

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



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FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

GRADUATION PAPER

**A STUDY ON HYPERBOLE IN SHORT STORIES OF
SOME TYPICAL VIETNAMESE AND AMERICAN
WRITERS**

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Class:

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HAI PHONG - 2010

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

Nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study

I do not know when I love such the fork songs, idioms and the proverbs in my country. May be, I am a person who grow up in the sea of the fork songs and proverbs when I was a child, closing to my grandmother's hand and my mother's love. Any when I went to sleeping, I was also heard many fork songs and proverbs by my grandmother. Up to now, I also remembered clearly some of the fork song like this:

*“Cày đồng đang buổi ban trưa,
Mồ hôi thánh thót như mưa ruộng cày.
Ai ơi bưng bát cơm đầy,
Dẻo thơm một hạt đắng cay muôn phần.”*

Or the proverb likes this:

*“Đêm tháng năm chưa nằm đã sáng
Ngày tháng mười chưa cười đã tối”*

At that time, by the smoothly rhythm of my grandmother's voices, I just knew that the fork songs and proverb was very interesting and easy to learn by heart.

When I grew up a little, I studied at primary school, secondary school, high school and university with many different subjects, especially semantics I realized that it is the fork songs and the proverbs my grandmother often talked to me that is outstanding hyperbolic usage. And now, I can analyze the meaning of those fork songs and proverbs.

In the fork song, “*mồ hôi thánh thót như mưa ruộng cày*” shows sweat drops very much. And the meaning of “*chưa nằm đã sáng*” and “*chưa cười đã tối*” are the night of May and the day of October are very short.

This phenomenon step by step attracts me a lot, and that drives me the wish to study in order to understand it more. And when I started to make a minor comparison between the way Vietnamese and American use hyperbole, this linguistic issue totally captivates my attention. Therefore I choose hyperbole as the major topic in my graduation paper hoping that first I can understand it then help other Vietnamese learners to grasp the in-depth meanings shown in each hyperbole. However, because of the time limit and the scope of the study, I only can focus on the hyperbole used in some typical Vietnamese and American short stories.

2. Aims of the study

The study is aimed at:

- Figure out common hyperbole used in some typical short stories of American and Vietnamese writers.
- Analyze the formation and implied means of hyperbole
- Identify common mistakes
- Suggest some effective solutions.

3. Scope of the study

It is too difficult for me to study all hyperboles because of my limited knowledge and time for this study so I only focus on hyperbole in some short stories which we often find when reading the stories. I will give some information on hyperbole and stress on the analysis of the expression of hyperbole in some typical short stories of American writers which I can compare them to Vietnamese ones.

4. Method of the study

In this graduation paper, I use some main methods. Firstly, I use quantitative research including statistical analyze to analyze the data collected. Then I classify hyperbole. Then, hypothesis testing is the second method in used setting the hypothesis for the use of hyperbole in typical American short stories and typical Vietnamese ones, trying to figure out why they are put in use in this or that way. And finally is comparative research which enables me to find out the differences and similarities between hyperbole in Vietnamese and American.

5. Design of the study

This study consists of three parts of which the second is the most important

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

Part two is Development which is the main content that concludes three chapters: The first chapter is the theoretical background. It focuses on some general definitions. The second chapter stresses on the hyperbole in some short stories of typical American and Vietnamese writers and then finding differences and similarities between them. The third chapter will give some common mistakes and solutions, some exercises will provide knowledge about hyperbole.

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

1. Word

1.1. Definition of word

Lexicology is the study on stock of the words in a given language. The word is, therefore, of centre importance in lexicology. The fundamental we should attempt to answer is “what exactly do we mean by the term “*word*” in lexicology”.

The term “*word*” is used to specify an intermediate structure smaller than a whole phrase and generally larger than single sound segment. Therefore, the word may be defined differently

According to Nguyen Manh Hung (2006:3), word is defined as “a speech unit used for the purposes of human communication, materially representing a group of sounds, possessing a meaning, susceptible to grammatical employment and characterized by formal and semantic unity”.

According to Jackson and Amvela (2000:50), word is considered as “an uninterruptible unit of structure consisting of one or more morphemes and which typically occurs with the structure of phrase”. The morphemes are ultimate grammatical constituents, the minimal meaningful unit of language. For example, the different form of the verb “*sing*”, i.e. *sing*, *sings*, *singing*, *sang*, *sung* are separated word grammatically, similarly. Record (v) and record (n) are different grammatical words.

In general, there are many ways to define word. The word may be defined differently depending on whether we focus on its representation, the thought which it expresses or purely formal criteria. We can define word base on the phonological, lexical, grammatical points of view and semantic. However, we can see that definition of word according to Hoang Tat Truong seems to be the most

satisfactory.

According to Hoang Tat Truong (1993:11), word is defined as “A word is a dialectical unit of form and content, independent unit of language to form a sentence by itself”. For example: “*hand, bag, unhappy, come, drink, vocabulary, forget-me-not*” and so forth. Each word here can stand independently and it still has meaning.

Words in English may be classified as: lexical and grammatical words. Lexical word (including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) has fairly independent and meaning in isolations or in series. It was also referred to a “lexeme”. A lexeme is lexical unit of the vocabulary. The term “lexeme” is sometime used to denote a lexical word and this avoid confusion with the term “word” in general. In contrast, grammatical word (including articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, forms indicating number or tense and so on) does not automatically suggest any identifiable meaning.

1.2. Types of word

Word can be classified into three types: simple words derived words and compound words by Hoang Tat Truong.

A simple word is one that only consists of root morpheme: “*school, boy, table, big, blue, talk, begin, next, etc*”

A derived word is one that consists of a root and one or more derivational morphemes: *teacher, employee, unhappiness, enrich, antidisestablishmentarianism, etc.*

A compound word is one that has at least two roots, with or without derivational morphemes: *blackboard, handbag, greenhouse, bluebottle, goody-goody, etc*

Words are often considered as linguistic sign, similar certain respect to natural and conventional signs. They do not have meaning but rather are capable of conveying meanings which carries both lexical and grammatical meanings of the

word.

2. Word meaning

2.1. Definition of meaning

The question “*what is meaning*” is one of the questions which are easier to ask than to answer. The linguistic science at present is not able to put forward a definition of meaning which is conclusive.

However, the certain fact is that the function of word as a unit of communication is made possible by its possessing a meaning. Therefore, among the word’s various characteristic meaning is the most important.

General speaking, meaning can be more or less described as a way endowing the word through which a concept is communicated, in this qualities, actions and abstract notions.

(Nguyen Manh Hung, 2006:43)

More carefully analyzed, the word “*meaning*” is derived from the verb “mean” and both of them are used like many other English words, in the wide range of contexts and in several distinguishable senses.

For example, to take the case of the verb, if someone says:

“*Smith means well*”

(Nguyen Hoa, 2001:7)

He implies that Smith is well-intentioned, that he intends no harm

“*Red flag means danger*”

(Nguyen Hoa, 2001:7)

In this saying, one would not normally imply that the flag had plans to endanger anyone; one would be pointing out that it is used to indicate the danger in surrounding environment, such as the use of explosives in the nearby quarry or

deeply lake. After those, we can see that there are many different meanings of the word “mean”.

2.2. Types of meaning

“Some tigers are roaring at the mouth of the cave”

(Hoang Tat Truong, 1993:86)

The above is a meaningful part. One of the smaller parts is the word “*tiger*” which refers to certain animal. We can call it a referring expression. A tiger expression is a piece of language that is used as if it is linked something outside language, some living or death entities or concepts. Another meaningful part is the verb “*roar*” which is also linked to something outside of language, an action here associated with the referring expression “*tiger*”. We call this meaningful predicate which clarifies something about that entity. Besides, the plural form of noun “*tiger*” indicating that there is more than a tiger and the tense of the verb “*roar*” pointing out the time of this action. Obviously, in a sentence, two kinds of meaning are remained: lexical meaning, in case of the noun “*tiger*”, the verb “*roar*” and grammatical meaning (also called functional meaning) in the plural form of noun as well as the tense of verb.

2.2.1. Lexical meaning

Lexical meaning is one of two types of meanings found in words.

“Lexical meaning is the individual meaning; each word has in the system of language. It is the realization of concept and emotion and bring together the different forms of one and same word”

(Hoang Tat Truong, 1993:53)

When we hear or see the word “*head*”, for example, our concept is realized and the picture or image of a leader, a part of person, part of bird occurs to our mind. Therefore, this realization is called lexical meaning.

According to Hoang Tat Truong, lexical meaning is divided into two types. They are direct meaning and indirect meaning.

“Direct meaning which is also called literal meaning, is the meaning that directly denotes something without comparing it or associating with the other thing, i.e. we do not need the context”

(Hoang Tat Truong, 1993:57)

E.g.:

“Can you carry the bag for me?”

“I am sorry, I can’t. My hands are hurting”

The word “*hand*” is the part of the body to do something or to hold something...We need not the comparison or association with other things to understand it. So hand in the sentence is direct meaning. It differs from the indirect meaning which is presented in the following:

“Indirect meaning is the meaning that indirectly denotes something in the association with other things, i.e. we need contexts to understand. Indirect meaning also called figurative meaning”

(Hoang Tat Truong, 1993:57)

When hearing the word “*key*”, for example, we are most likely to think of a small instrument used to open or lock the door. This is the direct meaning of “*key*”. On the other hand, if we come across the sentence: “*He said that always listening to other ideas is the key to success*”, we will think of meaning of the way to gain the success in life” which is indirect meaning.

2.2.2. Grammatical meaning

“Grammatical meaning can be defined as an expression in speech of relation between words based on contrastive features of arrangement in which they occur.

This meaning is abstract and generalized

(Hoang Tat Truong, 1993:53)

Every language has grammatical systems. We can explain what grammatical meanings are by showing how they differ from the sentence “some student are playing football” to others that have the same referring expression and predicate. The grammatical system of English possibly makes the expression of the meaning like these:

Statement vs. Question:	
Some students are listening to music	Are some students listening to music
Affirmative vs. negative	
Some students are listening to music	Some students are not listening to music
Present continuous vs. past	
Some students are listening to music	A student is listening to music
Plural vs. singular	
Some students are listening to music	A student is listening to music
Indefinite vs. definite	
Some students are listening to music	The students are listening to music

From the above comparison, we can conclude that grammatical meanings are expressed in various ways: the arrangement of words (referring expression before the predicate, for instance) by grammatical affixes like the -s attached to the noun “student” and the -end attached to the verb “play”; and by grammatical words or functional words like the ones illustrated in those sentences be (in the form are),

not, some, the. These words do not automatically suggest any identifiable meaning. They are elements like prepositions, articles, conjunction, forms indicating number or tense, and so on.

All in all, lexical and grammatical meanings do not exist separately but always close together to make up the meaning of word.

3. Hyperbole

3.1. What is hyperbole?

Do you know what a hyperbole is? This graduation paper will help you understand basically hyperboles using interesting examples of hyperboles...

The word "*hyperbole*" has its origin in the Greek language. Hyperbole is a figure of speech that is a complete exaggeration and which denotes extremes. So to say, '*I laughed so much I nearly died*' is an example of hyperbole. It denotes that something was very funny and that someone laughed a lot, but it is extremely unlikely that someone laughed so much that they almost died. However, the phrase gives us a sense of just how funny something was

Hyperbole exists in many languages, but in English, it is very common in both everyday speech and in written English. In written English, from poems, dramatics, plays, novels, stories to other kinds of literature, hyperbole is used quite popular and widely to evoke strong feelings or to create a strong impressions. It tends to be used within informal settings or for literary effect. It is not, for example, regarded as good practice to use hyperbole within business English; it could be regarded as unprofessional.

I would not use phrases such as, '*bursting with rage*' with a client. I would instead, express my disappointment and frustration. However, if I were writing a story, a poem, or a simple informal email, and then the use of hyperbole is perfectly acceptable and is actually a way of giving added depth and quality to my writing. Hyperbole is therefore a literary tool or a very informal tool and it should

not be used in formal settings.

As mentioned on the scope of the study, I only focus on hyperbole in short stories of some typical American and Vietnamese writers that are the small representing of hyperbole in literature.

3.1.1 Definition of English hyperbole

There are many definitions of hyperbole in English as the following: *“Hyperbole is a figure of speech which is an exaggeration. Persons often use expressions such as “I nearly died laughing”, “I was hopping mad” and “I tried a thousand times.” Such statements are not literally true, but people make them to sound impressive or to emphasize something, such as a feeling, effort, or reaction.”*

(<http://volweb.utk.edu/school/bedford/harrisms/hyperbole.htm>)

Wikipedia English, The Free Encyclopedia defines hyperbole as *“Hyperbole (pronounced/ haipərbəli/ or /hypərbuhli/), (/hypərbəul/ is mispronunciation) is a figure of speech in which statements are exaggerated. It may be used to evoke strong feelings or to create a strong impression, and is not meant to be taken literally. Hyperbole is used to create emphasis. Some examples include: “He has a brain the size of a pea”. “I could eat a horse”. “I’ve heard that a million times”. “She is a hundred feet tall”.*

Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1993): *“hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the expression is an evident exaggeration of the meaning intended to be conveyed, or by which things are represented as much greater or less, better or worse, than they really are; a statement exaggerated fancifully, through excitement, or for effect”.*

William Shepard Walsh defines hyperbole is that: (Gr. “excess,” “overstrained praise,” etc.), a recognized figure of rhetoric, meaning an extravagant statement or assertion, which, when used for conscious effect, is not to be taken too seriously or too literally. Yet the hyperbole is often used unconsciously by the men of vivid yet

unbalanced imagination whom the world sometimes calls liars and sometimes fools.

Hyperbole (from the Greek hyper, beyond, and bulletin, to throw), is an exaggerated form of statement and simply consists in representing things to be either greater or less, better or worse than they really are. Its object is to make the thought more effective by overstating it. Here are some examples:—"*He was so tall his head touched the clouds.*" "*He was as thin as a poker.*" "*He was so light that a breath might have blown him away.*" Most people are liable to overwork this figure. We are all more or less given to exaggeration and some of us do not stop there, but proceed onward to falsehood and downright lying. There should be a limit to hyperbole, and in ordinary speech and writing it should be well qualified and kept within reasonable bounds

(<http://www.grammartips.net/hyperbole-in-english-writing>)

In show business, hyperbole (known as hype or media hype) is the practice of spending money on public relation in an attempt to bolster public interest in (for example) a movie, television show, or performing artist. Often the entertainment value of the thing being hyped is exaggerated. Consequently, hype (but not traditional, literate hyperbole) has a bad connotation.

Hyperbole is the effect way to color the speech of a character in a short story, or to make a point effectively in a humorous piece of writing

E.g. "*I laughed so much I nearly died*" is an example of hyperbole, it denotes that something was very funny and that someone laughed a lot, but it is extremely unlikely that someone laughed so much that they almost died. However, the phrase gives us a sense of just how funny something was.

3.1.2 Antonyms of English hyperbole

In rhetoric, some antonyms of hyperbole are meiosis, litotes, understatement, and bathos (the 'let down' after a hyperbole in a phrase)

Understatement (Litotes and Meiosis): as the word implies, is the opposite of hyperbole (or overstatement). It achieves its effect of emphasizing a fact by deliberately understating it, impressing the listener or the reader more by what is merely implied or left unsaid than by bare statement. Meiosis is merely understatement without the use of negatives. Nowadays, subdivision into litotes and meiosis is rarely done, except by precisionists. Modern English dictionaries tend to treat the three terms - understatement, litotes, and meiosis as synonymous. Sometimes understatement alone is used as the name for this figure of speech, litotes and meiosis being considered archaic. Understatement, unlike hyperbole, is often more difficult for students of EFL to identify or understand. This is because the comprehension of an understatement involves more than form; social-cultural factors, as well as the situational context, are relevant to understatement

For the sake of politeness and pleasantness, people often use another formation called understatement, which, is not to state something fully or adequately. Understatement, as the word suggests, is “*a statement that is not strong enough to express how good, bad, impressive etc something really is*”.

“*Understatement achieves its effect of emphasizing a fact by deliberately understating it.*”

“*Understatement is usually divided into litotes and meiosis. Litotes is understatement by using a negative statement instead of a positive one*”

Examples:

- a. *She is very ugly. --- She is not particularly good-looking.*
- b. *He was quite rich. ---He was a man of no mean wealth.*

In sentence (a), “*not particularly good-looking*” is more neutral and vague than “*ugly*”, so the employment of this euphemism successfully avoids annoying the person concerned. Sentence (b) has something to do with personal affairs. Westerners don’t like others to talk about their private affairs. Wealth belongs to one’s privacy, so it is more polite to use a roundabout way to talk about it when

you

have

to

“Meiosis is merely understatement without the use of negatives”

Examples:

c. *Her daughter is in prison. ---Her daughter lives under the government's expense.*

d. *I can't promise. ---Sorry, this is in fact more than I can promise.*

“Prison” in sentence (c) is an unpleasant word. General speaking, people are sensitive to the word *“prison”* if one is in prison, you had better avoid mentioning *“prison”* in front of his relatives. Sentence (d) is a refusal. When you refuse someone, indirect words will get a better result, for they will not

make him lose face.

By using understatements, the speakers do not seem to be so cruel to others whom they speak something upsetting to.

3.1.3 Definition of Vietnamese hyperbole

Hyperbole in Vietnam has many ways to define and name, especially to name it. In other way, it has many synonyms. For example, we can call hyperbole is *“ngoa dụ”* _ the Chinese-Vietnamese word; *“nói quá”*; *“thậm xưng”*, *“khoa trương”*; *“cường điệu”* likely some name of hyperbole in English(hyperbole, overstatement, exaggeration..)

Those following are some definitions of hyperbole in Vietnamese:

“Ngoa dụ(phóng đại, khoa trương, thậm xưng), biện pháp tu từ, dùng lối nói cường điệu một mức độ, tính chất, đặc điểm nào đó của đối tượng nhằm mục đích làm nổi bật bản chất của đối tượng cần miêu tả, tăng thêm tính biểu cảm của lời nói.” This means that hyperbole is a figure of speech using the overstatement in some property, level, and characteristic of object to set off its' characteristic which is described and to evoke strong feelings of speech.

E.g.

*“Đồn rằng bác mẹ anh hiền,
Cấn com không vỡ, cấn tiền vỡ đôi.”*

(ca dao)

Hoặc nói “*gầy trơ xương*”, “*ngáy như sấm*” là dùng lối ngoa dụ. (“*gầy trơ xương*” means very thin and skinny. And “*ngáy như sấm*” shows snoring is very loud.”

(<http://dictionary.bachkhoatoanthu.gov.vn/default.aspx?param=14A7aWQ9MTk5NDUmZ3JvdXBpZD0yMiZraW5kPSZrZXI3b3JkPQ==&page=4>)

“Nói quá là biện pháp tu từ phóng đại mức độ, quy mô, tính chất của sự vật, sự việc, hiện tượng được miêu tả để nhấn mạnh, gây ấn tượng, tăng sức biểu cảm.”

(Sách ngữ văn lớp 8: tập 1, bài 9, trang 102: nhà xuất bản giáo dục)

The meaning of this definition is that hyperbole is a figure of speech exaggerates level, scale, characteristic of object, action, and phenomenon which are described to create strong impression, emphasis or evoke strong feeling.

Here are some examples of hyperbole in Vietnam:

✓ *“Bàn tay ta làm nên tất cả*

Có sức người sỏi đá cũng thành cơm”

(Hoàng Trung Thông_ Bài ca vỡ đất)

✓ *“Anh cứ yên tâm, vết thương chỉ sứt da thôi. Từ giờ đến sang em có thể đi lên đến tận trời được”*

(Nguyễn Minh Châu, Mảnh trăng cuối rừng)

✓ *“Guom mài đá, đá núi cũng mòn, voi uống nước, nước sông phải cạn”*

(Nguyễn Trãi, Hịch tướng sĩ)

✓ *“Một hai nghiêng nước nghiêng thành*

Hoa ghen thua thắm liễu hờn kém xanh”

✓ “Râu hùm hàm én mày ngài

Vai năm tấc rộng thân mười thước cao”

(Nguyễn Du, Truyện Kiều)

3.1.4 Antonyms of Vietnamese hyperbole

Vietnamese hyperbole is also similar to English hyperbole which has antonymy like “*nói giảm nói tránh*”. It is defined as follow:

“*Nói giảm nói tránh là một biện pháp tu từ dùng cách diễn đạt tế nhị, uyển chuyển tránh gây cảm giác đau buồn, ghê sợ, nặng nề, tránh thô tục, lịch sự*”.

(Sách ngữ văn lớp 8, tập 1: bài 10, trang 108: nhà xuất bản giáo dục)

It means that understatement is the figure of speech using the polite and subtle expression to avoid the sadness, the distresses, and rudeness.

There are some examples of antonyms of Vietnamese hyperbole:

“*Vì vậy tôi để sẵn mấy lời này, phòng khi tôi sẽ **đi gặp các cụ Các Mác, cụ Lê-nin và các vị cách mạng đàn anh khác**, thì đồng bào cả nước, đồng chí trong Đảng và bầu bạn các nơi đều khỏi cảm thấy đột ngột*”

(Hồ Chí Minh, Di chúc)

“*Lượng con ông Độ đây mà...Rõ tội nghiệp, về đến nhà thì bố mẹ **chẳng còn***”

(Hồ Phương, Quê nhà)

“*Phải bé lại và lặn vào long một người mẹ, áp mặt vào **bầu sữa** nóng của người mẹ, để bàn tay của mẹ vuốt ve từ trán xuống cằm, và gãi rôm ở sống lưng cho, mới thấy người mẹ có một êm dịu vô cùng.*”

(Nguyễn Hồng, Những ngày thơ ấu)

“*Bác đã **đi rồi** sao, Bác ơi!*

Mùa thu đang đẹp, nắng xanh trời”

(Tố Hữu, Bác ơi)

CHAPTER II: AN INVESTIGATION INTO EXPRESSIONS OF HYPERBOLE IN SOME TYPICAL SHORT STORIES OF AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE WRITERS

1. Overview of hyperbole in American and Vietnamese short stories.

Firstly, hyperbole in American and Vietnamese also happens popular both in the speaking language and writing language by many different expressions such as using the simile, idiom like:

“He’s as easy as a gum shoe” (in “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

“Mặt rỗ như tổ ong bầu” (In the “Lang Rận” - Nam Cao)

“Im như thóc” (In the “Lang Rận” - Nam Cao)

“She is as big as an elephant!” (Cô ta béo như con voi)

“He is older than the hills.” (Anh ấy già hơn cả ngọn núi đỏ)

“It must be as big as the size of the Flatiron Building”. (in “Babes in jungle”
- O. Henry)

“They ran like greased lightning.” (Họ chạy nhanh như chảo chớp)

Secondly, hyperbole is used to evoke strong feeling, create strong impression and emphasis.

“Cổ tay căng gà” emphasizes the small and rickety wrist.

“Răng cái mả” emphasizes a kind of teeth which is very big and unbalanced

“Swam in tears” evoke strong feeling that means very moved and crying a lot.

“An auriferous head” impresses the person is very intelligent and talent.

2. Hyperbole in typical American short stories

O. Henry was the pseudonym of the American writer William Sydney Porter (September 11, 1862 – June 5, 1910). O. Henry's short stories are well known for their wit, wordplay, warm characterization and clever twist endings.

“*Strictly business*” is the selected works about New York social life and customs written by O. Henry whose works are well-known all over the world in many times and tens of decades. This selected works include twenty three small parts which are the short stories in many views and sides of society and people in his country. And “*Strictly business*” is also one of the most interesting short stories in his collection. I just focus on some typical short stories which use hyperbole clearly in my graduation paper.

2.1 Structures of hyperbole in typical American short stories

Hyperboles in American typical short stories can be expressed in terms of words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

2.1.1 Hyperbole in terms of words.

Firstly, I want to deal with the structures of hyperbole in words. Hyperbole in words happens rarely. Words subdivide into two types: simple words and compound words, so hyperbole in words also has two types, they are hyperbole in simple words and hyperbole in compound words.

2.1.1.1 In simple words

“*They only know this and that and pass to and fro and think ever and anon. I’d hate for my mother to know I was **skinning** these weak-minded ones. She raised me better*”. (In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

“*skinning*” is refreshing the mind.

2.1.1.2 In compound words

“*She is one goddess - one Juno - what you call one **ox-eyed Juno**?*” (In “The

gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

“**Ox-eyed**” means the big and protruding eyes.

“*They think I’m a hayseed and won’t have anything to do with me*”. (In “The poet and the peasant”- O. Henry)

The meaning of “*a hayseed*” is very useless and invaluable.

2.1.2 Hyperbole in terms of phrases

The second is structures of hyperbole in phrases. Phrases include adjective phrases, noun phrases, verb phrases and adverbial phrases, so, hyperbole in phrases has also such types. This is the most expression of hyperbole in short stories.

2.1.2.1 Verb phrases

“*After Hart and Cherry had gotten “Mice Will Play” flawless, they had a try-out at a vaudeville house that accommodates. The sketch was a house wrecker. It was one of those rare strokes of talent that inundates a theatre from the roof down. The gallery wept; and the orchestra seats, being dressed for it, swam in tears*”. (In “Strictly business” - O. Henry)

The bold words are hyperbole in verb phrase mean that the play “Mice Will Play” makes the audience be moved and cry a lot. In Vietnamese we say: “**boi trong nước mắt**”

“*The April sun seemed to stir in him a vague feeling that he could not construe*”. (“The day resurgent” - O. Henry)

It is about the different complex feelings of the person.

“*Why, its Easter is Sunday. Silly, I waited centuries for you and expecting you might come around to go*”. (“The day resurgent” - O. Henry)

It is the most typical hyperbole in this story which means that waiting a long time.

“*Several of us met over spaghetti and Duchess Country chianati, and swallowed indignation with slippery forkfuls*”.(In “The poet and the peasant”- O.

Henry)

It means keeping calm is very difficult, but he also must do it.

“At the end of their talk Hart was willing to stake the judgment, experience and savings of his four years of vaudeville that “Mice Will Play” was blossom into perennial flower in the garden of the circuits”. (In “Strictly business” -O. Henry)

It means that “Mice Will Play” was very famous and successful a long time in the circuits.

2.1.2.2 Noun Phrases

“When the teacher kept me in, vanishing, with a quick flirt of gingham apron-strings, she reappeared in considerably less than as a “trice” fluffy “Parisienne” –so near does Art bring the old red mill to the Moulin Rouge”.(In “Strictly business” - O. Henry)

This is noun phrase and the meaning is that the reappearance is very little and rare.

“Mrs. O’Brien heard, and lifted an auriferous head”. (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

It also is noun phrase means that the person is very intelligent and talent.

“Say, you old bald-headed bottle of shoe polish”, he spluttered”. (Mr. Kelly to the General). (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

It means that the General is a swindler.

“What hair of gold it is that she has”.

The meaning of “**hair of gold**” is background or the origin of her richness.

“If you ever lose your mind, Billy, and get too old to do honest swindling among grown men, go to New York. In the West a sucker is every minute; but in New York they appear in chunks of rose –you can’t count’em!”(In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

“**Chunks of rose**” means very popularly and crowdedly.

*“The Bed Liners stamped **their freezing feet**, looked at the empty benches in Madison Square whence Jack Frost had evicted them, and muttered to another in a confusion of tongues”.* (In “the fifth wheel” - O. Henry)

*“**Their freezing feet**”* mean the feet very cold

*“What to me is war and politics? This sport is **one paradise**. My country it have other brave heroes to continue the fighting... It is here I have found one angel. Let us buy the Hotel Esparnol and you shall be mine, and the money shall not be waste on guns”.* (This is the conversation between General Falcon and Dios). (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

*“This sport is **one paradise**”* means that the sport is very interesting and attractive.

2.1.2.3 Adverbial phrases

*“The discord and clatter uptown offended is nice ear; so a friend had sent him to **this oasis in the desert of noise**.”* (In “The thing’s the play”- O. Henry)

The bold words *“**this oasis in the desert of noise**”* means the place where he does not make trouble to his neighbor.

2.1.2.4 Adjective phrases

*“His head struck a stone. I did not intend to kill him. I was **mad with love and jealous**”.* (In “The thing’s the play” - O. Henry)

It shows the feeling of the man who was very happy with his love.

2.1.3 Hyperbole in terms of clauses

This is also one of the most expressions of hyperbole in short stories.

*“Kenwitz chuckled **like a diabolic raven**”.* (In “The girl and the graft” - O. Henry)

It means chuckling very frightful and horrible.

*“Vaucross treated me **like a bear hunter’s guide**.”* (In “The girl and the graft” - O. Henry)

It means bad and inhuman treating.

“He’s as easy as a gum shoe”. (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

“As easy as a gum shoe” is the hyperbolic figure talks about a person very easy-going and comfortable

“I know it as well as the cat in the City Hall knows I was an O’Sullivan”. (In “Babes in jungle”- O. Henry)

It shows this character knows very much and clearly

“I’ve got this Jayville-near-Tarrytown correctly estimated as sure as North River is the Hudson and East River ain’t a river”.(In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

This means ensuring is very good.

“What is the picture like, Mr. Morgan? asks Silver. “It must be as big as the size of the Flatiron Building”. (In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

It means that the picture is very big. (In fact, the size of the picture is not as large as the size of buildings), so it is hyperbolic

“Why should I not be going out?” demanded Danny in his grumpiest chest tones “should I stay in? Am I as good as a horse?” (In “The day resurgent”- O. Henry)

“As good as a horse” indicates the person is very helpful and hard-working.

“The family entrance of Dugan’s cafe was feasible; so Danny yielded to the vernal season as far as a glass of bock”. (In “The day resurgent”- O. Henry)

The meaning of the bold words is that Danny yielded to the vernal season is very difficult.

“The old lady is as fixed in her ways as a nut in a new axle”. (In “the fifth wheel” - O. Henry)

It means that her thought is unchangeable and firm.

“As soon as the ex-coachman had recovered his feet and his wits he hastened as fast as he could eastward toward Broadway”. (In “the fifth wheel” - O. Henry)

Its meaning is hastening very quickly and hurried.

“He drew forth a tightly rolled mass of bills as large as a teacup, and laid it on the table”. (In “The poet and the peasant” - O. Henry)

That means the mass of bills have a lot and are dense.

“He was as neat and well-groomed as in the old New York days, but how differently was he clad!”(In “The girl and the graft” - O. Henry)

It shows he is very simple but gentle

“She was from Kansas and she suggested corn in all of its phases. Her hair was as yellow as the silk, her form was as tall and graceful as a stalk in the low grounds during a wet summer; her eyes were as big and startling as bunions, and green was her favorite color”. (In “The girl and the graft” - O. Henry)

The hair was *“as yellow as the silk”* means the color of the hair is light and the hair is very glossy.

Her form was *“as tall and graceful as a stalk in the low grounds during a wet summer”* means she is very tall and powerful.

“He was more a goose than a man, but I think I love him yet”. (In “The thing’s the play” - O. Henry)

It means the man is very talkative.

2.1.4 Hyperbole in terms of sentences

This expression of hyperbole in short stories is not very popular. It just occurs in some situations.

“Gallons,” said the burglar. *“If all the snakes I’ve used the oil of was strung out in a row they’d reach eight times as far as Saturn, and the rattles could be heard at Valparaiso, Indiana, and back.”*(In the “Make the whole world kin”- O. Henry).

It means that the burglar exaggerated the medicinal method that he has used a lot of snakes’ oil to treat his pain.

2.2 Meaning of hyperbole in typical American short stories

We also know the functions of hyperbole in literature in general and hyperbole in short stories in individual that is to create strong impression, to emphasis or to evoke strong feeling. However, each hyperbole used has individually specific function with low, medium and high levels intensification. This is in detail as followings:

2.2.1 Hyperbole with low level of intensification

This is nearly similar to simile in short stories. Here are some examples:

“He’s as easy as a gum shoe”. (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

“As easy as a gum shoe” is the hyperbolic figure talks about a person very easy-going and comfortable

“I know it as well as the cat in the City Hall knows I was an O’Sullivan”. (In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

It shows this character knows very much and clearly

“The old lady is as fixed in her ways as a nut in a new axle”. (In “the fifth wheel” - O. Henry)

It means that her thought is unchangeable and firm.

“I’ve got this Jayville-near-Tarrytown correctly estimated as sure as North River is the Hudson and East River ain’t a river”. (In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

This means ensuring is very good.

“What is the picture like, Mr. Morgan? Asks Silver. “It must be as big as the size of the Flatiron Building”. (In “Babes in jungle” - O. Henry)

It means that the picture is very big. (In fact, the size of the picture is not as large as the size of buildings), so it is hyperbolic.

2.2.2 Hyperbole with medium level of intensification

This is the expression of hyperbole in this level which often creates impression, emphasis in normal, neither lower nor higher.

*“Mrs. O’Brien heard, and lifted **an auriferous head**”. (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)*

It means that the person is very intelligent and talent.

*“What to me is war and politics? This sport is **one paradise**. My country it have other brave heroes to continue the fighting... It is here I have found one angel. Let us buy the Hotel Esparnol and you shall be mine, and the money shall not be waste on guns”. (This is the conversation between General Falcon and Dios). (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)*

*“This sport is **one paradise**”* means that the sport is very interesting and attractive.

*“If you ever lose your mind, Billy, and get too old to do honest swindling among grown men, go to New York. In the West a sucker is every minute; but in New York they appear in **chunks of rose** –you can’t count’em!” (In “Babes in jungle”- O. Henry)*

*“**Chunks of rose**”* means very popularly and crowdedly.

*“The Bed Liners stamped **their freezing feet**, looked at the empty benches in Madison Square whence Jack Frost had evicted them, and muttered to another in a confusion of tongues”. (In “the fifth wheel” - O. Henry)*

*“**Their freezing feet**”* mean the feet very cold.

2.2.3 Hyperbole with high level of intensification

This is the highest expression of hyperbole in creating the strong feelings, impression and emphasis. We can recognize clearly it in following examples:

“After Hart and Cherry had gotten “Mice Will Play” flawless, they had a try-out at a vaudeville house that accommodates. The sketch was a house wrecker. It was

one of those rare strokes of talent that inundates a theatre from the roof down. The gallery wept; and the orchestra seats, being dressed for it, swam in tears". (In "Strictly business" - O. Henry)

The bold words mean that the play "Mice Will Play" makes the audience be moved and cry a lot. In Vietnamese we say: "*bơi trong nước mắt*"

"His head struck a stone. I did not intend to kill him. I was mad with love and jealous". (In "The thing's the play"- O. Henry)

It shows the feeling of the man who was very happy with his love

"Why, its Easter is Sunday. Silly, I waited centuries for you and expecting you might come around to go". (In "The day resurgent" - O. Henry)

It is the most typical hyperbole in this story which means that waiting a long time.

2.3 Stylistic features of hyperbole in American typical short stories

In stylistic scales, I think that it is appropriate that hyperbole is divided into two stylistic levels that are formal and informal.

2.3.1 Formal hyperboles

"Several of us met over spaghetti and Duchess Country chianati, and swallowed indignation with slippery forkfuls". (In "The poet and the peasant"- O. Henry)

It means keeping calm is very difficult, but he also must do it.

"At the end of their talk Hart was willing to stake the judgment, experience and savings of his four years of vaudeville that "Mice Will Play" was blossom into perennial flower in the garden of the circuits". (In "Strictly business" - O. Henry)

It means that "Mice Will Play" was very famous and successful a long time in the circuits.

2.3.2 Informal hyperboles

*“She is one goddess one Juno what you call one **ox-eyed Juno**?”*

*“**Ox-eyed**”* is one expression of hyperbole in informal stylistic scale.

*“Why should I not be going out?” demanded Danny in his grumpiest chest tones
“should I stay in? Am I as good as a horse?”*

“As good as a horse” indicates the person is very helpful and hard-working.

3. Hyperbole in typical Vietnamese short stories.

As you know, Nam Cao is the writer of critical realism. In his whole life, he create many typical characters with deformed and heteromorphic figures and severe fates like Chi Pheo, Truong Ru, Binh Tu, Thi No, Lang Ran... They are step by step lost their human dignities and had a long distance /separated to other people. Chi Pheo is one of the most famous charaters in short stories of Nam Cao. With the critical realistic and hyperbolic expression, Nam Cao created and analyzed Chi Pheo clearly and typical from appearance to characteristic and innermost feeling. These bellowed are some examples of hyperbole in Nam Cao.

3.1 Structures of hyperbole in typical Vietnamese short stories

As similar as the structure of hyperbole in American typical short stories, structures of hyperbole in Vietnamese typical short stories also have four small following types:

3.1.1 Hyperbole in terms of words

Vietnamese hyperbole in words just expresses in compound words instead of simple words. However, it is very rare.

*“Tiếng đấm đá nhau bình bịch. Thôi, cứ gọi là **tan xương**”*. This sentence is quoted in section of the quarrel and fighting between Ba Kien father and son and Chi Pheo. (In “Chí Phèo” -Nam Cao)

It means that the fighting is very violent and hurt.

“*Thôi đại gì mà vào **miệng cọp**, hấn cứ đứng đây này, cứ lại lăn ra đây này, lại kêu toáng lên xem nào*”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

The meaning of the bold words is that step into the house of Ba Kien like the mouth of tiger-symbolize to a danger place.

“*Cụ mà chết đi rồi, chúng nó lại không cho **ăn bùn***”. (In “Chí Phèo” _Nam Cao)

“**Ăn bùn**” in this sentence is the hyperbolic expression means that when Ba Kien would die, his competitors would not let his family peaceful and would bully his family.

“*Bá hộ tiên tri làng Vũ Đại chánh hội đồng kì hào, huyện hào, bắc kì nhân dân đại biểu, **khét tiếng** đến cả trong hàng huyện*” (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

It means that Ba Kien is very well-known person.

“*Người ta phải gọi hấn là **cục đất***”. (In “Chí Phèo” -Nam Cao)

The words “**cục đất**” shows a very good natured characteristic of Nam Tho. He is very naïve and easy bullied.

“*Cái ông Cửu ấy chẳng chỗ nào sót vết chân, còn đón nước gì mà để nó trốn đi? Vả lại trốn đi thì người ta **róc xương** bố mẹ nó ra chứ: lấy tiền của người ta nào phải là chuyện đùa hay sao?*” (In “Nửa đêm” - Nam Cao)

“**Róc xương**” is hyperbolic verb used to emphasis the action of Mr Cuu who does not let Nhi’s family free and peaceful. This action is very cruel and heartless.

3.1.2 Hyperbole in terms of phrases

3.1.2.1 Verb phrases:

“*Thử hỏi có mặt nào trong cái hơn hai nghìn suất đình này làm được như thế? Kẻ làm rồi có chết cũng cam tâm. Vả mà không: Cái cụ **Bá thét ra lửa** ấy lại xử nhũn, mời hấn vào nhà uống nước*”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

The bold words mean that Bá Kiến is the person having dignitary and powerful voice in his Vu Dai village.

“*Này nó hãy lôi ngay mấy cái mâm cái nôi hay đồ vàng đồ bạc ra khoác ngay vào cổ hắn, rồi cho vợ ra kêu làng lên rồi cột cổ hắn vào, **chần cho một trận om xuong**, rồi vu cho cái tội ăn cắp thì sao?*” (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

The bold sentence means that Chi Pheo’s afraid that he was fought very painful. This extract expressed Chi Pheo’s feeling before deciding to step into Ba Kien’s house. He wondered that whether Ba Kien’s family trapped to greatly harm to him.

“*Còn bọn đàn anh hay bới móc thì lại sợ, sợ thằng Chánh hội cũng như sợ Thiên Lôi; hai sức phá hoại ấy đập vào nhau thì phải **đổ đình đổ chùa** đừng có nói gì đến **đổ nhà đổ cửa***”. (In “Nửa đêm” - Nam Cao)

Two phrases “**đổ đình đổ chùa**” and “**đổ nhà đổ cửa**” have the same meaning but in different level. The level of connotation of “**đổ đình đổ chùa**” may be higher than the level of connotation of “**đổ nhà đổ cửa**”. The meaning of two phrases above is that the undermining of Thien Loi is very serious.

“*Đến lúc mới miêng, không buồn nói nữa, chị về sân, thì chồng chị đã lả ra hè, **ngủ như chết** từ bao giờ rồi*” (In the “Con mèo” -Nam Cao)

“**Ngủ như chết**” means deeply sleeping without minding to anything surrounding.

The quotation “*nghe đến con lúc nào thì **thương con đứt ruột** nhưng biết làm sao*”. (In “Một đám cưới” - Nam Cao). This is one of the most well-known stories of Nam Cao about the poor’s fate. What a pity! Nam Cao also used a lot of hyperbole in this stories.

“**Thương con đứt ruột**” also called hyperbolical expression shows that the mother’s feeling to her daughter is very deeply and profound.

“Trăng sáng” is a story of series writing about educated poor person of Nam Cao. In his works, he often feels sorry to the underclass miserable person or criticizes to the corrupt Federal regime. But, in this story, it takes him a lot of love, sympathy to the fate, the aspiration and the occupation of the poor intellectual people in the unfair society. Using hyperbole in each story also makes the story interesting and effectively. Here are some hyperbolical points in “Trăng sáng”.

“*Con bé khóc. Thế là ca nước gừng dốc tuột vào mồm nó. Nó **giãy lên như đĩa phải vôi**. Nó phun phè phè. Nó gào lên. Bao nhiêu nước gừng bắn ra áo mẹ*”. (In the “Trăng sáng” - Nam Cao)

This is a quotation when Dien’ daughter had stomachache. Her mother must her to drink ginger juice to reduce her hurt. But, it is too hot for her to drink. So, she opposes her mother.

“*Giãy lên như đĩa phải vôi*” means that squiring violently and strongly.

3.1.2.2 Noun phrases

In the extract described Nam Tho- a character has the tragic fate, Nam Cao also used hyperbole appropriate like “*Nam Thọ vốn là thằng **đầu bò đầu bươu***”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

It means that Nam Tho is a hooligan guy who does not know what frightening is, he does anything without abiding by law.

“*...**Mặt rỗ tổ ong**, trán thấp và bóp lại ở hai bên, tóc còm cộm dở ngắn dở dài, mắt ti hí nhưng sáng như mắt vọ... tất cả những cái ấy vào hùa với cái mũi ngắn và to héch lên như **mũi hổ phù**, đôi lông quỳên cao trên bờ những cái má trũng như hai cái hố, những cái xương hàm nổi bật lên, và **bộ răng cải mả** nhai xương rau rầu...*” (In “Nửa đêm” -Nam Cao)

“***Mặt rỗ tổ ong***” is pork – marked face

“***Mũi hổ phù***” is a big and coarse nose

“**Răng cái mã**” is a kind of teeth which is very big and unbalanced

In the beginning of story “Con mèo” - Nam Cao, hyperbole is used clearly. “*Anh cu vừa ở ruộng về. Hai người cùng mỗi mẹt. Hai người cùng bút rứt. Một người ngòi gãi cái **đầu tổ quạ** đến mấy tháng nay chưa gội.*”

“**Đầu tổ quạ**” is one of the most typical hyperbolic images in Vietnamese. It means that the hair is very ruffled and uncombed.

3.1.2.3 Adjective phrases:

“*Mà mấy khi được một nơi mát như thế, **mát rợn rợn thịt**, sung sướng quá*”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

The bold words showed Thi No’s feeling when she sitting on the garden near Chi Pheo’s house where is strongly windy. It makes her nearly cold.

Đức - the son of Thien Loi was also well- described by Nam Cao. “*Có thể nói nó lớn nhanh hơn những đứa trẻ được bú no sữa mẹ. Nó **múp míp** nhẩn nhụi, **kháu kháu lạ!** Nó **hiền như đất**, **hiền như con** những nhà thiếu ăn*”. (In “Nửa đêm” - Nam Cao)

How beautiful child is! The phrase “*Nó **hiền như đất***” expresses that he is a very docile boy.

“*Gồm mồm với miệng gì mà **toang toang như ngỗng đực***”... “*cái giống người hơi tí là **oang oang như mõ ấy***”

“***Toang toang như ngỗng đực***” and “***oang oang như mõ***” are hyperbole means that the voice is very loud and echoing.

“*Cả nhà ông Cựu cuống quýt, **lo xanh mắt***”. (In the “Lang Ran”- Nam Cao)

It means that the family is very anxious and nervous

3.1.2.4 Adverb phrases

“*Anh cu Thiêm đứng lên, như một cái lò xo bật*”. (In the “Thôi đi về”- Nam Cao)

It means that he stand up very quickly and suddenly

3.1.3 Hyperbole in terms of clauses

In the extract describing the meeting between Chi Pheo and Thi No, the writer described: “*Những cái môi nứt nẻ như bờ ruộng vào kỳ đại hạn và cái mặt rạch ngang dọc như mặt thớt*”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

The meaning of the sentence is about cracked lip of Thi No and interlacing scars on Chi Pheo’s face.

In the extract describes appearance of “Rụ” – also called “Thiên Lôì”- is the main character of this story, Nam Cao used hyperbole a lot such as “*Hắn ngoài 30 tuổi, da đen như cột nhà cháy... đã thế đôi lông mày rậm và dựng đứng như hai con sâu róm nằm trên trợn lực ...*” (In “Nửa đêm” - Nam Cao)

This quotation is one of the most symbolic example of hyperbole in short story of Nam Cao which expresses his writing style and his talent.

“*Da đen như cột nhà cháy*” means: Thien Loi’s skin is very “black”

“*Lông mày rậm và dựng đứng như hai con sâu róm*” is a both black and bushy eyebrow

“*Thị rất xót xa khi thấy những ông khách cục súc, sau khi đã nể nỏm khen bộ ghé vừa đẹp vừa thanh, liền đặt cái mông bành bành như cái vại lên mặt ghé, khiến những sợi muốn lún xuống, rồi co cả hai chân bản thiu lên*” (In the “Trăng sáng”- Nam Cao)

“*Mông bành bành như cái vại*” is a large bottom

3.1.4 Hyperbole in terms of idioms

*“Hắn làm thì cật lực mà quanh năm vẫn **nghèo rớt mùng toi**”.*

The phrase “**nghèo rớt mùng toi**” is one of typical expression of hyperbole. It is adjective means that very poor and miserable.

*“Mẹ nó vốn **nghèo từ trong trứng nghèo ra**”.* (In “Một đám cưới” - Nam Cao)

“**Nghèo từ trong trứng nghèo ra**” is hyperbolic idiom used very much in Vietnamese speech. It means that the poorness is long drawn out.

*“Chồng bà chết từ khi nó mới lọt lòng ra. Bà **thắt lưng buộc bụng**, nuôi nó từ **tám tám, tí tí giờ đi**”.* (In the “Một bữa no”- Nam Cao)

“**Thắt lưng buộc bụng**” that is appropriately idiomatic shows the good quality of the Vietnamese women scarifying to their families, husbands and children means very economical and well-expensed.

“Một bữa no” is one of my favorite stories in series writing about the poor and the deteriorating their human dignities because of their poorness. They are so excruciatingly humiliating that they can ignore their faces and even their lives to have only one fulfill meal like the title of this story. What a pity and bitter!

*“Năm ngoái đây, ông ấy còn bắt bà **ốm một trận thập tử nhất sinh**. Có đồng nào hết sạch”* (In the “Một bữa no”- Nam Cao)

Nam Cao succeeds in using hyperbolic idioms in his works. One more times, he uses it very well: “**ốm một trận thập tử nhất sinh**” is serious illness. It seems nearly die.

3.1.5 Hyperbole in terms of sentences

In quotation followed, the hyperbolic expression is very clear. “*Rồi **đột nhiên** **hắn khát, trời ơi sao mà khát! Khát đến cháy cổ họng**”.* (In “Chí Phèo” -Nam Cao)

The sentence “**Khát đến cháy cổ họng**” means that very thirsty like burning throat.

In “Một đám cưới”- Nam Cao, he also used a lot of hyperbole such as “*bên ngoài mịt mù sương. Khí lạnh sắc như dao*”.

The bold words mean that the air is very cold.

“*Thì cứ để bạc mà đem chôn! Có tiền có của, làm đàn anh không muốn, cứ muốn để đưa khác nó cười lên đầu lên cổ. Ngu như bò*”. (In the “Mua danh”- Nam Cao)

“*Ngu như bò*” is very stupid and dull.

3.2 Meaning of hyperbole in typical Vietnamese short stories

3.2.1 Hyperbole with low level of intensification

Meaning of hyperbole in low level is not rather different from simile.

“*Những cái môi nứt nẻ như bờ ruộng vào kỳ đại hạn và cái mặt rạch ngang dọc như mặt thớt*”.

The meaning of the sentence is about cracked lip of Thi No and interlacing scars on Chi Pheo’s face.

“*Nó hiền như đất, hiền như con những nhà thiếu ăn*”. How beautiful child is! The sentence “*Nó hiền như đất*” expresses that he is a very docile boy.

“*Gồm mồm với miệng gì mà toang toang như ngỗng đực*” ...”*cái giống người hơi tí là oang oang như mõ ấy*”

“*Toang toang như ngỗng đực*” and “*oang oang như mõ*” are hyperbole means that the voice is very loud and echoing.

“*...Chúng chửi bằng đủ giọng, đủ lời...cái mồm ngoác thật to, vồ đùi vồ đoi, nhẩy cẳng lên hoặc giậm chân bèn bẹt đến gần thụt đất*”. (In the “Thôi đi về”- Nam Cao)

The bold words mean that stamping her foot strongly

“*Trâu làng năm nay chết rất nhiều. Do trận bão vừa qua. Có những giàn **nát như tương**, chẳng khác gì có người giật đổ xuống rồi lấy chân mà dận*”. (In the “Mua danh” -Nam Cao)

“***Nát như tương***” means that very crushed

3.2.2 Hyperbole with medium level of intensification

“*Điền tạn yếu quá, không được nhận vào công sở; và các người đã vội cho con tiền đi học thật là **tiền vắt xuống sông***”. (In the “Trăng sáng” - Nam Cao)

This is a significant hyperbole improving the connotative of this extract that any person also very poor and miserable for food and accommodation. It is so difficult to living that going to school becomes useless and waste.

“*Có **chạy xoạc cả gấu váy**, hết chợ gần đến chợ xa, thì mới kiếm nổi ngày mấy đồng xu*”. (In the “Một bữa no”- Nam Cao)

“***Chạy xoạc cả gấu váy***” means very difficult to making money

“*Mày đã biết cái đại của mày chưa? Bây giờ mày mới **trơ mắt ếch** nhà mày ra. Sung sướng thật!*” (In the “Thôi đi về” -Nam Cao)

“***Trơ mắt ếch***” shows the big and surprising eyes.

“*Mụ béo tròn béo trọc, **mặt rỗ như tổ ong bầu**, mắt trắng, môi thâm, mà đen như thăng quỳ*”... “*Ai cười ai nói, mặc! Suốt ngày mụ chỉ **im như thóc***”. (In the “Lang Ran” -Nam Cao)

“***Mặt rỗ như tổ ong bầu***” is pork – marked face.

“***Im như thóc***” means very silent

3.2.3 Hyperbole with high level of intensification

“*Rồi đột nhiên hần khát, trời ơi sao mà khát! **Khát đến cháy cổ họng***”. (In the “Chi Pheo”-Nam Cao)

“*Hắn làm thì cật lực mà quanh năm vẫn **nghèo rớt mùng tơi***”. (In the “Chi Pheo” - Nam Cao)

“*Đến lúc mới miệng, không buồn nói nữa, chị về sân, thì chồng chị đã lăn ra hè, **ngủ như chết từ bao giờ rồi***” (In “Con mèo” - Nam Cao)

“*Năm ngoái đây, ông ấy còn bắt bà **ôm một trận thập tử nhất sinh**. Có đồng nào hết sạch*”. (In the “Mot bua no” - Nam Cao)

“*Ngươi ta tức bà đến **sắc cả tiết ra đàng mũi** cũng không thể giúi đầu bà xuống mà cộc*”. (In the “Mot bua no” - Nam Cao)

This sentence is quoted from an extract of grandmother visit to her nephew. And there are a lot of feelings about bitter and hurt to the miserable person.

“*Tức đến sắc cả tiết ra đàng mũi*” indicates extremely angry feeling.

“*Trông cái váy, ngươi ta tưởng như nó **bền đến thiên niên vạn đại**. Ấy thế mà cũng rách*”. (In the “Tu ngay me chết” - Nam Cao)

The meaning of the sentence is that the skirt seems to be very strong wearing

“*Về đến sân, chị đứng lại, hồng hộc thở, **mặt không còn một giọt máu***”. (In the “Thôi đi về” - Nam Cao)

The meaning of the phrase is an extremely nervous and pale face.

3.3 Stylistic features of hyperbole in typical Vietnamese short stories

Nam Cao is the writer of critical realism. He spends almost his life to create the bitter characters with their unhappy fates. By the critical pen and the talent of using the simple and easy-understanding words, so the stylistic scales of hyperbole in his stories are very familiar and informal.

3.3.1 Formal hyperbole

“Năm ngoài đây, ông ấy còn bắt bà **ôm một trận thập tử nhất sinh**. Có đồng nào hết sạch” (In the “Mot bua no”- Nam Cao)

“Trông cái váy, người ta tưởng như nó **bền đến thiên niên vạn đại**. Ấy thế mà cũng rách”. (In the “Mot bua no”-Nam Cao)

3.3.2 Informal hyperbole

As I concern above, informal stylistic scales in Nam Cao are popular. That expressed as following:

“Phen này cha con thằng Bá Kiến đó còn dám vác mặt đi đâu nữa! **Mồ mà tổ tiên đến lộn lên mắt**”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

“Này nó hãy lôi ngay mấy cái mâm cái nôi hay đồ vàng đồ bạc ra khoác ngay vào cổ hắn, rồi cho vợ ra kêu làng lên rồi cột cổ hắn vào, **chần cho một trận om xương**, rồi vu cho cái tội ăn cắp thì sao?”. (In “Chí Phèo” - Nam Cao)

“Cụ mà chết đi rồi, chúng nó lại không cho **ăn bùn**”. (In “Chí Phèo” -Nam Cao)

“Hắn ngoài 30 tuổi, **da đen như cột nhà cháy, mặt rỗ tổ ong**, trán thấp và bóp lại ở hai bên, tóc còm cộm dờ ngắn dờ dài, mắt ti hí nhưng sáng như mắt vọ, đã thế đôi lông mày **rậm và dựng đứng như hai con sâu róm** nằm trên trợ lực, tất cả những cái ấy vào hùa với cái mũi ngắn và to héch lên như **mũi hổ phù**, đôi lông quỳ cao trên bờ những cái má trũng như hai cái hố, những cái xương hàm nổi bật lên, và **bộ răng cải mả** nhai xương rau rầu...” (In “Nửa đêm” - Nam Cao)

“Cái ông Cửu ấy chẳng chỗ nào sót vết chân, còn đón nước gì mà để nó trốn đi? Và lại trốn đi thì người ta **róc xương** bố mẹ nó ra chứ: lấy tiền của người ta nào phải là chuyện đùa hay sao?” (In “Nửa đêm” - Nam Cao)

“Góm mồm với miệng gì mà **toang toang như ngỗng đực**” ...” cái giống người hơi tí là **oang oang như mõ ấy**” (In “Con mèo” - Nam Cao)

“Có **chạy xoạc cả gấu váy**, hết chợ gần đến chợ xa, thì mới kiếm nổi ngày mấy

đồng xu". (In the "Một bữa no" -Nam Cao)

"Người ta tức bà đến **sặc cả tiết ra đằng mũi** cũng không thể giúi đầu bà xuống mà **cốc**". (In the "Một bữa no"- Nam Cao)

"Chúng mày đã **gầy dơ xương**, mình mẩy, chân tay thì ghẻ gún. Ngộ tao chết thì có lẽ chúng mày **rã xương** ra được. Này, cái cổ tay ... Có khác gì **cái cẳng gà** hay không?"(In the "Tu ngày me chết"- Nam Cao)

"**Gầy dơ xương**" means very thin or skinny

"**Rã xương**" is overstatement shows the poverty-stricken of the children when the mother would die, and then they can not live

CHAPTER III: IMPLICATION

1. Difficulties faced by learners of English in interpreting and using hyperbole in American and Vietnamese short stories

1.1. The ambiguities between two figure of speech_ simile and hyperbole

The problem when I do this study is that the ambiguities between two figure of speech_ simile and hyperbole. And I think that there are a lot students like me also must wonder whether this sentence uses simile or hyperbole and the mistakes because of misusing these two figures of speech are popular, too.

For example:

I am awful when it comes to English. I am just wondering if the following sentence is a simile.....

"And his other leg as black as night."

And would this sentence *"My heart is broken in so many ways"* that be a metaphor or a hyperbole

The first sentence *"And his other leg as black as night"* is a simile (explicitly stated comparison leg color-black as night).

The second (heart is broken) is more a figure of speech or an idiomatic expression, as no comparison or analogy is being made to another object/idea. *"My heart shattered like glass upon hearing his words"* would be a simile.

1.2. The misunderstanding

In interpreting and translating process, the readers and the translators often get this error in some literature works using hyperbole.

Words in general English can carry different meanings and express new concepts in specific English. It is a cause lead to misunderstandings in translation process.

Firstly, the translators often misunderstand the meaning of word between general English and specific English or among fields. That proved by following examples:

“Mrs. O’Brien heard, and lifted *an auriferous head*” (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

The word “*auriferous*” means golden and it is translated as “*có vàng*” in Vietnamese, but in this work, the meaning of this word is tranfered as interligent and talent.

“What *hair of gold* it is that she has”. (In “The gold that glittered” - O. Henry)

The meaning of each simple word of noun phrase “*hair of gold*” is “*tóc của vàng*” in Vietnamese word for word translation . But depending on the context of this work, the meaning of “*hair of gold*” is background or the origin of the richness.

Therefore, due to the limitation of knowledge about the specific field and the variety of both Source Language and Target Language, the translators surely have difficulties in the process of translating and understanding terms.

2. Suggested solutions to avoid common errors

2.1. Suggested solutions to avoid the ambiguities between two figure of speech - simile and hyperbole

After studying hyperbole, I get some solutions to avoid this error.

Firstly, we must know clearly the definition of each figure of speech, what is hyperbole, what is simile or metaphor...

Simile: An indirect relationship where one thing or idea is described as being similar to another. A stated explicitly comparison that is made between two essentially unlike things. Often contains the words "like" or "as," but not always.

Eg. *"The moon appeared crimson, like a drop of blood hanging in the sky"*

Eg. *"She hunched and struggled her way down the path; the way an old beggar woman might wander about"*

Eg. *"My love is like a red, red rose."*

Eg. *"The day we passed together for a while seemed a bright fire on a winter's night."*

Hyperbole: A description which exaggerates, usually employing extremes and/or superlatives to convey a positive or negative attribute. A bold, deliberate overstatement not meant to be taken literally but may be used to evoke strong feeling or to create a strong impression.

Eg. *Mr. Smith is the greatest human being ever to walk the earth.*

Eg. *I'm so hungry I'd give my right arm for a piece of pizza.*

Eg. *He has a brain the size of a pea.*

Secondly, we need to know the features of these figures of speech.

Similes directly compare two unlike things using "like" or "as".

(The bump on her head was as big as a watermelon.)

Hyperbole is an exaggeration, doesn't use like or as, and is used to emphasize a point. *(If I've told you once, I've told you a million times, do not put that pencil up your nose)*

Hyperbole is great exaggeration *(I'm starving to death)* but it is not necessarily separate from simile. Hyperbole sometimes uses simile:

"She's as big as a barn"

"He's like a giant, slow motion trainwreck"

Both are hyperbole, both use simile. *(No one is really the size of a barn and to*

compare a person to a trainwreck is a big exaggeration).

And the last, the purposes of using each type of figurative language is very important to recognize them and to avoid the misunderstanding and errors.

If it is meant to create a sensory feel for something (*sight, sound, taste, touch, smell*), it is first a simile, then a hyperbole. If the intent is to exaggerate an idea, then it is a hyperbole first, then a simile. I think some solutions above are effective and useful for us to understand what is hyperbole and to distinguish the ambiguities between some nearly similar figure of speech to avoid errors.

2.2. Suggested solutions to avoid the misunderstanding

Firstly, the translators should try to understand the words in the whole context and intention of the text translating. The principal way to reach it is reading all the sentences or the text completely to give the idea that we want to say in the target language because the most important characteristic of this technique is translating the message as clearly and naturally as possible. By this way, translators can guess the meaning of word in the detail content. Moreover, it is necessary to look up new word by dictionary. Most of terms created from original word in general English.

Secondly, the translators should search the knowledge about the translation matter in order to, at least, understand meaning of the words and use them correctly, and decrease all the difficulties stated above. By doing this, translators can choose the best equivalent from English into Vietnamese and avoid the misunderstanding

Thirdly, the translators should avoid the tendency to translate word by word, because that will destroy the meaning of the original word and ruin the beauty of the expression. Basically, most of terms are translated by using general word. However, sometimes, it is necessary to translate an English word by a long phrase

or even a whole sentence to help readers understand.

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. Issues addressed in the study.

Nowadays, English more and more becomes the first popular language in the world, using English fluently has become a common situation and gradually obligate in offices, especially in communication when Vietnam has already jointed in World Trade Organization. The important role of English is illustrated in every field of human life such as economy, science, and politics, medical, etc. To be a successful person in work, the good knowledge in specialty seems to be not enough, we need to know foreign languages, especially English in order to communicate with foreign partners, at least to know what he says, what he wants and to be able to expresses the individual ideas that makes the success in cooperation. So we must clearly understand tradition, custom, and culture of the partners to avoid misunderstanding. Hyperbole is of the most complicated figure of speech which is very common in daily life communication as well as in the literature but also very interesting for studying.

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

After consulting and collecting from teacher either English or Vietnamese, I have designed the paper into three parts.

Firstly, Part one is introduction of the study concluding the rationale, aim, method, scope as well as design of the study.

The second part which consists of three chapters is major one. Some notions have been given in the theoretical background as an introduction to the study relating to hyperbole.

Chapter I states common knowledge on word, word meaning in general and definition as well as antonym of hyperbole in particular.

Chapter II highlights an investigation into expressions of hyperbole in some typical short stories of American and Vietnamese writers and analyzing the expressions of hyperbole in terms of structures, meanings, and stylistic features.

Chapter III is implication focusing on difficulties faced by learners of English in interpreting and using hyperbole in American and Vietnamese short stories and then giving out some suggested solutions to avoid common errors

The final part is conclusion which states overview of the whole study. At last, the author of this graduation paper supply some exercises with the hope that learners will understand more throughout practicing exercises.

2. Recommendations and Suggestions for further study.

In general, to understand fully and profoundly those application of meanings and attitudes of English hyperbole in general and of literature on particular is very difficult because they relate to a great number of fields such as geographical feature, social development, culture, etc.... and sometimes the origins or reason why they are used are not known. Moreover, English is spoken in many countries and the number of English hyperboles produced is not small at all. Consequently, the difficulties in learning English hyperboles that Vietnamese learners must deal with are undeniable. Suggestions and exercises for overcoming are very necessary. The learners usually have difficulties in identifying hyperboles, guessing the meaning, using them in suitable situations finding Vietnamese equivalent. To overcome these difficulties, learners should study feature of hyperboles deeply, guess their meaning in the contexts and carefully read English texts, to exercises and not forget to take care of cultural features and try to have cultural competence.

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

present international language and a reference to those who are interested in English culture, English semantics as well as English hyperboles and English or American literature and then open other topics for further study

However, because of my limited knowledge and ability, mistakes and shortcomings are unavoidable. Therefore, the writer greatly does hope to receive any remarks, criticisms and suggestions from teachers and friends to make it better.

Hyperbole, in general, and hyperbole in some typical short stories of American and Vietnamese, in particular, is an interesting subject that needs more investigation from authors.

On the coming time, researchers intend to study:

- Hyperbole in some typical poems of famous English and Vietnamese writers.
- The similarities and differences between hyperbole in English literature and American literature.
- Hyperbole in slogan of advertising

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APPENDIX

Some exercises :

Exercise 1: Indicate if the sentence is an example of a simile, metaphor, or hyperbole:

1. The paper is as light as a feather.
2. The ocean was a raging bull.
3. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
4. The streetlight was my security guard.
5. A gentle summer wind feels like a soft cotton sheet.
6. The ship plows the sea.
7. Her eyes shone like stars in the night sky.
8. All the world's a stage.
9. My little brother eats like a pig.
10. The tears flowed like a river.
11. Mr. Smith drank his tea in oceans.
12. We are all in the battle field.
13. The mayor's voice was a strong weapon.
14. The horse moved with lightning speed.
15. Jim is as stubborn as a mule.
16. My boyfriend is like a watermelon in the summer.
17. He's like a typhoon in the house.
18. My motorcycle is a bomb on wheels.
19. He is so hungry that he could eat a million cookies and six gallon of ice cream.
20. The lights in our classroom are too bright because they are brighter than ten thousand suns.

Exercise 2: In the following sentences, underline the hyperbole and write what it means on the line underneath.

1. I think of you a million times a day.

2. She is one hundred feet tall.
3. These books weigh a ton.
4. The path went on forever.
5. I'm doing a million things right now.
6. I waited centuries for you.
7. Hyperbole is the greatest ever!
8. I will die if she asks me to dance.
9. I jumped up to the moon and came back till she finished her makeup.
10. If I were to become any richer, I would have bought a cloud
11. Exhausted, I dropped down dead.
12. Her beauty eclipsed the sun.
13. Her voice brought on earthquakes.
14. You are telling me this one hundred and two million times.

Key to exercises

Exercise 1:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. simile | 11. hyperbole |
| 2. hyperbole | 12. metaphor |
| 3. metaphor | 13. hyperbole |
| 4. metaphor | 14. hyperbole |
| 5. simile | 15. simile |
| 6. metaphor | 16. simile |
| 7. hyperbole | 17. simile |
| 8. metaphor | 18. metaphor |
| 9. simile | 19. hyperbole |
| 10. hyperbole | 20. hyperbole |

Exercise 2:

1. I think of you a *million times* a day. (I think of you many times a day)
2. She is *one hundred feet* tall. (She is very tall)
3. These books *weigh a ton*. (These books are very heavy)
4. The path *went on forever*. (The path is very far)
5. I'm doing *a million things* right now. (I'm doing a lot right now)
6. I *waited centuries* for you. (I waited a long time for you)
7. Hyperbole is the *greatest ever!* (Hyperbole is good)
8. I *will die* if she asks me to dance. (I can't dance)
9. They look at him as if he is *a ghost*. (They look down on him)
10. If I were to become any richer, I would have *bought a cloud*. (If i were to become any richer, I would have bought anything I wanted)
11. Exhausted, I *dropped down dead*. (I was very exhausted)
12. Her beauty *eclipsed the sun*. (She is very beautiful)
13. Her voice *brought on earthquakes*. (Her voice is very loud and terrible)
14. You are telling me this *one hundred and two million times*. (You are telling me this many times)