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Contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese idioms
and proverbs relating to insects' names

(So sánh đối chiếu thành ngữ tục ngữ trong tiếng Anh
và tiếng Việt liên quan đến tên một vài loại côn trùng)

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



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So sánh đối chiếu thành ngữ tục ngữ trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt liên quan đến tên một vài loại côn trùng

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Part 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Each nation has its own particular culture and the cultural identity of ethnic groups has decided the differences between customary practices, personality, and history of every country in the world. Among them, folklore is the most precious treasure for any country. As a result of a long process, proverbs and idioms have become important parts constituting that culture. In both Vietnamese and English there are many different idioms and proverbs that are really close to human life: nature, plants, people and even to the small animals like insects. I chose to research on insects for the following reasons:

- Vietnam is an agricultural country, so insects of both beneficial and harmful species are close to and necessary for agriculture. It is obvious that people with considerable experience in agriculture are able to speak and understand the language better. The vivid picture, as it is expressed by idioms and proverbs is the best method to learn it.

- In Britain, although industry has become the most important aspect of the modern state, the people still consider agriculture to have a significant impact on their culture, especially on the language. This is the reason why there are still lots of proverbs and idioms referring to nature. Each category has specific insects. Utility, different effects and people often lend their image to one or more of the general nature of man. They are mostly constituted out of rhymes so that they can easily be remembered. Through the course history, these idioms and proverbs were given from one generation to another and are still relevant nowadays. This interesting topic has attracted a large number of scientific researchers as well as numerous students. Even little children are interested in learning idioms, as they teach them a lot about life and the way some people behave. I learned so many interesting and useful things from this topic: understanding profound aspects of culture of both English and Vietnamese nation and gaining experience for my future life.

2. Scope of the study

Idioms and proverbs are so large and difficult aspect of each language, that my researching paper cannot cover all insect idioms; it only focuses on typical insects such as bee, flea, bug, butterfly, and ant.

3. Aims of the study

Idioms and proverbs are an extremely difficult topic, which is hardly understood by foreign English learners, and even native speakers, who learn the idioms and proverbs and do not know how to use them. Being aware of this fact, I appreciate the idioms and proverbs associated to attitude and behavior of the speaker. Sometimes we can ignore the spelling mistakes because we still understand, but if someone uses the wrong idioms, we cannot understand. Therefore, my research is aimed at:

- Collecting, and classifying some idioms and proverbs which are usually used in Vietnamese and English language.
- Finding out some similarities and differences between these two cultures.
- Helping the learners or someone interested in idioms and proverbs to use them in a correct way.

4. Methods of the study

In order to learn English and Vietnamese idioms and proverbs relating to some common insects' name better and to make learners recognize the important roles of idioms and proverbs in life, the following methods are used in the studying process:

- Material analysis: reading reference books to find and collect needed information. Other hand, collecting the specific examples for study.
- Consultations: having discussion with the supervisor, experts and friends.
- Comparison and contrast: selecting, comparing and contrasting examples in English idioms and proverbs and Vietnamese ones in order to find the most similarities and differences.

5. Design of the study

This paper provides a clear organization consisting three main parts, which are very easy to explore and learn. Part I- Introduction consists of five small parts namely: Rationale, Scope of the study, Aims of the study, Methods of the study and Design of the study. Three other chapters are presented in the Part II. "An overview of ididoms" and "An overview of roverbs" are belonging to Chapter 1, Theoretical background. In these sub-divisions I present some knowledge about idioms, proverbs definition and their some common features. Chapter 2, Idioms and proverbs relating to insects' names in English and Vietnamese. Due to the limitation of time and knowledge, I just do research on ten typical insects' names: Bees, Fleas Butterflies, Ants, Flies, Bugs, Worms, Spiders, Gnats, and the Grasshopper. Chapter 3 is "Related problems faced by English learners and suggested solutions". And the last part is Part III, Conclusion.

Part II: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. An overview of idioms

1.1. What is an idiom?

It is important to recognize that idioms are not only colloquial expression, as many people believe. Idioms as a special form of language that carries a large amount of cultural information, such as history, geography, religion, custom and so on. They appear in formal style, in slang, in poetry...

To research idiom, first of all, we must well understand idiom's definition. There are many scholars defining what an idiom is. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary:

"A group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words"

(Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary, 1948, the 7th edition, page 707)

An idiom is a chain of words or phrase which means something different from what it says- it is usually metaphor. Only people who are very good at speaking the language of the idiom will know what an idiom means. This because in order to understand an idiom, you usually need to know the culture the idiom comes from.

In addition, another definition of idiom:

"A phrase which has a meaning that is commonly understood by speakers of the language, but whose meaning is often different from the normal meaning of the words is called an idiom."

(www.usingenglish.com/.../idiom.html)

As well as the definition from Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary, the above one also indicate that idiom includes a chain of words, commonly understood by natives

than learners. Another important thing here is the meaning of the word chain. Nobodies can break them from one another because of losing mean.

Idioms are words, phrases, or expressions that are unusual grammatically, as in "*under the weather*" or there is a meaning that cannot be derived from the conjoined meaning of its elements, as in "*storm in a teacup*". Every language has idioms, and they are challenging foreign students to learn.

(<http://English-Zone.Com>)

In fact, this is what makes idioms all more confusing.

E.g." Save for the rainy day "

This idiom means: preparing for the rainy day, literally. However it means building up a fund to meet emergencies, idiomatically.

The definitions of idiom are many in our society. In my opinion, idioms consist of set phrases and short sentences, which are peculiar to the language in question and stepped in the national and regional culture and ideals, thus being colorful, forcible and true to life. Strictly speaking, idioms are expressions that are not readily understandable from their literal meaning of individual parts. In a broad sense, idioms may include colloquialisms, catchphrase, slang expressions, proverbs and so on.

To sum up, an idiom is a phrase where the words together have a meaning that is different from the dictionary definition of the individual words, which can make idiom hard for English learners to understand.

1.2. Some common features of idioms

There are many different definitions of idioms but we can find some similarities between them.

➤ An idiom is a multiword expression. Individual components of an idiom can often be inflected in the same way individual words in a phrase can be inflected. This inflection usually follows the same pattern of inflection as the idiom's literal counterpart.

E.g. "have a bee in one's bonnet" = feeling anxiously

➤ An idiom behaves as a single semantic unit

▪ It tends to have some measure of internal cohesion such that a literal counterpart that is made up of a single word can often replace it.

E.g. "kick the bucket" = die

▪ It resists interruption by other words whether they are semantically compatible or not.

E.g. "do a bunk" = "do a bunk with sb"

or "be sulky as a bear" = "be as sulky as a bear"

▪ It resists reordering of its component parts.

E.g. "let the cat out of the bag" = "the cat got left out the bag"

➤ An idiom has a non-productive syntactic structure. Only single particular lexemes can collocate in an idiomatic. Substituting other words from the same generic lexical relation set will destroy the idiomatic meaning of the expression.

E.g. "eat one's words" = "eat one's sentence"

➤ It is syntactic anomalous. It has unusual grammatical structure.

E.g. "by and large"

2. An overview of proverbs

2.1. What is a proverb?

Proverbs are used by speakers for a variety of purposes. Sometimes they are used as a way of saying something gently, in a veiled way (Obeng 1996). Other times, they are used to carry more weight in a discussion, awake person is able to enlist the tradition of the ancestors to support his position. Proverbs can also be used to simply make a conversation/discussion more lively. In ,any parts of the world, the use of proverbs is a mark of being a good orator. So what is a proverb.

Theoretically, there are lot of different ways to define what is proverb.

A proverb is a short saying or sentence that is generally known by many people. The saying usually contains words of wisdom, truth or morals that are based on common

sense or practical experience. It is often a description of a basic ruler of conduct that all people generally follow or should follow. Proverbs can be found in all languages.

E.g: Every day is not Saturday

Paul Hermadi and Francis Steen make it clearly by considering proverbs" brief, memorable, and intuitively convincing formulations of socially sanctioned advice".

The concept of proverb is, however, a bit different in Vietnamese. Từ điển Tiếng Việt defines proverb as "short statements, often expressed with rhythm, which sum up knowledge, life experience and moral lessons of people".

E.g. All lay loads on the willing horse or All men do not follow in the footsteps of their forbears

According to Pham Van Binh, " A proverb is a complete sentence expressing an idea of comment, of experience, of morality, of justice or of criticism draw from the human life ".

To sum up, proverbs are often borrowed from different languages and cultures and sometimes come down to the present through more than one language.

2.2 Some common features of proverb

Even though each specialist has his own definition on proverb, we also can indicate some following common characters of proverb

- Proverbs are passed down through time with little change in form.
- Proverbs are often used metaphorically and it is understanding their metaphorical nature that we can unravel their meaning. While " a stitch in time saves nine", " don't count your chickens before they've hatched", "don't throw the baby out with the bathwater" are common proverb, few of us stitch clothes, count the chickens, or throw out bathwater.
- Proverbs often make use of grammatical and theoretical devices that help to make them memorable. including alliteration, rhyme, parallel structure, repetition of key words or phrases, and strong imagery.

3. The distinction between idioms and proverbs

3.1 English idioms and proverbs

If you say: "The cat is out of the bag" instead of "The secret is given away", you're using an idiom. But "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" is a proverb. Proverbs are old but familiar sayings that usually give advice unlike idioms.

Friedrich Seiler(1939) presented an important definition for proverb. He defined proverb as follows: The prominent, articulated, advisory, and free speeches that are current in people's language.

The proverb is a complete sentence with a firm structure that is based on an unchangeable foundation, like "where there's a will there's a way", or "one who seeks will find". Proverbs represent a complete piece of information because they can occur as a sentence. They are meaningful by themselves.

In contrast, idioms are not syntactically independent because they can not always occur as full sentences, but as a part of a sentence. As it was said, the difference between proverb and idiom pertains to their form, structure, and function. Contrary to the proverbs, idioms are the general and current phrases that must be substituted in sentences so as to obtain a complete sense. These phrases can change according to time adverb, subject, and object. Explanation of an idiom is possible in the sentence with some additions. In other words the meaning of sentence is not perceived from its component words. The idioms carry the substance of speech. They must be used in a complete idiom.

3.2 Vietnamese idioms and proverbs

As well as Britain culture, idioms and proverbs has been being a very important part of the folk treasure. Vietnamese people are used to using idioms and proverbs from the immemorial time in the daily life, on the other word, they have been very close to Vienamese life. It is not surprise that our ancestors did composed a very diverse treasure of sayings, idioms, proverbs, folks, and so on. Our ancestors left us a great valuable experience on weather, agriculture, crop, and so forth, via idioms and proverbs. In the past, because of lacking material and knowledge, Vietnamese people

often taught their children these idioms, proverbs and saying in oral. Nowadays they are written language in document or texture. All of the idioms and proverbs are written by very simple language and we can learn them very easily. In short, the Vietnamese meaningful idioms and proverbs contributed a great quantity as well quality in our culture.

Chapter 2: SOME IDIOMS AND PROVERBS RELATING TO NAMES OF SOME INSECT SPECIES

1. Idioms and proverbs relating to bees

Bees are a very important insect for the human, plant and animal kingdoms. They provides humans, animals, birds and plants with nourishing honey, beeswax and associated produce; it plays a critical role in sustaining crops and wild plants by pollinating them.



the Honey- bee



the Hornet

In addition, this insect species is a hardworking one in the wild world. There are many kinds of them such as the honeybee, the worker, the Queen, and so on.

To talk about their busy feature, there is a very famous idiom which go like:

" As busy as a bee"

This idiom show an image of a very diligent manner of the bees. They work all daytime and nighttime, especially the worker. Thanks to his assiduous attitude, the wild world, even people can taste the most wonderful honey bee.

The native speakers use this idiom, which indicate the bee, to relate the human.

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

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

In such case, the speaker wants to show off the characteristics of *she*, the industrious and clever woman, the busy woman indeed.

In Vietnamese culture, the native speakers already do use this feature of the bee to indicate the man: "*chăm chỉ như ong*". This idiom also talks about a characteristic of the bee - hardworking. Not only in the literature, but also in the daily life, the Vietnamese are used to using this idiom to praise someone.

As far as we know, the bees always live together in a hive on the branch tree or underground, and they will move if their Queen moves. It means that they have the very high unity. To point out the dense of the bees, the English people say: "*as busy as bee hive*" or "*hive of activities*". Some people compare the market place with a hive due to the busy activities there. Both of them are crowded and noisy. As well as the moving swing of the bees, people in the market make the very riotous sound. With the same meaning but in different way, Vietnamese people say: "*đông như kiến cỏ*" or "*như ong vỡ tổ*".

Not only hardworking or busy, the bees are very ferocious species, especially the hornet. To denote the dangerous characteristic, the English people often use the idiom of: "*as mad as hornet*". Hornet is one of the largest bees, he can reach up to 5.5cm in length. Hornets, like many social wasps, can mobilize the entire nest to sting in defense, which is highly dangerous to humans. Hornet stings more painful to humans than typical wasp stings because hornet venom contains a large amount poisonous. His poisonous can kill even a buffalo. So, don not make he mad, and it is very wise to keep away from this species.

Borrowing the image of the hornet, English people want to talk about the *hornet* men, who are easy to going mad, easy to loose their temper. Whenever these people can control their themselves, they become very dangerous and can harm the others.

For example: *He was as mad as a hornet when he heard what she said about him.*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

By using another word, Vietnamese people also have the similarity saying: "*nổi cơn tam bành*". It is a state of angry, but very angry and the person who *as mad as hornet* usually threatening other people and make them away from himself.

In these idioms, the similarity is that both English and Vietnamese pay attention to the manner of the bees, and use these manners of the bees to imply people, and due to different cultures they have different ways to express.

2. Idioms and proverbs relating to fleas.

Another insect species is flea. Flea is the common name for the insect which are wingless insect with mouthparts adapted for piercing skin and sucking blood. Fleas are external parasites living by hematophagy off the blood of mammals and birds, especially of dog. Their legs are long and they are the most wonderful jumping one in the wild life.



Relating to fleas, English culture utilize the image of fleas and the dog to denote happiness in such following idiom: "*as happy as a flea in a doghouse*". Living in a dog house(under the dog further), a flea is very happy because he did find out a favorable condition to settle. He can jump, and suck the blood, even dance.

To refer to someone "*as happy as a flea in a doghouse*" means that they are very happy and contented.

For example: *one man who won the lottery as happy as a flea in a doghouse.*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

By other way, other matter, Vietnamese people describe the happiness: "*vui như hội*" or "*vui như Tết*". To the Vietnamese people, festival (hội) and Lunar new year (Tết) are the happiest and the most important time. Thus, Vietnamese people spend 3 months a year to celebrate festivals nationwide. In the Tet holiday, no matter where they are, all Vietnamese people are eager to back home.

One another idiom, which also uses the symbol of the fleas to expresses the good-natured characteristic, is very popular in English culture: "*not hurt/ harm a flea*".

For instance: *Ted would never hurt a flea, and he would not hit anyone as you claim.*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

This idiom talks about a man who never hurt anyone even the smallest as flea. Same to Vietnamese, you can find out the same meaning saying in our folklore treasure: "*hiền như bụt*" or "*hiền như cục bột*". "Bụt" is the Buddha, the symbol of the main religion in Vietnam, Buddhism. Buddha is considered the most good-natured man in the Vietnamese spirits. Due to the effects of his good behavior, he becomes the standard of every good thing in society.

By using the image of flea the above idioms did show many good characteristics of the human being. In spite of utilizing unlike methods, both Vietnamese and English culture have the same meaning of the idiom and saying.

3. Idioms and proverbs relating to butterflies



A butterfly is a mainly day-flying insect. Butterflies have large, often brightly colored wings and attractive, fluttering flight. Thank to the nature, the butterfly may be the most colorful and beautiful insect in the wild world. That could be the origin of the saying: "*as gaudy as butterfly*". The word "gaudy" (colorful) has the stronger effect than "beautiful", gaudy means too brightly colored.

For example: *The woman was as gaudy as a butterfly when she left for the concert.*

<http://www.americanidioms.net/>

The English native speakers employ this idiom to imply the striking color, especially the color in woman fashions. To talk about the flamboyant color, Vietnamese people often say: "*hoa hòe hoa sòi*". Instead of using the image of insect, we use another word which show a flashy color to raise the emotion of such color. In conclusion, to praise the beauty world wide people can use many ways, but these beauties always are the striking one.

In the thought of nervous feeling, the English also employ the image of butterfly to express: "*there is butterfly in one's stomach*". As you feel very nervous or anxious, especially before doing something, you often say "there is butterfly in my stomach". That phenomenon is most often experienced prior to important event.

For example: *She had butterfly in her stomach as she walked out on the stages.*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

Or: *When her boyfriend dropped to one knee and took a small box out of his coat pocket, Mary felt butterflies in her stomach.*

<http://www.usingenglish.com/>

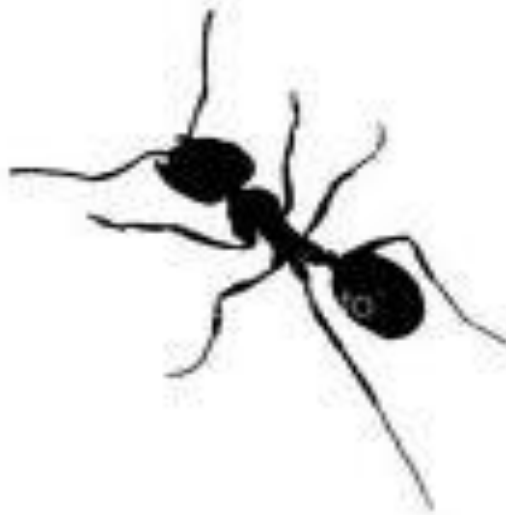
On other researches, some scholars indicated that this state especially frequent in teenage than adult, and more frequently experienced by females than males. They also suggest, sometimes just sitting back, relaxing and taking deep breaths can help to relieve the feeling.

To show the same feeling, Vietnamese people say : "*lo ngay ngáy*" or "*như đứng trên đống lửa*". Whenever you feel anxious, you cannot do anything, even stand or sit and you will have uncomfortable, fear feeling.

In brief, both two cultures have the novel methods to show off their aims. These ways do reach the conservation aim as them become the symbols of each language.

4. Idioms and proverbs relating to ants

Ants are socio- insect, they usually live in a big family with millions individuals. They are used to living on the land and creating the super group. As well as the bee, this specie are divided into many kinds: the Queen, the workers, the soldiers, and so forth. Characteristically, they having wings only in the males and fertile females and living in colonies that have a complex social organization.



To similar with the idiom of "*have butterfly in one's stomach*" the saying "*ants in one's pants*" also give the idea of extremely restless, uneasy, impatient, or anxious emotion.

For example: *this child just cannot sit still, he must have ants in his pants*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

This rhyming idiom calls up a vivid image of what might cause one to be jump. In this case, Vietnamese people often use the phrase : "*đứng ngồi không yên*" to express the child's action.

Relating to this insect's name, Vietnamese people say: "*kiến tha lâu cũng đầy tổ*". This saying raises a feeling of admiring the hardworking of the ants. The idiom is different from the above ones, it is not about the anxious feeling. It talks about a characteristic of the ant - laborious. As we see in daily life, the ant is a very laborious specie. For example, they appear whenever and wherever as soon as find out the food, especially sweet food. Due to the physical appearance - a small insect, they can carry a very small quantity food. Thus they must do many times. In Vietnamese culture, this idiom is usually use to indicate the hardworking person.

All in all, despite many differences in geography, language, or culture each nation have their own expression but same idea. There is only one ant, but he is employed in many different saying with different meaning. Thank to our ancestors who left us such wonderful relic.

5. Idioms and proverbs relating to flies



Fly is a kind of insect, who has a pair of wings and a mobile head with big eyes and also living in social colonies. They are used to appearing in the dirty place and they always make the food, which they foot on, soil or polluted.

Due to his features, people employ the image in an idiom like: "*a fly in the ointmen*". Let imagine of a pure oilmen and a foul fly who is swimming in, what happen here? The oilmen is soil, surely. This idiom is often symbolized to the degenerated man who destroy his fame as well as his family's or his collective's. It must be a bad one and it

worth to excluding out of the collective. In another word, the man makes himself notorious and get bad reputation. What a pity!

For example: *We enjoyed the play, but the fly in the ointment was not being able to find my hat afterward.*

<http://www.phrases.org.uk>

To express the same action, Vietnamese people say: "*con sâu làm rầu nồi canh*". Soup (*canh*) is a indispensable dish of the Vietnamese meal. The delicious soup is destroyed by a dirty worm (*con sâu*) and then the soup cannot serve. Using the image of *soup* and *the worm*, Vietnamese people want to accuse crimes and warn people before doing bad things. Hoping that none of us make mistake and fall into disrepute.

In short, although Vietnam and British are separated nearly half of the world, both two nations have the same thought, same feeling, same comparison, but expression ways.

6. Idioms and proverbs relating to bugs

As far as we know, the bug is a small insect with six legs and a pair of half hardish wings. Similarity to the flea, the bug also sucks out blood to feed himself. A number of health effects many occur due to the bug, including skin rashes, psychological effects, and allergic symptoms. Thus, this is a peril of human.



Relating to the bug insect, English culture have a lot of idioms. A quite famous idiom relating to bug go like: "*as snug as a bug in a rug*". *Snug* means warm and comfortable state, and the *rug* like a blanket which always cozy. This idiom mean a bug is snug by covered by a rug, literally. Idiomatically, the idiom refer to the state of comfortable, cozy and happy of a man who living in a good condition or receiving full love.

For instance: *You get in your nice warm bed with your teddy and you'll be as snug as a bug in a rug!*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com>

By different way, the same meaning is expressed by Vietnamese culture: "*trong vòng tay cha mẹ*". This idiom not mean living in the parents' arm as its literal meaning. We can understand the meaning of the idiom by the following way: under the care of parents, the children have prosperous lives both in physical and emotional life. With the parents careness, the children are supplied a good living standard, a good quality life. Thanks to our parents, who gave us birth and brought us up with oceans of love and careness.

By borrowing the image of the bug, who often parasitizes on the human bed and sucks the blood, the English people want to describe a comfortable and happy life. In another way, Vietnamese people also verbalize the same idea without the image of the bug. All in all, besides denote a good life, these idioms above advise us to respect our happiness.

7. Idioms and proverbs relating to worms

A small, easy to be hurt insect, which we all see in our life, worm. Some of them lives underground, a helpful insect. Due to loving wet condition, they usually concentrate in farmland and their movement inside land make the cultivated land more soft and porous. However, some kinds of them are harmful ones. They kill the trees, destroy the harvest, even poison people if we touch them.



The helpful worm



The harmful worm

Because they are very popular in our life, so previous generations in both United Kingdom and Vietnam have had created many idioms and proverbs relating to the worm. For instance, the English people said that: "*even a worm will turn*". As I present in the beginning, worms are considered as a small insect specie, and they are very easy to be hurt. There is no need to use a knife to kill a worm. If you pay enough attention in them, you will find out that this insect always go ahead, rarely turn back. When I was small, I often caught this insect and took them to the playground, and then used two branch trees to bar his way. Did not fear my threatening, he just shriveled up for a moment when faced to the branches, then he crept over the bar. How amazing they are! He did not give up, he did pass over. So, why did English people say: "*even a worm will turn*"? This phrase means that even a meek person will become angry if you abuse him or her too much.

For example: *You'd better stop maltreating Amy. She's a mild-mannered woman, but even a worm will turn.*

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com>

A very clear message from this proverb, do not bully other even the most good- nature person. Even though those people are harmless and never hurt any one, they have inner power that can kill you if you victimize them extremely.

Also in Vietnam, we have the idiom of "*con giun xéo lẫn cũng quăn*". Surprising! They are, both in English and in Vietnamese, as like as two peas in term of meaning. Using the image of *con giun* (worm) as well, Vietnamese people want to send the same note, do not abuse others unless you will take the same treatment.

These similarities between two culture make us astonish again. There is only one reason that two nations, careless about language, culture and so on, we have wonderful interest in wild life and take them to human life.

8. Idioms and proverbs relating to spiders

Spider is a very special insect. He has eight legs and wingless but they hunt other insect by creating a protein net which is very sticky. Most spiders have fours pairs of eyes in their head and the ability of poisoning other insects, and trapping them by the net. However the insect is harmless to human being, but their appearances in the ceiling make our houses more dirty.



Normal spider



Black widow

Relating to this very popular insect, there is a well known saying "*spider and fly*". Spider and the fly are not enemy but the spider's prey including fly. Spider builds web in the corners of ceiling hides until a victim occurs. The above idiom does not talk about spider and fly, literally. That is hunter and victim via metaphor. And there is no

wonder that the native speaker also employed this genus in the following idiom "seeing pink spiders". The meaning of this idiom is intoxicated may be by alcohol.

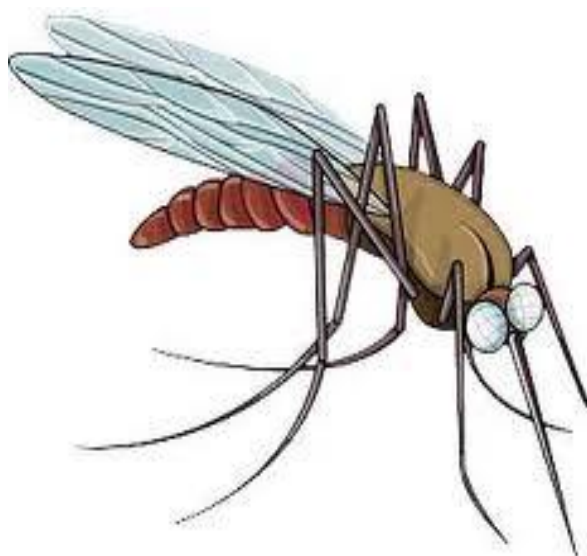
For instance: *He's screaming something about seeing pink spiders, and he wants a drink*

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

In this state of mental, people cannot control by themselves, as well as the spider's poison result in the paralysis of the animal's nervous system and then the spider can has delicious meal.

In other way, Vietnamese people say "say bí tí" to denote such state. Do not employ any image of animal, Vietnamese nation have our own way to illustrate this state with only one main verb "say" (drunk) and one verb complement as "bí tí" (completely). By different manners, and different languages, the same idea is presented perfectly.

9. Idioms and proverbs relating to gnats



Male gnat



Female gnat

Gnat- may be some one does not know about this genus of insect, but by using other word, *mosquito* we all knew him. Even though gnat is so small, mostly smaller than two millimeters, that is one easy moving type with a pair of wings and six legs and their speed can be 1.5 to 2.5 kilometers per hour. As well as other genus, this genus also is including female and male. It is very surprised that the male gnat is smaller than

the female and he does not suck the blood as his wife does, his servers himself by sap. May be their features is the source of this following proverb "*strain at a gnat and swallow camel*". To analyze this idiom we need to pay attention on instances.

For example:

Jill: Look at that. Edward is combing his hair at his desk. How unprofessional.

Jane: Don't strain at gnats and swallow camels. There are worse problems than that around here.

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>

In the proverb we can see clearly two size opposite animal are utilized namely *gnat* and *camel*. One is the very tiny specie, one is a big genus. So how can we strain at a gnat? And how can we swallow a camel? The above proverb does not mean that. Idiomatically, it means *too formal*, *too careful*, and it also criticize other people for minor offenses while ignoring major offenses. In the example, Edward's unprofessional combing hair action is not serious because there are worse problem around them and Jane used this proverb to remind Jill about those problems. The proverb give an obvious message, do not be too finical because *too* for every thing is unnecessary and may be annoy other. And instead of paying attention to this such small things, should be paid more careness on the important one. Other words, do not be *a storm in a teacup*.

To Vietnamese people, in such case, we will say "*quá cầu nệ, quá thận trọng*". No matter what idioms or proverbs, equivalent in Vietnamese is available. It is really wonderful if you know them well and practise fluently. Try your best and get good result.

10. Idioms and proverbs relating to grasshoppers

The grasshopper is an eating leaf insect, I mean a harmful to plants specie. This insect has got a pair of strong legs, which are suitable for jumping. This genus is very popular in farm land areas and I am sure that we all see them once in life.



Employing this image, the English native speakers have an idiom about the very young human, the very short life time: "*knee-high to a grasshopper*".

Let's consider the following example:

E.g: *I learned to ride a bicycle when I was knee-high to a grasshopper.*

<http://www.americanidioms.net/>

The phrase denote the childhood time of human or some things as short, small as the grasshopper. In the example, instead of saying *I learned to ride a bicycle when I was very young*, the native speakers usually replace the adjective *very young* by *knee-high to a grasshopper*. Meaning is clear, and the usage is precise as well. This phrase plays a role as an adjective. Nothing will be discussed here. Giving this proverb I just wanna present you another way to express the idea of *very young*.

Same as in Viet Nam, we often say "*thủa còn trong trứng nước*" or "*từ khi bẻ tèo tèo*" to paraphrase this idea. All of them both in English and Vietnamese are very easy to understand and apply in communication. Hoping that my readers can get better way in communicating to native speakers afterward.

In general, there are certain similarities and differences between English - Vietnamese idioms and proverbs. Grammatically, about the order of the word. In the idiom we

cannot change the order of the word in the phrase. As well as, it is impossible to change the order of the of the words in the sentence in the proverb, unless under the special circumstances belong to context. The next and also the very important one is grammatical structure, which we cannot change both in idioms and proverbs .Semantically, some names of insect species convey similar meaning when they are used in idioms and proverbs in both English and Vietnamese. For instance, the English idioms of "*as busy as bee*", we all understand as "*chăm chỉ như ong*" in Vietnamese language. However, some of them have different meaning as we used in Vietnamese and English idioms and proverbs. For example, about the idiom of "*there is butterfly in my stomach*", it means "nervous" in English but Vietnamese people do not employ the image of butterfly as well as any insect in this case. For such case, we have a idiom which go likes "*như ngòi trên đống lửa*". In brief, it depends on the situation in which each name of insect is used to convey specific meaning. This use of language is due to the way people in that country think of the insect. This reflects the difference in the culture of each people.

Chapter 3: RELATED PROBLEMS FACED BY ENGLISH LEARNERS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

1. Some difficulties in studying idioms and proverbs

In fact, many people want to learn English idioms and proverbs, but they deal with a lot of difficulties. The following are some difficulties I have had in the process of researching on this papers:

Firstly, because of different geography, the differences between the cultures of two country is unavoidable, especially the idiom and proverb system.

Secondly, identifying idiom and proverb is not easy.

Thirdly, most of idioms and proverbs are difficult to guess the meaning correctly because they have association with the ordinary meaning of the individual words or phrase. They can be guessed if they are in the context, that is, when we know the particular situation they are.

Fourthly, the main difficulties is that learners do not know the levels of styles, that is, whether a idiom or proverb can be used in informal situation or not.

Lastly, when translating English idioms or proverbs, it is not easy to for Vietnamese equivalent suitable to the nuance of meaning of English idioms and proverbs.

2. Suggested solutions

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

Firstly, the learners should understand about the culture, belief, region, habit, and so on of both Vietnam and England, thus they can compare and guess the meaning of the idioms or proverbs.

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

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

Fourthly, it is advisable not to make frequent use of slang expression because it is easy to sound strange.

Lastly, some English idioms and proverbs have more than one equivalent so the learners should care when choosing them. Some English idioms and proverbs have no Vietnamese equivalent, so we should paraphrase them or find similar one.

Part III: CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there are a lot of idioms and proverb relating to insect names. However, due to my limitation of time as well as my knowledge I have just only mentioned some idioms and proverbs that are supposed to be the most popular and important. The similarities and differences between such features of two countries have great effect on life experience idioms and proverbs both semantically and lexically.

The development is the main part the study. It consists of three chapters in which the general knowledge about idioms and proverbs in both Vietnamese and English are introduced in chapter 1: "Theoretical background" which provides learners of English an overview of idioms and proverbs.

In chapter 2 and chapter 3, we have "Idioms and proverbs relating to insects names in English and Vietnamese" and " Related problems faced by English learners and suggested solutions". In these chapter, I gave some idioms and proverbs which were having its examples in order to make the process of learning English idioms and proverbs effectively, an analysis on some English idioms and proverbs in comparison with their Vietnamese equivalent is draw with the aim at helping learners of English understand cultural characteristics of each image.

Part 3 is mentioned to give some difficulties in learning English idioms and proverbs about idioms and proverbs relating to insect's names.

Lastly because of the limited time as well as my limited knowledge, only idioms and proverbs relating to insect's names in comparison with Vietnamese equivalent and some difficulties in translation were focused, suggested solutions will be left for further study.

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