fast, exactly and have many methods to overcome difficulties and disaster caused by the nature. One of them is basing on the ancestors' experience and lessons through the idioms. More and more fruitful crops and harvests and produced every month together with the assistance of developed scientific technologies.

2. English idioms related to the weather

2.1 Forecasting the bad weather

The main themes of English weather idioms are often about to predict the natural phenomena like rain, storm or snow. Followings are some typical English idioms related to the weather.

- “*It is raining cat and dog*” (<http://www.idiomsite.com/>)

This idiom means that there is a heavy and loud rainstorm. It has many origins:

The phrase isn't related to the well-known antipathy between *dogs* and *cats*, which is exemplified in the phrase '*fight like cat and dog*'. Nor is the phrase in any sense literal, i.e. it doesn't record an incident where *cats* and *dogs* fell from the sky. Small creatures, of the size of frogs or fish, do occasionally get carried skywards in freak weather. Impromptu involuntary flight must also happen to *dogs or cats* from time to time, but there's no record of groups of them being scooped up in that way and causing this phrase to be coined. Not that we need to study English meteorological records for that - it's plainly implausible.

It has also been suggested that *cats and dogs* were washed from roofs during heavy weather. They were the only place for the little animals to get warm. So all the pets, dogs, cats and other small animals, mice, rats, bugs, all lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery so sometimes the animals would slip and

fall off the roof. Thus the saying, "*it's raining cats and dogs.*"

Ex: *It's raining cats and dogs* out there! It's a wonder any of the men can see what they're doing!

- *It is raining pitchforks* (and hammer handles)

(<http://vi.wiktionary.org/wiki/pitchfork>)

It is raining very hard.

Ex: Take an umbrella. *It's raining pitchforks* and hammer handles out there!

- *Pour with rain* (<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/pour+with+rain>)

It means that rain heavily. (Said of the sky, day, morning, night, the weather, etc...) The sky was *pouring with rain* and the sun never shone from dawn to dusk. It poured with rain the entire night.

- "*Mare's tails and mackerel scales make tall ships take in their sails.*"

The '*Mare's Tail*' in this weather proverb refers to 'cirrus' clouds in the sky, and the '*Mackerel Scales*' or 'Mackerel Sky' refers to 'cirrocumulus' clouds. The cirrocumulus clouds are a bit more distinct, and seem rarer because they're not specifically looked for. They often precede an approaching warm front, and indicate good moisture in the higher levels of the atmosphere. In time, often this is followed by the gradual arrival of lower clouds...and precipitation.

(<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/weather/classroom/folklore/6562717.html>)

- "*Clear moon, frost soon.*" (<http://www.wxdude.com/proverb.html>)

If the atmosphere is *clear*, the surface of the earth will cool rapidly as heat is radiated away at night. There is no "blanket" of clouds to keep the heat that the ground absorbed during the day from radiating back up into space. If the temperature is low enough on these clear nights and there's no wind, *frost* may form.

- “*A year of snow, a year of plenty.*” (<http://www.wxduke.com/proverb.html>)

A continuous covering of *snow* on farmland and orchards delays the blossoming of fruit trees until the season of killing frosts is over. It also prevents the alternate thawing and freezing which destroys wheat and other winter grains.

- “*Halo around the sun or moon, rain or snow soon.*”

(<http://www.wxduke.com/proverb.html>)

The *halo around the sun or moon* is a layer of cirrus clouds made of ice crystals. These ice crystals act as tiny prisms, forming a white or sometimes colorful *halo* around *the sun or moon*. This cirrus-status cloud often indicates an approaching warm front and an associated area of low pressure. *Rain or snow* will not always follow, but there is a higher probability of it after a halo is seen, and the brighter the circle, the greater the probability.

- “*When smoke descends, good weather ends*”

(<http://www.atmosphere.mpg.de/enid/2264>)

The instability of the atmospheric pressure before a storm and the humidity prevents chimney or bonfire *smoke* from rising quickly. The *smoke* tends to curl downwards in the face of a storm wind.

- “*When the stars begin to huddle, the earth will soon become a puddle.*”

(<http://www.atmosphere.mpg.de/enid/2264>)

When clouds increase, whole areas of *stars* may be hidden by clouds with groups of stars, still in the clear sky, seem to huddle together. The clouds are increasing, so the chance of rain is increasing too.

- “*Sea Gull, Sea Gull, Sit on the Sand; A Sign of Rain When You're at Hand...*”

Animals (especially birds) are more ability to changes in air pressure than humans. As a result, some get more squawky and fidgety with an advancing

change in pressure (most often a storm arrival). Others, like *sea gulls*, who are used to nasty weather, will roost during these times. Often before large storms, large numbers of birds like the *Sea Gull* will 'sit it out'.

(<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/weather/classroom/folklore/6703987.html>)

- "*Cow's Tail to the East Make's the Weather Least...*"

This saying is purely New England, and has a lot of truth to it. Most grazing animals do so with their *tails* to the wind. This really has less to do with the *tail*, and more with the head. For defense, animals often naturally orient themselves in such a way to come across the scent of potential predators as it is carried by the wind. Often in New England, the onshore Easterly breeze is the one most often associated with the nasty weather. Hence, forecasting by the *cow's tail*.

(<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/weather/classroom/folklore/6704217.html>)

- "*When the Ditch Offends the Nose, Look for Rain and Stormy Blows...*"

Another high or low pressure weather proverb. High pressure again is associated with sinking air, and keeping things low to the ground. In previous examples, this would be air particles and bugs, but here, we're talking about actual smells and odors. When high pressure is in town, perhaps the swamp smells stay trapped (or enough to not cause a stink). But when low pressure arrives, those odors start to lift and pervade, letting us know of a potential stormy day ahead.

(<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/weather/classroom/folklore/6704587.html>)

- "*When the Stars Seem to Huddle, the Earth May Soon Start to Puddle.*"

At night, when clouds are on the way, much of the sky's *stars* would be hidden by approaching clouds. *The stars* that remain unclouded often appear to be '*huddled* together'. Often this doesn't lead directly to rainfall, but it can be

said that if the clouds are increasing, then so must the threat of rain.

(<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/weather/classroom/folklore/6704587.html>)

- “*Swallows Fly Low, Get Your Rain Gear in Tow*”

This is another folklore saying related to high and low pressure. Air pressure naturally decreases with altitude, and rapidly at that when close to the ground. Birds try to fly high (especially when migrating) to make use of this, but there is a limit to how low a pressure level each bird likes to fly. In a 'low pressure' situation, that pressure level is pushed lower to the ground. Thus, so are the birds, and sometimes with stormy weather on the way.

(<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/weather/classroom/folklore/6703572.html>)

- “*Flies bite more before it rains*”

This rule does not always apply. However, insects do settle on objects more during moist weather as they find it more difficult to *fly*. High temperatures cause us humans to sweat more and this makes us a more appetizing target to a fly. These two reasons, plus an increased release of body odour when atmospheric pressure decreases means that *flies* and insects are more bothersome just *before it rains* than at any other time.

(<http://www.americanfolklore.net/folktales/rain-lore.html>)

Some pictures indicate the bad weather:





2.2 Forecasting the fair weather

- “*A rainbow afternoon, good weather coming soon*”

Because *rainbows* are caused by sunlight reflecting off and refracting through raindrops. So that, when it appear it make the sky more clearly it means that *good weather* will be *come*. (<http://wilstar.com/skywatch.htm>)

- “*When ladybugs swarm, expect a day that is warm*”

The above idiom may be true because *lady bugs* store heat in their shells. If it gets too *warm*, they start flying to dissipate the heat. Of course, this means it is

already *warm*, not that it is going to be *warm*. (<http://wilstar.com/skywatch.htm>)

- “*The higher the clouds, the finer the weather.*”

Clouds are formed by moisture that condenses out of rising air currents. The *higher* the air must rise before condensation begins, the drier it was to begin with. (<http://wilstar.com/skywatch.htm>)

- “*If a cat washes her face and her ear,*

It is a sign the weather will be fine and clear.”

Cat fur can build up static electric charges when it gets very dry. During times of low humidity and fair *weather*, especially in the winter time when it is very dry, a *cat* may lick its fur. In order to moisten it. Moist fur will shed electric charge and prevent static discharges, which annoy the *cat*.

(<http://www.thinklikeahorse.org/cowboyweather.htm>)

- “*Evening red and morning gray,*

Two sure signs of one fine day.”

Weather systems usually move from west to east. A *reddish evening* sky can be caused by sunlight shining through dry dust particles in the western sky. This dry sky may move overhead by morning. If the *morning* is *gray* in the east, it means the clouds have already passed you. So that, it will have a fair weather.

(<http://wilstar.com/skywatch.htm>)

- “*Cool is the night, when the stars shine bright.*”

The more moisture there is in the sky, the more the light from the sun, moon, and *stars* is dimmed or reddened. A very clear sky permits more starlight to penetrate, thus *the stars* appear *brighter*. Moisture tends to hold in the day’s heat, like a blanket. The less moisture there is in the air at night, the more the temperature tends to fall. Thus, *the brighter the stars* appear, the *cooler* is the

night. (<http://wilstar.com/skywatch.htm>)

- “*If owls scream in foul weather, it will change the fair*”

During the protracted rain- storms in autumn, and particularly in November, the short eared *owls* that frequent the meadows are exceedingly noisy. Day and night, if two or three chance to roost in the same tree, they will hoot in concert, from sunset to midnight, and no more on the day proceeding a clearing up of the weather than during the first of half a dozen rainy day. It means that the weather will change into the fair.

- “*A deep blue sky indicates fair weather*”

A deep blue sky without afternoon clouds indicates a dry atmosphere under the control of a high pressure system. The *weather* should stay clam and dry for at least a couple of days. It is a sign of *fair weather*.

(<http://weather.thefuntimesguide.com/index.php?page=13>)

- “*If cats lick themselves, fair weather comes*”.

During fair weather, when the relative humidity is low, electrostatic charges (static electricity) can build up on a cat as it touches other objects. Cat fur loses electrons easily, so cats become positively charged. Many cats don't like to be stroked when the air humidity is low as sufficient electrical charge can build up and cause small sparks which irritate the cat. When a cat licks itself, the moisture makes its fur more conductive so the charge can “leak” off. (<http://www.idiomsite.com/>)

- “*The higher the clouds, the better the weather*”

High clouds indicate both dry air and high atmospheric pressure. These conditions are both present when the *weather* is fair.

(http://boatsafe.com/nauticalknowhow/weather_proverbs.htm)

- *“Rainbow in the morning gives you fair warning.”*

In the morning, when the Sun is in the east, the shower and its rainbow are in the west. As the weather in the mid-latitudes of the northern hemisphere moves mostly from west to east, rainbows in the morning to the west indicate approaching rain, while a rainbow at sunset indicates that the rain is leaving and fair weather is on the way. (<http://www.wxduke.com/proverb.html>)

Some pictures indicate the fair weather



Clouds



Rainbows



Sky



Cat

In both forecasting the bad weather and forecasting the fair weather, English people often use the images of animals such as: cat, dog, sea gull or cow, etc... They are pets and close animals whose behaviours and reaction are easy to observe. Apart from, they use many natural images like moon, clouds or star, etc... which are the symbols in the sky. The shape of the moon, the number of the stars or the state or colour of the clouds can foretell the weather of the following days. The former generations have cleverly summarized their valuable experience to raise their children's awareness of the importance, good and bad impact of the weather on the daily life.

3. Vietnamese idioms related to the weather

3.1 Forecasting the bad weather

- *“Tháng bảy kiến bò chỉ lo lại lụt”*
or *“Tháng bảy kiến đàn, đại hàn hồng thủy”*

If the ants crawl with large number, it will rain. Because of existence instinct, they are afraid of water. So that when it is about to rain, the ants crawl higher than usual. Based on this phenomena, people can predict the bad weather.

(<http://sdc.udn.vn/forum/Topic.aspx?BoardID=96&TopicID=56>)

- *“Tháng bảy heo may, chuồn chuồn bay thì bão.”*

Or *“Chuồn chuồn bay thấp thì mưa, bay cao thì nắng bay vừa thì râm”*.

When it is sunny and dry air, so that the body and wings of dragonfly are very light, can fly high. When it is about to rain, air humidity is higher than usual. It makes the wings more heavy and moist. Thus, dragonfly can not fly higher. It has to flies neither high or low, it is cloudy sky.

(<http://www.gardendigest.com/weather.htm>)

- “Ếch kêu uôm uôm, ao chuôm đầy nước”

When it is about to rain, frogs can know high humidity air throughout their skin. They can breath more oxygen in the air, so they fell very comfortably and pleasantly. In this circumstance, frog will be particularly excited, so that it cries very much. Thus, frog will cry when it rains.

(<http://sdc.udn.vn/forum/Topic.aspx?BoardID=96&TopicID=56>)

- “Ráng hồng thì nắng, ráng trắng thì mưa.”

When we see that the sky is pink, that is the color of sunlight reflecting up. And, the white is the color of the steam water breath rises and condenses into clouds to rain.

(<http://sdc.udn.vn/forum/Topic.aspx?BoardID=96&TopicID=56>)

- “Én bay thấp mưa ngập bờ ao.”

Sallow probably is not capable of forecasting the weather. When it is about to rain, there are much the steam water and standing on the wings of insects, increasing the load, which can only fly near the ground. Among these are species of insects such as dragonflies, however there are termites, small mosquitoes, which we can not see. Because of low pressure and stuffy, so many species of insects as well get off the ground. Swallows fly low to catch these insects. Thus, whenever you see any swallows flying into a flock swooping down, people say that the sky is about to rain. (<http://www.answers.yahoo.com>)

3.2 Forecasting the fair weather

- “Đêm nào sao sáng xanh trời,
Ấy là nắng ráo yên vui suốt ngày.

*Những ai chăm việc cấy cấy,
Điềm trời trông đó, liệu xoay việc làm.”*

Or “Mau sao thì nắng, vắng sao thì mưa”

When it is cloudless and clear, we can see the stars clearly and also see many stars it means that the sky has a little cloud. So that, the accumulation of moisture on the atmosphere which can produce rain is not going to happen because it does not have any clouds. And there is not any star on the sky or little because a lot of large clouds cover the sky. They also carry a large amount of water to create rain tomorrow or the following day.

(<http://www.baigiang.violet.vn/present/show>)

- *“Mây càng bay cao trời càng đẹp”*

If the sky has not many clouds or we can not see clear them, it will have fair weather tomorrow. Because of steam, they will condense into clouds, it cause raining. So that, if the cloud is high and bright, it will not rain. It is the fair weather. (<http://vn.360plus.yahoo.com>)

- *“Én bay cao mưa rào lại tạnh.”*

As explained, when sallow fly high, it means that they get the food difficultly. When it is beautiful, the insects will not get off the ground. Because the insects will get off the ground when it is about to rain. So that, it shows the fair weather. (<http://vn.360plus.yahoo.com>)

Besides that, there are many idioms related to the fair weather such as:

*“Quạ tắm thì ráo, sáo tắm thì mưa”
or “Mây kéo xuống biển thì nắng chang chang”*

Some pictures of insects and animals or stars, etc... which people often use to forecast the weather



Dragonfly



Swallows



Ants



Clouds

Both forecasting the bad weather and forecasting the fair weather, people use a lot of the images of animals, insects, clouds and stars, etc...because Vietnam has tropical monsoon type of climate and large and rich plains which are used for agriculture. Besides that, Vietnam's economy is mainly based on the wet rice production. That is, in daily life, people deal with production tools and animals that either directly or indirectly serve their farming. As a result, when using metaphor they often take the familiar things which regularly exist in their daily life and their way thinking as the images of comparison.

4. Comparison & Contrast between English and Vietnamese idioms.

Idioms are shaped in a community after a long period's living of the local people and it is the reflection and expression of the culture of a certain race, because of this, the differences on geography, history, custom and living habits will be reflected in the word used in idioms among cultures. In this part, the similarities and differences between English- Vietnamese cultures will be expressed in idioms.

4.1 Similarities

All languages have simple saying or short saying but contain useful comments about life experiences. The name of short saying that is “Thành ngữ - Tục ngữ” in Vietnamese, “Idiom- Proverb” in English, PROVERBE in French, etc... With the ability summed considerate, adorn the text, but more salty, and prove an eloquent argument, idioms play a significant role in everyday language. Specially, we can see many similarities in the content between Vietnamese and English idioms. For example, “Yêu ai yêu cả đường đi” in Vietnamese has the equivalence in English “Love me, Love my dog”.

Despite the differences in culture, there are still coincidences in ways of thinking and observing the world of English- Vietnamese people. This undoubtedly leads to the similarities in the way of expressing ideas and concepts through idioms. There are some similarities between English and Vietnamese idioms.

Firstly, that is the belief of the people in natural phenomena. Idioms have been mostly built by the life experience for many years ago. Each person always

interests in natural and surrounding environment and they have to observe keenly through out many days. Then, they can give a conclusion when it will be happened. If there is not a belief in natural, they will not sum up into idioms to predict and forecast the weather. Spending many years with many natural phenomena like sunny, rainy, stormy, etc... People have lived and done with these phenomena through out life experience. They have sum up many idioms such as: “*Mây càng bay cao trời càng đẹp*” in Vietnamese has the equivalence in English “*The higher the clouds, the finer the weather*”.

Secondly, about the meaning and structure of the idioms, they are not only refined and particular but also vivid. They have the same meaning, awareness as well as method presenting although they still remain national specific characteristic. For forecasting rain, we have many idioms to predict and forecast the weather.

For example: “*Én bay thấp, mưa ngập bờ ao*” in Vietnamese and “*Swallows Fly Low, Get Your Rain Gear in Tow*” in English. And about the form of structure, a lot of idioms in the same point, can be divided into two positions with the same syntax and rhythm. For example, “*Xa mắt, cách lòng*” in Vietnamese and “*Out of side, out of mind*” in English.

Finally, people use the image of animals and stars, moon, clouds... to indicate one of natural phenomenon based on the impression of objective things and the society etc...linked to their life. The Creator has given animals a reflex to predict the weather better many times than man. Although they can not speak, but their senses are extremely sensitive. If we note the actions of the animals around us, to be sure that we will get a lot of good lessons about forecasting weather. For example, if we see the swallow fly low, ants or white ants bring

their foods to high place, it will rain. Such as: “*Swallows Fly Low, Get Your Rain Gear in Tow*” or “*Tháng bảy kiến bò chỉ lo lại lụt*” have explained above.

4.2 Differences

Each country has different territory, terrain and climate condition which lead to have differences in culture and character of each nation. Therefore; English – Vietnamese idioms are quite different from each other.

Firstly, Vietnamese people with agriculture cultivation they see the nature as an important part of their life and the important role that agriculture has played in Vietnam’s economy. So that, if they pay close attention to the nature, they can predict and avoid some of natural phenomena to have a better day. Traditionally, people relied on natural signs, animals and insect’s behavior to help them forecast the weather. For example:

“*Gió bắc hiu hiu, sếu kêu thì rét*”

It is difficult to find English equivalent idioms because English idioms mostly reflect rather social relationship than natural one and work experience.

Secondly, there are some differences in using metaphor idioms between two nations. Many different symbols are used to indicate the same meanings and awareness.

For example, there are two idioms: the Vietnamese idiom “*Kiến đen tha trứng lên cao, thế nào cũng có mưa rào rất to*” and English idiom “*It is raining cat and dog*”. Both of above idioms talk about the rain, however, Vietnamese people use the image of ants which live around us, they observe the actions and

reactions of them when the natural phenomena happens. Therefore, they can base on it to predict the bad weather. On the contrary, English people use the image of cat and dog to indicate the bad weather.

Finally, each nation has its own history and literature with its own typical characters. So that, they use different symbols to indicate what they want to say. For example, to talk about strength, Vietnamese people often use the image of buffalo to describe. For Vietnamese culture is mainly based on wet rice production. Thus, they use the image of buffalo to describe the strength. And English people use the image of horse. With them, they think a horse is the strongest animals. For example, some components are used with positive meaning in English idioms but with negative meaning in Vietnamese. That is, when expressing the same idea, each person uses different animal components. Specially, in Vietnam, dogs are considered as dirty animals, unintelligent in idioms such as: “*Ngu như chó*” (*As stupid as a dog*)

On the other hand, English people love them so much. Dogs are beloved and considered as lovely pets. They are well fed and have good sleeping place. English idioms often use animal components with positive meaning. For instance, “*to be lucky dog*”

Chapter III

Some difficulties for learner of English when study idioms

1. Some difficulties in studying idioms.

In fact, many people are fond of English idioms, but they deal with a lot of difficulties. The following are some difficulties that might emerge in the process of absorbing the weather related to idioms.

Firstly, because of the unlike geography, the differences between the cultures of two countries is unavoidable, especially the idiom system.

Secondly, most of idioms are difficult to guess the meaning correctly because they have association with the ordinary meaning of the individual words or phrases. They can be guessed and understood in the context, that is in a particular situation.

Thirdly, the main difficulty is that learners do not know the level of

style; that is, whether an idiom can be used in a formal or an informal situation. In the formal situation, when we do not know very well we are talking to or the occasion is public, we choose word much more carefully. It would be wrong to choose a slang expression. This means that we can express the same information or idea in more than one way using different level of style.

Lastly, when translating English idioms, it is sometimes difficult to find out the right equivalents or even no equivalents in Vietnamese, that is the reason why phrasing is occasionally accepted.

2. Suggested solutions

With above difficulties, how to overcome the difficulties is still of a great question, the following suggestions are referred to help Vietnamese learners in their English studying:

Firstly, the learners should understand about the culture, belief, region, daily habit of both Vietnamese and English so that they can compare and guess the meaning of the idioms.

Secondly, the learners should study the features of idioms carefully, and distinguish them from other kinds of set expression to identify the idioms better.

Thirdly, the learners can analyze the meaning of all components and the relationship among the components or study the meaning in the context or ask the native speakers.

Fourthly, it is advisable not to make frequent use of slang expression because it is easy to sound strange. And using idioms with neutral style is a good idea. Besides, knowing an idiom is natural or appreciate in a certain situation is

also a difficulty. This can only be learnt by careful reading of English texts which contain idioms. The learners should take careful note of examples of usage in typical situation.

Lastly, some English idioms have more than one Vietnamese equivalent so the learners should be careful when choose them because if they choose the idioms which reflect the specialties of Vietnamese nature and society too much, the unity of English style will be lost. Some English idioms have no Vietnamese equivalent, we can translate them into our language but we must keep the suitable nuance of meaning.

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Major findings

Idioms are both the easiest and the most difficult elements in a language. Learning English by idiom is one of the most effective way to improve your English. It helps you to understand not only language in daily life but also the culture of English – Vietnamese people. In this research, we can see that the role of idioms in life and English- Vietnamese weather idioms related to the weather. By researching about weather idioms, I can understand much more about the culture and traditional customs both English and Vietnamese. To forecast the weather people have observed many things around the life and work.

Firstly, I find that they have similarities about using the images to forecast the weather. Such as insects, animals or many natural images like moon, clouds or stars which are the symbols in the sky. They also believe in natural phenomena and idioms have been built by the life experience for many years ago.

Secondly, there are many differences between territory, terrain and climate conditions which lead to have different ways of thinking and describing the images.

Generally speaking, to understand fully and profoundly those applications of weather in English idioms is very difficult because they relate to a great number of fields such as geographical features, social development, culture, and sometimes the origins or reasons why they are used are not known. Moreover, English is spoken in many countries and the number of English idioms produced is not small at all.

Thus, the difficulties in learning English idioms that Vietnamese learners must deal with are undeniable, the learners usually have difficulties in identifying idioms, guessing the meaning, using idioms in the suitable situation. To overcome these difficulties, learners should study the features of idioms deeply, guess their meaning in the contexts and carefully read English texts, do exercises and not forget to take care of cultural features and try to have cultural competence.

2. Implications for ELT & learning

Nowadays, when English becomes more and more important in our life, learning and using English is very necessary. That is a small study on linguistic theory, how to implicate it for ELT and learning is not very difficult. The followings are some specific situations that idioms can be taught and learnt effectively outside and inside classroom.

Which idioms to teach? This is a primary consideration since teachers always wish their learners to learn those idioms that will allow them to

participate more fully in interactions with native speakers. Since there are thousand of idioms in any language with native speakers. Since there are thousands of idioms in any language, people may want to devote attention to the most useful ones. Generally, “most useful” overlaps with “most frequent”. Fortunately, recent research has greatly contributed to knowledge in this area; English teachers may consult the work by Liu on the most frequent used spoken idioms in American English. In short, frequency is a significant criterion when choosing idioms for teaching purpose.

Separated lessons or integrated ones: If teachers decide to devote attention to idioms in their class, they may consider creating separated lessons so as to teach useful idioms. However, this is not necessarily the most effective way. The reason is that a lesson on idioms is likely to be limited in two ways, the time spent on them and the naturalness of language used to contextualized the idioms. For these reasons, many people have argued in favor of an integrated lesson which involves incorporating idioms into regular one that focus on any of the four skills.

The first step would raise learners’ awareness of idioms so that they should develop a habit of noticing them in everyday situations, including reading and listening. Learners can be asked questions about the usage. Teacher can draw attention to new idioms by taking them into vocabulary improving and reading activities. Teachers should also take advantages of authentic materials like on TV, in newspaper, magazines and modify them for classroom purpose based on the learners’ level.

Another way is to instruct and familiarize learners with the way of learning idioms by connecting the new information with something they already know and by making a picture in their mind. Imagination could do much to help

remember new idioms.

Specific classroom activities: Most researchers suggest using a wide range of techniques. Firstly, it is assumed that most vocabulary teaching strategies will be applicable to idioms as well. An important first step is exposing learners to idioms in context for contextual clues are useful to learners in comprehending unknown idioms. Learners should be encouraged to infer the meaning of the idiom by using contextual clues, background knowledge or first language equivalents. Teachers may help learners during this process, especially if the idiom is not easily worked out. There are several techniques to make learners aware of the link between the idiom's literal and figurative meanings. For instance, learners can draw pictures to present the literal meaning, this can be particularly effective for lower- proficiency learners for idioms which are image – evoking.

After presenting idioms in context and helping learners to infer their meaning, teachers should revise the idioms that have been studied. This can be done in numerous ways, including typical vocabulary exercises like matching idioms to their meaning, filling in blanks with the appropriate idiom, replacing underlined expressions with an idiom, etc...

3. Suggestions for further study

It is said that idioms are one of the most complicated fields for studying but they are very interesting when used in daily life.

This study has attempted to show an overview of idioms in general and the idioms related to the weather in English – Vietnamese.

All what have been referred to in this paper come from the limited understanding and ability. It is, however, hoped that this study will be a small

contribution to figure out the interesting significance of the idioms of the international language and a reference to those who are interested in English and Vietnamese culture. Due to constraint time, limited reference sources and the researcher's ability, all dimensions of idioms could not be covered. Hopefully, one of the following themes will be presents in the further study.

- Comparison & Contrast on English- Vietnamese proverbs and idioms.
- A study on English – Vietnamese idioms describing people's characteristics.
- A study on English – Vietnamese idioms using images of insects and animals.

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