

## A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE METAPHOR "ANGER IS HEAT" IN ENGLISH AND THE POSSIBLE EQUIVALENT EXPRESSIONS IN VIETNAMESE

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### SUMMARY

Metaphor is traditionally treated as a rhetoric device in poetics. However, according to cognitivists, metaphor is not merely a matter of language but a matter of thought. This research is intended as a contrastive analysis of the metaphor "Anger is Heat", one of the most common used metaphors for emotions, in English and the equivalents in Vietnamese. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, different samples containing the central conceptual metaphor "Anger is Heat" were collected from authentic sources of data in both English and Vietnamese. After being collected, the data were analyzed by using the major approach of quantitative to describe and analyze the common and distinctive features of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in English and in Vietnamese equivalents. The findings showed that the cognitive basis of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in both languages is the same and based on bodily experiences. While English tends to express anger through the physiological effects of the whole body, Vietnamese tends to utilize body parts to express anger. These differences result from the differences in culture and medical knowledge.

**Key words:** *contrastive analysis, metaphor, conceptual metaphor, 'anger is heat', Vietnamese equivalents*

### INTRODUCTION

It is common knowledge that metaphors, especially conceptual metaphors are not only an effective device for representing the world outside language but also a tool for thinking, speaking and acting. Lakoff and Johnson (1980:3) [3] state that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action" and "our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor."

Being teachers of English, the researchers have always been aware of the importance of metaphors and they have also been interested in metaphors especially conceptual metaphors for emotions; therefore, they choose conceptual metaphors as their research topic. Of many everyday conceptual metaphorical expressions, the writers would like to take a careful study on the conceptual metaphor "Anger is Heat". "Anger" is one of abstract concepts of people's emotions that are highly

used in English and in Vietnamese. How is this metaphor used differently in the two languages? These are the main reasons for the study "*A Contrastive Analysis of the Metaphor 'Anger is Heat' in English and the Possible Equivalent Expressions in Vietnamese*".

Within the scope of this study, the researchers aim to figure out the similarities and differences in regard to how the English metaphor "Anger is Heat" and the Vietnamese equivalent are perceived and what causes the differences in cognitive mechanism of this metaphor between the two languages.

### METHODOLOGY

To achieve the aims of the study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches is employed with priority given to qualitative analysis. The qualitative method is used to describe and analyze the common and distinctive features of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in English and the equivalent expressions in Vietnamese.

The researchers collected different samples containing metaphorical expressions belonging to the central conceptual metaphor

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"Anger is Heat" from books, previous studies, novels, stories, and the Internet in both English and Vietnamese. These samples are authentic sources of data and the research procedure follows the research design and principles strictly. So the validity and the reliability of the study can be guaranteed. After being collected, the data were analyzed by using the following techniques:

- Classifying the samples collected into two sub-versions of the central metaphor "Anger is Heat" based on the corresponding source domains,
- Systematizing is used to categorize the samples into metaphorical entailments in accordance with their meanings, and
- Inferring the similarities and differences of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in English and the possible equivalents in Vietnamese.

#### FINDINGS

**A contrastive analysis of the metaphor "Anger is heat" in English and the possible equivalent expressions in Vietnamese.**

The research pointed out that the central metaphor "Anger is Heat" in both English and Vietnamese has two versions: "Anger is the Heat of a Hot Fluid in a Container" and "Anger is Fire".

*The version "Anger is the Heat of a Hot Fluid in a Container" in English and the Vietnamese equivalent*

In this metaphor, the target domain "anger" is understood through the source domain "the heat of a fluid in a container". The mechanisms of this metaphor in English and in Vietnamese are the same and based on a set of correspondences between the source domain "the heat of a fluid in a container" and the target domain "anger". Based on what have been discussed about the version "Anger is the Heat of a Hot Fluid in a Container" in the two languages, it can be figured out that English and Vietnamese have the same levels to describe anger, but English has more

metaphorical expressions to describe than Vietnamese

In addition, in the two languages anger is conceptualized as the same hot fluid; however, the containers in the two languages are different. In English, the whole body is usually applied to the container; while in Vietnamese parts of the body are usually applied to the container

*In English* we have a number of metaphorical expressions for this like. *gorge rise, get a rise, well up, towering rage, seethe with anger, build up, blood boil, boiling point* as in the following examples:

- I felt my *gorge rise* and I knew I was going to lose my temper.

(<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/gorges>) [12]

His pent-up anger *welled up* inside him. (Lakoff and Kovecses: 1983) [4]

- Public anger *reached boiling point* when troops were called in to control protesters. (<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/reach+boiling+point>) [12]

*In Vietnamese* people usually use the states "nóng" and "sôi" of the fluid to express the anger.

Sau sự cố Phương Thanh giẫm chân lên sách, cư dân mạng thêm một lần nữa *nóng mắt* với hình ảnh Angela Phương Trinh giẫm chân lên sách. (<http://giaoduc.net.vn/Van-hoa/Người-mau-Nong-mat-anh-Angela-Phuong-Trinh-giam-chan-len-sach/206142.gd>) [13]

Tôi quay sang Ngủ, mặt tím lại, *mắt long sòng sọc*. Nhưng Ngủ đã ngó lơ chỗ khác. Tôi thấy nó mim môi lại, chắc là nó nén cười.

(Nguyễn Nhật Ánh: 2011, p 140) [9]

*The English version "Anger is Fire" and the Vietnamese equivalent*

In this central metaphor target domain "anger" is conceptualized through the source domain "fire". Like the first version, the cognitive mechanisms of the metaphor in the two languages are the same and based on

correspondences between the source domain and the target domain. Based on these correspondences, the central metaphor "Anger is Fire" in both English and Vietnamese has a number of elaborations. Let us consider the following examples of metaphorical expressions which highlight the cause of anger to find out similarities and differences between the two languages:

*In English:*

- Those are *inflammatory* remarks. (Lakoff and Kovecses: 1983) [4]

- What you said *inflamed* him. (Lakoff and Kovecses: 1983) [4]

- Your insincere apology just *added fuel to the fire*. (Lakoff and Kovecses: 1983) [4]

*In Vietnamese:*

- Các cuộc không kích của NATO vào hai bất đồng quân sự ở biên giới Afghanistan vào đêm hôm 25/11 đã *đổ thêm dầu cho ngọn lửa giận dữ* của Pakistan vốn đã được *nhen nhóm* sau vụ đột kích của Hoa Kỳ tiêu diệt Osama Bin Laden hồi tháng Năm. Năm. (<http://www.baomoi.com/Pakistan-Ban-tra-neu-bi-NATO-tan-cong/119/7516227.epi>) [14]

- Từng đợt nắng chùn cú xoáy vào tai, làm cho ông ta *hai mắt như náy lửa* (Trần Bá Tiến: 2009) [8]

After studying central metaphor "Anger is Heat" in English and in Vietnamese, the researchers could make some comments as follows:

- The central metaphor "Anger is Heat" both in English and in Vietnamese is based on the folk theory of physiological effects of anger. This metaphor has two versions: the version "Anger is the Heat of a Hot Fluid in a Container" when the central metaphor is applied to fluids and the version "Anger is Fire" when the central metaphor is applied to solids.

- English has more metaphorical expressions and levels to describe anger than Vietnamese.

Though both English and Vietnamese people conceptualize anger as *the heat of a hot fluid* and *fire* but the containers are

different. In English the whole body is mainly applied to the container; in contrast, in Vietnamese, parts of the body are mainly applied to the container. There are few expressions in English in which parts of body are used to conceptualize anger. Three parts which are often used are head, face, and blood vessel. A question arising here is that why Vietnamese tends to utilize more body parts for the container but English tends to use the whole body.

**Explanation for the differences of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in English and the equivalent in Vietnamese**

According to Lakoff and Kovecses (1983) [4], the use of "face" and "head" are based on the physiological experience that when body temperature and pressure increase, face and neck area becomes red. This is visible physiological effect. The case of "*burst a blood vessel*" is quite common in everyday use. Why "*blood vessel*" is used not other parts like heart, liver, or lung? In England if the rate of heart disease is very high, it becomes the cause of death. Based on their fundamental medical knowledge, English people know that excessive pressure will cause blood vessels burst. The state of extreme anger can cause pressure increase dramatically. It can be said that modern medical knowledge affects the model of conceptualization of English people.

In contrast, Vietnamese people are affected by knowledge of Oriental medicine. Vietnamese traditional medical theories, which are deeply influenced by Chinese ones, affect the model of conceptualization of Vietnamese people. These medical theories follow the theory of Yin-Yang and the theory of five elements. Chinese traditional medicine applies these theories to account for the relations between humans and nature, between the internal organs inside the human body, and between the internal organs and the external body parts.

According to the theory of five elements, the Zang and Fu organs liver and gall and eyes, which belong to the element Wood, are categorized to anger. This is the basis for expressions like "nóng mắt", "mắt long (song sọc)", "sôi mắt", "sôi gan". About eyes, they are used in many expressions for emotions based not only on the Yin-Yang theory and the five element theory but also on Vietnamese culture which considers eyes as "the windows of the soul" expressing people's states of emotions.

Although intestine (small and large intestine) and heart are categorized to happiness and grief, they are also used to express anger as in expressions "sôi ruột", "nổ ruột", "sôi tim". What are the reasons for this? First about heart, it can be seen under the cultural aspect. Vietnamese people consider heart as the central organ of people which can contain all states of emotions like anger, happiness, anxiety, grief, and fright; therefore, it is applied to express not only state of happiness according to Yin-Yang theory and five element theory but all other states of emotions.

According to Oriental medicine, intestine and liver are organs of digestive system and are interrelated. When someone gets angry, blood in his/her liver becomes hot, which make the intestinal juice to become hot. This is the basis for the expression "sôi ruột". Also related to Oriental medicine, steam is one of the two important elements (steam and blood) which help organs in the body act normally. When someone gets angry, circulation of steam in liver is hampered. When the circulation of the Yin steam in liver is hampered, it causes the one of the Yang steam in intestine to be hampered (Trần Bá Tiến: 2009)[8]. This is the basis for the expressions "nổ ruột".

In summary, cultural aspect and medical knowledge form the differences in the conceptualization of anger between English and in Vietnamese.

## CONCLUSION

The study has fulfilled its aims with the following major points presented. Firstly, the study has investigated the cognitive basis of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in English and the Vietnamese equivalents. Secondly, it has analyzed cognitive mechanism of the metaphor "Anger is Heat" in the two languages. English usually describes anger through the physiological effects of the whole body. In contrast, Vietnamese tends to utilize body parts. The research has also explained the reason why there are differences between the two languages. These differences result from differences in culture and medical knowledge.

## RECOMMENDATION

Metaphors are highly used in everyday English, so teaching metaphorical expressions is essential and important. Here are some implications that the authors hope, to some extent, will help teachers in teaching metaphors:

- When teaching metaphorical expressions, teachers should provide not only meanings but also the background of the expressions, cultural and structural features of the expressions. This can help learners effectively build semantic memories of the metaphorical expressions in English.

In teaching metaphorical expressions, teachers should put them in contexts. When expressions are put in contexts, students may guess their meanings and understand how they are used, so that it is easier for students to remember metaphorical expressions.

Contrasting and comparing the English metaphorical expressions to Vietnamese may also be an effective way. This technique may be employed for different tasks such as translation and reading. When teaching, teachers should highlight metaphorical expressions in texts of translating or reading, and then contrast and compare them to Vietnamese. Through contrast and

comparison with Vietnamese, teachers can provide students awareness of the metaphorical universal concepts used in the two languages which help them use metaphorical expressions correctly and effectively.

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## TÓM TẮT

### PHÂN TÍCH ĐỐI CHIẾU BIỂU THỨC ẪN DỤ “ANGER IS HEAT” (SỰ TỨC GIẬN LÀ NHIỆT) TRONG TIẾNG ANH VÀ CÁC BIỂU THỨC TƯƠNG ĐƯƠNG TRONG TIẾNG VIỆT

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Ấn dụ trước đây thường được biết đến như một biện pháp tu từ trong thi ca Tuy nhiên, theo các nhà ngôn ngữ học tri nhận, ấn dụ không chỉ đơn thuần là một phương tiện ngôn ngữ mà nó còn là phương tiện biểu đạt tư duy. Bài báo này nhằm phân tích đối chiếu biểu thức ẩn dụ “sự tức giận là nhiệt” - một trong những biểu thức ẩn dụ chỉ cảm xúc được sử dụng rộng rãi nhất trong cả tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Để đạt được mục đích nghiên cứu, các tác giả đã tiến hành thu thập các mẫu câu từ các nguồn dữ liệu đáng tin cậy trong cả tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt trong đó có sử dụng biểu thức ẩn dụ “sự tức giận là nhiệt”. Sau khi thu thập dữ liệu, bằng phương pháp chủ đạo là định tính, tác giả đã tiến hành mô tả và phân tích những điểm tương đồng và dị biệt trong cách sử dụng biểu thức ẩn dụ “sự tức giận là nhiệt” trong tiếng Anh và biểu thức tương đương trong tiếng Việt. Kết quả nghiên cứu đã chỉ ra rằng biểu thức này có nền tảng tri nhận giống nhau ở cả hai ngôn ngữ và đều liên quan đến những biến đổi cơ thể. Trong khi người Anh có xu hướng biểu đạt sự tức giận thông qua những biểu hiện sinh lý của toàn bộ cơ thể thì người Việt sử dụng một vài bộ phận trên cơ thể để biểu lộ cơn giận. Sự khác biệt này xuất phát từ những khác biệt về văn hóa và kiến thức y học.

Từ khóa: *Phân tích tương phản, phép ẩn dụ, phép ẩn dụ khái niệm, 'tức giận là nhiệt', tương đương tiếng Việt*

Ngày nhận bài: 24/9/2016; Ngày phản biện: 05/10/2016; Ngày duyệt đăng: 31/03/2017