

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



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KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

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GRADUATION PAPER
A CONTRASTIVE analysis of similes in English and
Vietnamese

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Class:

NA 1201

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HAI PHONG - 2012

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:.....

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Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày tháng năm 2012

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày tháng năm 2012

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2012

HIỆU TRƯỞNG

GS.TS. NGUYỄN *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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Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2012

Cán bộ hướng dẫn

(họ tên và chữ ký)

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CỦA NGƯỜI CHẤM 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)

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Student

Duong Thu Hien

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study

Language plays an important role in human life. Everyone tries to acquire, learn and use language as means of communication and simultaneously as social symbol of humanity. By using language, someone could make statement, convey facts and knowledge explain or report something as well as keep social relations among the language users. They are to indicate that by means of language, people can express their ideas, felling, information, etc through communication.

As one of the languages in the world, English is considered and applied an international language. Since then, it is very popular and has been spoken and learnt by almost people in the world. In a developing country like Vietnam, English plays a vital role in various aspects. Especially, English can be used for developing relationships in the global forum, for reading English books (especially for English majors and researchers for approaching human's knowledge in English – the global language).

However, to gain remarkable achievements in studying this international language like the other languages in the world, learners must spread their approaching over various skills such as listening, writing and especially reading. Why reading is mentioned special? The reason lies in the weakness of the researcher of this study.

As an English major, during years of studying English in university, I am always in trouble with reading skills. Beside the lack of reading skills, particular set expressions are also of great concern. Surprisingly, how can the same components make the different meanings in an expression? I am confused with the variation of these sayings.

In addition, a perfect understanding of how set expressions are used in daily life language is not only important for English students to improve their vocabulary, but also to understand new and original idioms when we hear and

use them in daily life. These are the reasons why I decided to do a research on the topic of simile. In fact, simile is a subtype of set expressions. Besides, simile attracts me with its appearance in rule of using comparative words of “like” and “as...as”. Also, when I started to make a minor comparison between Vietnamese and English simile, this linguistic issue totally captivates my attention and drives me the wish to study more to understand as well as make us of it. Therefore, I hope that this major issue in my graduation report will help me enhance my knowledge of it and then help others to grasp the deep meanings shown in each simile. Nevertheless, due to the limitation of time and scope as well as the size of the study, I only focus on the Vietnamese and English similes relating to colors, human’s characters as well as physical characteristics.

2. Aims of the study:

The study aims at:

- ✓ Widening knowledge of the learners and someone interested in similes.
- ✓ Enriching the English similes for learners.
- ✓ Helping the learners use simile correctly in relevant ways.
- ✓ Giving out solutions for difficulties in studying similes and tips for effective use.

3. Scope of the study:

It is rather difficult for me to study all the similes of all topics due to the limitation of my knowledge as well as the time so I only focus on similes in term of typical colors, human’s negative and positive characters as well as physical characteristics. In addition, I will try to have a contrastive analysis on Vietnamese and English similes in some cases.

4. Method of the study:

This study is carried out basing on:

- ✓ Material collection from various reference books, dictionaries as well as golden websites to establish the theoretical background.
- ✓ Quantitative method including consulting ideas from people joining in the research.
- ✓ Comparative research to find out the similarities and differences used in similes between English and Vietnamese.

5. Design of the study:

This study consists of three parts and the second is the most important one.

Part One is the introduction which states the reason of the study, the aims of the study, and the scope of the study, the method of the study and the design of the study as well.

Part Two is the Development which is the main content consisting of three chapters. The first chapter is the theoretical background. It focuses on some general definitions. The second chapter stresses on two kinds of similes basing on comparing them in English and Vietnamese. The third chapter will give out some problem learners are facing in studying similes and suggested solutions as well as some exercises for practicing.

Part Three is the Conclusion of the whole study which summarizes the main topic given in the part two.

PART TWO: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER I: Theoretical background of simile in English.

1. Definition

Of all figures of speech, simile is said to be the simplest and the most common used. Simile is utilized popularly in numerous languages and linguistic fields. It is believed that simile is taken the best advantages in making writings or work more interesting and entertaining.

There are ample ways to give simile a definition.

First of all, in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1997, p.593), C. Jonathan defines: "*Simile is a comparison of one thing with another*". It is considered the briefest and simplest definition.

However, far from now, Kirssner and Mandell (1987, p.82) gave a more specific definition: "*A simile is a comparison between two essentially unlike items on the basis of a shared quality; similes are produced by like or as*".

Another idea of same thought in The American Heritage College Dictionary (1997, p.1270) supports the above definition as the authors confirm simile as: "*A figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are explicit compared, usually by the means of like or as*".

Besides, it is quoted from Wikipedia.org that: "*Simile is a figure of speech that directly compares two different things, usually by employing the words "like" or "as"*".

It could be concluded from above mentioned definitions that simile involves some forms of comparison using "*like*" or "*as*" and the comparison here is explicit.

In Vietnamese, according to Lac and Hoa (2001, p.189), simile is defined as: "*Sơ sánh (còn gọi là tỉ dụ) là phương thức diễn đạt tu từ khi đem sự vật này đối chiếu với sự vật khác miễn là giữa hai sự vật có một nét tương đồng nào đó, để gợi ra hình ảnh cụ thể, những cảm xúc thẩm mĩ trong nhận thức của người đọc, người nghe*".

For example:

Tình anh như nước dâng cao
Tình em như dải lụa đào tằm hương.

(Ha, 2011, p.196)

In addition, in “Từ điển Tiếng Việt”, simile is given as : “*Tỉ dụ là phép so sánh để làm nổi bật một tính chất nào đó*”. For example: “*Đẹp như tiên.*”

(Huyen & Tri, 2010, p.753)

In Vietnamese, a simile is always supported by the words “*như*”, “*tựa*”, “*tày*”, “*bằng*”, etc. Besides, there are pairs of word “*bao nhiêu...bấy nhiêu*”, “*tựa thế*”, “*ngang*”, so on. These features will be discussed in details with examples in the next chapter for the contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese similes.

For the clear definitions with original features, the study on similes will suggest amazing discovery among researchers.

2. Basic elements of similes.

It could be briefly concluded from the definitions that similes create comparison between two things by using “like” or “as”. Grammatically, simile is the form which represents two propositions in the semantic structure. In reality, any proposition consists of two parts: a topic and a comment about that topic. To illustrate, the proposition “My friend is beautiful” amounts to the topic “my friend” and the comment “is beautiful”. Apparently, if a simile occurs, there will be two propositions which are related to each other by a comparison. The comparison appears in the comment part of the propositions. By way of illustration, the simile in English “My friend is as changeable as the weather” is based on two propositions:

a. My friend is changeable.

Topic comment

b. The weather is changeable.

Topic comment

In (1), the topic is “my friend” and the comment is “changeable”. In (2), the topic is “the weather” and the comment is also “changeable”. It is obvious that the topic of the former is being compared to that of the latter since the two propositions are identical. The topic in the second proposition is the thing that the first topic is like; it is called the “image” or the illustration. The “point of similarity” is found in the comments, in this case, is “is changeable”. Let us consider another example, “He was like a bull in a china shop, treading on everyone’s feet and apologize constantly.” In this case, only the topic “He” and the image of the simile “a bull in a china shop” are given out. The point of similarity, however, is implicit. To analyze this simile, we can state the two propositions explicitly as follows:

- a. He is extremely careless and clumsy.

Topic	comment
-------	---------

- b. A bull in a china shop is extremely careless and clumsy.

Topic	comment
-------	---------

Subsequently, the implicit information becomes apparent. The point of similarity turns out to be “is extremely careless and clumsy”. In short, similes include three basic elements. They are:

1. **TOPIC:** the topic of the first proposition (non - figurative), i.e., the thing really being talked about.
2. **IMAGE:** the topic of the second proposition (figurative), i.e., what is being compared with.
3. **POINT OF SIMILARITY:** this is found in the comments of the two propositions involved. To sum up, it is advisable to write out the propositions, which are basic to comparisons. That the topic, image, point of similarity have been identified is helpful to interpret simile.

3. Classification of simile.

So as to have an insightful look at simile, it is vital for identification to be taken into consideration. However, there are various ways to classify them based on different criteria. This study will focus on two simple ways to identify this idiom of comparison:

- Based on the similar features given by Leon.
- Based on component word and phrase mentioned on Wiktionary Online.

3.1. Based on the similar features

First of all, let us have a look at the classification of simile based on similar features. According to Leon, there are explicit simile using “as...as” and implicit simile using “like”.

3.1.1. Implicit similes.

In the implicit case, characterized by the use of 'like' to connect the two ideas, the simile leaves an audience to determine for themselves which features of the target are being predicated:

Implicit similes	Meaning
Sleep like a baby	Sleep soundly
Work like the devil	Work hard
swim like a fish	swim very well
sing like a bird	sing very well
multiply like rabbits	have many babies
live like a candle in the wind	live dangerously

3.1.2. Explicit similes.

On the contrary, the explicit simile with the using of “as...as” makes the comparison much clearer to the target. For example:

Explicit similes	Meaning
As tough as nails	strong and determined
As cunning as a fox	very foxy
As stubborn as a mule	very stubborn
As dry as bone	extremely dry
As colorful as a rainbow	very beautiful

It could be concluded from the examples that the meaning in explicit simile is much clearer than in the implicit one for the features as well as characteristics of the objectives are given to make the comparison more obvious.

In Vietnamese, according to Lac and Hoa (2001, p.190), the full form of simile includes four components and it is illustrated in the following chart:

1.Comparing objects	2.Comparative characteristics	3.Comparative words	4.Compared objects
Gái	có chồng	như	gông đeo cổ.
Các chóp mái	đều lượn rập rờn	như	các nếp sóng bạc đầu.
Lòng ta	vẫn vững	như	kiềng ba chân.

(Lac & Hoa, 2001, p191)

However, there is some exception for the above form which is used in folklore. They are:

- Reversing the comparative order:

*Chòng chành như nón không quai
Như thuyền không lái như ai không chồng.*

(Ha, 2011, p.122)

- Cutting down comparative characteristics:

Ai về ai ở mặc ai

Ta như dầu đượm thấp hoài năm canh.

(Ha, 2011, p.138)

- Cutting down comparative words:

Gái thương chồng, đương đông buổi chợ...

(Ha, 2011, p.202)

- Adding the pair of “bao nhiêu...bấy nhiêu” in:

Qua đình ngả nón trông đình

Đình bao nhiêu ngói, thương mình bấy nhiêu.

(Ha, 2011, p.262)

From the chart of full form of simile, the authors put in another example of folklore to come to an important conclusion.

1.Comparing objects	2.Comparative characteristics	3.Comparative words	4.Compared objects
Cổ tay em	trắng	như	ngà
Con mắt em	sắc	như là	dao cau
Con mắt em liếc	ø	như là	dao cau
Miệng cười	ø	như thể	hoa ngâu
Chiếc khăn đội đầu	ø	như thể	hoa sen

(Lac & Hoa, 2001, p191)

“Sắc” is the characteristics of “dao cau” so it is the comparative characteristic. Meanwhile, “liếc” is the action but not the characteristic of the “con mắt” therefore the third sentence contains no comparative characteristic. Similarly, “cười” and “đội đầu” are not the comparative characteristics of “hoa ngâu” and “hoa sen”, respectively.

As a result, the important conclusion lies on the comparative characteristics of the objects. That is comparative characteristics which classify simile in to implicit simile or “so sánh chìm” in Vietnamese and explicit simile or “so sánh nổi” in Vietnamese.

In “ Phong cách học Tiếng Việt” (1982, p.358), Hien wrote “*Xét về mặt nội dung, đối tượng nằm ở hai vế của phép so sánh (hình ảnh) là khác loại, nhưng lại có những nét nào đó giống nhau, nét giống nhau này có thể hoặc “nổi” hoặc “chìm”*”. He also gave examples for illustration:

✓ “Implicit simile”:

*Trẻ em như búp trên cành
Biết ăn ngủ, biết học hành là ngoan.*

(Hien, 1982, p.221)

✓ “Explicit simile”:

*Dù ai nói **ngả** nói **ngiêng**
Lòng ta vẫn vững như kiềng ba chân.*

(Hien, 1982, p.235)

It is obvious that the criterion to classify simile is similar in both English and Vietnamese. When the comparative characteristics are given, the simile is explicit. On the other hand, when the comparative characteristics are hidden, the simile is implicit. The readers must make use of their general knowledge to find out the comparative characteristics.

3.2. Based on component word and phrase

Secondly, let us turn to the point of classification of simile based on component word and phrase mentioned by Wiktionary Online. Pursuant to this clarification, simile can be divided into three groups:

3.2.1. Comparisons with adjectives:

Idioms of this group are constructed as:

As + Adjective + as + (a/the) + Noun.

The point of similarity is explicitly given out. Through these idioms, characteristics of compared objectives are exposed symbolically. For instance:

- *As bald as a coot*
(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+as+bald+as+a+coot>)
- *As youthful as the month of May*
(<http://www.similestack.com/as-youthful-as-the-month-of-may>)
- *As treacherous as the memory*
(<http://www.similestack.com/as-treacherous-as-the-memory>)

In Vietnamese idioms, typical examples of comparisons with adjectives are:

- *Nhát như thỏ đế*
(Hung, 2005, p.143)
- *Hiền như bụt*
(Hung, 2005, p.99)

3.2.2. Comparisons with verbs:

Verbs + like + a/ the + noun

Many verbs with simple meaning and structure take part in forming idioms of this group to emphasize or make clear actions or behaviors of the compared objectives. Though the point of similarity is hidden, the idioms are still trouble-free to comprehend thanks to their simplicity. For instance, English idioms include:

- *To cry like a baby*
(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/cry+like+a+baby>)
- *To follow like a shadow*
(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/shadow>)

- *To spread like wildfire*

(<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/spreads+like+wildfire>)

Vietnamese idioms utilize:

- *Ăn như mèo*

(<http://www.hoalinhthoai.com/news/detail/news-3317>)

- *Chạy như cò lông công*

(Luc, 2002, p.119)

- *Hót như khướu*

(Luc, 2002, p.349)

3.2.3. Miscellaneous comparisons:

These kinds of comparisons do not follow any regular patterns. As compared to the aforementioned ways, these types of “set of comparison” – even fewer in number – are frequently used by native English speakers for this might make their verbal communication more and more vivid. Their structures may be:

(Verb) + Like/ as + a clause

(Verb) + Like/ as + a verb phrase

(Verb) + Like/ as + a noun phrase

Here are the idioms to exemplify:

- *(To be) like a red rag to a bull*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+like+a+red+rag+to+a+bull>)

- *(To have) a memory like an elephant*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/have+a+memory+like+an+elephant>)

- *Như cá trên cạn*

(Hung, 2005, p.145)

- *Tiền vào nhà khó như gió vào nhà trống*

(Hung, 2005, p.187)

4. The linguistic features of similes in English and Vietnamese.

4.1 The acoustic feature of speech.

In Vietnamese proverbs, the acoustic feature has been particularly noticed. Therefore, both two components in similes usually have alliteration or reduplication. This acoustic feature is more prominent in Vietnamese similes than those in English owing to the monosyllabism, the creative assonance of Vietnamese and the contribution of a harmonious collection of six tones. For example:

- *Rành **rành** như **canh** nấu **hẹ**.*

(Lan, 2008, p. 386)

- *Một cái **rằm** bằng **nằm** thuốc **tiêu**.*

(Lan, 2008, p. 291)

- *Một giọt máu **đào** hơn **ao** nước **lã**.*

(Lan, 2008, p.294)

- *Chị em **dâu** như **bầu** nước **lã**.*

(Lan, 2008, p. 82)

However, this feature seems to be scanty in English so that the researcher has not found out any simile of this feature yet.

4.2 Numerous components in Vietnamese similes.

Some Vietnamese proverbs have four components, two sides or even more, which specifically makes the difference between similes in Vietnamese from those in English. For example:

- *Công cha **như** núi Thái Sơn, nghĩa mẹ **như** nước trong nguồn chảy ra.*

(Ha, 2011, p.228)

- *Con có cha **như** nhà có nóc, con có mẹ **như** bẹ ắp măng.*

(Lan, 2008, p.108)

- Ăn **như** rồng cuốn, nói **như** rồng leo, làm **như** mèo mửa.

(Luc, 2002, p.31)

4.3 The implicit feature of comparative words.

A lot of Vietnamese proverbs that are created by using similes have two sides linked to each other by comma or implicit conjunction “*cũng như*”, “*bằng*” whereas similes in English do not have this feature.

For example:

- Miếng ngon nhớ lâu, (**cũng như**) đòn đau nhớ đời.

(Lan, 2008, p. 286)

- Liệu cơm gắp mắm, (**cũng như**) liệu con gả chồng.

(Lan, 2008, p. 257)

4.4 The national feature.

Who is the first person to create a very special and vivid way of comparing things – the so-called simile? That is the forefathers and our ancestors long time ago. The similes reflect every aspect of their daily lives from their belief, their values as well as customs and traditions. We can trace back the distinctive and ancient traits of Vietnamese and English cultures through similes. So, people may have difficulty understanding these long-standing similes fully without any explanation. For example:

- Gái có con như bồ hòn có rễ

(Luc, 2002, p.181)

The soapberry takes roots deeply and firmly into the ground, just like the women, once they have already had children, they will strongly adhere to their families.

- As wise as Solomon

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/wise+as+Solomon>)

This is a difficult and ambiguous simile in English. It may confuse people who have never read the Bible in their life. Who is Solomon? Solomon is a king mentioned in the Bible and he is famous for his foresight and his intelligence.

4.5 The involvement of other figures of speech.

Similes can include other figures of speech.

➤ Here are some similes including hyperbole in English and Vietnamese:

- *He ran like **greased lightning**.*

(<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/figures-simile.htm>)

- *Khinh như rác.*

(Lan, 2008, p.224)

➤ Similes in English often make use of irony and sarcasm. In such cases, they may even mean the opposite of the adjective used like these following examples:

- *His explanation was **as clear as mud**. (not clear at all since mud is opaque)*

(<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/figures-simile.htm>)

- *The film was about **as interesting as watching a copy of Windows download**. (long and boring)*

(<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/figures-simile.htm>)

- *Watching the show was **like watching paint dry**. (very boring).*

(<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/figures-simile.htm>)

➤ Some similes in Vietnamese are also very humorous and sarcastic.

For example:

- *Ăn như rồng cuốn, nói như rồng leo, làm như mèo mửa.*

(Luc, 2002, p.31)

4.6 The cliché characteristic of similes.

Some similes in English become cliché because they have been used so much that they are not interesting and meaningful in terms of rhetoric anymore. For example:

- *Like a fish out of water* .(Như cá trên cạn)
- *Like water off a duck's back*. (Như nước đổ đầu vịt)
- *To eat like a pig*. (Ăn như heo)
- *As free as a bird*. (Tự do như chim trời)
- *As brave as a lion*. (Dũng mãnh như sư tử)

(<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/figures-simile.htm>)

In contrast, similes in Vietnamese have never been considered as clichés. The important role of similes in our country has never changed and simile always remains an interesting feature of Vietnamese culture.

In conclusion, similes in English and Vietnamese bear both the similarities and the differences. These characteristics not only create a link with two languages but also take time of scholars who are interested in similes on studying them in some extents.

CHAPTER II: The contrastive analysis of similes in English and Vietnamese.

Inferring from the afore-mention part of introduction of simile, it could be concluded that similes compare two things by association which are not like each other but which can make the meaning via the association more descriptive by using the words “like” and “as”. The difference between these two words is in their formulas in which:

➤ Like + N

For example: *sell like hot cakes*.

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/sell+like+hotcakes>)

➤ As + adj + as + N

For example: *as black as coal*.

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/black+as+coal>)

However, it is the difference of meanings that creates the contrastive analysis between English and Vietnamese for this figure of speech. This dissimilarity attracts interests from numerous scholars for various aspects of simile. This part of the study will be mainly carried on the vivid meanings applied by two words “like” and “as” in both English and Vietnamese.

1. Implicit simile “like”.

For the clear division, first of all, the implicit simile using “like” will be thoroughly operated. To some extent the presence of words expressing the comparative relationship is obligatory for the full form of a simile. According Lạc and Hòa (p 191), these words are called the “expressions of comparison”. In English similes, the common as well as the only expression of comparison for implicit simile is “like”. However, when “like” translated into their counterpart language, it bears ample meanings such as: “tựa”, “giường như”, “tày”, “bao nhiêu... bấy nhiêu”. Also, the most popular meaning of “like” in Vietnamese is “như”.

1.1. Comparative expression of “like”-“như” in Vietnamese.

Moreover, what has just been mentioned only focuses on the meaning of the expression of comparison “like” in the most common feature when coming to examples, the objects, the images are the determined factors of the simile.

To illustrate, let us have a look at some examples using “like” of “như” and their contrastive meanings in English and Vietnamese.

❖ “To sell like hotcakes”

This simile must be classified in terms of business idioms. What is used with “sell like hotcakes”? Why did the English use the image of “hotcakes”? In fact, a hotcake is a pancake which made of flour, egg and milk cooked in hot pan. By the beginning of the 19th century, hotcake was popularly used for church benefits, fairs and other functions. Since then, hotcakes have been used as a model of popularity and high demand. As a result, “sell like hotcakes” was a familiar expression for anything that sold very quickly effortlessly and in quantity.

For example:

- ✓ *The new Ipod music players may be small, but they hold lots of songs and cost much less than other models. Not surprisingly, they are **selling like hotcakes**. Some store cannot keep up with the demand because customers are buying them so quickly.*

(<http://lopngoaingu.com/words-and-idioms/index.php?au=yes&id=words-and-idioms-45-sell-like-hotcakes-sell-oneself-05-26-10-94950929.html>)

However, in Vietnamese, people do not get used to using hotcakes. In other words, hotcakes are not popular in Vietnamese. Vietnamese idioms have an equivalent for this simile but it is not for the same components. Vietnamese people use: “Đắt **như** tôm tươi” to indicate the quick selling.

However, the same characteristic of “being fresh” is used in these two similes. It could be easily found in folklore or famous poems like:

“Chiều khách quá hơn nhà thổ ế
Đất hàng như thể mới tôm tươi”

(Xuong, 1984, p.15)

❖ “Sleep like a log”

This comparative saying indicates the sleeping status of a person. How is that status? Here, pursuant to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, a log is a thick piece of wood that is cut from or has fallen from a tree. It is obvious that once a tree is cut and made into logs, the logs will not do anything. They simply lie quietly on the ground. As the result, it is from that idea that this idiom comes from. When someone sleeps like a log, he sleeps very well. In addition, there is another equivalence for this simile in English whose image is a top. The top becomes very familiar to children like a favorite toy. In fact, tops, or more correctly spinning – tops, were popular amusements in the days before children had access to toys requiring batteries.

When a top is spinning well, the processional effect causes its axis to remain stationary and it can appear to be still, i.e. “sleeping” (<http://www.phrase.org.uk/meanings/sleep-like-a-top.html>). Also, when a top spinning quickly looks immobile. As a consequence, the two similes transfer the immobility of an object to that of a person who is sound asleep. Added to this, someone who is sound asleep could be said to “sleep like a baby”. Obviously, a newly – born baby sleeps eighteen hours per day and that they sleep freely without any thought let alone worry or sadness.

For example:

- *Everyone in our family **slept like a log**, so no one heard the thunderstorm in the middle of the night.*

(<http://www.idiom.thefreedictionary.com/sleep+like+a+log>)

- *Nothing can wake me up because I usually **sleep like a baby**.*

(<http://www.idiom.thefreedictionary.com/sleep+like+a+baby>)

Turning to its partner, Vietnamese people have an equivalent simile in the form of a hyperbole, that is:

- *Ngủ (say) như chết*

(Luc, 2002, p.534)

The simile is also used to indicate someone who sleeps well. This simile is called hyperbole because the status of sleeping, a normal daily activity is compared to the most still and quiet status of the death. However, it is clear that when somebody is dead, their eyes close and they do not breathe, the body is immobile. It is absolutely opposite to “*ngủ gà ngủ vịt*” in which the sleep is not too good. Here are some examples in which this image had been used:

- *Quyết mặc màn, đặt mình là **ngủ như chết**.*

(Tam, 1961, p.79)

- *Ông chếp miệng lẩm bẩm một mình: đàn bà con gái mà **ngủ như chết**.*

(Tu, 1976, p.121)

1.2. Other expressions of “like” in Vietnamese.

Different from English, beside “như” in Vietnamese there are various expressions of comparison due to the variety of Vietnamese. These expressions of comparison have been widely used in daily speaking, literature from prose works, short stories, and novels, to poems, song, etc... They play an essential role in polishing and shaping the lyrics. Let us have a visit around some famous works together to find out the other expressions of comparison in Vietnamese.

❖ “Nhu thể”

Vietnamese folklore has:

*“Miệng cười **nhu thể** hoa ngâu
Chiếc khăn đội đầu như thể hoa sen.”*

(Ha, 2011, p.211)

To praise the beauty of Vietnamese women in the past. She is always charming, coy and attractive in her appearance compared to traditional flowers.

❖ “Tựa”

For example:

*“Và **tựa** hoa tươi mở cánh dân
Từng hàng thực nữ dậy thì xuân.”*

(Binh, 1986, p.72)

These downy sentences are also used to highly appreciate virtuous women in her adolescence. Obviously, flowers are usually of priority for the description of the women.

❖ “Giống”:
*“Đất nước **giống** con thuyền xuyên gió mạnh
Những mối tình trong gió bão tìm nhau.”*

(Vu, 2010, p.364)

❖ “Tày”

For example:

*“Một cung gió thảm mưa sầu
Bốn cây nhỏ máu năm đầu ngón tay.
Ve ngân vượn hót nào **tày**
Lọt tai, Hồ cũng nhả mây rơi châu.”*

(Du, 1820, p.307)

❖ “Ngang”

For example:

*“Xa nhà, xa chị tuy buồn thực
Cũng cố vui **ngang** gái được chồng.”*

(Binh, 1995, p.120)

To support, there are also:

❖ “Bằng”

For example:

*“Mọi tên tuổi, vinh dự chỉ hư danh
Chẳng nghĩa lý **bằng** chiều nay em nhóm bếp”*

*“Phiên chợ xanh non màu xanh diếp
Tiếng trẻ cười tiếng chim hót xa xa”*

(Vu, 2010, p.321)

The author borrowed these beautiful words to remind the true love as well as the real value of this life. It is simple but extremely pure. It is the true love when partners live with each other happily. It is also the true love in which property does not hold control.

❖ “Kém”

Everyone who has read Truyện kiều written by Nguyễn Du might not forget the admirable beauty of Kiều in:

*“Làn thu thủy, nét xuân sơn
Hoàng hen thua thắm, liễu hờn **kém** xanh”*

(Du, 1820, p.184)

Thanks to the artistic description of Nguyễn Du, one of the greatest poets of Vietnam, Thúy Kiều was recognized with an irresistible beauty. Normally, the beauty of woman is compared to the beauty of flowers. However, in this case, flowers are still jealous of her beauty. Also, the nature

cannot be comparable to her charm. Frankly speaking, the genius in making a special character of Nguyễn Du lies in the appearance of the comparative expressions “kém” and “thua” that nothing can replace its position.

❖ “Nhường”

Coming back to “Truyện Kiều”, Thúy Kiều had got a sister whose beauty is showed in:

*“Hoa cười ngọc thốt đoan trang
Mây thua nước tóc, tuyết **nhường** màu da.”*

(Du, 1820, p.184)

Two sisters of Thúy Kiều and Thúy Vân owns unidentical beauty however, their appearance are both admirable. Thúy Vân’s smile is as beautiful as flowers. What is more, she had the honors of possessing the grace of the peaceful nature. Due to the appearance of “nhường” in the sentence, the smooth complexion as white as snow makes her stand out in the story.

❖ “Như là”

For example:

- *Tách ra khỏi vườn ươm 1300 gốc cao sun gang vai, lênh đênh
mấy chục gốc cao su Vĩnh Linh đứng ra khỏi hàng **như là** những
sĩ quan làm khung cho một sư đoàn ngự trang đang tập trung ở
bãi rộng.*

(Tuan, 1960, p.203)

❖ “Khác nào”

For example:

*“Mộng đẹp theo ngày tháng
Đi êm đềm như thơ
Khác nào trên khung cửa
Qua lại chiếc thoi tơ.”*

(Binh, 1986, p 39)

❖ “Khác chi”

For example:

*“Em há chẳng thấy cả một cái dải đường từ phía Suối Rút đang lần lần tuôn dài lên mà với tới em. Nhưng con đường kia có **khác chi** một mũi dao nhọn cắm phập vào lòng nàng, Sơn La ôi!”*

(Tuan, 1960, p.54)

❖ “Khác gì”

For example:

*“Cái khe nước biên giới, nước vẫn róc rách, tiếng nước chảy dưới cái cầu gỗ mục chẳng **khác gì** cái tiếng của một dòng nước đánh trống lảng ra khỏi một chỗ khó chảy êm.”*

(Tuan, 1960, p.33)

❖ “Chẳng khác”

For example:

*“Một buổi sớm mai đến Sài Gòn
Thân em **chẳng khác** con chim non
Bơ vơ trong xứ người xa lạ
Rộn những phồn hoa, em chạnh buồn.”*

(Bình, 1986, p.100)

❖ “Na ná”

For example:

*“Anh em thág thág chỉ mong có công tác về đồn Pom Lót dưới kia một lần, nó cũng **na ná** cái kiểu đội viên đội phát động ruộng đất mong về tổng kết ở hội nghị các đoàn ủy”*

(Tuan, 1960, p.38_ 39)

❖ “Bao nhiêu... bấy nhiêu”

The pair of comparative expressions is also a very popular one in Vietnamese simile relating to folklore. For example:

*“Qua đình ngả nón trông đình
Đình bao nhiêu ngói thương mình bấy nhiêu.”*

(Ha, 2011, p.215)

After a view look at some typical works of literature, dozens of comparative words are presented in Vietnamese with only one word of “like” in English similes. This is also the variety of Vietnamese spreading to various daily fields.

2. Explicit simile “as...as”.

2.1. Simile relating to “colour”

Colour is one of the most fulfilling elements in our daily lives. Since colour is an important part of our lives, it can attract our attention or change our mood. It speaks to who we are, how we feel and where we are going. We judge how healthy we, our crops and our food are, with the presence of colour. Colour is involved in almost every aspect of our lives. As the results, similes, the mirror of refection, are also remarkably influenced by colour. It is suggested to discover the marvelous effects of colour on simile.

2.1.1 Black

To start with, black will be the first colour of being studied for its relation to similes. It is obvious that black is not in the list of basic colours but it is still of controversiality for its presence in different cultures. The different cultures are reflected by the different things or phenomenon. As the result, the common colour of black is separately used in English and Vietnamese. In Vietnamese, when comparing something black, people often say “đen như than”, “đen như cột nhà cháy”, etc.

For example:

“Đã hơn ba tháng, đại đội này không nghỉ một ngày nào, hết chiến đấu lại chuyển quân đánh, rồi lại đi đến một nơi mới, lại xây dựng trận địa cấp tốc, lại đánh, lại đi, từ cán bộ đến chiến sĩ đều **đen** trũi **như cột nhà cháy**.”

(Thi, 1966, p.59)

In English, there are familiar similes such as “as black as coal”, “as black as ink”, “as black as ebony”, “as black as crow”.

For example:

- *My friend's cat is as black as coal.*

(http://english.vietnamlearning.vn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=30:kinhnghiemhoctap&id=270:thanh-ngu-voi-mau-sac-mau-den)



It is easily found out that there is the existence of similarity in both languages, to some extent. People in these two countries get used to the primary colour of “coal”, “ink”, “crow”. Therefore the similarity in using these images is undeniable.

However, the use of these similes is a little bit of difference in English and Vietnamese. In English, “as black as coal”, “as black as ink”, “as black as pitch” refer to the physical substance. As the result, the English fairy tale has had a snow white whose hair is as black as ebony. However, some of them are used for both the description of human’s appearance and the content of the event. In fact, the Eastern people live in the tropical weather in which they can get sun burnt easily. Here there must be an exaggeration describing their dark complexion. To illustrate, Vietnamese people have “*đen như trâu*”, “*đen như củ sừng*”, etc. Besides, black is also the symbol of bad luck. Thus the comparative sentences like “*đen như cuộc*”, “*đen như quạ*”, refer to objects or agents causing unfortunateness.

2.1.2 “Red”

Red, according to Wikipedia.org is the colour of blood when it is exposed to sunlight. In Western countries, it is most commonly referred to as a colour of love, evil and sometimes happiness. In English, the word “red” is associated with the colour of blood, certain flowers (e.g. roses) and ripe fruits (e.g. apples, cherries). It is easily identified that red is the main colour in the British flag. Besides teams of football, rugby wear red in their uniforms. In Eastern countries, red carries a largely positive meaning which is associated with courage, loyalty, honor, success, fortune, passion and happiness as well. It is found out that in both cultures, red is the representative of blood in our body, therefore, “*as red as blood*” – “*đỏ như máu*” is easily used and compared. However, each culture has its own characteristics with personal symbols. For instance, the fruit “cherry” becomes very familiar in Western with its colour which is as red as an apple. It looks like a plum, an apricot and maybe a small peach in the East. Its colour is really typical for the fresh colour of red “*as red as a cherry*”. However, the Vietnamese people find it uneasy to deal with it due to the unpopularity in the market. As the result, this simile must be translated into “*đỏ như son*”, “*đỏ như gấc*” for easy understanding.



“*Đỏ như son*” comes to Vietnamese folklore as:

Còn cha, gót đỏ như son
Đến khi cha chết, gót con đen sì.

(Ha, 2011, p.156)

Actually, the folklore use the two opposite images of “đỏ son” and “đen sì” to emphasize the very important role of the father- the bread winner of the family. Together with mother, the father will spend will his love and care to the child and the child will be happy with their parents.

On the other hand, “*đỏ như gấc*” carries two different descriptive aspects in which one is for the primary colour of red and one is for the status of a shy or angry person.

For example:

His face is as red as a cherry when being asked about his darling = His face turns red when being asked about his darling.

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/red+as+a+cherry>)

On the contrary, “*as red as a cherry*” is not for the anger in English and it must be changed to “*as red as the beetroot*” or “*as red as a beet*” for the exact description. At first, the researcher of this study felt embarrassed about this simile for its meaning in Vietnamese of “white”. This suggests obstacles in studying English similes.

2.1.3 “White”

White is the colour of purity. White subjects such as clouds, snow and flowers appear often in nature therefore it has frequent symbolism (<http://www.wikipedia.org>). Consequently, human culture has many references to white. Nowadays, white is usually of best choice to brides for it symbolizes a virgin. What is more, white daisies are a symbol of loyal love that lovers always admire. In many culture, white also stands for wholeness and completion, openness and truth as well. It is believable that putting some white in our life is to start a fresh beginning. As a consequence, white also plays the key role in verifying entities in which comparative idioms are clear examples. In English, people use “*as white as snow*” to indicate the pure white. What is better to symbolize whiteness than snow? Not only is the intensity of colour on a bright winter's day, but the purity of snow is also

summoned up by the simile. This simile was used in the old literature long time ago. For example:

The “King James Version of the Bible”, 1611, has this in Daniel 7:9 “I behelp till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow and the hair of his head like the pure wool”.

(<http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/181700.html>)



However, this simile might become familiar in Vietnamese thank to the popularity of the story “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”. The princess Snow White becomes loved in readers’ minds for not only her miserable destiny but also her beauty in which her skin is compared to white snow. Although snow is not of popularity in Vietnam – a tropical country, the image of white snow is still common.

Besides, in English, there is a very common simile relating white. It, however, does not focus on the primary colour of white but the status of weakness in human. This simile will be mentioned with the colour of pale for the sake of same meaning.

On contrary, in our own languages, Vietnamese people can use “bông, bột, mây” as the replacement of “snow – tuyết” in “*trắng như bông – as white as wool*”. Besides, fleece, ivory of flower of lily are also taken the advantage in making similes various. The image of ivory – “ngà” becomes usual in both languages. The Vietnamese folklore has wonderful lyric for this set expression:

*“Cổ tay em **trắng như ngà**
Con mắt em liếc như là dao cau
Miệng cười như thể hoa ngâu
Cái khăn đội đầu như thể hoa sen.”*

(Ha, 2011, p.95)

Not only the simile “trắng như ngà” but also the similes in the three next sentences highlighted the beauty of the woman in the past.

However, the usage of these images is different in specific situations such as “trắng như bông” is for hair, “trắng như bột” is for the complexion which is equal to “as white as snow” in English, “trắng như ngà” is for both complexion and teeth. Especially, when describing the soft and bright complexion like a baby’s, Vietnamese often use the simile of

“trắng như trứng gà bóc”.

(Luc, 2002, p.755_6)

2.1.4 “Pale”

Pale may come to consideration for the question “Is pale a colour?”. Normally, “pale” is in the thought of being an adjective describing the weak status of somebody. However, this idea only takes partly meaning of this controversial word. In fact, pale is a colour, a very light – green colour which is highly diluted with white. Pale sometimes suggests the feelings of calm, emotional healing and especially refreshing. Coming back to this study, there is few similes using pale as the comparative image. When pale is used in simile, the simple meaning of light colour is not presented. On the contrary they are to indicate the extremely pale status of an ill person in “*as pale as death*” or “*as pale as ghost*”.

For instance:

- *The woman in the hospital waiting room was **as pale as death**.*

(<http://www.americanidioms.net/as-pale-as-death>)

- *My grandfather was **as pale as ghost** when entering hospital.*

(<http://www.americanidioms.net/as-pale-as-death>)

- *Laura came into the room, **as pale as ghost**.*

“What happened?” her friends gasped. “What is the matter? You are as pale as death”.

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/pale+as+death>)

What is more, there are synonymous similes used to indicate the same status which are discussed in the fore – mentioned colour of “white”. In such case of Laura, “as white as ghost” or “as white as sheet” is equal to “as pale as ghost/ death”. When a person is frightened or sick, the blood drains from the face, leaving them looking very white. Since the whitest things those days were sheets, the simile was a natural one to make. However, it is difficult to find out the same simile of same colour “white” to indicate the spirit of a weak person. In contrast, “pale” finds out its partner in “xanh như tàu lá” in Vietnamese for the same case.

For example:

“Một chiến sĩ mới được bổ sung về đại đội chưa quá hai ngày, đang bị sốt rét, người xanh như tàu lá, cũng cứ nằng nặc đòi được đi diệt Mỹ.”

(Phuong, 1967, p.32)

2.2 Explicit similes relating to human’s characters:

Most people are concerned about characters of other people. You want to know what type of person and individual is before getting into a relationship with that person. If you were going to become involved in a business exchange, you would want to know the character or the other person or company.

Before you deal or interact with another person, you would like to know what type of person he or she is, especially before getting more involved. This is especially of concern in romantic relationships.

The first area usually concerns social character issues. You want to know if the other person is honest and reliable. You probably do not like someone who is sarcastic and rude. You like someone who is sharing and hospitable.

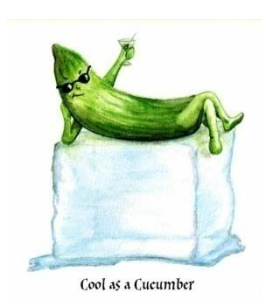
Another area of concern is the values and rules the person follows. Some people prefer to deal with those who are of the same religion or political persuasion as they are.

In conclusion, personal character traits are most important if the relationship is to become close, like in a romantic sense. A woman may think twice about getting involved with a man who was lazy and did not want to get a job. In any personal relationship or interaction, people tend to gravitate toward others who have a similar character. Also, some positive traits may overshadow various negative traits in a person.

2.2.1 Positive characters.

There are many positive character traits. The ones we show here are ones that, in our opinion, demonstrates those of a person with a positive disposition. A person's character is defined by the way the person thinks, how they feel, and how they act not only during the good times but during challenging times. The followings are the similes relating to human's positive characters which interests me most:

❖ “As cool as cucumber”



If someone is as cool as a cucumber, they do not get worried by anything, they are always optimistic and see their life with pink, they are always calm and unruffled after all situations. For example:

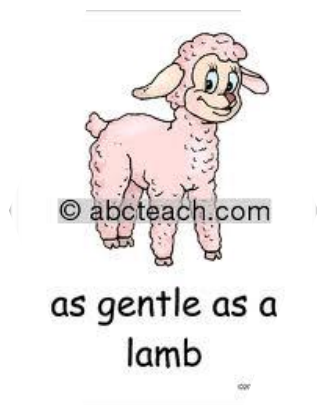
- Ray was **as cool as a cucumber** about his exam because he studied all week for it.

(<http://www.learn-english-today.com>)

Normally, students usually get nervous before the exam for various reasons, however, in this case, Ray was not because he prepared well for it. *Cool* here means imperturbable rather than a low temperature. *Cucumbers* are cool to the touch, relatively cold, or, served cold, usually. When we meet a problem, we often think a lot and feel worried and get stressed easily.

Therefore, it is vital for us to be “*as cool as cucumber*” because of being cool at all time is a very important trait. However, in the process of finding the Vietnamese equivalent, it is not easy to find the same simile to describe the calm people. It is suggested to translate it into “*bình chân như vại*” in Vietnamese (Hung, 2005, p.190).

❖ “As gentle as a lamb”



Lamb is a baby sheep which is typically kept as livestock. One of the earliest animals to be domesticated for agricultural purposes, sheep is raised for fleece, meat (lamb, hogget or mutton) and milk. A sheep's wool is the most widely used animal fiber, is usually harvested by shearing.

Sheep husbandry is practiced throughout the majority of the inhabited world, and has been fundamental to many civilizations. In the modern era, Australia, New Zealand, the southern and central South American nations, and the British Isles are most closely associated with sheep production. As a result, the image of sheep or lamb becomes very familiar to the Western. They seem to be very gentle to the farmers when they shave lamb's fur. Moreover, lambs are easy to be raised in their stocks, sometimes with the control of dogs. Consequently, the image of lambs comes into idioms with “as gentle as a lamb” to indicate people who are gentle, calm. For example:

- *Do not be afraid of Mr. Schaeffer. He may look fierce, but he is **as gentle as a lamb**.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/gentle+as+a+lamb>)

This example emphasizes the saying that “never judge anyone by their appearance”. Actually, Mr. Schaeffer may look fierce with his cranky face; however, he is very kind to the others. Similarly, for the same meaning of being gentle, English people also say “*as gentle as a dove*” because the dove is the representative of the world's peace.

Furthermore, due to the differences in culture, with the same values of content, the way of expressing ideas in similes spreads among culture. Although Vietnamese farmers use the familiar images in their fields to put in their idiom like the English ones, the images are not the same in each country due to the cultural gap. As a consequence, the simile “*as gentle as a lamb*” must be translated into “*hiền như đất*”, “*hiền như củ khoai*” for the similarity. These similes are to indicate the farmers themselves for their goof characters.

For example:

- “*Nay lại nở ra Chí Phèo. Lại một thằng **hiền lành như đất** nữa. tội nghiệp cho hấn, có lần Lý Kiến thấy hấn vừa bóp đùi cho bà ba vừa run.*”

(Cao, 1930, p.12)

In addition, Vietnam is a country in which Buddhism takes the majority in the population. Coming to the pagodas, temples in special occasions becomes a custom of high moral value. The existence of Buddha as well as statuette is calm and patient. They sit there to hear the confidence of the common people and they are the beliefs of the ordinary people. These statues say nothing and they come to idiom in the images of gentle people in “*hiền như phỗng đất*”, “*hiền như bụt*”.

❖ “As busy as a bee”

Wikipedia- the free Encyclopedia indicates that bees are flying insects closely related to wasps and ants, and are known for their role in pollination and for producing honey and beeswax. There are nearly 20,000 known species of bees in seven to nine recognized families, though many are indescribable and the actual number is probably higher. They are found on every continent except Antarctica, in every habitat on the planet that contains insect-pollinated flowering plants. Bees play an important role in supplying honey – precious medicine to human as well as beeswax and associated products. Furthermore, bees are the vital keys for the pollination of plants.

In the wild world, bees are considered the very hard working insects. There are various kinds of bees such as the honey bee, the Queen bee, the worker bee, etc of ample species.

The characteristic of working hard of the species of bees is given to the comparative idiom of “as busy as a bee”. The worker bees are the most hard work all day to bring pollen to produce wax and shape it into hexagonal cells called comb as well as to feed the larva inside. Based on this positive feature of bees, English people take the advantage of it to describe hard working people as well.



For example:

- *She's as busy as a bee, always going to meetings and organizing parties.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+as+busy+as+a+bee>)

In Vietnam, bees are very popular especially in the area of populous flowers. Bees never stop working as well as building their hives. In addition, bees are identified the hard working as well as useful insects. Therefore, Vietnamese people usually use the simile “*chăm chỉ như ong*” to indicate the laborious workers (Ba, 2004, p.123).

❖ “As wise as an owl”.



In western countries like Britain, owls are the presence of the scholar, of the prolong knowledge in the jungles. Owls are nocturnal birds and function extremely well at night. Their ability to see in the dark has elevated owls, in some cultures, to manifestations of wisdom.

Perhaps the earliest known link between owls and wisdom is their association with Athena. The Greek goddess of wisdom is often depicted holding an owl. Because of their close kinship with the night, owls are also associated with magic and witchcraft. Merlin was known to have an owl, and in the Harry Potter series, young wizards communicate by owl messengers instead of instant messengers. For these reasons, they may be the reason why owls perceived in folklore as being wise in “*as wise as an owl*”.

For example:

- *This is a difficult problem. You'd need to be **as wise as an owl** to be able to solve it.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/wise+as+an+owl>)

However, in Vietnam, the appearance of owls is equal to the existence of the death. Vietnamese people believe that, once the sound from the owls is made, somebody is going to die. Therefore, people try to drive owls away from households for safe and good luck. Besides, owls are not really familiar and of considered smelly because Vietnamese people say “*hôi như cú*” when they want to indicate the messy and dirty people. Obviously, the same component contains different meanings in each language.

As a result, in Vietnam, the owls will not be considered being wise. Instead, “*as wise as an owl*” in English can find its equivalent in Vietnam as “*khôn như ranh*” or “*khôn như trẻ ranh*” (Hung, 2005, p.107). “Trẻ ranh” here are the children who are cute and beloved among everybody. Sometimes, they are courting and demanding everything with their own reasons and as a result, almost their demanding will be supplied by their parents.

Also, another equivalent for that simile is “*khôn như mại, dại như vích*” (Lan, 2008, p.229) which came from the natural observation of the old peasants. “Mại” or “cá mại” is one kind of fish which resides in ponds or lakes. Because they are tiny so it is uneasy to catch them. Furthermore, when

there is strange sound, they will split and it is more difficult to catch them. For these characteristics, they come to language with the wisdom.

2.2.2 Negative characters.

People are not always perfect and wonderful. Characters of people can be affected by many things, such as by their parents, their surrounding people and environment. Beside good characters, normal people can get bad ones and some of them are also illustrated in similes:

❖ “As sly as a fox”

Fox is a common name for many species of omnivorous mammals belonging to the Canidae family. Foxes are small to medium-sized (slightly smaller than the medium-sized domestic dog), characterized by possessing a long narrow snout, and a bushy tail (or brush). Foxes are normally extremely wary of humans for firstly, they can be hunted and secondly, foxes are major predators of hens-human’s poultry. In many cultures, the fox appears in folklore as a symbol of cunning and trickery. Therefore, it is the root for the simile “as sly as a fox” or “as cunning as a fox”. It is rooted from an animal but is to imply a person who is cunning and experienced and can get what they want, often in an underhand way. Foxes are sly to escape enemies. They will lead them across roads, floating logs, and in general, obstacles. If you are *as sly as a fox*, you are extremely clever at getting what you want, especially by tricking someone.

For example:

- *The police have not caught the burglar yet. He is **as cunning as a fox**.*

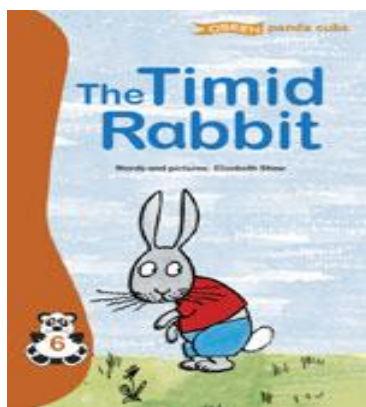
(<http://online-english-lessons.eu/wordpress/2009/11/idiom-as-cunning-as-a-fox/>)

Obviously, the burglar is very cunning and sly to hide all the clues relating to him so that the police could not find him after a long time of seeking.

To some extents, the cunning person is very determined to realize the target but with trickery and ruthlessness so at last, they will not be successful and not be respected by other people.

There are billions people living in the Earth. From country to country, people in each country may look unfamiliar with different physical appearance. Nevertheless, the typical characters must be in the same for groups of people, especially in typical social fields. Maybe the images in expressions vary from nation to nation but the meanings are in common including the case of illustrating cunning people. Similarly, Vietnamese equivalent does not contain the factor of fox in the saying but he meaning for that is fixed for the response of “*ranh như ma*” (Lan, 2008, p.386). Obviously, “ma” is an abstract image like the others to make Vietnamese idioms become less concrete than the English. The Vietnamese people make use of an abstract image to lead it free in the real world to emphasize the characteristics of the objects. It is said that “ma” or ghost is transparent and that is easy to confirm that “ma” can travel freely everywhere. Due to that feature, “ma” could do everything the others could not recognize. It could be concluded that “ma” is also very tricky and sly for the belief that “ma” can change shapes frequently.

❖ “As timid as a rabbit”



Rabbits are small mammals found in several parts of the world. Rabbit habitats include meadows, woods, forests, grasslands, deserts and wetlands. Rabbits live in groups, and the best known species, the European rabbit, lives in underground burrows, or rabbit holes. A group of burrows is called a warren. Rabbits are

prey animals and are therefore constantly aware of their surroundings. For instances, in Mediterranean Europe, rabbits are the main prey of red foxes, badgers, and Iberian lynxes.

For the feature of being timid observed by human, rabbits become a symbol for “*as timid as a rabbit*”. For example:

- *He's as timid as a rabbit.*

(<http://tatoeba.org/eng/sentences/show/612895>)

For the physical appearance, he may look gentle. However, from his nervous eyes, he looks very nervous and extremely timid. He is always in caution to the surroundings. If confronted by a potential threat, a rabbit may freeze and observe then warn others in the warren with powerful thumps on the ground. Rabbits have a remarkably wide field of vision, and a good deal of it is devoted to overhead scanning. They survive predation by burrowing, hopping away in a zig- zag motion, and, if captured, delivering powerful kicks with their hind legs. Their strong teeth allow them to eat and to bite in order to escape a struggle. Nevertheless, a timid person will be uncourageous enough to attack against the enemies but escaping instead because timid people are shy, nervous, and have no courage or confidence in themselves. Therefore, if you describe someone's attitudes or actions as timid, you are criticizing them for being too cautious or slow to act, because they are nervous about the possible consequences of their actions.

In Vietnam, rabbits are also familiar and gradually become domesticated pets. It is said that “the leopard never changes its spots” therefore, the rabbits everywhere keep their timidity. Vietnamese people have the equivalent similes of exact meaning to that of English to indicate timid and shy people. It is “*nhát như thỏ đế*” (Lan, 2008, p.333). In fact, “thỏ đế” is one kind of wild rabbits which are as timid as the normal rabbits.

The simile “*nhát như thỏ đế*” has been used for times in literature in which these sentences are very popular:

“Thằng giặc Pháp cậy nhiều người, nhiều của, nhiều súng đạn nhưng vào đất này thì lò dò, chậm như sên, **nhát như thỏ**, sợ từ cái lá rụng, tiếng cú kêu.”

(Luc, 2002, p.543)

The comparison really makes the images of French colonist become humorous, irony in the Vietnamese front. In addition to “*nhát như thỏ đế*”, “*nhát như cáy*” as well as “*nhát như cheo*” (“cheo” means the squirrels) are also used for the same describing purpose.

❖ “As stubborn as a mule”

If somebody is said to be *as stubborn as a mule*, it means that they are determined not to change their opinions or attitudes even when they are wrong.

For example:

- *You will not get him to change his mind – he is **as stubborn as a mule**.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+as+stubborn+as+a+mule>)



Can the leopard change its spots? It is difficult because it belongs to the nature. In case of him, his character has been existing; therefore, it is impossible to change his mind. The afore-simile makes use of the image of a mule to emphasize a negative character of stubbornness. A mule is the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse however it does not sound exactly like a donkey or a horse but a donkey. The mule possesses the even temper, patience, endurance and sure-footedness of the donkey, and the vigor, strength and courage of the horse.

Operators of working animals generally find mules preferable to horses: mules show more patience under the pressure of heavy weights, and their skin is harder and less sensitive than that of horses, rendering them more capable of resisting sun and rain. In addition, mules are generally less tolerant towards dogs than horses are. They are also capable of striking out with any of their hooves in any direction, even sideways if needed. These features of a mule are easily getting involved with a stubborn person. In other word, stubborn people could be compared to “*as obstinate as a mule*” for the synonymous meaning.

In Vietnamese, there are similar comparative idioms for the same meaning of *as stubborn as a mule* but with others compared features due to the cultural gaps. The Vietnamese agricultural sector normally attaches with the buffalo, the cow, the crab, not the mule, the horse, etc like the Western countries. Consequently, it could be found in Vietnamese the similes like: “*ngang như cua*” or “*ngang như cày bừa*” (Luc, 2002, p.518). The reason why the crab is put in that idiom is that the crab travels in the horizontal line which is different from that of the other creatures. Added to that, the branches of “*cây bừa*” also straight out on the horizontal plane. For example:

- *Chị ta trả lời **ngang cày bừa** như thế rồi cứ ôm con ngủ.*

(Huong, 1965, p.86)

- *Thỉnh thoảng giáo Kền gặt gù chêm một câu **ngang như cua bò**.*

(Hoai, 1968, p.79)

These similes appear not only in the writing context of literature works in the role of emphasizing but also in the daily language as the critical suggestions to someone stubborn.

❖ “As slippery as an eel”



An eel is a long sea or freshwater fish that looks like a snake. The eel has a long tapered body covered by slimy

skin. Some species have scales. The eel has dorsal (back) fins but no pelvic fins. That means there are no legs for an eel to move from place to place. They travel through the water with an undulating motion. In other words, eels worm through the water and they move at high speed. Moreover, eels with no scales live in the water so they are too smooth to catch let alone to hold it. In daily life, there are people who are as cunning as foxes dishonest and devious. To some extent, they are always cheating the others. These people will be probably compared to the eels in the simile: “as slippery as an eel”. For example:

- *That sales person is **as slippery as an eel** and you should be careful when you talk to him.*

(<http://www.americanidioms.net/as-slippery-as-an-eel>)

- *You' would be mad to go into business with him. He is **as slippery as an eel**.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+as+slippery+as+an+eel>)

Both the salesperson in the first example and he in the second one are compared *as slippery as an eel*. They are both dishonest and cannot be trusted. Exactly like the natural features of an eel, these bad people will easily escape from the others, in special cases, police, the owners, etc. Especially, in business, these as slippery as an eel people will not be trusted by partners.

In Vietnamese, the eels have the same features as in English images. In their living in habitats, it is easy for eels to escape from their enemies fast. In Vietnamese, eels are called “lươn” or “chạch”. Although, they are a little bit different from the appearance of colour and length, they have the same feature of skin. They are both slippery. And these features come to similes like English to describe people for both the figurative and literal sense of meaning. There are “lẩn như chạch”, “lủi như chạch” and even “trốn như chạch”(Luc, 2002, p.428). Here the verbs of “lẩn”, “lủi” or “trốn” are active verbs that carry the high sense of description. For example:

- *Từ hôm anh Lượng bị bắt, cậu này **lăn như chạch**, tôi tìm hai ba lần mà nó cứ trốn không chịu gặp.*

(Thi, 1966, p.19)

Besides, there is another equivalent of the same verb but dissimilar image in Vietnamese for “*as slippery as an eel*”. This comparative phrase carries “lủi như cuốc” for the same meaning (Luc, 2002, p.428).

2.3. Physical characteristics.

Beside colours, human’s characters, simile also bears various categories that play an important role in highlighting the similarities as well as the prominent differences between English and Vietnamese, similes could include a group of physical characteristics. It is suggested to have a whole look at how the cultural factors have influence on similes through physical characteristics.

❖ “As tough as nails”

In case of literal meaning, “tough” is having or causing problems for the situations and being difficult to cut or chew for soft materials such as meat. Besides, nails may be the thin hard layer covering the outer of our fingers or toes and maybe the a small thin pointed piece of metal with a flat head for hanging things on the wall or for joining pieces of woods together. It could be concluded that, metal nails are strong enough to bear the heavy forces. When something is compared to “*as tough as nails*”, it must be in contexts to have the exact translation. Firstly, “*as tough as nails*” along with “*as tough as the old boots*” could be used for food or materials which are very difficult to chew or cut. From the characteristics of the nails- a hard material and the boots which were made of animal’s skin, the similes are used to indicate something difficult to chew or cut. In addition, to some extent, they could be equal to “*as tough as the leather*” for leather is similar to boots in

terms of expression. The first meaning can be illustrated with the following example:

- *That steak I had was **as tough as old boots**.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+as+tough+as+nails>)

In Vietnamese, there is an equivalent for these two similes in English. However, it could be emphasized that the different components create the same meaning due to the separation of culture. Boots became popular to the West long time ago because of the acquaintance with cattle raising. The West farmers make the best use of their products. Similarly, the Vietnamese people get used to simple tools in helping them for the hard work. As a consequence, the saying “*dai như chũo*” is released to be the partner of *as tough as nails* and *as tough as the old boots*. *Chũo* is one kind of rope made of jute tree for tightening also. This special tool is always of long use and more important, it is familiar in Vietnam.

However, *as tough as nails* or *as tough as the old boots* could be used to illustrate one of human's characters. For this aspect, *as tough as nails* means being strong and determined, unable to be discouraged or not feeling or showing any emotions such as sympathy, fear or worry. For instance:

- *'Do you think Grandad will ever recover?' 'Of course, he is **as tough as old boots**.'*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+as+tough+as+nails>)

“*As tough as the old boots*” owns a very humorous equivalent in Vietnamese. To indicate someone who is determined and decisive, “*lạnh như tiền*” will be of first choice. “*Tiền*”- the *money* bears the literal meaning of the Vietnamese old coins of tin or copper which were far away used. From the typical characteristics of the coin moneys as well as the true value of money in miserable life, the simile becomes a very suitable saying for the aim of indicating the cold-hearted people. Moreover, for the same description, “*lạnh*

như tiền” could be “*lạnh như sắt*”, “*lạnh như băng*” or “*lạnh như nước đá*” but the first meaning is still of best use (Luc,2002, p.401_2).

❖ “As easy as ABC”

If something is “*as easy as ABC*”, it really poses no difficulties to deal with the problems. Actually, ABC stands for the alphabet in English therefore it is often in plural. The symbol of ABC is both meaningful and easy to understand like its name. In any country, when children start going to school, normally the primary school, it is obligatory for them to take the first step of studying the alphabet because alphabet is one of the very initial as well as simple lessons for each student. As a result, “*as easy as ABC*” not only focuses on the level of the work but also a suggestion, encouragement for the rising up of the workers.

In English, there are similar similes to “*as easy as ABC*” to evaluate the measurement of a process. One of them is “*as easy as a pie*”, sometimes “*as easy as an apple pie*”. Pie is the popular cake in Western countries therefore making pies becomes ordinary without any difficulties.

For example:

- *You make everything sound as easy as pie, George.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/pie>)

Actually the recipe for making a pie is rather simple. With some tools carrying out four or five steps, you can have a delicious pie cake.

Another synonym for “*as easy as ABC*” is “*as easy as falling off the log*”. A log is a large decomposing tree trunk that has fallen, usually in a forest. It is also the decaying wood provides moisture and nutrients for a variety of insects and plants. When it lies in the forests under the change of the weather, logs can get wet and moist. Furthermore, with the shape of a cylinder, logs make the other fall off them easily. In other words, “*as easy as falling off the log*” can be “*as easy as rolling off the log*”.

(<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/easy+as+ABC>)

In their counterpart, Vietnamese people do not say “*dễ như bẻ gãy cành chuối*” or “*dễ như cái bánh*” but “*dễ như trở bàn tay*” for the same measure of the action. For example:

- “*Nghị Lại giàu có một cách hốt hơ. Tiền, thóc, ruộng, nhà cửa người khác lọt vào tay ông ta dễ như trở bàn tay*”. (Luc, 2002, p.223)

Here it is an action of moving hands taking only one second. Normally, hands move, turn over thousands times therefore “*dễ như trở bàn tay*” is possible and in the reach. That Nghị Lại became rich is extremely easy by bullying the poor peasants. By bullying, “*dễ như bẻ*” carries the same meaning to these above similes. It can be also literally translated into “*dễ như chơi*” that are all mentioned clearly in “*Thành ngữ Tiếng Việt*” composed by Luc (2002, p.223).

❖ “As straight as an arrow”.

A long time ago, arrows were invented and effectively used. The latest evidence shows that the first arrows attached to the Paleolithic about 8000 years ago. People made use of arrows in hunting as well as protecting themselves from the wild animals. The designs of arrows have changed due to the advance in making means of production; however, arrows are still kept straight. The arrows must be straight for the straight direction to the targets. From their personal experience as well as observation of the nature, people use the images of arrows to describe straight objects in “*as straight as an arrow*”. For example:

- *The road to my house is as straight as an arrow, so it should be very easy to follow.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/straight+as+an+arrow>)

Obviously, the road to that house is very straight without any branching roads or roundabout and as a result, it is very easy to reach.

Nevertheless, this simile seems to be cliché for it has been used so much that they are not interesting and meaningful in terms of rhetoric

anymore. On the contrary, Vietnamese similes are never considered cliché due to the variety of this language. It is easy to find the numerous equivalents of *as straight as an arrow* in Vietnamese to illustrate the shape of the entities. For the same meaning of the same image, Vietnamese has “*thẳng như tên bắn*” mainly for the line and the road like in the above example. For instance:

- *Nhìn con đường mới mở ra biển vừa to vừa rộng lại **thẳng như tên bắn**.*

(Luc, 2002,p.697)

Besides, there is also “*thẳng như kẻ chì*” for the same purpose of drafting out a line or a road in Vietnamese. Normally, students use a pencil to draw a line by tracing on the top line of the ruler and that line is very straight like the line in that ruler.

“As straight as an arrow” is not only used for description of objects but also bears the descriptive meaning of a person’s character. When someone is compared “*as straight as an arrow*”, that person is considered very honest, forthright and well-behaved. For example:

- *Tom is **as straight as an arrow**. I'd trust him with anything.*

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/straight+as+an+arrow>)

There is an exact equivalent of this simile in Vietnamese for the honest and trustful people. Like the others, this simile also is characterized by the observation in the nature. It is discovered that the stomach of one kind of animal is very special. It is not for digestion. In this animal, this function belongs to the bowel for this organ is rather long and large in size. That is the horse. Additionally, in Vietnamese, the figurative meaning of bowel symbolizes for human’s feelings and emotions. As a result, the horse comes to idioms in a very new meaning with “*thẳng như ruột ngựa*” for the descriptive expression of an honest and trustful person.

For example:

- *Anh Tịch phải năn nỉ mãi, cũng bởi vì Út hay nói lô la **thẳng như ruột ngựa** nên anh sợ.*

(Luc, 2002, p.697)

In conclusion, the mentioned similes are a small part of the whole family of similes but they play an important part in highlighting the contrastive comparison between English and Vietnamese in some extents. The pictures of British as well as Vietnamese culture are partly painted with beautiful colors of life. Through these pictures, learners could have a general view on similarities in both two rich cultures. Nevertheless, the difference occupies most in idiomatic expressions, here, which is simile due to the differences of various factors. These differences would probably attract learners' interest in figures of speech in general and similes in particular. On the other hand, these differences could cause many difficulties to the learners in the learning process. What are these difficulties? As a result, these obstacles will be mentioned in the next part together with the suggested solutions so that the learners as well as the researcher could escape their troubles.

CHAPTER III: IMPLICATION

1. Problem faced by learners in studying similes.

It must be concluded that knowing and understanding idiomatic expressions is a significant step to master English. The more fluently and accurately Vietnamese learners can use English set phrases and collocation, the more successfully they can deal with the language of globalization. However, the problem when studying this language is unpredictable because of various reasons. During the process carrying out this study, the researcher had consultation with foreigners who directly use expressions in their daily speaking. In addition, some English majors joining in the exercises given by the researcher gave their opinions about this issue. Through the combination of ideas from foreigners, participants as well as personal knowledge, the researcher of this study has found out the difficulties faced by learners of similes. In fact, the problem in studying simile in particular is equal to the problem in studying other lexicological or grammatical issues in general. In this part, attempts are made to shed light on common difficulties confronted by learners. Furthermore, suggestions to solve the problems are also given in this chapter.

The followings are common problem faced by learners in studying similes:

1.1. Problem in understanding meaning of similes.

To start with, the matter of grammatical structure will not be mentioned as one of the problem faced by learners in studying similes. Obvious, it is concluded from the above – mentioned parts that the structure of simile is easily recognized in the forms of:

- “Like” for implicit simile.
- “As... as” for explicit simile.

As a result, it is easy for all learners to learn by heart the forms of similes.

However, the differences between the English and Vietnamese cultures are the most obstacles for learners to grasp the meanings of similes in each situation. Cultural gap, in other words, results in numerous ways of expressing one's idea. It is, therefore, the main reason causing remarkable difficulties to learners. Also, the two dissimilar comparative systems in two countries make learners from time to time feel at loss to find an exact equivalent to the comparative expressions they encounter. For example, the simile "as alike as two peas" (in a pod) in English is used to express the indistinguishable features between two people or things. The pod here is the cover or the container of the two peas. Hence, the two peas in a pod must absolutely look like each other.

For example:

- *The twins are as alike as two peas in a pod.*

(<http://www.dictionary.reference.com/idioms/as+alike+as+two+peas+in+a+pod>)

However, when it is translated into Vietnamese, the English partner employs "giống nhau như hai giọt nước" instead of "giống nhau như hai hạt đậu trong vỏ quả đậu" as the word – by – word translation to express the identity. Besides, it could be translated into "giống nhau như đũa", "giống nhau như in", "giống như đổ khuôn", "giống như lột" as well as "giống như tạc" due to the usage in Vietnamese. For example:

- "Người ta bảo Thanh **giống** thằng ấy **như lột**, từ cái nước da, cái con mắt đến cái trán và đường gân xanh ở thái dương."

(Hong, 1961, p.32)

Another example for cultural gap is "as cool as cucumber" which has been discussed in the part of explicit similes in terms of people's characteristics. It is obvious that in the process of finding a Vietnamese equivalent, it is notable to grasp beforehand the meaning of the English one as

to describe “calm people, especially when the opposite might be expected, e.g. on a hot day or in a tough situation”. It is only translated into “*bình chân như vại*” into Vietnamese for the exact equivalent.

1.2. Problem in memorizing meaning of similes.

Beside difficulties in understanding, learners of simile are also in trouble with a variety of problem in memorizing.

Firstly, learners have to face up with the large number of similes in English of numerous topics. According to the research’s knowledge, there are about 800 items of simile in English. However, it is said that set expressions change together with the change of life society and language as well. As the result, there is no exclusive to simile. Therefore, the number of 800 could be changed rapidly. Thus, facing with such ample ocean of similes, learners can easily get confused and discouraged in memorizing them. It could be concluded that such large number of English similes is actually one of the reasons that hinders Vietnamese learners from learning them.

For instance, along with idioms in general, similes in particular can be classified into various categories such as food, weather, animals, etc. Moreover, similes could spread into numerous aspects with variety of images so that learners are really in troubles with memorizing them.

Secondly, the difficulty in memorizing could be caused by the infrequent use of English similes in contexts. The reason is that in speaking, people rarely use idioms including comparative idioms. As a result, the infrequent use leads to the difficulties and even challenges to the learners of this figure of speech. In this side, learners do not apply flexibly the comparative expressions they have learnt because some of them sound uncommon to take in. In the other side, learners do not firmly approach them, thus, they do not know how to use them appropriately. This makes these set expressions become hard to be learned. In fact, set expressions have been studied and practiced in classroom – environment under the form of exercise,

not in daily life. However, learners try to use ordinary words to paraphrase, to simplify their expressions instead of comparative idioms. In short, the lack of language environment in which similes are utilized results in the fact that learners do not remember them and use them efficiently as well. For example, English make use of “*as good as gold*” to emphasize a good character of a person, normally a baby who is very obedient. However, this saying really causes misunderstanding to English learners, for instance the Vietnamese because for the literal meaning in Vietnamese, “*as good as gold*” will be “*tốt như vàng*”. Actually, “*tốt như vàng*” is used to indicate the wonderful characteristics of the objects for gold is very precious

Last but not least, learners of simile are facing difficulties in memorizing them due to the inadequate method of learning them. In fact, in learning English idioms in general and similes in particular, foreign learners including Vietnamese ones do not pay much attention to the learning method that leads to the inefficiency in memorization. Normally, after getting the meaning of new set expressions, these expressions come to learners’ minds and get away quickly and they will be left in the exercise, worksheets without application in daily communication. It is obvious that learners study them out of specific communicative situations, that is why comparative idioms are separated from the context. Unfortunately, this is not the way of learning similes for knowing without using is nonsense.

2. Suggested solutions.

This study is carried out with the aim at widening a large number of similes among the researcher as well as someone interested in this figure of speech. After figuring out some main reason leading to the difficulty in studying simile in particular, the researcher would like to suggest solutions to deal with her own obstacles in approaching similes as well as helping others widen their knowledge over this issue.

2.1. In understanding the meaning of similes.

Firstly, it is suggested that, learning by heart the similes is very important. Obviously, it is the first step for learners to put them into their minds and have a physically general definition of them. Then, these comparative idioms should be better learn in specific communicative contexts and real situations so that their meanings become familiar to the learners. Also, they are clear enough for the learners to decide which situation is best used. In addition, frequent application of these idioms is of great help.

Secondly, it is advisable that learners should guess the meaning of the idioms before looking them up in the dictionary. It is obvious that the dictionary is not always by the side of the learners. Furthermore, “guessing meanings from the context is the most successful strategies, leading to correct interpretation in 57 percent of the cases” (Cooper, 1999, p.262).

Last but not least, the process of understanding idioms should be accompanied with a process of discovering cultural features including psychological characteristic customs, beliefs, concepts, attitudes, etc. Accordingly, the background knowledge on a culture would be advantageous to firmly grasp idioms. It does take time since knowledge is accumulated gradually, nevertheless, learners can benefit much from using idioms during communication.

2.2. In memorizing the meaning of similes.

To begin with, there is no point worrying about a large number of comparative idioms. Attention should be devoted to the most useful and frequent method to memorize. Learners could look for books, useful references in which clarification of set expressions, idioms is very clear. In English, Oxford student’s Dictionary of English (Joint, 2008, p.109) is a good option. Furthermore, learners are advised to build their own way of classifying similes based on a certain criterion. For example, learners may

divide similes into subgroups such as: food, weather, colours, animals, etc and search for relating similes.

Moreover, comparative idioms must be practiced in certain situations frequently. Learners can join in wordsearch, matching quiz designed for similes to subgroup them. In addition, learners should have a look at examples attached with similes in some truthful websites to approach the exact usage of similes. It is common knowledge that the more learners drill the language items, the more they can memorize them.

Finally, it is advisable for learners to find out the equivalent in Vietnamese for the English similes. In this way, the relation between two languages will be installed. Then, the learners can make up their own examples by making sentences, stories to taking the best advantages of similes. Also, it is necessary for the learners to design their own dictionary – notebook. This notebook consists of list of similes with their meanings as well as illustrated examples so that a daily fifteen minute look at the dictionary will help the learners gradually remember the similes.

2.3. In using similes effectively.

When studying similes, it is necessary to understanding and memorizing them. However, it is also vital to use them effectively. In other words, as the aims of the study, similes must be used widely in relevant situations. Firstly, learners must understand theses similes in their contexts. Then, learners should make their efforts in imagining the situations when these similes are used and make sentences or create dialogues to reinforce the meaning of each idiom. Once the learners understand the similes, they can use them flexibly.

Furthermore, learners should do everything possible to create themselves a relaxed atmosphere to study similes effectively. Learners are advised to learn and update new comparative idioms through listening English songs and poems, funny stories, etc; playing idiomatic games on the Internet

and studying from other sources such as E books, newspaper, magazines, television show, in conclusion the media communication where similes are observed frequently. It could be affirmed that learners will feel relaxed and excited during the studying process,

The following poems of simile are a typical example in raising learners' interest in learning simile.

Your teeth

Your teeth are like stars

They come out at night.

They come back at dawn

When they are ready to bite.

(<http://www.funny-poems-for-free.com/funny-simile-poems.html>)

Clever

Poor as a church mouse.

Strong as an ox,

Cute as a button,

Smart as a fox.

Thin as a toothpick,

White as a ghost,

Fit as a fiddle,

Dumb as a post.

Bald as an eagle,

Neat as a pin,

Proud as a peacock,

Ugly as sin.

*When people are talking,
You know what they'll say,
As soon as they start to use a cliché.*

(<http://www.poetryteachers.com/poetclass/lessons/teachsimiles.html>)

During the process of fulfilling this graduation paper, it could be concluded that English idioms including similes are diverse and rich, full of meaning. In order to master them well, it is vital to understand British culture but firstly, we should have good knowledge of Vietnamese culture and similes.

In the following part, some exercises will be given in the Appendix. Hopefully, they will partly help the learners drill with similes.

PART THREE: CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a conclusion for this graduation paper. Firstly, the issues addressed in the study are discussed. Secondly, the recommendations and suggestions for further study are made.

1. The issues addressed in the study.

Nowadays, English gradually becomes the first popular language worldwide. Therefore, using English fluently has become as a common trend and step – by – step becomes obligatory in offices, especially in communication when Vietnam has already integrated into various global forums, organizations. The important role of English is illustrated in ample fields such as economy, science, politics, medical, etc. The good knowledge in specialty seems to be not enough to become a successful employee, especially in private enterprises let alone to become an excellent leader. It is necessary to be fluent on foreign languages notable English in order to communicate with foreign partners, to express the individual ideas. Therefore, clear understanding on tradition, custom, culture of the partners to avoid misunderstanding is of vitality simile is of one of figure of speeches which is in common in daily communication as well as in the literature and also interesting for studying.

After a precious time of working with the help of supervisor, teachers and my friends, my graduation paper has been completed.

After consulting and collecting from supervisor, I have designed this paper into three parts.

Firstly, Part One is the introduction of the study including the rationale, aims scope, method as well as the design of the study.

The second part, also the main one, consists of three chapters in which chapter I focuses on theoretical background of simile in English and Vietnamese as well as the features of similes in both languages; chapter II highlights the contrastive analysis of similes in terms of explicit similes and

implicit similes; chapter III is the implication focusing on difficulties faced by learners of English in understanding and memorizing them and suggested solutions to deal with the obstacles.

The final part is the conclusion which states overview of this study. After that is some exercises for drilling.

2. Suggestion for further study.

All what have been referred to in this graduation paper come from the limited understanding and ability. It is, however, hoped that this study will partly be a contribution to figure out the interesting significance of similes and a useful reference to those who are interested in English culture, English semantics as well as English similes.

However, because of my limited knowledge and time, this study has just run through some typical topics of similes. Also, mistakes and short – comings are unavoidable. Therefore, the research does hope to receive all remarks, criticisms and suggestions from teachers and friends to better this paper.

The researcher finds simile an absolutely interesting subject that more investigation is needed.

Hopefully, in the coming time, researcher could have chances to spread the study into:

- A contrastive analysis of similes and metaphors in English and Vietnamese.
- A study on English and Vietnamese simile in terms of typically modern topics such as: business, politics, math, etc.

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APPENDIX

Exercises:

Exercise 1:

Animal Similes

Fill in the blank with the following words:

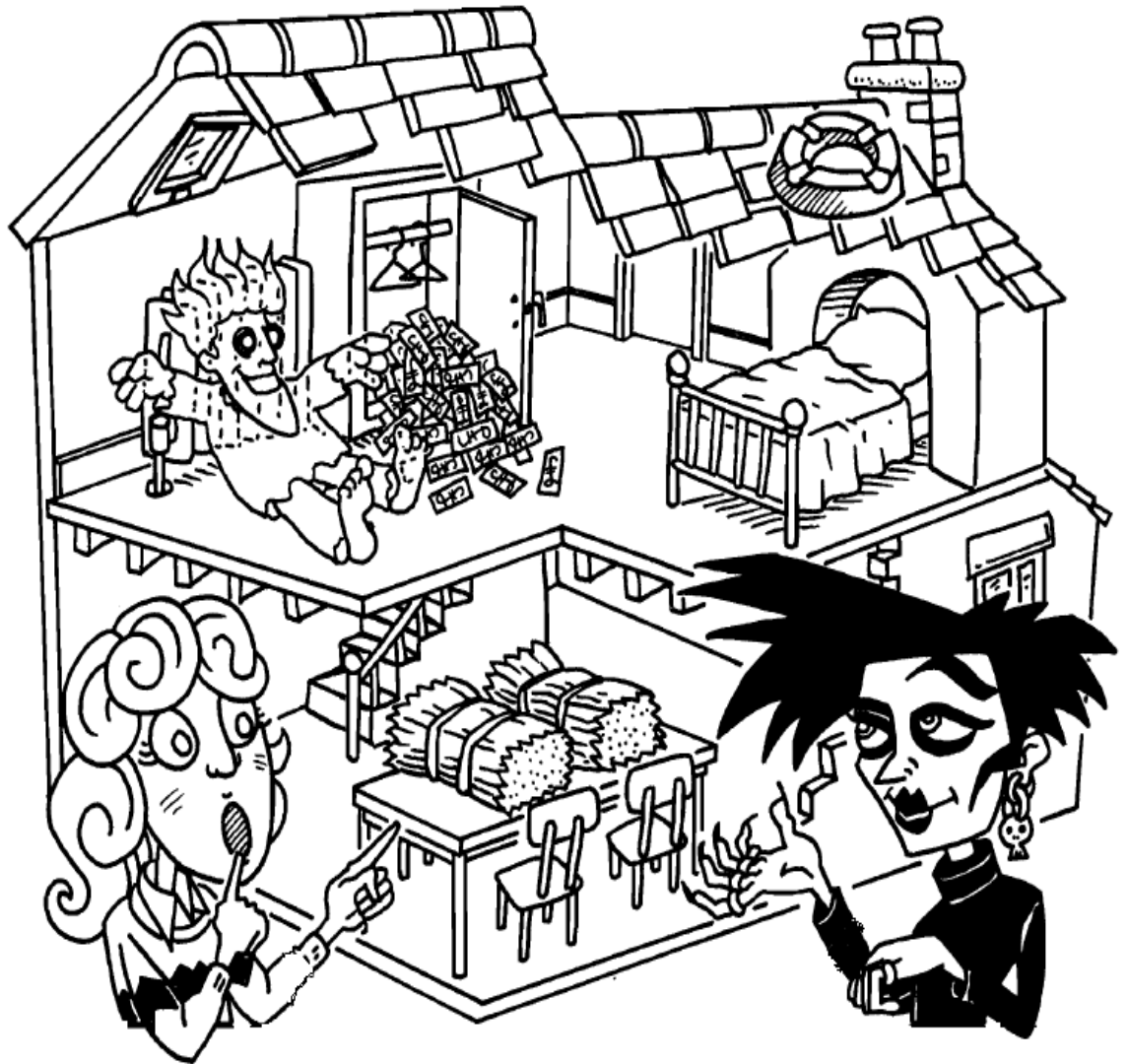
Mouse	Snail	Eel	Bee	Bird
Ox	Mule	Lamb	Dog	Bat

1. Don't expect that she'll change her mind. She's as stubborn as a(n)
.....
2. Bob will help you carry that heavy box up the stair. He's as strong as a(n) ..
.....
3. I can't go to work today. I'm as sick as a(n).....
.....
4. The old man can't see anything. He's as old as a(n)
.....
5. With all her activities, she's as busy as a(n)
.....
6. My computer's as slow as a(n)...I'm afraid I have to buy a new one soon
.....
7. He'll never settle down. He likes travelling place to place as free as a(n)
.....
8. I didn't hear her come to the room. She's as quiet as a(n)
.....
9. My mom never shouts at me. She's as gentle as a(n)
.....
10. If I were you, I'll never land him such a lot of money. He's as slippery as
a(n).....

Exercise 2:

Silly Questions

Carina thinks that Grimelda's family is very strange. Help Grimelda answer Carina's questions by matching the questions to the answers.



1 .Why do you have an ashtray on your roof?	a) Because she spends money like it's going out of fashion.
2 Why is there a bed in your fireplace?	b) Because my grandma eats like a horse.
3 Why is there hay in your dining room?	c) Because we get on like a house on fire.
4 Why do you phone the fire station before your best friend comes round to see you?	d) Because my father drives like a lunatic.
5 Why are you afraid of vacuum cleaners?	e) That's my uncle - he looks like death warmed up.
6 Why is there a psychiatrist in your father's car?	f) Because my granddad smokes like a chimney.
7 Why is there a ghost sitting next to the radiator?	g) Because my sister treats me like dirt.
8 Why does your mother keep her cash in the wardrobe?	h) Because my brother sleeps like a log.

Keys to the exercises:

Exercise 1:

1.mule	2.ox	3.dog	4.bat	5.bee
6.snail	7.bird	8.mouse	9.lamb	10.eel

Exercise 2:

1.f	2.h	3.b	4.c
5.g	6.d	7.e	8.a