

CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS

Unofficial

PREFACE

Since Lado's introduction of *Linguistics Across Cultures* in 1957, there have been numerous publications on Contrastive Linguistics, many of which deal with contrastive analysis of English and other languages. In Vietnam, Contrastive Linguistics is taught at undergraduate and post-graduate programs; however, there is no single course book written solely for undergraduate students of English. Using materials intended for post-graduate level readers is a real challenge for undergraduate students. This *Contrastive Linguistics: A Course Book*, therefore, serves the purpose of simplification for Vietnamese undergraduate students of English. It is concerned with an introductory treatment of bilingual contrastive analysis between Vietnamese and English on both micro- and macro-levels, including syntax, lexeme, phonetics and discourse.

Structured in six chapters, the book touches upon on both theory and practice. The first two chapters deal with theoretical matters of contrastive studies and the subsequent chapters primarily focus on practical contrastive analysis. Although the natural order of first language acquisition normally begins with the phonetic aspects, in this course book syntactical units are chosen as a starting point of contrastive analysis. The reason for such organization of contents is that the users of the book are literate adults, who exhibit vast different cognitive and literacy competences as compared to children learning their mother tongues. In the scope of an introductory course, we only focus on major issues in the two languages. It is hoped that the material provides students with basic cross-linguistic understanding between Vietnamese and English so that they can get hold of methods of comparison and procedures for contrastive analysis, which are especially important for their self-study and research, as well as teaching and doing translation.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Le Dinh Tuong, the chief author, designed the structure of the book and wrote the first four chapters. Dr. Tran Ba Tien undertook the last two chapters. As the first attempt to compile a course book of such complexity, shortcomings are inevitable. We welcome readers' comments and constructive criticisms that help us improve the next editions.

The author

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CHAPTER I: CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS

Any language is able to convey everything. However, they differ in what a language must convey.

Roman Jakobson

- **Determine the agent of contrastive studies;**
- **Recognize the objects of contrastive studies;**
- **Specify the role of contrastive studies in learning and teaching second language, and translation;**
- **Analyze the aims of contrastive studies;**
- **Explain the equivalence between linguistic units.**

1.1. Introduction

Contrastive linguistics is a linguistic approach that studies the similarities and differences between languages. It is rejoined with other two collocations - *contrastive studies*, and *contrastive analysis*.

1.1.1. Contrastive linguistics, contrastive studies and contrastive analysis

The collocations that seem to be the most appropriate description for contrastive linguistics are *Contrastive Studies*, *Contrastive Linguistics*, *Comparative Linguistics*, *Contrastive Analysis*, *Comparative Syntax*, *Contrastive Lexicography*, *Contrastive Pragmatics*, *Contrastive Discourse Analysis*, or *Contrastive Sociolinguistics*, to mention but a few. The adjectives *contrastive* or *comparative* have been assigned to disciplines traditionally regarded to pertain to theoretical linguistics, as well as to those fields that have been traditionally dubbed as applied (mostly language learning/teaching, translation and interpreting)¹. In the case, *comparative* can be understood as a synonym of *contrastive*.

But there are three main collocations that differ from the scope of contrastive description: (i) *contrastive studies* (CS), (ii) *contrastive analysis* (CA), and (iii) *contrastive linguistics* (CL).

¹ Butler, Ch. (eds.) (2005). *The Dynamics of Language Use: Functional and Contrastive Perspectives*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins De Sutte. P. 20.

Contrastive linguistics is defined as a subdiscipline of linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages in order to determine both the differences and similarities between them². It focuses on both of languages and cultures, and practical application.

Contrastive study denominates the most general field (including linguistic and extralinguistic dimensions) of contrastive research. Therefore, the term refers to comprehensive contrastive investigations.

Contrastive analysis is the technique associated with contrastive linguistics which though frequently used interchangeably with the other two collocations, seems to more accurately name the third of the three steps involved in classical contrastive procedure: *description, juxtaposition and comparison*³. It is also a way of comparing languages in learning and teaching second (third, fourth, and so on) language, and translation.

From the above definitions, contrastive linguistics is concerned with the comparison of some subsystems of two or more languages which are "socio-culturally linked" and it covers both concepts of contrastive studies and contrastive analysis. Contrastive analysis is a part of a contrastive study.

1.1.2. Purpose of contrastive linguistics

Contrastive linguistics is both theoretical and applied. It helps discover the "inner essence of man", and helps in the verification of language universals. Contrastive studies itself have the task of trying to probe into the language-user's mind.

In the framework of a textbook, contrastive linguistics is considered as methods of improving learning and teaching second language, and translation. For the teacher, contrastive studies are undoubtedly essential for designing syllables

² Fisiak, J. (Ed.) (1980). *Theoretical Issues in Contrastive Linguistics*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. P. 1.

³ Krzeszowski, T. (1990). *Contrasting Languages: Scope of Contrastive Linguistics (Trends in Linguistics: Studies & Monographs)*. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter. P. 21.

and preparing teaching materials. Likewise, the usefulness of contrastive studies cannot be denied for textbook writers⁴.

The crucial questions dealt with contrastive linguistics are: (i) language and its properties in contrastive studies, (ii) the agent of language contrast, (iii) language patterns in contrastive linguistics.

1.2. Language in contrastive linguistics

Language is systems of symbols in the brain, which are designed for the purpose of communication. It is a storehouse filled by the members of a given community and consists of embodied ideas.

1.2.1. Language classification

Languages can be divided into grammar, lexeme and phonology which are used as a means of communication and thoughts in discourse. Grammar, lexeme, phonetics/phonology and discourse are universal units, which can be studied in various linguistic perspectives, such as structural, generative, functional, pragmatic, cognitive, etc.

In addition, language encompasses various types: individual and social, contact and dynamic, native language and second language, target language and interlanguage (or variable). All of them exist in discourse (any piece of language, whether a spoken utterance or a piece of writing, which language users receive or produce) at the levels of phonetics/phonology, lexeme and grammar.

1.2.1.1. Social and individual language

Social language is used in spoken and in written and common to the speakers in the community. It sometimes can be understood as standard. In learning, teaching second language and translation, social language is the target.

⁴ Fisiak, J. (et al) (1981). *Contrastive Linguistics and The Language Teachers*. Oxford: Pergamon Press. P. 8.

Language is embodied experience. Experience exists in the mind and language is individual. Individual language is a typical one. Therefore, it can be as either social or interlanguage.

Language is a human tool used to establish and to maintain contact between people in particular situations. In some situations, a common means of communication may be lacking and needs to be created.

1.2.1.2. Contact and dynamic language

Language is in progress. It changes during time to meet the needs of communication. The property is called dynamic. Dynamic language is a type of diachronic one in many aspects, such as they develop through time. The property belongs to both of social and individual languages, native learners' language and their interlanguage.

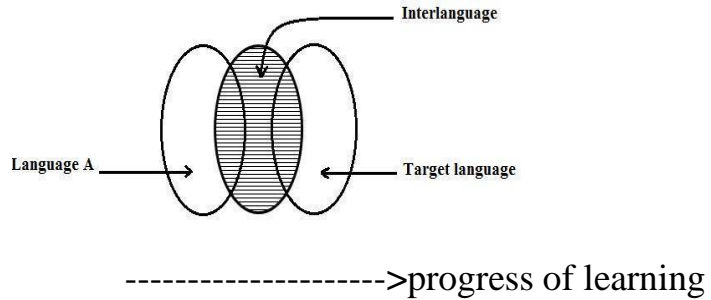
In contrast, contact languages (or pidgins) are the ones that develop when people use different languages to communicate with one another. The languages are conducted from a mixture of two or more languages. They are used by people who do not speak each other's languages.

In second language learning, learners' native language and their second language begin to be pidgins.

1.2.1.3. Interlanguage

Interlanguage is the language produced by nonnative speakers of a language in the process of second language learning. The relation between the language learned (target language), the learners' native language and their interlanguage can be illustrated as in Figure 1.1:

Figure 1.1: Transitional Dialects⁵



Interlanguage, as natural language, has all the properties and aspects of a language (phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax, and discourse) which occur along with communication skills (critical thinking, listening, speaking, reading, writing). It can be seen in the perspectives of social and individual, contact and dynamic.

In the process of learning English, Vietnamese native speakers have their interlanguage which is composed of numerous elements from the Vietnamese and English languages. In means, they use three languages – Vietnamese (L1 - native language), English (L2 - second language) and their interlanguage.

Interlanguage of Vietnamese speakers of English has all the properties and aspects of a language. It means their interlanguage is a mixture of both English and Vietnamese in all their perspectives – mixture of communicative content and its expression; mixture of communication skills. Let's look at the examples of Vietnamese learners' interlanguage of English at the levels of phonology, morphology, syntax, and discourse.

	Interlanguage	English (target language)
Phonology	/ɪn.təneɪʃ.ən.ən/	/,ɪn.tə'næʃ.ən.əl/
Morphology	John play footballs.	John plays football.

⁵ Corder, 1971, p. 151- Cited in Smaoui, Ch. (2015). "The Fossilized Pronunciation of the /3:/ sound in the Speech of Intermediate Tunisian English Students: Problem, Reasons and Suggested Solution". P. 72.

Syntax	I no understand what are you saying.	I don't understand what you are saying.
Discourse	I want invite you to drink coffee. Send me the report.	Would you like a cup of coffee? Could you (please) send me the report?

The evidence suggests that it is necessary for language learners to impose regularity on contrastive analysis between their own interlanguage and the target language (intralingual contrast), the target language and native language (interlingual contrast), and their native language and interlanguage systems. They should continuously and independently compare their interlanguage with both of the native and target languages in all of the perspectives of communicative language competence such as linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, of which is required as comprising knowledge and skills.

1.2.2. Language properties


The main property of language is reflexivity. It encompasses displacement, productivity, duality, cultural transmission, arbitrariness, etc.

Displacement is the ability that allows language users to talk about things and events that happen at various time and places, and to use different forms to express particular ideas. The property allows humans to make speech suitable to surrounding environment and helps them to determine the relations between 'I - YOU - NOW - HERE'.

Productivity is the property indicating that people can make new expressions by using their linguistic resources to describe new ideas and contents. By the way, countless ideas can be described by limited meaningful items. The property frequently happens in morphology of synthetic languages. For example, *depend* ↔ *dependent* ↔ *dependence* ↔ *independence* ↔ *independent* ↔ *depended*, etc.

Being a tool of communication each linguistic unit encompasses two related sides – content and its linguistic expression. Each side gets its value from the other. The feature of two sides of a meaningful unit is illustrated by an English, Russian, French and Vietnamese noun in *Figure 1.2*.

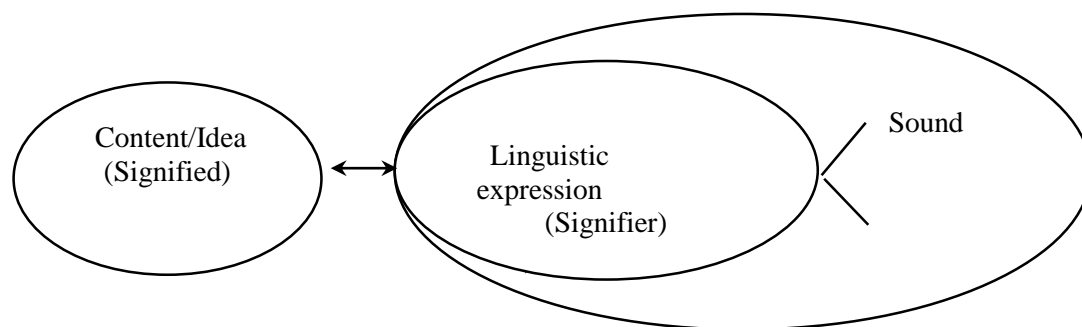
Figure 1.2: An equivalent in content expressed differently in English, Russian, French and Vietnamese

Content (image)	Linguistic expression
	<p>watch</p> <p>часы</p> <p>horloge</p> <p>đồng hồ</p>

Depending on the circumstances the term *content* can be used alternatively by *concept*, *idea*, *image*, *symbol* or *signified* which is expressed by specific sound and spelling (or writing). The dialectical relationship between content and the linguistics expression belongs to all linguistics and speech units such as phoneme, morpheme, lexeme, sentence and discourse.

The dialectical relationship between content and its linguistic expression can be described as in *Figure 1.3*.

Fig.1.3 – Relationship between content and its linguistic expression



All the components of the dialectical relationship are worthy of attention in both second language acquisition and comparisons of languages. They serve the

starting point for language acquisition and one of the platforms, the common ground for contrastive studies.

1.3. Contrastive linguistics

Contrastive linguistics describes the similarities and differences among two or more languages at such a level as phonology, lexemes, syntax and discourse in order to improve learning and teaching second language, and translation.

The main issues that will be discussed are: terms dealt with contrastive linguistics, contrastive studies in the practice and science, trends and patterns of contrastive studies, challenges and problems in contrastive linguistics.

1.3.1. Contrastive studies in the practice and science

Linguistic contrast is made by people. It can happen in practical daily life or in science.

1.3.1.1. Contrastive studies in practical daily life

Making comparisons is a very human occupation. We spend our lives comparing one thing to another, and behaving according to the categorizations we make. Patterns govern our lives, be they patterns of material culture, or patterns of language⁶. The same we do with language. In other word, language contrast between languages happens continuously in human daily life and language exists due to the contrast in its nature and elements. The type of contrastive studies can be called naïve. It is performed automatically by everybody who want to improve their communicative language competence.

From the perspective of second language learning, the mentioned type of contrastive studies are considered as one of the (five “C”) goal areas of the official standards document in the textbooks. The goal is summarized by the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* as the following⁷:

⁶ Diehard, J. M. (1999). "A linguistic look at riddles". In *Journal of Pragmatics*, (31). P. 98.

⁷ <https://www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages>.

Standard 4.1: Language Comparisons

Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

Standard 4.2: Cultural Comparisons

Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Language encompasses culture, therefore, comparison of languages includes the comparison of cultures. Therefore, learners should obtain the ability to compare their second language with not only the native language, but also their interlanguage, to compare their native language with the interlanguage. In other word, learners improve their communicative language competence through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

In learning second language, learners are naive contrastivists who continuously spend their time comparing one linguistic event to another, and behaving according to the categorizations they make. They conduct their contrastive analysis along with their communication, and raise their knowledge of and skill in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and construction of discourses through comparisons of particular communicative language competences. Their language develops due to the contrast in its nature and elements.

In textbook, comparison and contrastive analysis emerge on the various labels such as choose (the best answers, the correct words), complete (the text, the sentence, the phrases), (tense, vocabulary) contrast, correct (the sentences), match (the sentences to, the options with, the headings with), check, explain, listen and repeat, test yourself, translate the sentences. It means, learners conduct contrastive analysis along with their activities of critical thinking, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In sum, second language learners, translators, travelers, businessmen, etc., in nature, are naive contrastivists. They autonomously learn how to pronounce the unfamiliar utterances, words, phrases, stress, etc., and try to remember how to use words, grammatical rules by determining similarities and differences between linguistic units. During comparing speech events, naive contrastivists try to make associations which repeat linguistic patterns. The more often an association is made, the stronger that association becomes. New associations are formed and new links are made between larger and larger units until complexes of networks are formed⁸. The associations involving reception, production and interaction help naive contrastivists, especially second language learners, to improve their communicative language competence.

1.3.1.2. Contrastive studies in science

Contrastive linguistics is a branch of linguistics which is concerned with the comparison of two or more languages in order to determine the similarities and differences between them. Its description can be carried out for its own purpose - general linguistic theory, translation theory, cross-cultural communication, second-language acquisition, construction of digital research tools, and even cultural studies. Contrastive linguistics makes a substantial contribution to the task of learning and teaching second language, and translation.

From the perspective learning and teaching second language, contrastive study can be defined as a systematic comparison of selected linguistic features of two or more languages, the intent of which is... to provide teachers and textbook writers with a body of information which can be of service in the preparation of instructional materials, the planning of courses, and the development of classroom techniques⁹.

⁸ Gass, S. M. & Selinker, L. (2008). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course. 3rd edition*. New York: Routledge. P. 206.

⁹ Hammer and Rice (1965) – cited in Fisiak (ibid., p. 195).

The selected linguistic and textual features are various according to adopted linguistic theories which day by day approach to natural language. Contrastive studies, therefore, extend their scope. They are conducted not only at the linguistic levels, but also in the various perspectives of discourse such as *Contrastive Discourse Analysis*, *Contrastive Pragmatics* and *Contrastive Sociolinguistics*. In addition to this, traditional *Contrastive Analysis* has developed to modern *Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis* which involves a comparison of language studied (target language) with learners' own languages (including the native and the interlanguage).

1.3.2. Trends of contrastive studies

In a time when people live in "a global village", they must answer the need of multilingual, multicultural and intra-linguistic, cultural competence. So as, it is necessary to extend the scope of describing the differences, as well as the similarities between two or more languages, both interlinguistically and intralinguistically.

Contrastive studies are performed in various linguistic models: **traditional grammars, structural, generative-transformational, functional, cognitive.**

Traditional approaches are based on universal grammatical categories, which are considered as *tertium comparationis* for comparison. The comparisons themselves were also based on intuitions in so far as grammarians depended on their knowledge of the compared languages in deciding on what a particular item in L1 should be compared with in L2¹⁰.

Structural approaches were based on the principles that particular linguistic units in various languages were matched for comparison because they meant more or less the same thing. It is impossible to describe all languages within the same universal framework of grammatical categories. It means, that linguistic

¹⁰ Krzeszowski, T. (1990). *Contrasting Languages: Scope of Contrastive Linguistics (Trends in Linguistics: Studies & Monographs)*. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter. P. 110.

units in various languages can be compared because they share something in common.

Generative transformational approaches are based on generative grammar. Most generative transformational grammars share the basic premises that rules are the central theoretical concept in the grammar and transformational rules go between abstract representations and their surface structure representations. All languages share basic elements such as sentence, modality, and proposition as well as basic relationships between their components.

Contrastive Generative Grammar has the base of semanto-syntactic equivalence in language. He says that, equivalent sentences obtain identical semantic representations. If we characterize various constructions in any two languages in terms of equivalence and formal correspondence, we shall observe that the compared sentences may be: (a) equivalent, formally different, (b) equivalent, formally similar, (c) non-equivalent, formally similar, (d) non-equivalent, formally different¹¹. Languages share common ground of deep structure, which contrastive studies can be based on.

Traditional, structural, generative-transformational, and generative contrastive studies have been so far conducted to determine similarities and dissimilarities between languages in practice and in science.

Contrastive studies in the functional and cognitive perspectives develop rapidly at the beginning of 21th century.

Contrastive functional approaches are based on perceived similarities of meaning in two or more languages and the ways in which the shared meanings are expressed in different languages. Representing the approaches is Contrastive Functional Analysis suggested by Chesterman¹². It is designated as functional and

¹¹ Krzeszowski (ibid., p. 148).

¹² Chesterman, A. (1998). *Contrastive Functional Analysis*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

based on meaning and follows the process of semiotics: it looks at the ways meanings are expressed.

Cognitive approaches are based on the assumption that human language reflects the way people experience the world, and human thought, perception, cognitive processing, and language are organized as the same kind of structures. Human experience of reality contains the usual propositional contents which are described by mental images in the minds of language users. And they are idealized into concepts, which are understood as the basic semantic units of idea and/or language. Concepts are universal for human and languages.

In order to account for an individual's communicative competence, current trends of contrastive also include *discourse analysis*, *psycholinguistics*, and *sociolinguistics*. Beside, *cultures* must be considered as an object of contrastive studies. They are the starting point for social and language interaction.

Contrastive studies not only support *computational linguistics* in creating electronic dictionaries, or the designing computer tools in machine translation, and in the other side, but also use linguistic corpora for investigation. The main types of corpora are *comparable corpora*, *parallel corpora* and *translation corpora*. Translation corpora consist of texts in the original languages and their translations into other languages. Parallel corpora constrain translations from one language to the other. Comparable corpora consist of texts in two or more languages which are comparable with regard to genre, formality, subject-matter, time-span, etc. The use of parallel and comparable corpora are central to the contrastive analysis of linguistic phenomena¹³.

There are many contrastive studies based on the exploitation of corpora such as *Requests in American and British English: A contrastive multi-method*

¹³ Aijmer, K. & Lewis, D. (eds.). (2017). *Contrastive Analysis of Discourse-pragmatic Aspects of Linguistic Genres*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing. P. 3.

*analysis*¹⁴ based on using the data from the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English* (SBCSAE) and *British component of the International Corpus of English* (ICE-GB); *Modal Adverbs of Certainty in EU Legal Discourse: A Parallel Corpus Approach*¹⁵ based on the exploitation of the *Opinions of Advocates General at the European Court of Justice* and *Corpora in applied linguistics*. Some materials in some our description were collected from the *Corpus of Contemporary American English*.

A new trend in contrastive studies, which compares native and non-native varieties of one and the same language is *Contrastive interlanguage analysis*. It is an useful approach in learning and teaching second language, and translation.

In sum, contrastive descriptions are conducted at every level of linguistic structure (phonology, lexeme, grammar) and complete discourse in various perspectives of linguistic approaches (traditional, structural, generative, functional, and cognitive). They continuously expand fields and their subfields.

1.3.3. Patterns of contrastive studies

Contrastive studies have the aims of discovering differences and similarities between equivalent systems of the grammatical structures, between equivalent sentences, and between equivalent rules operating at various levels of language. They are taxonomic in nature. The taxonomy of contrastive studies is based on the assumption that various kinds of contrastive studies can be distinguished in a strict relation to various *tertia comparationis* adopted and, consequently, to various kinds of equivalence¹⁶. The first level of the taxonomy in contrastive studies deals

¹⁴ Flöck, I. (2016). *Requests in American and British English*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

¹⁵ Szczyrbak, M. (2017). *Modal Adverbs of Certainty in EU Legal Discourse: A Parallel Corpus Approach*. In *Contrastive Analysis of Discourse-pragmatic Aspects of Linguistic Genres*. Aijmer & Lewis (eds.). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing. (91 - 115).

¹⁶ Krzeszowski (ibid., p. 25).

with interlingual or intralingual comparison, contact or dynamic language, which parallels the equivalence between linguistic units of compared languages.

1.3.3.1. Equivalence – one of the first levels of taxonomy

The equivalence point can be formal (based on linguistic expression – sound and writing), semantic (content) and pragmatic/functional.

- Formal equivalent base (for contrastive studies of word order, function words, inflections, affixation, suprasegmentals, alliteration, rhymes),
- Semantic equivalent base (for contrastive studies of meaning of words, phrases and sentences),
- Pragmatic/functional equivalent base (for contrastive studies of meaning/function of texts, structure of discourse, stylistic properties, quantitative aspects of text).

1.3.3.2. Interlingual and intralingual comparison

Interlingual comparison (or contrast) is based on the data collected from two or more languages; one of them is target, the other is source language. The comparison can be parallel. For example, contrastive studies are made by second language learners between their native language and their second language.

Intralingual comparison is performed between a target (or social) language and its interlanguage (or variant language), such as a comparison conducted by second language learners between the learning language and their interlanguage.

Contrastive (both intralingual and interlingual) studies can occur at every level of linguistic structure (speech sounds, written symbols, word-formation, word meaning, collocation, sentence structure) and complete discourse.

All the above contrastive linguistic models can be taken at every level of linguistic structure - speech sounds, written symbols, word-formation, word meaning, collocation, sentence structure - and complete discourse and occur in learning and teaching foreign-language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking).

1.4. Purpose, subject and object of contrastive studies

1.4.1. Purpose of the Course Book

Contrastive studies are a way of comparing languages in order to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a second-language-learning situation¹⁷. In range of a course book, the focus relates directly to comparing various linguistic units (comprising meanings and their forms) in learner's language (including native and interlanguage) with their correspondents in the second (target) language for the purpose of discovering the differences and similarities.

The similarities in structures between native and second languages seem to be easy to learn because they will be transferred to the second language. In contrast, the differences sometimes make learners difficult in producing second language speech. The comparison helps learners in making decisions on which expressions and contents of native language are appropriate for use in second language.

And the ultimate goal is for second language learners and teachers to predict and select what is easy and what is difficult in their learning and teaching.

1.4.2. Subject of contrastive studies

The subject of contrastive studies, as mentioned above, are polyglots (who know and are able to use several languages) including second languages learners, tourists, language teachers, translators, linguists, etc. They are either “naive” or professional contrastivists.

The course focuses mainly on learning and teaching second language, and translation. It means, the learners are trained to be the contrastivists who can produce contrastive studies in the perspective of not only interlingual, but also intralingual comparison.

¹⁷ Gass & Selinker (ibid., p. 96)

1.4.3. Objectives of contrastive studies

Languages are too broad and abstract to be compared. The common object of contrastive studies is the ways of expressing the same meaning in different languages¹⁸.

We can compare linguistic components, linguistic units. But the things can be contrasted only while they can be measured, they have something in common. As mentioned, all languages are divided into phonemes, lexemes and grammatical structures; they exist in discourse. In other words, second language learners and teachers do, as Lado stated, a structure-by-structure comparison of the sound system, morphological system, syntactic system, and even the cultural system¹⁹.

Phonemes, lexemes, grammatical structures and discourse, which encompass both of linguistic expression (form) and its content (meaning) are universal for languages. They and their subtypes share principal common ground for contrastive studies. Therefore, grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse are starting points for selecting problems to be compared in two or more languages.

In this book, contrastive syntax analysis is introduced in Chapter 3. Comparison between lexemes in two languages is mentioned in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 refers to contrastive analysis of phonetics/phonology. Chapter 6 deals with contrastive discourse analysis.

Contrastive units will be introduced and illustrated based only on one or some of theoretical approaches – structural (or formal), functional and cognitive - which are familiar for undergraduate students and more necessary for them in the future. The mentioned linguistic approaches will work for one of the bases of selecting *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies.

¹⁸ Lipinska, M. (1980). *Contrastive analysis and the modern theory of language*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. P. 169.

¹⁹ Cited in Gass & Selinker (ibid., p. 96).

Phonetics/phonology, lexeme, syntax and discourse, and their subtypes deal with various perspectives in contrastive studies, such as interlingual and intralingual comparison, social and individual language, contact and dynamic language. All of the mentioned objects sharing *tertium comparationis* are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

1.5. Theoretical background for contrastive studies

Contrastive linguistics is concerned with the comparison of two or more (subsystems of) languages in order to develop general and communicative language competences in learning and teaching second language, and translation. Thus, contrastive studies (a part of studying and learning language) must be based on language properties, linguistic universals and theoretical approaches suitable for contrasted languages.

1.5.1. Common linguistics levels

Language can be divided into units: phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases and sentences. The rules of the internal structure of phrases and sentences are called syntax. Language exists in discourse or text. Therefore, phonemes, morphemes, words, sentences and discourse are considered as units in contrastive studies.

1.5.2. Common linguistic approaches

Linguistic items can be studied based on various theoretical linguistic approaches such as Relational Grammar, Lexical Functional Grammar, Generalized Categorical Grammar, Logical Semantics, Functional Grammar, and Cognitive Grammar.

The approaches are distinguished by the following criteria: Syntactic base, Formal semantic base, Pragmatic base, Cognitive base, Rule system, Tendencies, Structure oriented, Word oriented, One-one relation, One-many relation, Algorithmic, Biological, Modular, Integrated, Context-free, and Context-sensitive.

The mentioned criteria play an important role in specifying *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies.

In the scope of a course book for undergraduate students, contrastive problems will be introduced based on structural, generative, functional, cognitive approaches, which are familiar to students in their learning.

1.5.3. Communicative competence

Communicative language competences are those which empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means. Communicative competence in this narrower sense can be considered as comprising several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Each of these components is postulated as comprising, in particular, knowledge and skills and know-how²⁰. In learning and teaching second language, skills focus on critical thinking, listening, speaking, writing, reading, etc. The process of creating communicative competence is described as the ecology of language acquisition (see *Figure 10.3* in²¹).

Components of communicative competences serve as equivalent items and patterns on which we base in learning and teaching second language, and translation. They are contrastive units and one of the starting points for contrastive studies, especially for intralingual comparison.

1.5.4. Second language acquisition

Second language acquisition is the study of how second languages are learned, how learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to a second language, what is learned of a second language and what is not learned,

²⁰ Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press. P. 9 - 13.

²¹ Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, 5th ed., Longman. P. 307.

etc.²². The process and its components play an important role in intralingual contrastive studies.

Considering human beings are "bio-programmed" for language, Brown²³ describes language acquisition as an ecology comprising four main components (or stages): (a) input (including perceived and comprehended input), (b) intake (Phonological Rules, Grammatical Rules, Discourse Rules, Sociolinguistic Rules, Pragmatic Rules, Reception Rules, Production Rules, Interlanguage System, and Declarative Knowledge), (c) integration, and (d) output (Fruit of Performance – think of feedback, listening, speaking, writing, reading). These components are related to each other.

Input, in broad terms, is understood as a bit of what is heard/read and is slightly ahead of a learner's current state of grammatical knowledge. It is, according to Krashen²⁴, $i + 1$ in which i is learner's current state of knowledge and the next stage knowledge is $i + 1$. We move from i , our current level to $i + 1$, the next level along the natural order, by understanding input containing $i + 1$.

In learning second language, input comprises learners' current state of knowledge including knowledge of learners' native language.

Input, intake, integration and output in metaphorical figure of the ecology prove good background in defining contrastive units for improving communicative competence in learning and teaching second language.

1.5.5. The role of native language in second language acquisition

Second language learners tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture - both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and

²² Gass & Selinker (ibid., p. 1).

²³ Brown (ibid., pp. 306 – 308).

²⁴ Krashen, S. (1985, p. 2) - Cited in Gass & Selinker (ibid., p. 309).

understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives²⁵. They test hypotheses about the target language from a number of possible sources of knowledge: knowledge of the native language, limited knowledge of the target language itself, knowledge of the communicative functions of language, knowledge about language in general, and knowledge about life, people, and the universe around them²⁶.

Knowledge of the native language affects the second language acquisition in various dimensions such as in categorizing linguistic events, identifying main arguments and summarising them, reading between the lines, recognizing key information, relating idea, setting linguistic signs used to represent units of speech in a systematic way, etc. Therefore, it is necessary to compare learners' social native language with the interlanguage when their native language is not proficient enough to be contrasted with the second language.

The knowledge of and skills in learners' native language provide them with a good background in second language acquisition. So, during acquiring second language, comparison of target language and learners own languages form one source of difficulty in learning a second language. But the creative process of forming an interlanguage system involves the learner in utilizing many facilitative sources and resources. Inevitable aspects of this process are errors, from which learners and teachers can gain further insight²⁷.

In sum, learners tend to transfer forms (including syntax) and meanings (including semantic concepts) of their native language into learning language while they recognise something from their native language that might be useful to them.

²⁵ Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures: Applied linguistics for language teachers*. University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor. P. 2.

²⁶ Brown, D. (ibid., pp. 255 – 256).

²⁷ Brown, D. (ibid., p. 288).

SUMMARY

Contrastive linguistics has the aim of describing similarities and differences between languages for learning and teaching second language, translation, compiling bilingual dictionaries. It takes part in developing general linguistics and promoting the understanding between cultures and civilizations.

Subjects of contrastive studies are polyglots (people in multicultural and multilingual environment) including second language learners and teachers, tourists, translators, and linguists.

Contrastive studies can be described at every level of linguistic structure (phonetics/phonology, lexeme, syntax and discourse), and in the perspectives of interlingual and intralingual, individual and social contact, of linguistic contact and dynamic. They follow definite adopted approaches and linguistic theories.

Background for contrastive studies encompasses the properties of language, theoretical linguistic approaches, communicative competence, the process and components of second language acquisition.

Content (meaning) and its linguistics expression (including sound and writing) have dialectical relationship. One transforms the other. They take crucial part in common platform in contrastive analysis.

Second language learners tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture. It is necessary for second language learners to compare their own languages with target language.

EXERCISE

Practice 1: Read the statements and question, then choose the best answers²⁸.

1 The National Standards describe Comparisons as:

²⁸ Adapted from ACTFL n.d.

- A Adopting the habits and attitudes of the target culture.
 - B Developing insight into the nature of language and culture through comparisons of the language and culture studied and learners' own.
 - C Saying how something is the same or different from one's own language or culture.
 - D Comparing cultural perspectives.
- 2 Which of the following were used in the original Standards document and executive summary to describe teaching the goal of Comparisons?
- A This goal area describes the impact that learning the linguistic elements in the new language has on students' ability to examine English and to develop hypotheses about the structure and use of languages.
 - B The long-term experience of studying another language leads students to discover that other cultures view the world from a perspective different from their own. Students view concepts in a new light as they probe apparently similar concepts in the target culture.
 - C Students learn ways of hypothesizing and making predictions about how language is likely to work in a setting with which they are not familiar. They cease to make naïve assumptions about other languages and cultures solely based upon knowledge of their own.
 - D All of the above.
- 3 Students would demonstrate understanding the nature of language in all of the following ways, **EXCEPT**:
- A Using an online translation program to convert their English into the target language.
 - B Analyzing an online translation program's target language version of an English text and identifying what appropriately matches the target

language syntax and what is merely a translation of each word in isolation.

- C Describing some ways in which word order is different in native and target languages.
- D Watching a recorded sample of their in-class interpersonal conversation and explaining how their native language surfaces in some of the ways they expressed themselves.

Practice 2: Read the statements and question, then choose the best answers.

- 1 Which language refers to the linguistic system constructed by learners at any given stage in their development?
 - A The first language.
 - B The second language.
 - C The interlanguage.
 - D The native language.
- 2 Contrastive linguistics covers concepts of the following terms, **EXCEPT**:
 - A contrastive study.
 - B contrastive analysis.
 - C comparison of languages.
 - D discourse analysis.
- 3 Linguists have established the relationship between:
 - A content and its its expression.
 - B expression and form.
 - C expression and writing.

D content and use.

4 In contrastive linguistics content shares the meaning with all of the following terms, **EXCEPT**:

A idea.

B meaning.

D form.

C concept.

5 In contrastive studies linguistic expression shares the meaning with all of the following terms, **EXCEPT**:

A form.

B writing.

C sound.

D content.

6 The common object of contrastive studies is the ways of:

A expressing the same signifier in different languages.

B expressing the same meaning in different languages.

C expressing a meaning in the same language.

D expressing the same meaning in different interlanguages.

Practice 3: Look at entry *analyse* on <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> and answer the following questions.

analyse

verb [T] • UK US **analyze** UK  /ˈænəlaɪz/ US 



★ **to study or examine something in detail, in order to discover more about it:**

Researchers analysed the purchases of 6300 households.

analyse data/results/information *Management requires enthusiasm and intuition rather than merely an ability to analyze data and invent strategies.*

analyse a problem/issue *We need to look at what went wrong, analyze the problem, and come up with a solution.*

Notice:

- The writing of the entry (word) is expressed by **analyse** .
- The sound of the entry (word) is demonstrated at UK  /ˈænəlaɪz/ US  .
- The writing and sound are the word linguistic expression.
- The meaning (or content) of the entry is indicated by *to study or examine something in detail, in order to discover more about it.*
- The mentioned elements are considered the targets for learners of English.

- 1 Do learners compare their pronunciation of the word with the target?
- 2 Do learners compare their understanding of the word with its definition?
- 3 Have you ever recorded your pronunciation and tested it?
- 4 Do learners compare their the enrys' meaning with any their native appropriate word?
- 5 Can you predict some Vietnamese interlanguage varieties in pronunciation of English verb *analyse*?
- 6 Can you predict errors that Vietnamese beginner of English may make in writing of the entry?

Practice 4: Read the speaking and listening tasks in *Life*²⁹, Section *Invention for the eyes*. Analyse what learners should compare to improve their communicative competence along with doing the exercises.

- 1 Work in pairs. What problems did these famous inventions solve? Check your answers on page 153.

Briale electric bulb

microwave oven post-it note telescope

- 2 Think of one more invention that solved a problem and tell the class. Compare everyone's inventions and decide which was the most important in human history.
- 3 This Tibetan man is wearing a new type of glasses. Listen to a science programme about the glasses. Answer the questions.
 - a) What is a problem for many people in the world?
 - b) How can the glasses solve this problem?
 - c) In which parts of the world do people now wear the glasses?
- 4 Listen to the first half of the programme again. Number the instruction on the diagram in the correct order (1 – 4).

..... The lens changes shape.

...I.. The wearer turns the wheels on each side.

..... The silicone oil moves into the lens.

..... The pump pushes the silicone oil through the pipe.

- 5 Listen to the second half of the programme again. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

²⁹ Hughes, J., Stephenson, H. & Dummett, P. (2015). *Life. Pre-Intermediate Student's Book*. Singapore. Cengage Learning. P. 94.

- a) The first man who used the glasses made clothes.
 - b) The glasses are expensive to produce.
 - c) Thirty thousand people will have the glasses by 2020.
- 6 How does Joshua's invention compare with your list of other inventions in Exercise 2? Does it solve a bigger problem?

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Who does contrastive studies? Give example to illustrate the ideas.
2. What should be compared in second language learning?
3. What are the criteria for a contrastive study?
4. Name main contrastive approaches.
5. Explain the similarities and differences between test yourself and contrast some linguistic units in second language learning.
6. Determine the target language and interlanguage in Practice III.

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CHAPTER II: PRINCIPLE AND AREAS OF CONTRASTIVE STUDIES

To compare them would be tantamount to putting ten-ton lorries and banana skins in the same class on the grounds that neither ought to be left on footpaths!

Carl James

After reading this chapter, students should be able to:

- * **Recognise the methodology of contrastive studies;**
- * **Specify intralingual contrastive models and their submodels;**
- * **Describe the areas of contrastive studies;**
- * **Analyze *tertium comparationis* in contrastive studies;**
- * **Explain the role of language communicative competence in contrastive studies.**

Contrastive studies are autonomous and generalized. They are carried out by linguists, textbook writers, second language learners and teachers, businessmen, tourists, etc. at all levels of language.

The levels of language (phonemes, lexemes, grammatical structures and discourse, which encompass both of linguistic expression and its content) are universal for languages including learners' native language (**L1**), the second language (**L2**) and learners' interlanguage (**IL**). The levels comprise their components which share the appropriate common platform between languages and serve contrastive units if they follow a specific linguistic theory. What is contrastive units dealt with in comparisons of natural languages is that they come in many varieties of genres according to communicative language activities and strategies. The chapter describes the possible contrastive models and common

platform for comparisons and then suggests a possible methodology framework for contrastive studies.

2.1. Areas of contrastive studies

Being linguistic components, contrastive units operate in discourse and deal with varieties of genres. The external aspects affecting contrastive models comprise communicative language activities and strategies of language users – spoken and written, receiving and producing, social and individual, contact and dynamic.

2.1.1. Contrastive models from the perspective of communicative activities and strategies

Communicative language activities consist of various types such as productive, receptive, interactive activities and their strategies which involve speaking, writing, listening to or reading of a text (i.e. discourse), and roughly called critical thinking. Therefore, critical thinking, speaking, writing, listening to or reading of a discourse are submodel types along with contrastive phonological, lexical, syntactic and discourse analysis. In other word, phonological, lexical, syntactic units and discourse should be compared from the perspectives of critical thinking, speaking, writing, listening to or reading of a text.

In second language learning, most comparisons of social (L1 or L2) and interlanguage (IL) most involve a mixture of activity types. They are realized in practice in the following question patterns: *“Listen to ... talking about ... Tick the ... which are true for each answer. Work in pairs. Compare your answers in the quiz.”*, *“Compare and contrast the two photos (picture/chart/time table). Answer the questions.”*, *“Look at the photo (picture/chart/time table). Then write a paragraph describing the information in the photo (picture/chart/time table).”*, *“List the problems facing poor and overpopulated countries (city transport/gender equality). Then report your results to the class”*, *“Read the passage and then do the tasks that follow”*, *“Read the quotes by an expert (artist/doctor/politician). Then discuss the questions”*, and so on.

The tasks involve three main parts: (i) input (receptive), (ii) intake and (iii) output (productive), each of which has its role in comparisons of languages.

Input comprises spoken, written discourse and suggestions/questions parted from the discourse. The suggestions (questions) serve as criteria for comparison of social and individual languages. Input stands for social language and the source, standard in language comparison (L2). Output (production) what learners respond involves spoken, written discourse based on appropriate suggestions. It realizes what learners intake and stands for learner's interlanguage (IL). Intake is the part of input which learners attend notice while processing the input. In language learning, input refers to the results of not only learner's knowledge, but also listening, reading, speaking, writing and critical thinking.

The process from input to output draw on the relation between input, intake and output: input → critical thinking → intake → critical thinking → output. Output and intake become products of the input thanks to learner's critical thinking which demonstrates the capacity of conceptualizing idea, categorizing linguistic events, identifying main argument, summarising arguments, reading between the lines, recognizing key information, etc.

In intralingual comparisons, critical thinking, listening, speaking, writing and reading serve as a criteria for learners' communicative capacity. In interlingual comparisons, critical thinking provides evidence for sociocultural similarities and dissimilarities in languages.

In short, to improve communicative competence, comparisons of language activities are what learners should conduct continuously. The crucial language activities that works for common platform in almost every contrastive models are critical thinking, listening, speaking, writing and reading.

2.1.2. Contrastive models from perspectives of language types

The mentioned contrastive areas (phonological, lexical, syntactical and discourse actualized in critical thinking, listening, speaking, writing and reading)

are universal domains to L1, L2 and IL. They can be compared from the perspectives of L1, L2 and IL types – social and individual, contact and dynamic. The possible models of contrastive analysis are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Possible models for contrastive studies³⁰

	Intralingual comparison			Interlingual comparison				
Contact comparison	<i>ie</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>ise</i>		<i>isd</i>		<i>id</i>	<i>sd</i>
Dynamic comparison	<i>ie'</i>	<i>se'</i>	<i>ise'</i>	<i>sie'</i>	<i>isd'</i>	<i>sid'</i>	<i>id'</i>	<i>sd'</i>

Notice: *i* stands for *individual* language; *s* stands for *social* and *e* – for *the same* and *d* – for *various* languages.

Based on the models and on mutual intelligibility and dialect continuum of languages, in this book, second learners' language is seen as their interlanguage. It is language of an individual or group of individuals who share the equivalent communicative language competence. Thence, the main possible contrastive models for second language learner and teacher, and translator are the followings:

- 1 Comparison of social target language (L2) and the social native language (L1),
- 2 Comparison of social target language (L2) and the second learner's language (IL),
- 3 Comparison of a second learner's interlanguage (IL) and an individual interlanguage (IL),
- 4 Comparison of the social learner native language (L1) and the second learner's language (IL).

The comparisons of L2 and IL, L1 and IL, IL and IL are mostly used for self-assessments.

³⁰ Кашкин, В.Б. (2010). *Парадоксы границы в языке и коммуникации*. Воронеж: Издатель О. Ю. Алейников. Р. 26.

The mentioned comparisons can be contact and dynamic. Contact comparisons are conducted based on the data produced at the same period of time. Dynamic comparisons are based on the data produced in progress or in duration of second language acquisition. All the contrastive models are always studied in the related relationship between linguistic expression (including sound and writing) and its content (or meaning) in second language learning and teaching.

There are some examples of the some contrastive models as illustrations of contact language comparisons for Vietnamese native learners of English.

2.1.2.1. *Interlingual contrastive analysis of social languages (comparison of L1 and L2)*

Interlingual contrastive analysis of social languages can be scientific or daily practical. Contrastive studies in science have a basis of particular linguistic approach and large data. Examples of the type are namely *Hedging devices in English and Vietnamese economic research articles*³¹, *Lexico-semantic relationship in English and Vietnamese clause complex*³², *Thematic structure in English and Vietnamese: A comparative study from the systemic functional perspective*³³. The researchers are representative comparisons of Vietnamese and English.

The model of interlingual comparison of social languages actualized in contrastive questions such as *Some pronunciation problems facing Vietnamese learners of English language when speaking English naturally; English verbs "say", "tell", "speak", "talk" and their Vietnamese equivalents; The experiential structure of nominal group in English and Vietnamese; How the Vietnamese*

³¹ Phạm, Thị Thanh Thùy (2012). *Hedging devices in English and Vietnamese economic research articles*. University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University.

³² Nguyễn Thị Minh Tâm (2013). *Lexico-semantic relationship in English and Vietnamese clause complex*. University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University.

³³ Đỗ, Tuấn Minh (2007). *Thematic structure in English and Vietnamese: A comparative study from the systemic functional perspective*. College of Foreign Languages, VNUH.

learners of English learn and use the future forms; A contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese verb phrases. Almost of the problems are conducted based on specific adopted linguistic theories and data sources. They are contrastive studies in science.

Being a future teacher and linguist, it is necessary for learner approaches the type of interlingual contrastive studies in science. But, being a second language learner, student must be a naïve contrastivist, he or she continually compares linguistic events of the studied language with the appropriate native ones.

There are some possible examples for practical interlingual contrastive analysis.

Example 1: A case of guessing the meaning of English verbs *take* and *bring* in a particular context (Exercise for Vietnamese native speaker of English at pre-intermediate level)

Her mother always took her to school and brought her home in the afternoon.

At some stage of learning, Vietnamese learners of English might not recognize the meaning of take (took) and bring (brought), they roughly generalize the facts that “someone moved somebody to somewhere” and “someone moved someone in the direction of the person being spoken to”. The opinion is expressed in their knowledge "ai đưa ai đi đâu" and "ai đón ai về (lại) chỗ nào".

Let's check the hypothesis by looking up the verbs in English and Vietnamese encyclopedias.

take – 2. to go with somebody from one place to another³⁴

bring – 1. to come to a place with somebody/something³⁵

³⁴ <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com>

³⁵ <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com>

đưa – 3. dẫn dắt, hướng dẫn, điều khiển, làm cho đi tới một nơi, đạt tới một mục đích nhất định³⁶

đón – 3. đến gặp để đưa về cùng với mình³⁷

The hypothesis is correct and the Vietnamese equivalent is “Sáng nào bà mẹ cũng đưa cô ta tới trường và chiều đến lại đón cô ấy về nhà”. This is an example of learners’ practical analysis of social language learned and individual native language in the process of second language acquisition. The type of contrastive analysis supports learners to improve not only their vocabulary but also the skill of critical thinking.

Example 2: A case of determining the similarities and differences in meaning between English proverb “The grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence” and its Vietnamese equivalents “Đứng núi này trông núi nọ”

The example can be a contrastive study in science when the research is based on the adopted linguistic theory and a large number of collected data. It can be an analysis when it based on individual understanding. The type of interlingual comparisons help second language learners in using languages to study and explain the nature of language and the concept of culture.

2.1.2.2. Intralingual contrastive analysis - Comparison of L2 and IL

Intralingual comparisons of interlanguage and the social languages are varied in second language learning and teaching. Being an internal linguistic system constructed by learners at any given stage in their development, their interlanguage share both social and individual language. It means the interlanguage encompasses at least two types of language, one of which becomes the social (or standard) and it should be considered the source in developing learners’ communicative competence.

³⁶ Viện Ngôn ngữ học (2000). *Từ điển tiếng Việt*. Nhà xuất bản Đà Nẵng. P. 354.

³⁷ Viện Ngôn ngữ học (ibid., p. 331).

Example 3: Cases of comparing meanings of words or morphemes for Vietnamese learners of English

The comparison requirements are on the labels “*Choose the correct answer.*”

1. Anny usually *is* usually *going/goes* to bed at around eleven o'clock.
2. I hope to go on a trip round the *world/earth* one day.
3. It's nice to win, but the important thing is to *make/take/have/do* your best.
4. It can be quite busy here during the tourist *period/stage/season/phrase*.
5. The in-flight entertainment may differ *to/from/in/at* that advertised.

The learners compare their English capacity with the social.

Example 4: Cases of comparisons of what foreign learners of Vietnamese have gained and the social language

The task is represented on the label of “Correct the following sentences.”

1. Cậu không ăn uống cho tử tế.
2. Qua các hoạt động tình nguyện năm nay đã cho chúng tôi thấy cuộc sống vất vả của các em học sinh ở vùng sâu, vùng xa.
3. Để có cơ hội nhận được việc làm như ý. Chúng ta phải tự đào tạo mình.
4. Thời tiết ngày mai, nếu có mưa có gió.
5. Bây giờ tôi mới hiểu tại sao tôi lại không được nhận vào vị trí việc làm đó?

Example 5: Cases of contrastive phonological analysis for Vietnamese learners of English (Pre-Intermediate level)

The requirements can be “*Listen to the ends of these verbs. Write /s/, /z/ or /iz/. Then listen again and repeat*”, “*Many English words have the same vowel*

*sound but different spellings. Match the words with the same vowel sounds”, “Listen to these sentences. Notice the stressed words in each sentence. Then listen again and repeat”*³⁸. The exercises require learners to compare their pronunciation with the social (standard).

Example 6: Cases of contrastive lexical analysis for Vietnamese learners of English (Pre-Intermediate level)

The requirements of comparisons can be *“Delete the incorrect word in each group and say why”, “Look at the photo. What does it show? What do you think they were for?”, “Match the words with the correct groups”*³⁹. The learners should compare what they have gained with the requirements.

Example 7: Cases of contrastive syntactic analysis for Vietnamese learners of English

The comparisons are represented in the terms of request types such as *Complete the sentences, conversation, text (with an appropriate word in each gap), Choose the correct words to complete the sentences, Combine two simple sentences to make one sentence, Rewrite each of the following sentences in such a way that its means almost the same as the sentence printed before it*. The exercise type are performed based on what learners have gained from the previous.

The suggested examples are of intralingual comparisons of individual and social languages. They are one of the most popular and necessary exercise type in learning language.

2.1.2.3. Intralingual contrastive analysis - Comparison of L1 and IL

There is an example for comparison of native language and the interlanguage: a case for language teacher in correcting student’s work, for editor

³⁸ Adapted from Hughes, J., Stephenson, H. & Dummett, P. (2015). *Life. Pre-Intermediate Student’s Book*. Singapore. Cengage Learning.

³⁹ Hughes, Stephenson & Dummett (ibid., p. 106).

of Vietnamese, or learner whose Vietnamese is not efficient enough to be based on to develop second language.

Example 8: Rewrite the following translation.

Mặc dù phải sống khắc khổ và thiếu thốn, mặc dù phải chịu nạn đói cơ tham nhũng, không quản ngại chết chóc, bệnh tật và cảnh thảm não của hầu hết mọi gia đình, miền Nam một lần nữa lại tuyên bố “Chỉ một chiến thắng nữa là chiến tranh kết thúc” và lần này lòng hân hoan tin tưởng còn mãnh liệt hơn mùa hạ năm qua.

The origin English sentence: Despite privation and hardship, despite food speculators and kindred scourges, despite death and sickness and suffering which had now left their mark on nearly every family, the South was again saying “One more victory and the war is over,” saying it with even more happy assurance than in the summer before.⁴⁰

The given examples illustrate some of the most popular contrastive models realized in language textbook from the perspectives of language types. But, in fact, the languages are practically impossible to be contrasted in their whole. They can be compared only at the levels of linguistic units and constituents of discourse. In other word, the possible contrastive models have their own subsystems.

Intralingual contrastive lexical model for learners of Vietnamese is demonstrated in the terms of the exercises as in Example 9.

Example 9:

1 Hãy đặt tên trường từ vựng cho mỗi dãy từ dưới đây⁴¹:

Tủ, rương, chai, lọ.

Buồn, vui, phấn khởi, sợ hãi.

⁴⁰ Mitchell, M. (2008). *Gone With the Win*. New York – London – Sydney. Pocket Book. P. 348.

⁴¹ Nguyễn, Khắc Phi (Tổng chủ biên) (2018). *Ngữ văn 8, tập 1* (Tái bản lần thứ 14). Nxb Giáo dục Việt Nam.

Hiền lành, độc ác, cởi mở.

2 Điền thêm yếu tố để thành ngữ được trọn vẹn⁴².

Lời ... tiếng nói Chân cứng đá...

Một nắng hai... Bên trong bên...

No cơm ấm... Buổi... buổi cái

In sum, contrastive models can be divided into interlingual and intralingual comparisons, each of them comprises a pair of social and social, or individual and social language comparisons. Therefore, contrastive submodels can be contrastive phonological, lexical, syntactic and discourse analysis, each of which can be investigated from various communicative activities and strategies.

The contrastive models and their submodels are very numerous, which make them very difficult to deal with an particular contrastive study. Instead, the learners and teachers are invited to find out for themselves about the most significant and suitable problems for learning and teaching second language, and translation.

2.2. Tertium comparationis

Two languages or two linguistic units that would have nothing in common could not be compared because there would be nothing that could serve as a “unit of measure”. All comparisons involve the basic assumption that the objects to be compared share something in common, against which differences can be stated. This common platform of reference is called *tertium comparationis*. It is a common measure and a background of sameness that is necessary for any justifiable, systematic study of contrasts. Therefore, to determine the *tertium comparationis* means to set criteria for comparison, to establish a shared ground for contrastive studies.

⁴² Nguyễn, Khắc Phi (Tổng chủ biên) (2018). *Ngữ văn 7, tập 1* (Tái bản lần thứ 14). Nxb Giáo dục Việt Nam.

Tertium comparationis shares the concept of something in common, common platform, some kind of sameness, similarity and equivalent. The terms can be used interchangeably in the book.

2.2.1. Tertium comparationis and similarity

Tertium comparationis requires that the compared objects have some similarity in some respects. A similarity is easy to be perceived between two distinct linguistic units. It can be either in their contents (semantic bases), or in the linguistic expression (formal bases).

Example 10: Similarities in native and second languages

- *Keep an eye on her, take care of her.*
- *Anh nhờ em quan tâm, chăm sóc chị ấy hộ anh.*

The utterances are expressed in different languages (English and Vietnamese). They share the similarities in content/meaning and some respect in linguistic expression (imperative sentences - requests). The similarities serve as “units of measure”. They are equivalent in some respects and the linguistic units can be contrasted.

Example 11: Similarities in social language and interlanguage

(1) *If I were the President of my country, I would try to build a system based on ability and knowledge.*

(2) *If I am the President of my country, I will try to build a system based on ability and knowledge.*

“Unit of measure” is unreal situation and they are expressed in English. Therefore, unreal situation (content) in English has its expression [If + V in past simple], [+ would + V in base form], and (1) is social and standard and the one in (2) is a possible type of interlanguage. The two utterances share some kind of sameness (unreal condition). They serve as the objectives of contrastive studies.

Similarities in contrasted languages arising in the perspective of content can be semantic (sharing the same semantic feature), functional (sharing the same function or purpose) or cognitive (participating in similar perception). In Translation Theory, similarity is a kind of translatability, but in contrastive linguistics, the compared entities may be similar in some aspects and different in others but they must have some equivalents.

In sum, similarities in languages can be either in their content, or in the linguistic expression. But similarities in languages are based on the content (meaning-based) which contrastive studies has to be. What is to be compared are the ways of expressing the same meaning in different languages⁴³.

2.2.2 Tertium comparationis and equivalence

Tertium comparationis and equivalence are required to be established in contrastive studies. They are not the same, but they can be used interchangeably. Equivalence and TC are two sides of the same coin and for that reason they tend to be used interchangeably in contrastive studies⁴⁴.

To establish *Tertium comparationis* and equivalence, Krzeszowski⁴⁵ divided contrastive studies into two major types (2-text): systematic (based on *langue*) and text-bound studies (based on *parole*). The concept of "2-text", defined as "any pair of texts, written or oral, in two languages, which are used as data in contrastive studies". One member of a 2-text pair may be a translation of the other; or the pair may be matched only in terms of genre, field, tenor, mode, etc.

He suggests seven types of equivalence: translation equivalence, statistical equivalence, system equivalence, semantic-syntactic equivalence, rule equivalence, substantive equivalence and pragmatic equivalence.

⁴³ Lipinska, M. (1980). "Contrastive analysis and the modern theory of language". John Benjamins Publishing Company. P. 169.

⁴⁴ Gómez González (ibid., p. 29)

⁴⁵ Krzeszowski (ibid., pp. 23ff.).

The equivalence types are detailed and concreted to contrastive areas and models. They are useful for contrastive studies (including learning and teaching second language, and translation). Based on the equivalence of the objects of the study, adopted various contrastive studies can be distinguished.

Contrastive studies use various kinds of *tertium comparationis*. All of them must be based either on linguistic expression or on content/idea. Linguistic expressions include surface structure, syntactic deep structure, and formal operations of various kinds. Expression (form) and its content constrain each other. When looking at form, a semantic equivalence between grammatical terms can be assumed. In contrary, when looking at content, an equivalence in linguistic expressions can be assumed.

2.2.3. Characteristics of tertium comparationis

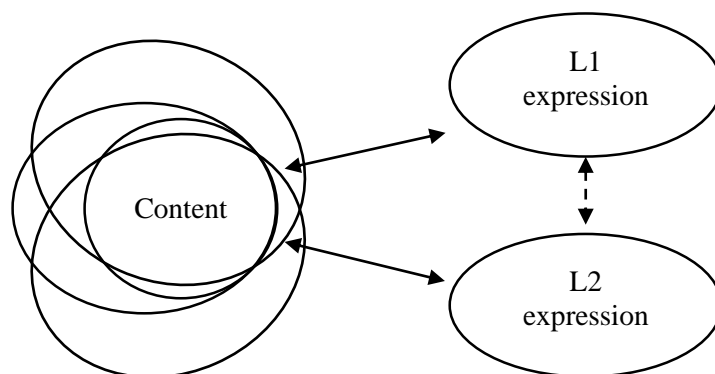
Tertium comparationis has a complex hierarchical structure. The equivalence, the sameness of the compared units should be determined in their functional systems.

In learning and teaching second language, and translation, each contrastive unit should be seen simultaneously from two sides – content and its linguistic expression. Linguistic expression comprises sound and its spelling (or writing). The idea encompasses its prototypical components that differ the meaning unit from the others. The idea, of course, includes some supporting components that share the meaning with other linguistic units.

Meaning of a linguistic unit is the result that humans make in relating the idea (or content) to its linguistic expression in a particular language, and vice versa (the two sides of meaningful units). People cannot understand any linguistic unit without relating the two dimensions. The skill is named as critical thinking, the ability that a person can make relationship between some linguistic expression and an idea in his or her mind. Idea and its linguistic expression is unseparated dimensions in learning and teaching second language and translation, especially in contrastive studies.

Linguistic expression, in turn, has its “two sides” – sound and spelling (more exactly, writing). To create the meaning of an idea and its sound, a person must have the listening and speaking skills in the mentioned language. To catch the meaning of linguistic unit in writing, a person must have the reading and writing in the definite language. The term expression refers to not only the ‘ways in which contrastive languages are used’ and the ‘larger levels of language structure’ but also their either spoken or written forms. The relation between discourse content and its expressions in two contrastive languages is illustrated in *Figure 2.2*.

Fig. 2.2. – Relations between content and its linguistic expression in contrastive study



An expression shapes an image/idea/content that is unequal in various individuals. Each idea encloses its own expressions in various languages. Content, its expression in language 1 (L1 expression) and its expression in language 2 (L2 expression) are three components of a contrastive study.

In learning and teaching second language, and translation, listening and reading skills are input; speaking and writing are output. Both input and output are necessary process, which are in varying degrees of complementary distribution in a second language learner’s linguistic journey⁴⁶. It is one of the aspects that should be respected in contrastive studies for improving communicative language competence.

⁴⁶ Brown (ibid., p. 293)

The relation between content and its linguistic expression deals with all linguistic units and theoretical approaches.

Language is embodied and expresses human experience. Consequently, languages in the world share some similarities and dissimilarities.

Similarities and dissimilarities between languages can be either in content or their expression. For example, *United States Department of State* (an office in United States of America) and *Foreign Commonwealth Office* (an office in United Kingdom) share some similarities and dissimilarities in content, but they are not equivalent in linguistic expression although both of them are in English.

Contrastive methods should follow the properties of language (arbitrariness, duality, productivity, displacement, cultural transmission, etc.) and should be correlated with definite theoretical approach.

2.2.4. Establishing tertium comparationis for contrastive studies

The question of *tertium comparationis* or equivalence remains a central point of controversy among contrastivists because of its characteristic – it deals with almost every components of linguistic hierarchy structure.

A general equivalent for comparison of languages is meaning (content) which has dialectical relationship with its linguistic expression. Therefore, *tertium comparationis* can be either meaning-based (based on content) or formal-based (based on expression), but it should be seen in the relations of linguistic expression and its content.

Tertium comparationis in scientific contrastive studies is overall. It is more detailed in daily practice.

2.2.4.1. Tertium comparationis in science

To identify the similarities and differences between languages in a systematic way requires a reliable *tertium comparationis*, and it can be grounded in the following systems:

- structural similarities and differences among languages;
- perceived similarities of meaning and the ways they are expressed in languages;
- the way people experience the world.

More recently contrastivists have tried to specify similarities and differences in culture-specific categories among languages, and suggest that “universal semantic common measure” must be grounded in semantics⁴⁷. The approach will be mentioned in (4.3.2).

2.2.4.2. *Tertium comparationis in daily practice*

In daily contrastive analysis, *tertium comparationis* can be based on both content and its expression depending on the purpose of comparison. Let’s examine *tertium comparationis* in comparisons of L2 and IL in a language textbook.

General purpose of language learning and teaching is communication, so overall contrastive agents are learners and teachers, and the object is comparisons of textbook language (L2) and interlanguage (IL). The general communication themes comprise (1) personal identification, (2) house and home, (3) environment, (4) daily life, (5) entertainment, (6) travel and transport, (7) relations with other people, (8) health, (9) education, (10) shopping, (11) food and drink, (12) services, (13) places, (14) language, (15) weather, (16) technology, etc. which a language textbook should cover. Each of the themes focuses on pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and skills (listening, speaking, writing, reading, critical thinking). The materials, communicative activities and strategies are relevant to learners’ level of proficiency and described based on a specific philosophy of second language acquisition. In addition, after each 2 - 4 themes there is necessary a test yourself (self-assessment).

⁴⁷ Goddard, C. & Wierzbicka, A. (2008). “Universal human concepts as a basis for contrastive linguistic semantics”. In *Current Trends in Contrastive Linguistics*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. P. 223.

The mentioned hierarchical structure of the textbook specifies the system of *tertium comparationis* of comparisons of interlanguage and social language.

The hierarchy of *tertium comparationis* of communicative competence of comparisons of interlanguage and social language shares the contents of the textbook. A rough common platform (criteria) for comparisons in a specific theme can be illustrated as the followings:

Theme	Phonetics/Phonology	Listening
		Speaking
	Vocabulary	Writing
		Reading
		Critical thinking

Requirements of linguistic materials (phonetics/phonology, vocabulary, grammatical rules) and skills (listening, speaking, writing, reading, critical thinking) presented in term of exercises/tasks are *tertium comparationis* for comparisons of social language and interlanguage. It is assigned more concisely and comprehensively in test yourself and progress test.

Common platform for intralingual contrast can be based on sound, writing (deep structure), semantics, or both of deep structure and semantics.

Example-Exercises for common platform in sound (vowels, consonants and segmental) are presented in terms of requirements such as *Listen and repeat*.

Example 12: Listen and repeat⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ Adapted from Hoàng, Văn Vân (Chủ biên) (2018). *Tiếng Anh – 11*. (Tái bản lần thứ mười một). Nxb Giáo dục Việt Nam. P.151

/pt/	/bd/	/ps/	/bz/
stopped	robbed	stops	robs
jumped	stabbed	steps	brides
stepped	grabbed	maps	rubs
trapped	bribed	shops	clubs

In the case, the sound and learners' listening and speaking are what learners should base on to compare the social pronunciation with the sound they produce. It is formal-base.

Example-Exercises for equivalents in deep structure (in writing) are demonstrated in terms of *Report the statements/questions*, *Rewrite the sentences*, *Choose the correct tenses*, *Complete the sentences using the given verbs*.

Example 13: Choose the correct form of the verb.

- 1 How long *you work/ have you worked/worked you* in the company?
- 2 When Minh was young, she *lives/lived/has lived* in a countryside. She now *has/ had / has had* a house in a big city.

The common platforms for the comparisons are the transformed rules illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Form (expression)	Category	To talk about (content):
<i>∅/-s</i>	Present simple	permanent situation or fact
<i>-ed</i>	Past simple	completed events in the past
<i>have/has + -ed</i>	Present perfect	events that are connected with the present.

Learners base on the transformed rules of verb tenses (present simple, past simple, present perfect) to compare the requirements with their understanding, but the task requires them to contrast not only verb forms but also their critical thinking, reading and writing skills with what social language expects.

Tasks for equivalents in semantics (content) are made under the titles like *Read/Listen and choose the best answer, Match the definitions with... Read the text and then answer the questions that follow, Rephrase the paragraph.*

Example 14: Read the passage and answer the questions⁴⁹.

Air, water, and soil are necessary to survival of all living things things. Badly polluted air can cause illness, and even death. Polluted water kills fish and other marine life. Pollution of the soil reduces the amount of land that is available for growing food. The pollution problem is very complicated because much pollution is caused by things that benefit people. For example, exhaust from automobiles causes a large percentage of air pollution. But the automobile provides transportation for millions of people. Factories discharge much of material that pollutes the air and water, but factories give employment to a large number of people. Thus, to end or greatly reduce pollution immediately, people would have to stop using many things that benefit them. Pollution can be gradually reduced in several ways. Scientists and engineers can work to find ways to lessen the amount of pollution that such things as automobiles and factories cause. Governments can pass and enforce laws that require businesses and individuals to stop, or to cut down on certain polluting activities.

- 1 What is necessary for the survival of all living things?
- 2 What can polluted air, water and soil cause?
- 3 Why is the the pollution problems complicated? Give one example.
- 4 What would people have to do to end or to reduce pollution immediately?

⁴⁹ Adapted from Hoàng, Văn Vân (ibid., 133 – 134).

5 How can governments control pollution?

The common platform for comparisons of social and learners' languages is roughly said, what required by five questions following the text (meaning-based). But the result of comparisons presents perfectly learners' communicative competence in comprehensible reading.

Another meaning-based *tertium comparationis* is exercise types *Roleplay a conversation/interview*, *Work in groups/pairs*, *Work with your partner*.

Example 15: Write your complete CV. Work in pairs. Use these questions to check your partner's CV⁵⁰.

- Does it have clear headings?
- Has he/she used action verbs effectively?

The task requires learners to produce intralingual comparisons of individual interlanguages. Learners ground on what the task requires to compare their languages during perform speaking and listening activities.

In sum, it not easy for learners to specify common platform for comparisons of materials and skills which integrate themselves into discourse because they have many activities and limited time to perform along with receiving or producing the discourse. Therefore, learners should practise contrastive analysis consciously at the beginning of learning separated linguistic units and communicative skills.

Contrastive analysis realized in language textbook represents daily people contrastive practice.

2.3. Stages of a contrastive study

The stages in doing a research can be as followings: (1) Selecting a problem, (2) Reviewing the literature on the problem, (3) Designing the research,

⁵⁰ Adapted from Hughes (ibid. p. 89)

(4) Collecting the data, (5) Analyzing the data, (6) Interpreting the findings and stating conclusions, and (7) Reporting results⁵¹.

Contrastive study is a typical type of research. Its distinguished differences from other types of research mainly lie in selecting, analysing and interpreting of data. James (1980: 63) suggests two basic stages of analysing: description and comparison including four steps: (1) assemble the data, (2) formulate the description (3) supplement the data as required, (4) formulate the contrasts. Sharing the idea, Krzeszowski describes three steps for contrastive studies: (1) description, (2) juxtaposition, (3) comparison⁵².

Stages of a general contrastive study in the perspective of functional grammar are set up as follows: (1) Primary data, (2) Comparability criterion, (3) Selecting the problem, (4) Initial hypothesis, (5) Test the hypothesis, (6) Revised the hypothesis, (7) Testing of the revised hypothesis⁵³. The methodology framework seems simple and suitable for the course purpose.

Based on above suggested methodology, a contrastive study can be set up in the following steps:

- 1 Selecting question (linguistic unit) in contrast,
- 2 Reviewing the literature,
- 3 Designing the contrastive study,
- 4 Collecting primary data against which hypotheses are to be tested,
- 5 Establishing comparability criteria based on a perceived similarity of any kind,
- 6 Defining the nature of similarity and formulating the initial hypothesis,

⁵¹ Ary, D., Jacobs, L. & Sorensen, Ch. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education*, 8th Edition. Australia: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. Pp. pp. 31 – 33.

⁵² Krzeszowski (ibid., p. 35.).

⁵³ Chesternam (ibid., p. 54).

7 Testing the hypothesis,

8 Interpreting the results.

2.3.1. Selecting the problem

In learning and teaching second language, and translation, primary data in languages raise some similarities and differences. It suggests some question to be compared for learners, teachers and translators.

As a research question, a comparison (i.e. contrastive study) should be significant and suitable for contrastivists and their communicative competence. In other words, contrastivists should recognize what they contrast, why they do it. In addition, the comparison must be researchable for learners, teachers and translators. It means learners, teachers and translators can recognise some “sameness” between the contrastive unit in two languages and explain the question basing on an appropriate theory and collected data.

The mentioned characteristics are considered as criteria for a good contrastive problem.

2.3.2. Reviewing the literature

Reviewing the relevant literature helps contrastivists understand the primary data and the problem more systematically. It provides an important and useful background to understand:

- The question and the primary data.
- The system of the contrastive units, terms, and concepts.

The theoretical background for the comparison.

Linguistic units and discourse can be studied in various perspectives. A problem may be seen either as autonomous or as reflecting how to conceptualize the idea of language users. Contrastive studies are conducted based on various

theoretical approaches that affect the results of the study such as structural, generative, functional, cognitive, etc.

2.3.3. Designing contrastive studies

A contrastive study requires a specific design of procedure. Based on the aim and the type of the comparison, contrastivists decide what methods to be used, what data will be gathered, how, where, when and from whom they will be collected.

2.3.3.1. Determine the type of comparison

There are two main types of comparison: the parallel contrast and the contrast in which one language is the source and the other is the target.

Parallel contrast (or parallel texts) refer to the type of the study in which any pair of texts, written or oral, in two languages, are used as data in contrastive studies. It is based on the analysis of the second language texts and its translations.

The other type of comparison is the contrast in which one language can be chosen as source and the other is the target. Source language is the language which is based on in comparison, and which is seen as a standard. It can be the native or a foreign language that the contrastivists know better than the target. The target language is the language which is explained or from which some characteristics are to be specified. This type of contrastive studies is frequently used in learning and teaching second language.

2.3.3.2. Planning procedure

Procedure deals with instruments of data collection. The most frequently used instruments in contrastive studies are survey and exploitation of corpora.

The survey, typically in the form of a questionnaire, interview, observation, etc. is one of the most common methods of collecting data on attitudes and opinions from a large group of participants. The participants in contrastive

research should be planned: number, age, education, place of living and educating, etc.

Using suitable databases can save considerable amounts of time and effort. Contrastivists should arrange suitable place and time to conduct each of subproblems as well as the whole problem.

2.3.4. Collecting data

Data in contrastive studies can be collected by questionnaire, interview, survey from varieties of texts, parallel and computer-accessible corpora, including translated texts. All of them are seen in synchronization.

The material should be in the contrasted languages and explicit about time frame and place of given speech events and participants. Attention should be paid to both linguistic expression and its content in contrasted languages.

Data must be appropriate for the comparison and productive enough to be organized in meaningful ways.

2.3.5. Establishing comparability criteria

The starting-point for an analysis is a perception of a similarity between language A-speakers' use of their language and language B-speakers' use of theirs. The similarity may be of idea (or content) or linguistic expression. *Table 2.1.* illustrates some differences in the linguistic expressions between British English and American English.

Table 2.1 – Similarities in contents/ideas, differences in the expressions in British English and American English.

Content/Ideas	American English expression	British English expression
Idea 1	It's twenty of ten, I've got to go.	It's twenty to ten, I've got to go.
Idea 2	Minh drives real fast.	Minh drives really fast.
Idea 3	He probably has arrived by	He has probably arrived by

	now.	now.
Idea 4	They met with the teachers to discuss it.	They met the teachers to discuss it.
Idea 5	How many students are in the course?	How many students are on the course?
Idea 6	Did they pick the team yet?	Have they picked the team yet?
Idea 7	a tempest in a teapot	a storm in a teacup

Establishing *tertium comparationis* for a contrastive study is a significant step for a language learner, a translator or a linguist.

2.3.6. Defining the nature of similarity

The problem in the stage is to define the relation between idea/content with the ways of expressing them in language A and language B. The starting point is usually the similarities assumed to be universal in semantics. Then the similarities and differences between languages are specified in other sides.

From this point of view, in language learning, students can reduce the interference and have good opportunity to give rise to language communicative competence.

2.3.7. Testing the hypothesis

Testing the initial hypothesis is the central process in contrastive study.

The tested data are utterances and instances of language use. We survey the forms used to express the same content by speakers of language A and speakers of language B. We can also survey the conditions under which the forms are used. From the survey we deduce the systems and their meanings.

2.3.8. Interpreting the results

The results should be formulated in many ways, depending on description used. They consist of similarities, differences and overlapping features which are interpreted in three main classes: meaning, syntactic forms, and conditions of use.

In learning and teaching second language, the step is considered as a form of assessment and evaluation. They are used in the sense of testing the proficiency of the second language user. Many effective types of assessment of learning and teaching second language are given by *Council of Europe*.

SUMMARY

The main properties of language are arbitrariness and interchangeable. One of the crucial for contrastive studies properties is relationship between content of contrasted units and their linguistic expression. In contrastive studies, linguistic expression (formal relations) and its content (semantic relations) constrain each other.

The areas of contrastive studies are conditionally connected with the systematic levels (grammar, lexeme, phonology) and discourse (or text), in particular with their meaningful units. They can be studied in the various respects: interlingual (first language versus second language) or intralingual (learner's interlanguage versus target language), social or individual, contact or dynamic.

Two linguistic units can be contrasted when they share *tertium comparationis*, equivalence, or sameness, which serves as a "unit of measure". *Tertium comparationis* of contrasted units must be seen in a complex hierarchical structure based on either their contents, or linguistic expressions.

Contrastive studies for learning and teaching second language, and translation should be based on communicative language competence specified in Council of Europe. Its main components include linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences and each of these components is suggested as encompassing knowledge and skills and know-how.

The stages of contrastive methodological framework can be set up in the following steps:

- 1 Selecting question (or item) in contrast,

- 2 Reviewing the literature,
- 3 Designing the contrastive study,
- 4 Collecting primary data against which hypotheses are to be tested,
- 5 Establishing comparability criteria based on a perceived similarity of any kind,
- 6 Defining the nature of similarity and formulating the initial hypothesis,
- 7 Testing the hypothesis,
- 8 Interpreting the results.

EXERCISE

Practice 1: Read the Exercises 6 and 7 from *Solution – Intermediate Student’s Book*⁵⁴. Then answer the questions that follow.

Exercise 6: Complete the sentences about your classmates with the phrases in the box. Try to guess the truth.

all a few many most none some

- 1 _____ of them have seen a ballet performance on stage.
- 2 _____ of them have sung in a choir.
- 3 _____ of them walked to school this morning.
- 4 _____ of enjoy dancing.
- 5 _____ of them like chocolate.
- 6 _____ of them had a shower this morning.

Exercise 7: Speaking: Read your sentences from Exercise 6 to class. Find out if they are correct.

Choose the best answer from A, B, C or D.

⁵⁴ Adapted from Falla, T. & Davies, P. (2015). *Solutions – Intermediate Student’s Book*. Oxford University Press. P. 97.

- 1 The exercises are realizations of the contact intralingual contrastive models of:
 - A social and social languages
 - B social language and individual interlanguage
 - C individual and individual interlanguages
 - D both of B and C

- 2 The exercises are realizations of learner's capacity of:
 - A phonetics/phonology
 - B lexeme
 - C grammar
 - D discourse

- 3 The exercises are realizations of learner's capacity of:
 - A listening, reading and critical thinking
 - B speaking, writing and critical thinking
 - C speaking, listening and critical thinking
 - D All of the mentioned activities

Practice 2: What do learners contrast while doing Exercise 6 in Practice 1?

Practice 3: What communicative activities should learners perform while doing Exercise 6 in Practice 1?

Practice 4: Describe the process of your doing Exercise 7 in Practice 1.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Explain the notion of *tertium comparationis* in contrastive studies.

- 2 Discuss the areas of contrastive studies.
- 3 Analyze the contrastive perspectives in interlanguage.
- 4 Specify contrastive study framework.
- 5 Explain parallel contrastive studies in language learning.
- 6 Define the *tertium comparationis* for comparison between your communicative language competences and the social language.

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CHAPTER III: CONTRASTIVE SYNTAX ANALYSIS

We will be happy if we find that a framework that seemed to work for the first language we examine also performs well in representing grammatical knowledge in other languages.

Charles J. Fillmore & Paul Kay

At the end of this chapter, students will be able to:

- **Recognise syntactic units in contrastive studies from the perspectives of generative grammar;**
- **Specify syntactic units in contrastive studies from the perspectives of functional grammars;**
- **Determine main contrastive objectives in syntax;**
- **Analyze the semantic types of predications for contrastive studies;**
- **Describe *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies on syntactic constituents.**

3.1. Overview

Syntax is the set of grammatical structures that combine words together to form phrases and sentences and allows language user to state, negate, question, command, and describe what he needs.

3.1.1. Linguistic theories in contrastive syntax analysis

Contrastive studies on syntactic units can be based on various linguistic theories such as structural, universal, functional, and cognitive. The more popular approaches for Vietnamese learners of English in learning syntax are formal and functional. Contrastive studies based on the perspective of *formal theories* specify the similarities and differences in syntactic structures independently of function. The other based on the perspective of *functional discourse-based theories* seek to determine the equivalent in the functions of appropriate syntactic units in two languages.

A linguistic model based on the perspective of formal theories and serving as the foundation for contrastive generative grammar must satisfy the following requirements⁵⁵:

1. It must contain a semantic base, generating universal semantic representations as inputs to language-specific grammatical rules. The semantic base serves as *tertium comparationis* for establishing semant syntactic equivalence.
2. The semantic input must contain information about reference since reference is a relevant concept in establishing semanto-syntactic equivalence of sentences across languages.

The contrastive model of functional discourse-based theories goes from meaning (content) to expression. Therefore, a complete theory of contrastive functional analysis has three components: a set of possible semantic structures; a set of forms whereby these are expressed in different languages; and a set of conditions governing the distribution of the various forms⁵⁶.

The linguistic theories that a contrastive study based on to analyzed are the starting-point for common platform of a contrastive syntactic unit analysis.

3.1.2. Syntactic constituents and contrastive syntactic units

Syntactic constituent is the term that simply refers to a subpart of a higher unit. The common syntactic constituents (or unit types) in the world's languages include: (i) phrases (including noun, prepositional and verb phrases), (ii) clauses (containing intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive verbs and their core arguments, including subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, and other categories), and (iii) sentence types (combining clauses either by coordinating clauses, or by subordinating a clause, through adverbial, complement, or relative clause structures).

⁵⁵ Krzeszowski (ibid., pp. 176 – 177).

⁵⁶ Chesterman (ibid.)

The mentioned syntactic units seen in a specific linguistic approach serve *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies.

3.2. Phrases as contrastive units

Noun phrases, prepositional phrases, and verb phrases are the common phrase types in the world's languages including English and Vietnamese.

Example 1: English noun, prepositional phrases and verb phrases and their appropriate in Vietnamese.

The children arrived at the garden \approx Bọn trẻ đã đi vào vườn.

The phrases, which combine into the sentences include (i) *the children* \approx *bọn trẻ* (a noun phrase), (ii) *arrived at the garden* \approx *đi vào vườn* (a verb phrase) and (iii) *at the garden* \approx *vào vườn* (a prepositional phrase).

The sentences and their constituents are equivalent in meaning (content) and constituent collocation but they are different in some aspects of linguistic expressions.

3.2.1. The noun phrase

A noun phrase is a grammatically syntactic constituent containing a head noun or a pronoun and its modifiers (or dependent elements). Typical dependent elements in the noun phrase involve article, demonstrative, possessor, adjective, numeral, quantifier, prepositional phrase, and relative clause. They are universal for most languages including English and Vietnamese.

Example 2: Noun phrase and its dependent elements in English and Vietnamese

Adjectives: *red carpet* \approx *tấm thảm đỏ*; *grammatical properties* \approx *các đặc trưng ngữ pháp*

Demonstratives: *this house* \approx *ngôi nhà này*; *those pens* \approx *những chiếc bút kia*

Relative clauses: *the boy who just came in* ≈ *cậu bé vừa mới bước vào*

Noun phrase is syntactic constituent and works as a cohesive unit. The order of each types of the elements in the noun phrase is fixed to most languages of the world. But in English and Vietnamese noun phrases the collocations of the noun and its dependent elements are the questions for contrastive analysis.

3.2.2. *The prepositional phrase*

A prepositional phrase is a syntactic constituent consisting of a preposition, which is the head of the constituent, and a dependent noun phrase. The preposition precedes the noun phrase.

In most languages, the order between the head position and the noun phrase is fixed. It has the collocation of PREP NP as illustrated in Example 3 and Example 4.

Example 3: June is *at the supermarket* ≈ June ở *trong siêu thị*.

Example 4: Mr. Donovan surveyed it *with inscrutable eyes* ≈ Ông Donovan *quan sát nó bằng đôi mắt khó hiểu*.

The prepositional phrase works as a common ground for comparison between English and Vietnamese ones although sometime there is not equivalent to either the preposition or the type of expression as in Example (5) and (6).

Example 5: The museum is located *on the right of the used bookstore* ≈ Viện bảo tàng nằm *bên phải tiệm sách cũ*.

The concept of *on* in the relation to *the right of the bookstore* is recognized by the Vietnamese as *bên* in the relation to the positions of *the museum, the bookstore*, and the speaker and hearer. For English speakers, *of* used to show the position of *the museum* relating to *the bookstore*. In Vietnamese, by contrast, there is no need to use preposition.

Example 6: Joanna was born *in 1998* ≈ Joanna sinh năm *1998*.

English speaker uses *in* in relation to the year of 1998 to express a period of time, which is demonstrated in the relation of Vietnamese *sinh* and *năm*.

Another problem in comparison between prepositional phrases in languages is a preposition in one language which has various equivalents in the other such as English prepositions *above*, *on*, *on top of*, *over* and their Vietnamese equivalent *trên*; English *in* and its Vietnamese equivalents *trên*, *trong*, *dưới*, *vào*, *ở*, *theo*, *bằng*, etc. It needs to be determined in learning and teaching English to the Vietnamese and vice versa.

From the mentioned problems, contrastive studies on the prepositional phrase should be conducted in the relation to elements which link the semantic primes together, especially conducted from the perspective of how the idea is conceptualized by native speakers.

3.2.3. *The verb phrase*

Verb phrase is a syntactic constituent consisting of a verb as the head of the phrase, and optional dependents including noun phrases (as objects), adverbs, adjectives, and prepositional phrases (including indirect objects).

Verb phrase contains a predicate which plays the role of the structural center of the clause. Predicate links its arguments into a greater structure and its purpose is to complete an idea about the subject. It is common in English and Vietnamese sentences.

Example 6: Jim *drew* a small package from his overcoat pocket \approx **Jim** *rút từ túi áo khoác của mình ra một gói nhỏ*.

In English the verb phrase is a syntactic constituent. It means the order of elements within a verb phrase is relatively fixed and the phrase can be replaced with auxiliary verb *do*.

Do you *speak French*?

Yes, I *do*.

Who *lives in Thanh Hoa city*?

Mai Anh *does*.

The property differentiates between English and Vietnamese phrase verbs.

A special type of verb in English is *be*, which denotes a relation between two noun phrases or between a noun phrase and an adjective. The noun or adjective that follows *be* is called the complement. What is its equivalent in other languages? This is an interesting question for Vietnamese learners and teachers of English.

It is necessary to examine verb phrase and its elements in the various perspectives (such as generative, functional, cognitive). Each of linguistic approaches gives the contrastivist a good overview on the similarities and differences between verb phrases in various languages.

Phrases and their types are common to languages. They serve as linguistic units for comparison in learning and teaching second language, and translation.

3.3. Clauses as contrastive units

Phrases combine into to the next higher level of syntactic organization: the clause. A clause is a syntactic unit typically consisting of a verb, its noun phrase arguments, and optional adverbial elements (usually adverbs and prepositional phrases). Clause and its constituents can be looked in grammatical and semantic relationships between arguments and verbs which can be chosen as compared units in contrastive studies.

3.3.1. Constituents of clause from the perspective of grammatical relationships

Constituents of clause can be verbs which functions as the predicate of the clause (describing the act being performed) and their arguments. Verbs in languages can be (i) intransitive (one argument), (ii) transitive (two core arguments); and (iii) ditransitive (three core arguments).

Example 7: Intransitive verbs in English and Vietnamese

smile ≈ cười, go ≈ đi, fall ≈ ngã

James smiled and came out ≈ Jame cười và đi ra.

Mike goes to school by bus ≈ Mike đi học bằng xe buýt.

Example 8: Transitive verbs in English and Vietnamese

learn ≈ học, play ≈ chơi, see ≈ nhìn thấy

They learn French ≈ Họ học tiếng Pháp.

We play football in the school yard ≈ Chúng tôi chơi bóng đá trong sân trường.

Example 9: Ditransitive verbs in English and Vietnamese

tell ≈ kể, give ≈ tặng, send ≈ gửi

David told children a story ≈ David kể cho bọn trẻ nghe một câu chuyện.

John never gave us a choice ≈ John không bao giờ cho chúng tôi được lựa chọn.

According to grammatical relations with the verb, the arguments of verbs are referred to as subjects or/and objects of the clause; and objects can be direct or indirect. The typical order for a verb and its noun-phrase arguments in English and Vietnamese is Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). Understanding the common type of meaning and determining its similarities and differences between the transitivity of the verb in languages helps second language learners improve their language proficiency.

Clause and the phrases are grammatical universal constituents for most languages. They can serve as common platform for comparison in the perspective of structural and generative grammar. But, languages differ in the grammatical

properties that define the mentioned linguistic units, so each language needs to be examined independently to determine which criteria distinguish between types of subjects, predicates and objects.

3.3.1.1 Subject as a contrastive unit

Subject is the core constituent in a simple sentence. It refers to something stated or asserted in the rest of the sentence. The features and functions of subject serve a common platform for contrastive analysis of subject. Let's look at the subjects of English and Vietnamese sentences.

Example 10: Equivalent in grammatical subject in English and Vietnamese sentence

Carol lives with her parents.

Carol sống cùng bố mẹ.

The children are playing in the garden.

Bon trẻ đang chơi ngoài vườn.

The bridge was built last year.

Cây cầu ấy (được) xây dựng năm ngoái.

All of the underlined expressions are subjects of appropriate sentences in English and Vietnamese. They share the certain features – the people and thing about which the assertion is made in the rest of sentences, and are demonstrated before the predicates. But, there are some differences in meaning.

Example 11: Differences in meaning between English and Vietnamese subjects

1 There are some books on the table.

Trên bàn có vài quyển sách.

2 There are five members in my family.

Gia đình tôi có năm người.

3 It's interesting to watch this film.

Xem phim này thú vị lắm.

English subjects *there* in (1) and (2) are not equivalent to Vietnamese *trên bàn* and *gia đình*, and English *it* in (3) does not have the meaning of Vietnamese

xem phim đó. In fact, in (1) *there ~ on the table ≈ trên bàn*; in (2) *there ~ in my family ≈ trong gia đình tôi*; and in (3) *it ~ to watch this film ≈ xem phim này*.

Dummy subjects in English (as *there* and *it* in the mentioned sentences) differ considerably from Vietnamese ones. Therefore, the types of subjects should be more practised for Vietnamese in learning and teaching English.

3.3.1.2. Predicate as a contrastive unit

Predicate is the core part of a sentence which states or asserts something about the subject of the sentence. The properties serve common platform for English and Vietnamese analysis of predicate. The equivalent can be seen in the following sentences.

1 *Fred Williams worked in a factory ≈ Fred Williams làm việc ở một nhà máy.*

2 *Alfred and his family live in Sydney ≈ Alfred và gia đình sống ở Sydney.*

3 *The book costs £25 ≈ Quyển sách đó giá 25 bảng.*

The underlined expressions are predicates of the sentences. They are verbs that provide information about their appropriate subjects in the sentences. English predicates differ from Vietnamese in their forms. While Vietnamese predicates almost always have the base forms in different situations, English ones change their forms in agreement with tenses and person.

The differences in use between English and Vietnamese predicates require Vietnamese learners of English to practise using verb predicates in communication. In other words, it is frequent for them to compare the use of verb tenses.

3.3.1.3. Object as a contrastive unit

The common platform for the type of comparison is that object is the complement of a transitive verb or preposition, and expressed by a noun, a noun phrase, a pronoun or a clause, and it can be either direct or indirect.

Example 12: Analyze the similarities and differences between objects in English sentences and their equivalents in Vietnamese.

Then at last Matthew left school. He tried to get a job with a big company, and the manager wrote to the headmaster to find out what he could say about Matthew.

The headmaster wanted to be honest, but he also did not want to be too hard, so he wrote, "If you can get Matthew Hobbs to work for you, you will be very lucky".

Cuối cùng Matthew vẫn ra trường. Anh ta xin việc tại một công ty lớn. Người chủ công ty viết thư cho ông hiệu trưởng trường xem ông có nhận xét gì về Matthew, ông hiệu trưởng thấy cần phải thành thật nhưng đồng thời cũng không nên cứng rắn quá cho nên ông trả lời: "Nếu ông có thể thuyết phục Matthew Hobbs làm việc cho ông thì ông thật là người may mắn".⁵⁷

3.3.1.4. Auxiliary as a contrastive unit

Auxiliaries in languages share the property of syntactic units which give grammatical information not given by the main constituents of a sentence. However, they are different in English and Vietnamese sentences. Vietnamese especially in interrogative and negative sentences.

Do is one of three auxiliary verbs in English: *be*, *do*, *have*. We use *do* to make negatives (*do + not*), to make question forms, and to make the verb more emphatic.

⁵⁷ Hill, L. A. (ibid., pp. 138 - 139).

Example 13: Determine the English auxiliaries and their appropriate translation equivalents in Vietnamese. What are they similar and different in?

1	Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present.	Jim vẫn chưa trông thấy món quà tuyệt đẹp dành cho anh.
2	I didn't know you were in.	Tôi không biết là ông có nhà.
3	Where is the olive fork?	Cái đĩa ăn ô liu đâu rồi?
4	Oh, Joe, did you sell another sketch?	Ồ, anh Giô, anh lại bán được một bức tranh nữa đấy à?
5	Don't you want to come and play in my yard?	Em có muốn đến chơi ở sân nhà anh không?
6	Well, why don't you call a policeman? ⁵⁸	Thế sao ông không đi mà gọi cảnh sát? ⁵⁹

3.3.2. Constituents of clause from the perspective of semantic relationships

The semantic structure of a simple clause centres round the predicate, which determines the number and type of core arguments of the clause. Predicate is typically a verb and refers to the main idea of a process.

The children play football ≈ Bọn trẻ chơi bóng đá.

The sun rose ≈ Mặt trời mọc rồi.

Geoff is active ≈ Geoff hoạt bát.

⁵⁸ O Henry (1995). *100 Selected Stories*. Wordsworth Editions.

⁵⁹ Ngô, Vĩnh Viễn (2002). *Tuyển truyện ngắn O Henry: Chiếc lá cuối cùng*. Nxb. Văn học.

Predicates in languages share the common sameness of referring the main idea of a process, but they differ in its expression. The difference between English and Vietnamese predicate expression is what Vietnamese learners of English should focus on.

There are three main types of predicate: one argument predicate, two argument predicate and three argument predicate.

One argument predicate: *Mrs Harris lives in a small village.*

Two argument predicate: *Bill likes football very much.*

Three argument predicate: *George gave his son a book.*

Arguments of verb are equivalent to valency which reflects the number of argument expressed by the verb. In fact, valency has been the object of a lot of investigations comparing two or more languages including *Contrastive Studies in Verbal Valency*⁶⁰, *Các vai nghĩa trong câu nghi vấn tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh*⁶¹. Such constellations provide the most direct ways of exploring possible universals concerning the relationship between form and meaning when it comes to such more abstract aspects of form as those residing in morpho-syntax⁶².

Arguments (elements of clause) seen in their semantic relationship with the verb have their semantic roles. The most common roles in languages and the most familiar with language students are Agent, Patient, Theme, Recipient, Beneficiary, Experiencer, Location, Source, Goal, etc.

Agent refers to the volitional motivator of an activity or event.

Patient indicates the entity that undergoes a change of state as the result of an activity or event.

⁶⁰ Hellan, L.; Malchukov, A. & Cennamo, M. (eds.). (2017). *Contrastive Studies in Verbal Valency*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

⁶¹ Ngô Thị Cẩm Tú (2011). *Các vai nghĩa trong câu nghi vấn tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh- Luận án Tiến sĩ*. Trường Đại học Khoa học Xã hội và Nhân văn (Đại học Quốc gia Tp. Hồ Chí Minh).

⁶² Hellan (ibid., p. 2).

Theme is a semantic role of the entity undergoing motion or being located.

Recipient refers to the entity that receives a theme.

Beneficiary is mentioned to the person who benefits from an action.

Experiencer talks about the people who experience a physical or emotional state.

Location refers to the static location.

Source is mentioned to the beginning point of a motion direction.

Goal refers to the endpoint of a motion direction.

Temporal is the role of location in time.

Instrument refers to the entity used to perform an action.⁶³

The mentioned roles in languages serve as contrastive units in learning and teaching second language, and translation.

3.4. Sentence constructions as contrastive units

The common sentence constructions that are based on the same proposition (or state of affairs) can be affirmative, declarative, active clauses and they can function like signaling negation, asking questions, giving commands. Example 15 describes the proposition of *writing* with the subject (or agent) *Anmy*, and its object (goal) *poet* in with various constructions, fixed grammatical patterns and associated with particular functions. .

Example 15: The different constructions with the same proposition in English and Vietnamese sentences

1	Anmy wrote the poet ≈ Anmy sáng tác bài thơ đó.	Declarative, affirmative, active
2	Did Anmy write the poet? ≈ Có phải Anmy sáng tác bài thơ đó không?	Interrogative, affirmative, active

⁶³ Genetti (ibid., pp. 137 – 138).

3	Anmy didn't write the poet ≈ Anmmy không sáng tác bài thơ đó.	Declarative, negative, active
4	The poet was witten ≈ Bài thơ đó đã được sáng tác (vào thời điểm ấy).	Declarative, affirmative, passive
5	Wasn't the poet witten? ≈ Có phải bài thơ đó đã được sáng tác (vào thời điểm ấy) không?	Interrogative, negative, passive

The description of the proposition *writing* with its subject *Anmy* and its object *poet* in English sentences and their Vietnamese equivalents suggests that interrogative, negative and passive constructions are big problems for Vietnamese learners of English and vice versa.

3.4.1. Interrogative constructions in English and Vietnamese

Let's examine the constituent orders in English affirmative construction *Amelia closed the window* and its Vietnamese equivalent *Amelia đã đóng cửa sổ ấy lại*.

Both English and Vietnamese affirmative constructions have the same constituent orders (the subject precedes the verb/predicate, which precedes the object): *Amelia* (subject, the first argument of *close/đóng*) in the first position (1), *closed/đóng* (predicate) – in the position (2), and *the window/cửa sổ ấy* (object, the second argument of *close/đóng*) – in the third position (3). The clause constituent orders are as in Table 3.1a.

Table 3.1a: The clause constituent orders of *Amelia closed the window* and *Amelia đã đóng cửa sổ ấy lại*

Amelia	closed	the window.
Amelia	đã đóng	cửa sổ ấy lại.
1	2	3

Let's examine the clause constituent orders of Vietnamese affirmative construction *Amelia đã đóng cửa sổ ấy lại* in various interrogative constructions.

The question type which determines the agent of the action is *Ai đã đóng cửa sổ ấy lại?* and constituent orders are as in Table 3.1.b.

Table 3.1b: The clause constituent orders of *Ai đã đóng cửa sổ ấy lại?*

Ai	đã đóng	cửa sổ ấy lại?
1	2	3

The clause constituent order are the same as in the affirmative construction.

The question type which specifies the action that *Amelia* made with the window is *Amelia đã làm gì với cửa sổ ấy?* and the clause constituent order is as in Table 3.1.c.

Table 3.1c: The clause constituent order of *Amelia đã làm gì với cửa sổ ấy?*

Amelia	đã làm	gì	với cửa sổ ấy?
1	2	2'	3

The question type used to specify the object of the action *closed* is *Amelia đã đóng cái gì lại?* and the clause constituent orders are as in Table 3.1.d.

Table 3.1d: The clause constituent orders of *Amelia đã đóng cái gì lại?*

Amelia	đã đóng	cái gì (lại)?
1	2	3

The clause constituent order in Vietnamese interrogative constructions is nearly the same as in the affirmative construction – the subject (first core constituent) in the first place in the clause, the next position (2) is the predicate, and next to the predicate (3) is its second argument. Meanwhile, the English interrogative constructions (with the appropriate affirmative construction) are different. Their constituent orders are illustrated as in Table 3.2.a, 3.2.b, 3.2.c and 3.2.d.

Table 3.2a:

Amelia	closed	the window.
1	2	3

Table 3.2b:

Who	closed	the window?
1	2	3

Table 3.2c:

What	did	Amelia	do	with the window?
2'		1	2	3

Table 3.2d:

What	did	Amelia	close?
3		1	2

Note:

- Interrogative words in English are at the beginning of the clauses;
- The clause constituent orders in interrogative constructions differ from the affirmative construction except interrogative word is the subject.
- The clause constituent orders in various English interrogative constructions differ from each other.

The similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese

Constituents of clause

When you go bed last night? Where you met your husband? Can you tell me where is the bus station? Did you finish you're your homework yet? Do you can speak English? What you are doing tonight? What are you do tomorrow?

3.4.2. Negative constructions in English and Vietnamese

Example 17: The similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese negative constructions

3.4.3. Passive constructions in English and Vietnamese

Example 18: The similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese passive constructions

Making questions

3.5. Contrastive analysis of sentence types

Example 19: Analyze the (dis)similarities between English sentence types and their appropriate translation equivalents in Vietnamese in the following versions.

The two men walked happily for half of an hour, and then one of them said to the other, “That’s a very beautiful girl.”

“Where can you see a beautiful girl?” said the other. “I can’t see one anywhere. I can see two young men. They’re walking towards us”.

“The girl’s walking behind us” said the first quietly.

“But how can you see her then?” asked his friend.

The first man smiled and said, “I can’t see her, but I can see the young men’s eyes.”

Hai người bạn đi chơi vui vẻ đã nửa tiếng đồng hồ. Bỗng nhiên một nói với bạn: “Đó là một cô gái đẹp”.

“Đâu? Ông thấy cô gái ở đâu?” - Ông kia hỏi lại. “Tôi chẳng thấy cô gái nào cả. Tôi chỉ thấy hai thanh niên đang đi lại phía chúng ta thôi.”

“Cô ấy đang đi đằng sau chúng ta.” - Ông thứ nhất nói.

“Thế sao ông lại trông thấy cô ấy?” - Người bạn hỏi lại.

Người kia mỉm cười nói: “Tôi không trông thấy cô ấy, nhưng tôi nhìn thấy qua đôi mắt của hai

Immediate constituents

Grammar, in the course, refers to the set of hierarchical structures that allow for the combination of words into phrases, clauses, and sentences, and the grammatical principles and relationships that underlie these structures⁶⁵. It has the meaning of syntax.

This chapter deals with universal linguistic units of syntactic structure which work for contrastive units, with framework of contrastive studies at the level of grammar. At the same time, the chapter gives some contrastive examples as illustrations for comparison between English and Vietnamese syntactical units.

Practice

An example with predication contrast: the idea “the action with Predicate *give* has three participants; the first one is *the madame* in the function of *Agent*; the second one – *the money* in the function of *Patient*; the last one – *Dalla* in the function of *Recipient*” is described in *Table 3.7*.

Table 3.7: Predication of the “the action with Predicate give”

3.7.a

the madame	gave	Dalla	the money
Bà chủ	trao	cho Dalla	số tiền đó
Agent	Predicate	Recipient	Patient

3.7.b

the money	the madame	Gave	to Dalla
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⁶⁴ Hill, L. A. (ibid., pp. 19-20).

⁶⁵ Genetti (ibid., p. 118).

số tiền đó	được/do bà chủ	đưa	cho Dalla
Patient	Agent	Predicate	Recipient

The illustrated clauses in (3.7a and 3.7b) with predication of *give* are similar in meaning and collocation, but they are different in grammatical relations.

The mentioned predication of *give* can be shared by the clauses in (3.7c) and (3.7d) which differ from Vietnamese translations in collocation.

3.7c

Dalla	was given	the money	by the madame
Recipient	Predicate	Patient	Agent

Della được bà chủ trao số tiền ấy or Della nhận được tiền do bà chủ trao

3.7.d

the money	was given	to Dalla	by the madame
Patient	Predicate	Recipient	Agent

Vietnamese translation follows the order: Số tiền đó (Patient) đã được (passive voice) bà chủ (Agent) trao (Predicate) cho Della (Recipient).

The type of predication and will be continued in the next 3.5.

3.4. Sentences and their subsentences as objects of contrastive analysis

A sentence is an integrated syntactic unit consisting of at least one clause and optionally adverbials that have scope over the sentence as a whole⁶⁶. The definition is one of common platforms for comparing sentences and their types in languages.

A sentence consists one or more clauses. The sentence including an independent clause is a simple. The sentences consisting of two or more clauses can be divided into two types depending on their syntactic units (coordination

⁶⁶ Genetti (ibid., p. 140).

or/and subordination). Therefore, the common types of sentences in languages involve simple sentences, compound sentence, complex sentence and compound-complex sentences. The last two types of sentences differ in subordinate clauses which can be adverbial clauses, relative clauses, and complement clauses. The types of sentences and their subtypes are objects of contrastive analysis.

The mentioned syntactic units and their characteristics are common in semantics for languages. They serve as *tertium comparationis* for seeking equivalence at the level of syntax in communication, and at the same time they work as contrastive units in learning and teaching second languages, and translation.

SUMMARY

Central constituents of sentences that work for contrastive units at the level of syntax are phrases, clauses and various types of sentences. They can be studied basing on various linguistic theories such as structural, universal, functional, and cognitive.

Phrases including noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, etc. serve as objects of contrastive studies.

Predication, predicate, arguments and specifiers are various functional patterns that are considered equivalent in content and idea in contrastive linguistics. However, they are different from each other in various languages in linguistic expression and in some particular aspects.

Simple, compound and complex sentence and their syntactic units are common in languages. They serve as *tertium comparationis* for seeking equivalence at the level of syntax in communication. And the same time syntactic units work as contrastive units in learning and teaching second language, and translation including specifying sociocultural characteristics of languages.

EXERCISE

Practice 1: Describe the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese expressions of the content in declarative and negative construction: the process of *build* happening at the moment of speaking, its agent is *some workers*, the patient of work is *the house*.

Practice 2: Analyze the (dis)similarities between English and Vietnamese subjects in the story mentioned in Practice 8.

Practice 3: Compare the content expressing the process of *build* happened and finished before the moment of speaking, its agent is *some workers*, the patient of work is *the house* in English and Vietnamese interrogative construction.

Practice 4: What are the similarities and differences in passive construction between English and Vietnamese expressions of the content (idea) “describing the process of *pollute* and its patient *rivers in Vietnam* in duration from 1990 to the moment of speaking”.

Practice 5: Read and specify the syntactic units which are and are not equivalent in two following versions.

The sentence “One day he [Mr Brown] had to fly to Edinburgh to give a lecture to a few top people there, but an important army officer came to the airport at the last minute, and Mr Brown’s seat was given to him, so he was not able to fly to the city to give his lecture” by Hill is translated into Vietnamese by Nguyen “Một hôm ông phải bay đến Edinburgh để giảng bài cho một số người đứng đầu ở đó. Nhưng đến phút cuối cùng có một viên sĩ quan quan trọng trong quân đội ra sân bay. Chỗ ngồi của ông Brown phải nhường lại cho người đó, cho nên ông không thể bay tới thành phố đó giảng bài được”⁶⁷.

Practice 6: Break the English sentence “One day Mr Brown had to fly to Edinburgh to give a lecture to a few top people there, but an important army officer came to the airport at the last minute, and Mr Brown’s seat was

⁶⁷ Hill (ibid., pp. 88 – 89).

given to him, so he was not able to fly to the city to give his lecture” its Vietnamese translation equivalent into clauses and core arguments. Specify the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese clauses and core arguments.

Practice 7: Break the English phrases with verb *give* and their Vietnamese equivalents in Practice 5 into constituents. Compare the arguments of *give* with their Vietnamese translation equivalents.

Practice 8: Read and specify the similarities and differences between English complex sentences with relative clause and their and Vietnamese equivalents.

Mary’s mother was nearly seventy, and Mary and her husband wanted to give the old lady a nice present. She liked drinking tea, so Mary ordered an electric machine which made the tea and then woke you up in the morning. She wrapped it up in pretty paper and brought it to her mother on her birthday. Then her mother opened the package. Mary showed her how to use it.

“Before you go to bed, put the tea in the pot and the water in the kettle”, she explained to the old lady. “and don’t forget to switch electricity on. Then, when you wake up in the morning, your tea will be ready.”

After a few days, Mary’s mother rang up and said, “Perhaps I’m being rather silly, but there’s one thing I’m confused about: Why do I have to go to bed to make the tea?”

Mẹ Mary đã gần 70 tuổi. Hai vợ chồng cô muốn mua tặng mẹ già một món quà sinh nhật thật đẹp. Biết bà thích uống trà cho nên Mary đặt mua một ấm điện vừa đun trà vừa báo thức. Cô ta gói vào giấy rất đẹp mà mang đến tặng mẹ cô vào ngày sinh nhật. Mẹ cô mở gói giấy ra. Mary chỉ dẫn cho mẹ cách dùng, cô ta giải thích: “Trước khi đi ngủ, mẹ bỏ ít trà và đổ nước vào siêu. Đừng quên bật điện mẹ nhé. Sáng dậy mẹ sẽ có trà uống ngay.”

Sau đó vài ngày, mẹ Mary gọi điện thoại cho cô và nói: “Có lẽ mẹ hơi ngớ ngẩn nhưng thực tình có một điều mẹ thấy lúng túng: tại sao mẹ lại cứ phải đi ngủ để đun trà?”⁶⁸

Practice 9: Break the following English sentences and their Vietnamese equivalents into phrasal constituents. Specify the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese phrasal constituents.

Mary’s mother was nearly seventy, and Mary and her husband wanted to give the old lady a nice present. She liked drinking tea, so Mary ordered an electric machine which made the tea and then woke you up in the morning.

Mẹ Mary đã gần 70 tuổi. Hai vợ chồng cô muốn mua tặng mẹ già một món quà sinh nhật thật đẹp. Biết bà thích uống trà cho nên Mary đặt mua một ấm điện vừa đun trà vừa báo thức.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss language translation principles.
2. What are the *tertium comparationis* in choosing the perfect form?
3. What are the aspectual functions of the present perfection?
4. What are the temporal functions of the perfection of English and Vietnamese?
5. The order of adjectives in English noun phrase depends on their meaning. It follows: opinion, size or shape, texture, pattern or color, materials + noun. Compare it with Vietnamese noun phrase.

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⁶⁸Hill, 1994, pp. 83 – 84.

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CHAPTER IV: CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS AT THE LEVEL OF LEXEME

We have seen that words are constructed by the principled combination of morphemes, and that this gives them internal structures that can be compared and contrasted across languages.

Carol Genetti

After reading this chapter, students should be able to:

- **Determine *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies at the level of lexeme;**
- **Describe the equivalence in content of definite lexical items in learner's second language and their correspondents in his native language;**
- **Analyze the (dis)similarities in content and linguistic expression between major parts of speech in two languages;**
- **Explain (dis)similarities in contents between favorite lexical items in learner's second language and their correspondents in his native language;**
- **Specify lexical conceptual units of a word.**

The previous chapter has dealt with the central constituents of sentences, and the grammatical principles that can be seen as backgrounds and units in

contrastive studies. This Chapter focuses on lexemes and the lexical components which serve as common platform for linguistic comparison.

Lexeme (or lexical item) is the smallest unit in the meaning system of a language. And like a word, it can be separated from other units in utterances. It has meaning and takes place in both spoken and written forms.

Meaning of a lexeme is studied in many ways: semantic roles, semantic properties, semantic fields, semantic primaries, cognitive concepts. The most fundamental lexical semantic topics for Vietnamese learners of English are general meaning of word class, lexeme, semantic fields, cognitive concepts.

The contents can be investigated from the perspective of structural, generative, functional or cognitive structures. The Chapter pays attention mainly to generative and cognitive structures. The others are mentioned in Grammar and Discourse.

4.1. General meaning of word class in contrastive analysis

Meaning of each lexeme is comprised from some semantic primaries. One of the semantic primaries is the meaning of word class (parts of speech) which is common grammatical categories for languages. Each part shares some general contents and common morphological categories.

Morphological categories in practice may be understood as a kind of linguistic expressions. They differ from each other in morphosyntactic criteria (or forms) and in use. Morphological categories refer to synthetic languages, such as English, French, and Russian. Words in synthetic languages are formed by affixing a given number of dependent morphemes to a root morpheme. The kind of expression in analytic languages (such as Vietnamese, Thai and Chinese) hides in word collocation.

4.1.1. Parts of speech

According to the linguistic expressions and their general contents, words are classified under the following parts as in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Word classes, their common morphological and general semantic properties

Name of class	Common morphological expression	Semantic properties
Noun	Number, gender, case, person of possessor	Express persons, places, attitudes, ideas, things, qualities, or conditions.
Verb	Tense, aspect, person/number/gender of arguments, negation, mood	Express an action, an occurrence, a condition, or a state of being.
Adjective	Comparative; superlative; number, gender, or case of modified noun	Identify a characteristic or a quality of a noun or a pronoun.
Adverb	Absence of morphological inflection	Modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.
Quantifiers	Sometimes have common nominal morphology, such as case-marking	
Numerals	Ordinal versus cardinal	
Demonstratives	Distinguish at least proximal (<i>this</i>) from distal (<i>that</i>); may inflect for various properties of the noun, such as number (<i>this ~ these</i>)	Distinguish at least proximal (<i>this</i>) from distal (<i>that</i>) and inflect for various properties of the noun.
Articles	a, an, the	Indicate that the noun they refer to has not been identified previously.
Conjunctions	Usually particles, so do not vary in form	Connect words or groups of words.

Pronouns	Distinguish person, and often distinguish number, case, and other morphological categories of nouns	Refer to a noun that has already been mentioned.
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Each part of speech has its general meaning (content) and its form (morphological expression).

In synthetic languages, morphological expressions convey their general meanings (semantic properties). In contrast, in analytic languages, the semantic properties are expressed throughout syntactic connections or syntactic constituents. English lexemes share both synthetic and analytic characteristics.

In English, lexical categories are usually demonstrated throughout morphological expressions, i.e. by linguistic markers (especially suffixes). For example, the general meaning of verb is usually expressed by (suffixes) *-ate, -en, -fy, -ize, -ise*; the general meaning of noun – by suffixes as *-ance, -ence, -eer, -er, -ion, -ity, -ment, -ness, -or, -sion, -ship*; the general meaning of adjective – by suffixes *-able, -ible, -al, -ant, -ful, -ic, -ious, -ous, -ive, -less, -y*; and adverb - *by -ly, -ward, -wise*. Therefore, they are easy to be recognised. The synthetic characteristics are illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. The relations between lexical categories in English verb, noun, adjective and adverb.

depend	dependence	dependent	independently
correspond	correspondence	correspondent	correspondingly
realize	realization	realizable	really
Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
action	things	characteristics	manner, degree, place, time or cause of a verb, an

The English morphological categories differ from Vietnamese. And the difference is what makes the Vietnamese difficult in English communication, especially in forming interrogative or negative sentences.

However, in English there are many lexemes that share the same forms, but differ in parts of speech, i.e. differ in some aspect of meaning, such as *answer*, *chart*, *close*.

(4.1) *The crosses on the charts are to allow an easier comparison of these distributions.* (From *Cambridge English Corpus*)

(4.2) *The poem charts a gradual reduction of prosopopoetic powers among the human characters, and a runaway increase of it in the personifications.* (From *Cambridge English Corpus*)

Semantic properties of the lexemes are specified throughout the syntactic positioning and morphological behavior. In (4.1) *charts* is the head of noun phrase *the charts*, where it combines with article *the*. In (4.2) *charts* is the head of verb phrase *a gradual reduction* and is the predicate of the sentence. The lexemes share the analytic properties as Vietnamese lexemes.

The main syntactic constituents of a simple sentences are verb phrase (Y), which plays the role of predicate, and noun phrase (X) which is usually argument of the verb-predicate as mentioned in Chapter 3. In other words, all lexemes may occur freely in either X-constituents or Y-constituents. For example, *Students of Foreign Language Department join English club* is composed from a nominal expression (*Students of Foreign Language Department*) and a verbal expression (*join English club*). *Students* and its constituents are in X and *join* its constituents are in Y.

There is a syntactic distinction between nominal expressions and verbal expressions drawn in all languages. The distinction between nouns and verbs must be drawn also. Noun is the name of the words that occur as the sole or the principal

open-class constituent and it is syntactically distinguishable from other lexemes that function as verbs or adjectives in the same positions in the sentence. Verb is the name of words that can be one of the core elements of simple sentences⁶⁹. Nouns can occur in verbal expressions, and verbs can occur in nominal expressions but when they do, they require to be supported by appropriate syntactic circumstances.

Let's examine an English sentence and its Vietnamese equivalent.

(4.3) Each team must have five people.

(4.4) Mỗi đội phải có năm người.

They are equivalent in semantics. English sentence (4.3.) is comprised of six words in basic forms. There are two syntactical parts (constituents) in each sentence – a predicate and a subject. The subjects are noun phrases including head nouns and quantifiers. The predicates are verb phrases with head verbs and sub-verb phrases. The process of specifying parts of speech (or the similarities in syntactic positions of word classes) is described in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. The process of specifying word classes.

<i>Each</i>	<i>team</i>	<i>must</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>five</i>	<i>people</i>
<i>Mỗi</i>	<i>đội</i>	<i>phải</i>	<i>có</i>	<i>năm</i>	<i>người</i>
X			Y		
1	Subject		Predicate		
2	Noun phrase		Verb phrase		
3	Quantifier	Noun	Verb	Verb phrase 2	
4			Verb	Number phrase	

⁶⁹ Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics*. V2. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 429 – 437.

It is easy to realize nominal and verbal expressions (in stages 1 and 2). In the third stage, *team* and *đội* are recognised as nouns; *must* and *phải* are verbs. In the fourth stage *have* and *có* – verbs. And in the fifth – *people* and *người* – nouns. The mentioned lexical categories are determined by the relationship between syntactical constituents of "Each team must have five people" and "Mỗi đội phải có năm người".

The result of the contrast serves as 1 during moving from *i* (learner's background knowledge and skills) to *i* + 1 by understanding input containing *i* + 1⁷⁰. It means, it helps learners not only in understanding both English and Vietnamese syntactic and lexical constituents, but also in improving knowledge of the communicative functions of language and knowledge about language in general. The illustrated contrast is a primary procedure for specifying lexical categories in second language learning. The procedure is common to be applied for the rest parts of speech and for the other complex structures.

4.1.2. Subtypes of word classes

Each part of speech is divided into subtypes according to their general meanings and their morphological expressions. Examples of noun and verb classes are as followings.

Noun (part, class, or group of words) includes proper and common nouns. In turn, common nouns are divided into concrete, abstract, count and mass nouns. Verbs (class, or group of words) comprise transitive, intransitive, ditransitive and auxiliary verbs.

Subtypes of word class are significant for integrating meaning in communication including learning and teaching second language, and translation. Integrating semantic primaries from various domains into communicative competence is one of the most continuous tasks and acts that learners should perform during their learning and teaching. Each of the semantic primaries is the

⁷⁰ Krashen, 1985, p. 2 – Cited in Gass & Selinker (ibid., 309)

general meaning of not only the parts of speech, but also the meaning of their subtypes.

All the mentioned subtypes of word class can work for objects of contrastive studies.

4.2. Contrastive lexeme analysis

Each lexeme, as discussed, is comprised of its meaning and expression. Meaning is usually picked out as *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies.

Meaning of a lexeme integrates its syntactic component (as mentioned in Chapter 3), lexical category (as mentioned in 4.1), and referential meaning.

Contrastive studies on lexemes can be conducted in the perspective of structural, generative, or functional approaches. However they generally encompass all the above mentioned semantic constituent, and as a principle, their content (or use) and expression (or form) are always examined simultaneously.

4.2.1. Similarities and differences in lexemes in the perspective of language variants

There are many words that are similar or relate to each other in meaning or in sound. They are hyponyms, synonyms, homonyms, and antonyms. Hyponyms are a term a which is more specific than some other term, b, and which therefore has a narrower denotation; thus, “table” is a hyponym of “furniture”, and “apple” is a hyponym of “fruit” (the relation among hyponyms is called hyponymy). Homonyms are lexemes or expressions that share the same form (in spelling, in pronunciation, or in both) but have different senses. For example, “hear /hiə/” and “here /hiə/” are homonyms (same pronunciation), and “bow /bau/= bend at the waist” and “bow /bəu/ = weapon” - different pronunciation) are also homonyms. Synonym are two or more lexemes or other expressions that make the same or similar contributions to the sense of a sentence the relation among synonyms is called synonymy. Antonyms are two or more lexemes or other expressions with opposite meanings; narrowly, two or more lexemes that are gradable contraries, so denote opposite ends of a spectrum, such as short/tall (the relation among antonyms is called antonymy).

All of hyponyms, synonyms, homonyms, and antonyms differ from each other in some aspects, but always share something in common. They are objectives of not only intralingual but also interlingual contrastive studies.

4.2.2. Similarities and differences in lexemes in different languages

A word in language A has its equivalent in language B. They share nearly the same meaning, differ in writing. For example, the English word *table* has the following equivalents in Vietnamese: 1. *cái bàn*; 2. *thức ăn dọn trên bàn*; 3. *bảng số*; 4. *bảng*; 5. *liệt kê sự kiện*; 6. *mặt phẳng*; 7. *bảng gỗ, đá*; 8. *chữ ghi trên bảng*.

In contrast, Vietnamese word *bàn* according to Viện Ngôn ngữ học (2000, p. 29) has the following meanings:

bàn₁ d. Đồ dùng thường bằng gỗ có mặt phẳng và chân đứng, để bày đồ đạc, thức ăn, để làm việc, v.v. *Bàn viết. Khăn bàn.*

bàn₂ d. 1 Làn tính được, thua trong trận đấu bóng. *Ghi một bàn thắng. Làm bàn (tạo ra bàn thắng).* 2 (cũ, hoặc ph.) Ván (cờ). *Chơi hai bàn.*

bàn₃ dg. Trao đổi ý kiến về việc gì hoặc vấn đề gì. *Bàn công tác. Bàn về cách làm*

The idea is described as in Picture 4.1.

*Picture 4.1. Similarity and difference between between English *table* and Vietnamese *bàn**

Each lexeme (or word) expresses certain content (experience) in language user's mind. Accordingly, each language community encompasses their own

concept of a thing. For example, concept expressed by *wood* in English shares the meaning with other linguistic items described as in *Table 4.4*.

Table 4.4. Mismatches between content and the linguistic expression in different languages

English	French	Russian	Vietnamese
tree	arbre	дерево	cây
wood	bois		thân (cây)
			gỗ
timber	forêt	лес	gỗ
			rú
forest			rừng cây
		rừng	

The property of similarity and differences between linguistic units leads to two types of contrastive study: intralingual and interlingual.

4.2.3. Intralingual contrast

There are a lot of exercises in textbooks which require comparing linguistic units, i.e. learners compare words and phrases in particular contexts.

Example 1: *Circle the correct answer.*

*I hope to go on a trip round the **world** / **earth** one day.*

(Adapted from Mann, 2008, p. 13)

Common platform for the contrast is the meaning of lexeme (either world or earth) which is appropriate to the meaning of “the thing that one can go on a trip round”. Comparison is between the meanings of world and earth.

Intralingual contrast takes place between not only two linguistic units but also more units.

Example 2: *Choose the correct answer.*

I must remember to a souvenir back from Spain for my grandmother.

(Adapted from Mann, 2008, p. 13)

The assumption (learner's background knowledge and skills) for the type of exercises is that the learner recognizes the meaning (content) of the sentence. His or her primary task, in one hand, is to determine the lexical primaries that the sentence needs to be filled, to compare four lexemes (*go, take, bring and keep*) to identify the lexical primaries (from each of them) that are appropriate to the slot in the sentence, on the other hand. Performing the activities, one of the crucial stages is to specify the syntactic or lexical role of component of the slot (in the gap).

Doing the exercises, learners conduct, at least, two comparisons – compare English words with the others, and compare social language and their (individual) language. By the way, they speed up learning process, and as stated by Gass & Selinker: The more often an association is made, the stronger that association becomes. New associations are formed and new links are made between larger and larger units until complexes of networks are formed.⁷¹

British English and American English are variants. The comparison between their lexical lexemes is intralingual. There are hundreds of everyday words that are similar in most of aspects of meaning, but different in writing in American and British English. For example:

Brits call the front of a car the bonnet, while Americans call it the hood.

New Yorkers live in apartments; Londoners live in flats.

In American English, collective nouns are singular. For example, staff refers to a group of employees; band refers to a group of musicians; team refers to a group of athletes. Americans would say, “The band is good.”

⁷¹ Gass, S. M. & Selinker, L. (2008), *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course* (3rd ed.). New York and London: Routledge. P. 206.

But in British English, collective nouns can be singular or plural. You might hear someone from Britain say, “The team are playing tonight” or “The team is playing tonight.”

(From <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/six-difference-between-british-and-american-english/3063743.html>).

4.2.4. Interlingual contrast

Each lexeme has a certain meaning that can be interpreted from one language to another. However, it (a unit of lexical meaning) reflects language user's perception and experience, a lexeme in language A is not absolutely equivalent to its translation in language B. Specifying the differences between lexemes in different languages helps understanding sociocultural linguistic characteristics and improving communicative language competence.

Tertium comparationis for interlinguistic contrastive studies on lexemes, frequently is their translation equivalent, especially between synthetic and analytic languages. English shares both synthetic and analytic characteristics. But it is mostly analytic. Form of an English word (typically the affixes) to express a grammatical function or attribute such as tense, mood, person, number, case, and gender is changed; but its grammar is dominated by its syntax. Vietnamese is analytic; form of a word is not changed. Therefore, contrastive studies on English and Vietnamese lexeme are usually based on translation equivalent.

There are many comparisons between Vietnamese lexical units and their acquisitions in other languages. Vietnamese kinship terms in comparisons with English were examined on the perspective of meaning by Luong (see more in Luong, 1990). Focus particles and related entities in Vietnamese and their equivalents in English were investigated by Hole & Lobel (2013, pp. 265 - 303). Conjunctions in Vietnamese and their translation equivalents in English were conducted by Paris (ibid., pp. 243 - 263). All the studies are based on semantic functions.

There are some master's theses on contrastive analysis between lexemes investigated by Vietnamese native speakers such as, *A contrastive study of the*

verb “go” in English and “đi” in Vietnamese - a perspective of embodiment in cognitive linguistics by Hà, Thị Hồng (2010), *A contrastive analysis between the verb "fall" in English and the verb "ngã" in Vietnamese* by Nguyễn, Thị Ngân (2010), *Get, make, have, take and their Vietnamese translation equivalents* by Nguyễn Trang Thùy Dung (2010).

4.3. Contrastive concept analysis

Contrastive studies on lexemes that have been seen in (4.1) and (4.2) derive from semantic structural and functional approaches. They can be conducted in the perspective of cognitive theory.

Linguistic cognitive approach studies how people comprehend and represent the world around them through language. The theory emphasizes on individual’s active construction of understanding. Therefore, linguistic meaning is a property of the utterance, lexical representations consist of the mental abstractions, which we infer to must be stored as part of the language user's knowledge of language: symbolic units, together with the range of cognitive models, the semantic potential, to which a lexical concept affords access⁷². Words are only as contextual expressions embedded in utterance, and its meaning is variable across language use. Lexical concept forms a representational unit which is provided a label.

From the theoretical approach, lexical conceptual unit, lexical profile and lexical representation serve as common platforms for contrastive studies.

Lexical concept is a bundle of various types of schematic knowledge conventionally associated with a unique phonological vehicle in a symbolic unit. Lexical concepts are stored in the linguistic system and can facilitate access to conceptual structure.

⁷² Evans, V. (2009). *How words mean: Lexical concepts, cognitive models and meaning construction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 73.

Lexical conceptual unit is an integrated unit of linguistic content which is the result of lexical concept integration.

Lexical profile is the selection tendencies which form part of the linguistic content encoded by a lexical concept, and which is unique to any given lexical concept.

Lexical representation is the primary substrate in linguistically mediated meaning construction. Lexical representation is made up of symbolic unit and cognitive model.⁷³

Many cognitive researchers suggest their terms, but they are equivalents.

In contrastive studies, lexical concept refers content (or idea), and lexical representation refers to linguistic expression.

4.3.1. Prototype

People recognize and describe the world by perceiving higher frequency of occurrence of typical conceptual units of its class or group. They define the world by reference to typical instances. The typical conceptual units are called prototypes which are the “best example” of a conceptual category. The less typical units are seen as its peripheral members.

Prototype can be understood as a schematic representation of a concept, or of a category. For example, a prototype of a bird would be more like a *parrot*, a *sparrow*, or a *dove*, etc. than, for instance, a *penguin*, or a *kiwi*. Prototype of a Vietnamese native village, for most Vietnamese, includes their *private house*, *relatives*, *childhood*, *roads to school*, *friends*, *bird song* from the trees, *catching butterflies*, etc.

Example: *Circle the correct word.*

Adelia have a very good **connection / relationship** with her mother.

⁷³ Evans (ibid., pp. 349 - 350).

The typical conceptual units of the choosing word are connection between people in the family, so the word referring the acts which relate the speaker to his or her mother in a unit must be relationship.

Let us begin with the case of two English verbs *include* and *encompass*. Their ‘degrees of membership based on degrees of similarity’ are (i) something made as a whole, and (ii) the states of connections of separate parts. From the mentioned equivalents, *include* and *encompass* are synonyms.

4.3.2. Lexical concept

Lexical concepts are cognitive entities that are based on perceptual experience, which means that they are embodied⁷⁴.

Concepts integrate semantic primes from semantic-conceptual domains. Contrastive studies can be placed on a firm foundation, at least in the semantic-conceptual domain, by adopting as its terms of comparison the set of universal human concepts which have emerged from two decades of deep semantic analysis and cross-linguistic research in the “natural semantic metalanguage” approach⁷⁵.

Humans have a common conceptualizing capacity and knowledge of expressing what they conceive. They can have linguistic units such as phonemes, morphemes, lexis and syntax to describe their ideas. The concept that Australian express by *farm*, Vietnamese expression is *trang trại*. Their concepts have some prototypical equivalents. Concepts of time in English, Russian, Vietnamese, etc. are common in meaning, but it is expressed in different ways. In English, there are Present Simple Tense, Present Perfect, Past Continuous, etc., and they are expressed in different forms, but Vietnamese does not have such fine distinction of tenses and aspects as in English.

⁷⁴ Evans, V. (2015). *The Crucible of Language: How Language and Mind Create Meaning*. Cambridge University Press. P. 38.

⁷⁵ Goddard & Wierzbicka (ibid., p. 206).

According to Lakoff, people are born with a conceptualizing capacity⁷⁶. However, different communities may have unlike conceptual systems due to their different experiences which lay the basis for forming concepts. In fact, some conceptual systems are more important than others. The fundamental concepts including the concepts of time, space, cognitive models manifested through metaphors and metonymies are considered fundamental for conceptualizing categories in the system. For instance, the spatial concepts of “trên” and “dưới” and the corresponding verbs “lên” and “xuống” in Vietnamese belong to the basic conceptual systems as they can be projected to social relationships. When someone is promoted, he is said to be “lên chức”. If he is downgraded, he is “xuống chức”. Such examples can be extensively found in Vietnamese.

Lakoff⁷⁷ notes that the interesting distinction does not lie in individual concepts. When an entire culture is expert in a domain (as Eskimos must be in functioning with snow), they have a suitably large vocabulary. In other words, the categorization of entities in the nature varies according to experience. For example, rice is very familiar to Vietnamese, hence the different categories “lúa”, “gạo”, “com”. Nonetheless, it is not native to English speakers, and thus it has only one word “rice” to represent the three concepts as conceptualized by Vietnamese. More instances can be seen in the tables below:

Hóa đơn		
receipt	bill	invoice
Noodle		

⁷⁶ Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind*. University of Chicago Press.

⁷⁷ Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind*. University of Chicago Press.

phở	bún	miến	mì	hủ tiếu
Khách hàng				
client			customer	

4.3.2.1. Semantic primes

The authors of “natural semantic metalanguage” approach suggest the universal semantic primes for many languages (including Russian, Polish, French, Spanish, Danish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Malay, Mbula/Mangaaba-Mbula, Koromu, PNG, Tok Pisin, Amharic, Arabic, East Cree, Finnish, and many others) as listed in *Table 4.5*.

Table 4.5: Semantic primes (English exponents), grouped into related categories (adopted from Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2014, p. 12)

I ~ ME, YOU, SOMEONE, SOMETHING ~ THING, PEOPLE, BODY	substantives
KIND, PART	relational substantives
THIS, THE SAME, OTHER ~ ELSE	determiners
ONE, TWO, SOME, ALL, MUCH ~ MANY, LITTLE ~ FEW	quantifiers
GOOD, BAD	evaluator
BIG, SMALL	descriptors
THINK, KNOW, WANT, DON'T WANT, FEEL, SEE, HEAR	mental predicates
SAY, WORDS, TRUE	speech

DO, HAPPEN, MOVE, TOUCH	actions, events, movement, contact
BE (SOMEWHERE), THERE IS, BE (SOMEONE)'S, BE (SOMEONE/SOMETHING)	location, existence, possession, specification
LIVE, DIE	life and death
WHEN ~ TIME, NOW, BEFORE, AFTER, A LONG TIME, A SHORT TIME, FOR SOME TIME, MOMENT	time
WHERE ~ PLACE, HERE, ABOVE, BELOW, FAR, NEAR, SIDE, INSIDE	space
NOT, MAYBE, CAN, BECAUSE, IF	logical concepts
VERY, MORE	intensifier, augmentor
LIKE ~ WAY ~ AS	similarity

The given terms for the table are noted⁷⁸ as the followings:

1. Primes exist as the meanings of lexical units (not at the level of lexemes).
2. Exponents of primes may be words, bound morphemes, or phrasemes.
3. They can be formally complex.
4. They can have combinatorial variants or “allolexes” (indicated with ~).
5. Each prime has well-specified syntactic (combinatorial) properties.

Each semantic prime is as a semantic domain (or primary concept) including many conceptual units which are often polysemous, and they may be

⁷⁸ Goddard & Wierzbicka (ibid., p. 12).

polysemous in different ways in different languages. Cognitive concepts have hierarchical structure. So, a concept can be integrated by conceptual units in various lexical conceptual domains.

For example, some conceptual units of concept OVER (in PRACTICE 10) are "borrowed" from 'temporal - time' (6), 'examining - checking' (8), 'repetition - frequency' (9), 'more than - numeral' (10).

The relationships between lexical concepts and conceptual units can see more *Webs of words and Does conceptual metaphor change word meanings?* in Evans⁷⁹.

4.3.2.2. Lexical cognitive concept

Concepts are based on perceptual experience. It means, they are grounded in our daily experience. They reveal our embodied experience to us when we use language for communication.

4.3.3. Conceptual metaphors

Language users usually describe one domain in term of another domain like what they experience. The domain that they try to represent is called the target domain, and the domain that they use for this purpose is the source domain. The source domain is more physical and concrete than the target domain. And source domains are used to understand target domains. So, conceptual metaphor is a set of correspondences between a more physical source domain and a more abstract target domain⁸⁰. Conceptual metaphors are grounded in our physical and cultural experience.

Metaphors are characterized by the formula *A IS B*, in which a target domain A is understood in terms of a source domain B.

⁷⁹ Evans (2015, *ibid.*, pp. 200 – 217).

⁸⁰ Kövecses, Z. (2015). *Where Metaphors Come From: Reconsidering Context in Metaphor*. Oxford University Press. P.157.

The most common source domains suggested by Kovecses (2010, p. 28) include: (1) The Human Body, (2) Health and Illness, (3) Animals, (4) Plants, (5) Buildings and Construction, (6) Machines and Tools, (7) Games and Sport, (8) Money and Economic Transactions (Business), (9) Cooking and Food, (10) Heat and Cold, (11) Light and Darkness, (12) Forces, and (13) Movement and Direction.

The common target domains are (1) Emotion, (2) Desire, (3) Morality, (4) Thought, (5) Society / Nation, (6) Politics, (7) Economy, (8) Human Relationships, (9) Communication, (10) Time, (11) Life and Death, (12) Religion, and (13) Events and Actions.

Conceptual metaphors are characterized by common models in almost languages. They are common platform for contrastive studies.

4.4. Contrastive analysis on concepts in English and Vietnamese

4.4.1. Experiencing- feeling/emotion in English and Vietnamese

One of the exponents of FEEL in both of English and Vietnamese is to experience one's emotion. The concept is expressed by various linguistic forms. Let us examine the idea of experiencing feeling/emotion demonstrated by words *heart* in English and *lòng* in Vietnamese.

The *tertium comparationis* for the contrast is concept of experiencing emotion.

4.4.1.1. Experiencing emotion expressed by 'heart'

Heart is the thing that controls one's emotion. The idea can be seen in English proverbs

A blithe heart makes a blooming visage.

The joy of the heart makes the face fair.

It is a poor heart that never rejoices.

Fear is the prison of the heart.

Heart in idioms and colloquial expressions with *heart* represent various aspects of feeling/emotion: such as *love, joy, hatred, fear and jealousy*. They are ‘break someone’s heart’ (làm tan nát tim ai), ‘eat your *heart* out’ (dằn vặt mình (vì ghen tuông, ghen tị, hối hận, tiếc nuối...)), ‘gladden the/(one’s) *heart*’ (làm cho ai vui lòng), ‘*heart break*’ (buồn xé ruột), ‘*heart skips a beat*’ (thần kinh vững), ‘heavy *heart*’ (trĩu lòng/ héo ruột), ‘melt (one’s) *heart*’ (châm tay bùn rùn/ hờn xiêu, phách lạc/thót tim), ‘nearly gave (one) a *heart* attack’ (làm thót tim, làm người ta sợ hết hồn/mất vía), ‘*heart leaps*’ (sửng rơn người).

As above illustration, in English, *heart* in different collocations can indicate various states of emotion.

4.4.1.2 *Experiencing emotion expressed by ‘lòng’*

Lòng in Vietnamese is a physical part of body including internal organs, entrails. The expression can be used to describe various aspects of emotion: *mát lòng, đau lòng, phải lòng, yên lòng, lòng bồi hồi, lòng thương...*

Lòng bồi hồi nao nao/ Con đường xưa còn đó/ Mà người xưa có còn không?

Lòng xao xuyến mỗi khi hoa phượng rơi.

Một năm mới đang về/ Thấy vui trong lòng, dáng xuân mơ mộng.

Lòng has its components such as *tim, gan, mật, bụng, ruột...* and they can be used to represent emotion: ‘giận bầm *gan*, tím *ruột*’, ‘sợ vỡ *mật*’, ‘sợ thót *tim*’, ‘cười đau cả *bụng*’, ‘tức lộn *ruột*’, ‘sợ xanh *mặt*’...

4.4.1.3 *Similarities and differences between experiencing emotion expressed by heart and lòng*

(a) The similarities

Both English *heart* and Vietnamese *lòng* (and its exponents) can be used as mental entities to indicate various aspects of psychological status. These are the cases that people conceive their mental state in term of containers.

(b) The differences

Experience of emotion is explained by different parts of human body in English and Vietnamese. When a status of emotion is indicated in English by only *heart* referring to a part of the body, it is interpreted in some Vietnamese expressions that do not always refer to the heart, but to the other internal organs such as liver, gallbladder, stomach, etc.

Some psychological aspects of emotion expressed by Vietnamese *tim, lòng, tim, gan, mật, bụng, dạ, ruột...* are not always interpreted by English *heart*: *lòng thương – compassion, lòng căm thù – hatred, lòng ghen tị - envy, vui lòng, hả dạ - have stars in one's eyes, bầm gan tím ruột - black in the face (with rage)*, etc.

The above illustration is the evidence for Kovecses's suggestion(2005, p. 35): emotions are commonly said to be private and heavily culturally dependent experiences that are inaccessible to others. For this reason, the language and underlying conceptualization of emotional experience are expected to be highly culture-specific.

4.4.2. Conceptual metaphors in English and Vietnamese

Let us describe a contrastive study on conceptual metaphor MARRIAGE IS A UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS – a case in English and Vietnamese proverbs and folk verses.

Marriage is one of the most pervasive topics “in our ordinary everyday way of thinking, speaking, and acting” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 453), the metaphors for marriage might regularly occur among conventional metaphors. Therefore, *tertium comparationis* for the contrast in two languages is “*marriage is a unity of two complementary parts*”.

Developing additional structure in marriage that derives from love, Kövecses⁸¹ suggests that marriage is conceptualized as a particular kind: a physical unity of two complementary parts, which yields the complex metaphor **MARRIAGE IS A PHYSICAL AND/OR BIOLOGICAL UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS**.

4.4.2.1 MARRIAGE IS A UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS in English

The details of the UNITY metaphor for marriage based on English data are given by Kövecses as a set of mappings⁸²:

1	the two physical parts	→	the married people
2	the physical joining of the parts	→	the union of the two people in marriage
3	the physical/biological unity	→	the marriage union
4	the physical fit between the parts	→	the compatibility between the married people
5	the physical functions of the parts in the unity	→	the roles the married people play in the relationship
6	the complementariness of the functions of the parts	→	the complementariness of the roles of the married people
7	the whole physical object consisting of the parts	→	the marriage relationship
8	the function of the whole object	→	the role or purpose of the marriage relationship

⁸¹ Kövecses, Z. (2005). *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation*. Cambridge University Press.

⁸² Kövecses (ibid., p. 221).

4.4.2.2. *MARRIAGE IS A UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS in Vietnamese*

The data from Vietnamese proverbs and folk verses on marriage indicate that *unity of complementary parts in Vietnamese marriage* data signifies all components of the source domain in Kovecses's marriage metaphor.

Vợ chồng như đũa có đôi - A couple is like a *pair* of chopsticks.

Đôi tay nâng lấy coi trầu/ Miếng trầu không là vợ/ miếng cau là chồng -
The piece of betel leaf is symbol of wife, the piece of areca is husband.

Vợ chồng như khóa với chìa - A couple is *a lock* and the *key*.

Đôi ta như cúc với khuy/ Như kim với chỉ, bỏ đi sao đành - We are the *unity* of a *button* and the *buttonhole* in a piece of clothing.

The above unities of complementary parts have the meaning of (1) the two physical parts, (2) the physical joining of the parts, (3) the physical/biological unity, (4) the physical fit between the parts, (5) the physical functions of the parts in the unity, (6) the complementariness of the functions of the parts, (7) the whole physical object consisting of the parts, and (8) the function of the whole object. However, they refer to Vietnamese sociocultural details such as *chopsticks*, *trầu cau* (betel and areca), *the Moon and the Moon Man*, ect.

MARRIAGE IS A UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS in Vietnamese indicates particular characteristics connected with Three Powers and Five Hanh's: (a) the role of Nguyệt Lão (god of marriage and love), Nhân Duyên (fate in marriage), dodder; (b) requirement of a unity of two complementary parts in marriage.

4.4.2.3. *Similarities and differences between the metaphors in English and Vietnamese*

The concept of marriage can be expressed by the metaphor MARRIAGE IS A UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS in English and Vietnamese.

However, it is reflected in different ways in two languages. The differences depend on the particular parts in the source domain, i.e. the ways of mapping from the source to the target domains.

Marriage in Vietnamese folk beliefs is a union of various gender who are compatible with each other, sharing the belief in fate and affinity, perform different but complementary roles in the relationship.

SUMMARY

Lexeme is a unit of syntactic and reflective meanings. Each lexeme belongs to a particular grammatical category (word class) and subcategory (subtypes of word class). Lexemes, word classes and their subtypes are universal units which serve as common platform in comparison between languages including interlanguage.

Lexemes in languages can be compared in the perspective of cognitive theory which considers that human experience is embodied and language is embodiment. Therefore, meaning is viewed in terms of conceptualization and mental spaces, and concepts are considered to be common unit for languages.

Concepts integrate semantic primes from semantic-conceptual domains and each integrated concept is a lexical conceptual unit (the result of lexical concept integration). Lexical conceptual units consist of lexical profiles which select and form part of the linguistic content encoded by a lexical concept. Lexical conceptual units and profiles are continuous objects of intralingual comparison as well as learning and teaching second language, and translation.

Conceptual metaphors are grounded in our physical and cultural experience. They serve as contrastive units in specifying the similarities and differences in sociocultural characteristics of language speakers' communities.

PRACTICE

- 1 Provide the evidence to specify subtypes of English modal verbs.

- 2 It seems that there are not modal verbs in Vietnamese like in English. Try to prove the hypothesis.
- 3 Specify the component *i* (learner's background knowledge and skills) in Krashen's model for second language acquisition (*i + 1*) by doing the following exercises.

*Put the words in the correct order*⁸³.

(1) get up he must tomorrow early

(2) competition finish at must ten o'clock the

(3) send my have today application I to

(4) tomorrow to don't they have to go work

(5) argue referee team with the the can't

(6) five o'clock to game have doesn't finish at the

(7) for wear Tim can clothes casual the game

(8) sports kit they forget their musn't

- 4 What is the *tertium comparationis* for the comparison? Which meaning is appropriate to the situation? Explain the reason.
- 5 Discuss the role of comparison between the synonyms in second language acquisition.
- 6 Find British and American English lexemes that are similar in meaning but different in writing.
- 7 Provide the evidence to specify the similarities and differences between English *come/go* and Vietnamese *đi/đến*.
- 8 Identify the similarities and differences between English verb 'share' and its equivalents in Vietnamese.

⁸³ Hughes (ibid., pp. 157 - 158)

9 Specify the similarities and difference between *shared* in Profile (1) and *shared* in Profile (2)⁸⁴.

(1) On the one hand, an individual case is used as a vivid example of experience *shared* with a wider population.

(2) At the time, gas and coke industries were close to one another, with the manufacturing process *shared* and with compatible equipment.

10 Specify the meaning of preposition *over* in each sentence and determine the differences between them in the following sentences⁸⁵.

(1) The picture is over the sofa.

(2) St. Paul's is over the river from Southward.

(3) Your article is over the page limit.

(4) The movie is over.

(5) The government handed power over to an interim authority.

(6) The relationship had altered over the years.

(7) The clouds are over the sun.

(8) Jim looked over the document quite carefully.

(9) After the false start, they started the race over.

(10) Joyce found over forty kinds of shells on the beach.

(11) The heavy rains caused the river to flow over its banks.

(12) She has a strange power over me.

(13) I would prefer tea over coffee.

(14) The committee agonised over the decision.

⁸⁴ Cambridge English Corpus.

⁸⁵ Evans (*ibid.*, pp. 200 – 201).

- 11 The English word *time* encompasses a range of quite distinct conventional meanings. Decide its concept in each sentence. What are the similarities and differences between conceptual profiles?

Translate the sentences into native language and compare them and specify the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese equivalents in each sentence.

- (1) The time for action has arrived.
- (2) Time flies when you're having fun.
- (3) Time drags when you have nothing to do.
- (4) The relationship lasted a long time.
- (5) His time [=death] had come.
- (6) Time flows on forever.

- 12 Compare the concepts of *happiness* and *joy* in British and American English.

- 13 The most typical conceptual metaphors of emotions include the following:

EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER (filled with emotion)

EMOTION IS HEAT/FIRE (burn with emotion)

EMOTION IS A NATURAL FORCE (be overwhelmed by an emotion)

EMOTION IS A PHYSICAL FORCE (be struck by an emotion)

EMOTION IS A CAPTIVE ANIMAL (let go of an emotion)

EMOTION IS BURDEN (be weighed down by an emotion)

Do you think they are common for English and Vietnamese? Provide 2 - 5 examples in English and Vietnamese as evidence for your ideas.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Compare categories of noun, verbs and adjectives in English and Vietnamese.
2. Investigate the spatial concepts “vào” and “ra” in Vietnamese and their counterparts in English.
3. Compare the spatial concepts “trên” and “dưới” in Vietnamese in comparison with the concepts “in” and “on” in English
4. Compare the terms of address in Vietnamese and English and explain why the Vietnamese addressing term system is so varied.
5. Compare the idioms related to “heart” in English and its counterpart “lòng” in Vietnamese. Explain why the two communities make use of such internal organs.
6. Investigate the concept of happiness in English and their counterparts in Vietnamese.

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CHAPTER V: CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS AT THE LEVEL OF PHONOLOGY

Acquiring the phonological contrasts of a language is one of the more challenging tasks for a language learner, and determining what the contrasts are is a basic aspect of phonological description, and a prerequisite to further analysis.

Elan Dresher

At the end of this chapter, students should be able to:

- **Recognize questions for contrastive studies at the level of phonology;**
- **Determine various *tertium comparationis* for contrastive analysis at the level of phonology;**
- **Explain similarities and differences between Vietnamese and English suprasegmental aspects, including stress, intonation, assimilation, elision, liaison;**
- **Explain similarities and differences between Vietnamese and English segmental phonemes, including vowels, consonants, tones, allophones, distributions of phonemes;**
- **Analyze similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese learner interlanguage phonological problems.**

5.1. Key concepts for contrastive analysis of phonological aspects

Phonetics is the study of speech sounds which are utilized by all human languages to represent meaning. It is concerned with the description and classification of speech sounds. In other words, the central concerns in phonetics are the discovery of how speech sounds are produced, how they are used in spoken

language, how we record sounds with written symbols, and how we hear and recognize different speech sounds.

Phonology is the study of the distribution and patterning of speech sounds in a language and the tacit rules governing pronunciation. While phonetics deals with the physical production, acoustic transmission and perception of the sounds of speech, phonology describes the way sounds function within a given language or across languages to encode meaning. For many linguists, phonetics belongs to descriptive linguistics, and phonology to theoretical linguistics, although establishing the phonological system of a language is necessarily an application of theoretical principles to analysis of phonetic evidence.

The **phoneme** is a basic unit of a language's phonology. It is the smallest sound segment that is combined with other phonemes to form meaningful units, morphemes. The phoneme can also be described as "The smallest contrastive linguistic unit which may bring about a change of meaning". In this way the difference in meaning between the English words *kill* and *kiss* is a result of the exchange of the phoneme /l/ for the phoneme /s/. Two words that differ in meaning through a contrast of a single phoneme form a minimal pair. The phoneme is divided into two types: *segmental phoneme* and *supra-segmental phoneme*. The English *segmental phonemes* include 44 sound segments (i.e., the vowel and consonant sounds) of a language; the *suprasegmental phonemes* system consists of stress, pitch, intonation,... that can make one word different from the other which has the same segment.

For instance, **really** spoken with different tones *really* or *really* gives rise to two different communicative meanings. *Increase* with stress on the first syllable and *Increase* with stress on the second syllable do not share the same meaning: they are noun and verb, respectively.

Allophones are variants of phonemes derived from the same phoneme in different distributions. The crucial distinction between phonemes and allophones is that substituting one phoneme for another will result in a word with different

meaning and different pronunciation; however, replacing an allophone only gives rise to different pronunciation of the same word.

For instance, /p/ in **pan** and /p/ in **span** are not pronounced in the same way. The former is aspirated due to the fact that it is in the initial position of a stressed syllable while the latter is preceded by /s/, hence unaspirated. Therefore, /p/ in **pan** and /p/ in **span** are allophones of the phoneme /p/.

Further examples of allophones include: /l/ in *line* and *file*, /r/ in *rain* and *train*, /w/ in *win* and *twin*, /k/ in *car* and *scar*, etc

Velarization is a secondary articulation of consonants by which the back of the tongue is raised toward the velum during the articulation of the consonant. The lateral /l/ becomes velarized [ɫ] when it follows a vowel and precedes a consonant (as in *film*, *help*), or when it is preceded by a vowel and at the end of a word (as in *file*, *boil*). For example:

File [fɪɫ], *milk* [mɪɫk], *dealt* [deɪɫt], *boil* [bɔɪɫ]

The **syllable** is a very important unit in speech which is often longer than a sound and smaller than a whole word. It is a sound segment formed by a peak (normally a vowel) and its surrounding sounds (usually consonants).

It should be noted that vowels can form a syllable on their own, or they can be the center of a syllable. For instance, *aware* is a two-syllable word which consists of the first syllable /əˈ-/ by itself and the second syllable /-weə/ with a consonant /w/ and a diphthong /eə/. Consonants are at the beginning or at the end of a syllable; they do not normally form syllables on their own (except for some special cases).

Stress is the pronunciation of a word or syllable with more force than the surrounding syllables or words. A stressed word or syllable is produced by using more air from the lungs. It is often heard as being louder than the surrounding unstressed ones. Stressed syllables or words are normally on a higher pitch and with higher duration.

There are 4 main levels of stress: primary stress (main stress, full tonic stress), secondary stress (substress), half stress, and unstress.

- *Primary stress* has its syllable pronounced with the greatest prominence.
- *Secondary stress* is a little bit weaker than the main stress in the same sound sequence.
- *Half stress* has no stress but the vowel is pronounced with full dictionary value.
- *Unstress* is the weakest form of a syllable, usually as a schwa /ə/

Assimilation is a phonetic process by which one speech sound (assimilating sound) influences an adjacent sound (assimilated sound), making it resemble or become identical with the neighboring sound. Assimilation varies in extent according to speaking rate and style; it is more likely to be found in rapid and casual speech, and less likely in slow and careful speech. Assimilation may occur within a word and between words. There are two types of assimilation: progressive and regressive.

In progressive assimilation, the preceding sound affects the following sound as in:

- *would you* /wud ju:/ becomes /wudʒu:/
- *soldier* /səʊld jə/ becomes /səʊldʒə/
- similarly, *procedure* is pronounced as /prəsi:dʒə/.

In regressive assimilation, the following sound influences the preceding sound as in:

- *this shop* /ðis ʃɒp/ becomes /ðɪʃ ʃɒp/ (ʃ is identical)
- *monkey* /mʌn ki/ becomes /mʌŋki/ (**ŋ** and **k** are both velars)

Generally, the tendency for regressive assimilation is that the change in manner is most likely to be towards an easier consonant and one which makes less obstruction to the air flow.

Elision is the omission of one or more sounds (such as a vowel, a consonant, or a whole syllable) in a word or phrase. Sometimes sounds are elided

to make a word easier to pronounce and elision is typical of rapid and casual speech.

Liaison (linking) is the linking of words in speech when the second word begins with a vowel. The most common case is the linking of /r/.

- *an egg* /ən eg/
- *number eight* /ˈnʌm.bə(r)eit/

The **intonation** refers to the way the voice goes up and down in pitch when people are speaking. It is a fundamental part of the way we express our own thoughts and it enables us to understand those of others. As well as helping to determine meaning, intonation gives us clues about the speaker's attitude, or how he feels about what he is saying. For instance, we can get a good idea as to whether someone is interested, bored, being kind, being honest or lying.

In contrastive phonetics and phonology, two major areas of analysis include segmental (phonemes and phoneme variants) and suprasegmental phenomena (stress, intonation, rhythm). To put it another way, the linguistic signals involve knowledge and skill in the perception and production of phonemes, syllable structure, word stress, word tones, sentence stress, rhythm, intonation. They are universals and serve as *tertium comparationis* in contrastive phonetics and phonology. In second language learning, therefore, there are two models for contrastive studies: the comparisons between learner native segmental and the second language segmental phenomena, and between learner native suprasegmental and the second language suprasegmental phenomena.

5.2. Contrastive analysis of segmental phenomena in English and Vietnamese

A contrastive analysis of segmental phenomena in English and Vietnamese primarily focuses on the phonemic systems, allophones, and their distributions in speech events. It aims to answer the following questions: 1) Which phonemes are found in both languages?; 2) Are the allophones in the two languages similar or

different?; 3) Do the phonemes and allophones have the same distributions? According to⁸⁶, the procedure for contrastive analysis may involve three steps:

Step 1: *Determining the phonemic systems in the two languages based on the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to find out the similarities and differences.*

A comparison of Vietnamese and English may begin at the smallest unit of language: the phoneme or speech sound. A phoneme is the smallest phonetic unit in a language that is capable of conveying a distinction in meaning. English phonemes consist of two categories: consonants and vowels while Vietnamese comprises three types of phonemes: consonants, vowels, and tones (sometimes referred to as tonemes). The English monophthongs are further divided into seven short vowels (*I, e, æ, ə, a, u, o*) and five long vowels (*i:, a:, u:, ɜ:, ɔ:*). It is noticeable that Vietnamese does not have such distinction but its vowel system is quite complicated, depending on the dialect.

A contrastive analysis of the two languages shows that English and Vietnamese have 17 similar consonants (see Appendix 1). Tones do not occur in English, but they are considered as phonemes in Vietnamese since a change in tone indicates a change in meaning. For instance, *mua* “buy” and *múa* “dance” are two distinct words that only differ in tone, namely the level tone and rising tone, respectively. There are six tones in standard Vietnamese, including *level* (không dấu), *falling* (huyền), *creaky* (ngã), *dipping-rising* (hỏi), *rising* (sắc), and *constricted* (nặng). In the Southern dialect, the creaky and the dipping-rising tones are both produced as the dipping-rising tone; In the Central dialect, the creaky and the dipping-rising are pronounced as a constricted tone. The phonemic systems in English and Vietnamese are presented in the table below.

⁸⁶ Bùi, Mạnh Hùng (2008). *Ngôn ngữ học đối chiếu*. NXB Giáo dục. p. 183.

Phonemes		English	Vietnamese
Consonants		24	22
Vowels	Monophthongs	12	11
	Diphthongs	8	32
	Triphthongs	5	13
Tones		0	6
Total number of phonemes		49	84

As can be seen in the table above, both languages have approximately the same number of consonants and monophthongs. Nonetheless, Vietnamese diphthongs and triphthongs significantly outnumber the English counterparts. Some English sounds that do not exist in Vietnamese are especially difficult for Vietnamese learners.

For instance, the sound /æ/ as in “cat” is often mispronounced as /a/ or /e/ by Vietnamese learners. The distinction between long and short sounds also presents considerable challenges for Vietnamese. For example, it is not easy for Vietnamese learners, especially beginners, to distinguish between “ship” and “sheep”; “shot” and “short”.

A number of consonants are also absent in the Vietnamese sound system, such as dentals /ð/ as in “then” and /θ/ as in “thank”, palato-alveolars /z/ as in “vision” and /dʒ/ as in “job”, approximants /w/ as in “we” and /j/ as in “you”, etc. It is worth noting that if the same phonemes are found in the two languages, they can be further analysed.

Step 2: *Determining the allophones in each language and finding out similarities and differences.*

Some English phonemes have allophones in different distributions. Nevertheless, this phenomenon is not seen in Vietnamese. For example, the phoneme /t/ can have several allophones as follows: /t/ is aspirated in initial position of a stressed syllable as in “take” and it is unaspirated after /s/. Thus, the same /t/ is pronounced differently in “take” and “stake”. Similarly, /w/ is “win” and /w/ in “twin” differ in that the latter is devoiced after /t/.

Step 3: *Contrasting the distributions of phonemes and allophones.*

The phonemes in the two languages are not only contrasted on the paradigmatical axis, but also on the syntagmatical axis, i.e, how it may be combined with other phonemes to form meaningful words. Take the sound /ŋ/ for example. In English, this sound only occurs after vowels as in “dining”, “king”, etc. In Vietnamese, however, it occurs in both initial and final positions of a syllable, as in “ngoan”, “ngừng”, etc. By contrast, the sound /l/ is only found in initial position of a syllable in Vietnamese, but it can occur in both distributions in English, as in “leap” and “meal”.

5.3. Contrastive analysis of suprasegmental phenomena in English and Vietnamese

Suprasegmental aspects of speech are universal concepts in languages which include syllable structure, stress, tone, intonation and length. They are characteristics of speech that can distinguish words, phrases or sentences and can serve as *tertium comparationis* for contrastive studies on suprasegmental questions in languages. In second language learning, therefore, one can compare the learner native suprasegmental and the second language suprasegmental phenomena.

5.3.1. Contrastive analysis of syllable structure

Syllable is a unit of speech formed minimally of one vowel. Syllable is used to talk about the pronunciation of word, not writing. For example, in writing, *chocolate* can be divided into *cho-co-late*. But it is pronounced with only two parts. A word can be monosyllabic, disyllabic or multisyllabic. For example, English word *cut* is monosyllabic; confident /CONFident/ is multisyllabic.

The Vietnamese syllable has four components: tone, initial consonants, vowel, and final consonant. The initial and final consonant can be absent, but the tone and vowel are necessary. There are some similarities and dissimilarity between Vietnamese and English (and other the Indo-European languages) syllables. Most Vietnamese words are monosyllabic. Therefore, analysing these questions are significant and suitable for Vietnamese in their learning an Indo-European language as well as for the Indo-European native language speakers in their learning Vietnamese.

5.3.2. *Contrastive analysis of stress*

Stress is prominent relation between syllables in a word. Certain syllables are more clearly voiced than those around them. It is a popular and common characteristic of the Indo-European languages. In these languages, stress pattern is variable and unpredictable. The placement of stress in a multisyllabic word can mark a difference of the meaning of the word. For example, English words *cóntent* (that which is contained) differs from *contént* (satisfy someone); *récord* (anything that is preserved as evidence) and *recórd* (to write down or to tape something). If a word has more than one syllable, stress is given to one of the syllables. The syllable given by the stress is made longer, louder and higher.

If a word has more than one syllable, stress is given to one of the syllables. The syllable given by the stress is made longer, louder and higher than the others. Stress of a word can be shown circle: each circle is a syllable and the bigger circle shows the syllable which has the stress. For example, *September* is oOo.

Many American and British English words are stressed differently in the two varieties. Therefore, it is also useful to compare the differences between American and British English stress where distinction of stress is found.

Word tress is unfamiliar to Vietnamese native speakers because Vietnamese is an isolating language with lexical tones. It raises essential questions for comparison between Vietnamese and English at the level of phonology.

Multisyllabic words have stress pattern, which is lexical stress. However, sentences also have a stress pattern and this is sentence stress or rhythmic stress. For instance:

Thanks a lot! THANKS a LOT!

The stress pattern is OoO.

Yes, of course! YES, of COURSE!

The stress pattern is OoO.

Please to meet you! PLEASE to MEET you!

The stress pattern is OoOo.

Hancock (2003) gives an English sentence stress phrasebook for English learners to compare their rhythm with the standard. Through practicing comparison they improve their English pronunciation. This is a primary model of intralingual contrastive studies at the level of phonology.

oOo	OoO	oOoO	ooOoO
Good morning.	What's the	A piece of cake.	Would you like a
Good evening.	time?	The shop was	drink?
Excuse me!	Thanks a lot.	closed.	Do you want to
How are you?	Close the door.	It's the time to	come?
You're	Come and see!	go.	Is it time to go?
welcome.	Don't forget.	I spoke to John.	Is it far from
I'd love to.		A cup of tea.	home?

(Hancock, 2003, p. 161)

It should be noted that Vietnamese is a syllable-timed language while English has stress-timed rhythm, which means that stressed syllables tend to occur at relatively regular intervals whether they are separated by unstressed syllables or not. The stressed-timed rhythm theory states that the time duration from each

stressed syllable to the next tends to be the same, irrespective of the number of intervening unstressed syllables. For example:

2. Đi theo đường này đến đoạn cuối con kênh đào

In sentence (1) above, the duration of time from 1 to 2 is the same as that from 2 to 3, from 3 to 4 and from 4 to 5 even though there is no intervening unstressed syllable between 1 and 2, and there are 3 intervening unstressed syllables between 4 and 5. However, in the Vietnamese version (2), the duration of time between one syllable to the next is the same and all the syllables receive equal stress.

The same is true for the sentences below where stressed syllables are in bold type.

3. The latest trend is for green technology

4. Khuyh hướng hiện nay là công nghệ thân thiện với môi trường

The stress-timed rhythm in English is a big challenge for Vietnamese learners of English, who tend to speak English with the syllable-timed pattern.

5.3.3. Contrastive analysis of tone

Tone deals with quality of sounds to convey the meaning at the word level. The kind of tone is common for the Austro-Asiatic languages (including Vietnamese), but uncommon for the major European languages and their relatives. Vietnamese has six tones. Tone is shaped independently of initial consonant and rhyme. It is why the whole syllables are kept but tones change, a new word is created. For this reason, tones are considered as phonemes in Vietnamese since a change in tone indicates a change in meaning. For example:

Tone (thanh)	Mark	Level tone	Vietnamese	English
Ngang		Unmarked/level	ma	ghost
Sắc	´	Rising tone	má	mother

Huyền	ˋ	Falling tone	mà	which
Hỏi	ˊ	Falling/dipping rising/creaky tone	mả	tomb
Ngã	˜	High rising tone	mã	horse
Nặng	ˋ	Low constricted tone	mạ	rice seeding

The six tone markers help create numerous phonemes in Vietnamese. This is a huge difference between English and Vietnamese pronunciation.

5.3.4. Contrastive analysis of intonation

Intonation is crucial to human communication, supplying additional meaning to the lexical meaning. Intonation has the functions of focusing, attitude, grammar and discourse:

- Focusing function is that by which the speaker focuses on the most significant information by means of the location of the nucleus.
- Attitudinal function is used to express speaker's attitude on what is being said.
- Grammatical function is used to distinguish certain syntactic relationships in the utterance.
- Discourse function indicates relationships between speaker and listener, and between new and old information.

Intonation is an interesting and meaningful for both interlingual and intralingual contrastive studies. It plays an important role for second language learners in improving their communicative language competence.

5.3.5. Contrastive analysis of aspects of connected speech

Assimilation

Assimilation is a phonetic process by which one speech sound influences an adjacent sound, making it resemble or become identical with the neighboring sound. Assimilation is more likely to be found in rapid and casual speech, and less

likely in slow and careful speech. Assimilation may occur within a word and between words. For instance:

- *would you* /wud ju:/ becomes /wudʒu:/
- *soldier* /səʊld jə/ becomes /səʊldʒə/
- *monkey* /mʌn ki/ becomes /mʌŋki/ (**ŋ** and **k** are both velars)

In Vietnamese, “*sáp nhập*” is often pronounced as /sát nhập/ (**t** and **n** are alveolars)

Liaison

Liaison is the linking of words in speech when the second word begins with a vowel. The most common case in English is the linking of /r/.

- *number eight* /nʌmbə (r) eɪt/
- *an egg* /ən eg/

Vietnamese has six final consonants (3 voiceless sounds *p, t, k*, and 3 voiced sounds *m, n, ŋ*), but linking does not occur in Vietnamese.

For example: *Không khuất phục trước uy lực kẻ thù*

In the example above, the preceding sound /k(c)/ does not link with the following vowel /u/ as it is in English.

Elision

Elision is the omission of one or more sounds (such as a vowel, a consonant, or a whole syllable) in a word or phrase. Sometimes sounds are elided to make a word easier to pronounce and elision is typical of rapid and casual speech. Elision occurs in both English and Vietnamese.

- English: *tonight* /tənaɪt/, *police* /pəli:s/, *correct* /kərekt/
- Vietnamese: *đi thì đi* /đi ì đi/, *còn có một tí* /còn cơ ọm tí/

In Vietnamese southern dialect, clitic or contraction is also found in such cases below:

Ông (ông áy), anh (anh áy), bà (bà áy), bên (bên áy),...

SUMMARY

Contrastive analysis of phonetics and phonology involves the linguistic signals which include knowledge and skill in the perception and production of phonemes, syllable structure, tones, stress, rhythm, intonation. Some of them are universal and other are language-specific. Phonological contrastive studies are mainly limited to the investigation of the articulatory features of speech sounds. Hence, the similarity of articulation is one of the possible *tertia comparationis*. The lack of phonetic equivalents of some second language sounds in one's native language is one of major difficulties in learning a foreign pronunciation. The main methods of contrastive studies at the level of phonology are response recording and experimental.

PRACTICE

1. Compare the consonants in Vietnamese and English with regards to the following aspects:
 - *Which consonants are found in both languages?*
 - *Which consonants are present in English but absent in Vietnamese, and vice versa?*
 - *Distributions of consonants in the two languages: which consonants occur in initial (or final) positions in Vietnamese but are not found in such positions in English?*
 - *Which English consonants are problematic for Vietnamese learners? Why?*
2. Compare Vietnamese and English vowels in the following areas:
 - *Which vowels are found in both languages?*
 - *Which vowels are present in English but absent in Vietnamese, and vice versa?*
 - *Which English vowels are problematic for Vietnamese learners? Why?*

3. Which English consonants are pronounced differently depending on their positions in the syllable? What do we call this phonetic phenomenon?
4. Explain the following phenomena:
 - When /e/ in “them” is pronounced as /e/, and when it is pronounced as /ə/?
 - When /a/ in “and” is pronounced as / ə /, and when it is pronounced as /æ/?
5. The sound /l/ does not occur in final position of a syllable in Vietnamese but it does in English. What is the difference between /l/ in the initial and /l/ in final position?

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Investigate the elision phenomena in English and Vietnamese
2. Study the stress-timed rhythm phenomenon in English and investigate the difficulties Vietnamese learners of English often encounter
3. Compare Vietnamese learner interlanguage vowels and English vowels. Which English vowels are problematic for low-level Vietnamese learners and what deviation of pronunciation of such sounds that Vietnamese learners often make as compared to standard English?
4. Compare Vietnamese learner interlanguage consonants and English consonants. Which English consonants are problematic for low-level Vietnamese learners and what deviation of pronunciation of such sounds that Vietnamese learners often make as compared to standard English?
5. Investigate the weak form and strong form in English and conduct a survey of Vietnamese learner interlanguage of this phenomenon.

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CHAPTER VI: CONTRASTIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

"However many languages a person knows, that's how much a person is worth"

(Croatian folk saying)

At the end of this chapter, students should be able to:

- **Recognize general meaningful patterns in a discourse;**
- **Understand key concepts of discourse analysis, including cohesion, coherence, adjacency pairs, theme and rheme;**
- **Specify contrastive units on the perspective of speech acts;**
- **Explain the *tertium comparationis* in contrastive studies in discourse analysis;**
- **Do contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese discourse.**

6.1. The concept of discourse analysis

Discourses stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive. It refers to units of language in use that have been produced as the result of an act of communication such as utterances, paragraphs, conversations, interviews, texts. Let's look at the three pieces of language below:

1) *This box contains, on average, 100 Large Plain Paper Clips. "Applied Linguistics" is therefore not the same as "Linguistics". The tea is as hot as it could be. This is Willie Worm. Just send 12 Guinness "cool token" bottle tops.*

2) *Set of 6 Irish coffee glasses. Always place a spoon in the glass before pouring hot coffee into it. This will prevent the glass cracking.*

3) *Help!*

Example (1) is not discourse because it is not meaningful and unified; (2) and (3) are discourse because they are meaningful, unified and purposive.

Discourse analysis is concerned with the analysis of language 'beyond the sentence'. In other words, discourse analysts look at whole texts rather than sentences or clauses. Discourse analysis is divided into:

1. *Spoken Discourse Analysis*: study of conversations, dialogues, spoken monologues, etc.
2. *Written Discourse Analysis*: study of written texts, such as essays, news, written speeches, etc.

This chapter deals with major issues of contrastive analysis of English and Vietnamese discourse, including coherence, cohesion, adjacency pairs and exchanges, theme and rheme.

6.2. Contrastive discourse analysis principles

While discourse studies investigate ways in which language is used and investigate larger levels of language structure, contrastive studies on discourse focus on the (dis)similarities in content (or meaning) between the expressions, and the (dis)similarities in textual structure in two or more languages. The relation between discourse content and its expressions in two contrastive languages is illustrated in *Figure 2.2*.

L1 expression, L2 expression and their content are three components of a contrastive study. Overlapping idea/content is what has “the same cognitive structures and the same communicative needs in speaking” in contrastive discourses. The outside parts of the overlapping idea are the differences between contrastive units. They express sociocultural linguistic features.

The same cognitive structures and the same communicative needs in speaking in a discourse are as the surface of an iceberg. What supports the surface is as nonliteral meanings in second language acquisition. And it works for some kind of sameness in contrastive studies in the perspective of culture, speech acts, politeness, etc.

6.3. Discourse and contrastive units in the perspectives of speech

Discourse encloses its content and expression which regulates each other. Each constituent, in turn encompasses its constituents. The distribution of hierarchical structure of discourse is drawn as in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Units of discourse (following Кашкин⁸⁷)

Content	Linguistic expression of discourse	
	Spoken units	Written units
Genre	Communicative event	Text
Topic	Dialogue	Paragraph
Minimum idea	Utterance	Sentence
Pretext	Speech act	Speech act

Following Chafe⁸⁸ and Кашкин⁸⁹, we describe the hierarchies of contrastive units in discourse are processed like this:

Contrastive studies on discourse

are based on genre composed of either spoken or written discourse

are based on topics composed of either dialogs or paragraphs

are based on minimum ideas composed of either utterances or sentences

are composed of speech acts.

Speech act is an action that the speaker intends to perform with the utterance. It, according to Austin⁹⁰, includes locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

⁸⁷ Кашкин, В.Б. (2010). *Парадоксы границы в языке и коммуникации*. Воронеж: Издатель О.Ю.Алейников. P. 174.

⁸⁸ Chafe, W. (2014). 'Discourse: language beyond the sentence', In Genetti (ed.). Cambridge University Press. P. 202.

⁸⁹ Кашкин (ibid. p. 174).

⁹⁰ Austin, J. L. (1980). *How to do things with Words*. (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

6.4. Contrastive analysis of cohesion

Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning. While cohesion is surface links that connect clauses and sentences, coherence is the extent to which discourse is perceived to hang together rather than being a set of unrelated sentences or utterances. The difference between cohesion and coherence is shown in the table below:

Cohesion	Coherence
In the text	In the reader's/listener's mind
Grammatical links	The feeling that the text makes sense
Clues/signals/guide to coherence	The reader has to create coherence

The following examples illustrate the relationship between cohesion and coherence.

1) John forgot to bring the corkscrew. The party was spoilt

(There's no surface link, but it is coherent)

2) Although Thu is a teacher, she is very honest

(There is a formal cohesive device (conjunction "although"), but it is not coherent because the sentence does not sound right according to our common background knowledge)

3) **Hắn** vừa đi vừa chửi. **Chí Phèo** xách một cái vỏ chai đến nhà bá Kiến.

(**He** cursed as he walked. **Chi Pheo** went to bá Kiến's house with an empty bottle in his hand).

(The two sentences are coherent because they are connected with a cataphoric reference "Hắn/he", which refers forward to "Chí Phèo").

There are two main types of cohesion: *grammatical cohesion*, which is based on structural content; and *lexical cohesion*, which is based on lexical content and background knowledge. A cohesive text is created in many different ways. Halliday and Hasan⁹¹ identify five general categories of cohesive devices that create coherence in texts: *reference*, *substitution*, ellipsis, *lexical cohesion* and *conjunction*. There are universal and culture-specific features in the use of these cohesive devices in English and Vietnamese.

Reference

Reference includes anaphoric reference, which looks backward in the text for its referents “she” in (2) above, and cataphoric reference, which looks forward in the text for its referent as “Hắn” in (3) above. A contrastive analysis of a piece of discourse between English and Vietnamese version reveals some differences in using referents.

- 4) *We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild **our** country and to restore **its** promise for all of **our** people*
(President Trump’s inaugural address, 20/1/2017).
- 5) *Chúng ta, công dân của nước Mỹ, đang tham gia vào nỗ lực quốc gia lớn lao để tái thiết đất nước và khôi phục lời hứa với toàn thể người dân*
(Diễn văn nhậm chức tổng thống Trump, 20/1/2017)

As can be seen in example (4) and its translation in (5), possessive adjectives **our** and **its** are used as anaphoric reference in English. However, such devices do not commonly occur in Vietnamese as it may sound clumsy. Possessive adjectives as anaphoric or cataphoric reference are used in Vietnamese only when it is necessary to clarify.

- 6) *Nghe nói vậy, ông ấy lấy xe đi lên bác sỹ Hiền để được thăm khám.*
- 7) *Khi phát hiện thấy Hiếu đã lấy xe của mình, anh Mạnh hô “cướp”!*

Substitution and ellipsis

⁹¹ Halliday, M. A. K. & Hassan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.

Another kind of formal link between sentences is the substitution of words like *do or so* for a word or group of words which have appeared in an earlier sentence. It would be very long-winded if we had always to answer a question like *Do you like mangoes?* with a sentence like *Yes, I like mangoes* or *Yes, I think I like mangoes*. It is much quicker, and it means the same, if we say *Yes, I do* or *Yes, I think so*.

8) A: Is it going to rain?

B: I think so

9) A: Có phải Nam bị trượt môn lý thuyết không?

B: Hình như thế.

Ellipsis is a form of substitution in which the original item is replaced by zero. In other words, it is the omission of elements normally required by the grammar which the speaker/writer assumes are obvious from the context and therefore need not be raised. So the *structure* has a ‘missing’ element which, however, is supplied by the context. There are similarities and differences in the use of ellipsis and substitution in English and Vietnamese.

10) *I offered him a seat. He said he didn't want one.*

(Tôi nhường ghế cho bác ấy, nhưng bác bảo không cần...)

11) *The children will carry the small boxes, the adults the large ones.*

(Lũ trẻ khiêng hộp nhỏ, còn người lớn hộp to)

In (10), “one” is used as substitution for “a seat”. However, in Vietnamese ellipsis is used instead, i.e. it is unnecessary to repeat the word. In (11) substitution is used while repetition is more common.

Lexical cohesion

The major relation between vocabulary items in texts is *reiteration*. Reiteration means either restating an item in a later part of the discourse by direct repetition or else reasserting its meaning by exploiting lexical relations. Lexical relations are the stable semantic relationships that exist between words and which

are the basis of descriptions given in dictionaries: for example, *rose* and *flower* are related by *hyponymy*; rose is a hyponym of flower. *Eggplant* and *aubergine* are related by *synonymy*. In the following two sentences, lexical cohesion by synonymy occurs:

12) The meeting commenced at six thirty. But from the moment it began, it was clear that all was not well

Here, *commence* and *begin* co-refer to the same entity in the real world. Decoding the co-referring relationships is an interpretive act of the reader, just as occurs with pronouns. In the following example, cohesion by hyponymy occurs:

13) There was a fine old rocking-chair that his father used to sit in, a desk where he wrote letters, and a nest of small tables and a dark, imposing bookcase. Now all this furniture was to be sold, and with it his own past.

14) Ăn độ là nơi có truyền thống mua vàng vào các dịp lễ hội truyền thống. Cho dù giá vàng tăng gấp đôi nhưng điều đó không ngăn cản người dân Ăn Độ mua thứ kim loại lấp lánh này

In conversation, reiteration may be more diverse in English than in Vietnamese. In spoken data, speakers reiterate their own words and take up one *another's* vocabulary selections in one form or another from turn to turn and develop and expand topics coherently in doing so. This phenomenon is referred to as *relexicalization*.

15) A: It's very hot today

B: Yeah. It's boiling

16) A: Hôm nay trời nóng thật

B: Ủ, nóng chảy mỡ đi

Conversations in (15) and (16) show that English speakers tend to use a synonym for relexicalization while Vietnamese people may repeat the word with some emphasis.

6.5. Contrastive analysis of adjacency pairs and exchanges

An adjacency pair is an example of conversational turn-taking. An adjacency pair consists of two utterances by two speakers, one after the other. The speaking of the first utterance (the first-pair part, or the first turn) provokes a responding utterance (the second-pair part, or the second turn). The preferred patterns in English are presented as follows:

<u>Utterance function</u>	<u>Expected response</u>
<i>greeting</i>	<i>greeting</i>
<i>congratulation</i>	<i>thanks</i>
<i>apology</i>	<i>acceptance</i>
<i>inform</i>	<i>acknowledgement</i>
<i>leave-taking</i>	<i>leave-taking</i>

There are certain similarities and differences in Vietnamese and English. For instance:

17) A: *I really like your new haircut!!*"

B: *Oh, thanks*

18) A: *Cắt tóc đâu mà đẹp thế?*

B: *Thường thôi/Tối nay không ăn cơm cũng no/Cám ơn anh.*

19) A: *Nhà em mới chung nhau làm thịt con lợn sạch. Biếu anh chị một cân.*

B: *Em hay vẽ vờì thế.*

20) A: *I bought this VL purse for you.*

B: *Oh, thank you so much. This is exactly what I'm looking for.*

6.6. Contrastive analysis of theme and rheme

A message consists of two main parts: theme & rheme. The theme is the topic and the rheme is the comment. In other words, the theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message. The remainder of the message, the part in which the theme is developed, is called the rheme.

21) *The cat ate the rat (The focus is the CAT).*

22) ***The rat** was eaten by the cat (The focus is the RAT).*

There are three types of themes: Topical, Interpersonal, and textual.

23) ***Frankly, the movie** was a waste of money. **However, you** should see it and*

Interpl. Topical

Textual Topical

make up your own mind.

Theme can be a nominal group, adverb group, prepositional phrases. English and Vietnamese are called ‘SVO’ languages, in that the declarative clause requires a verb at its center, a subject before it and any object after it. Other languages are VSO’ or ‘SOV’ languages. However, very often this basic pattern is rearranged by means of *fronting devices*. When the subject is the theme, it is unmarked; when a theme that is something other than the subject in a declarative sentence is called *marked*.

24) *Giữa giường thất bảo ngồi trên một bà (marked)*

25) *Susan drove a Rolls Royce (unmarked)*

26) *Rich they may be, but I don’t think they’re happy (marked: CSV Complement-fronted)*

A contrastive analysis of theme and rheme in English and Vietnamese can be interesting and of practical values.

SUMMARY

Discourse analysis refers mainly to the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse. It deals with the organisation of language above the sentence such as cohesion and coherence, adjacency pairs, conversational exchanges theme and rheme. Comparisons between their components can be based on topics composed of either dialogues or texts on minimum ideas composed of either utterances or sentences. A contrastive analysis

of discourse between English and Vietnamese can be of practical and pedagogical values because there are certain common features and culture-specific in the two languages.

PRACTICE

PRACTICE 1: Someone say "thanks" to you. How do you reply to this?
Name as many replies as you can. Compare your replies with your partner's.

PRACTICE 2: Someone has done some inconvenient thing for you and they say "I'm sorry". How do you reply to this? Name as many replies as you can. Compare your replies with your partner's.

PRACTICE 3: Write the prototypes of English and Vietnamese greetings in Table 7. 1. Explain the similarities and differences between formal and informal, self introducing and introducing someone.

	Self introducing	Introducing someone else
Formal introduction	-.....	-.....
Informal introduction	-.....	-.....

PRACTICE 4: Write the most suitable response to the following phrases.

English expression	Vietnamese expression
<i>How are you?</i>
<i>How do you do?</i>
<i>Pleased to meet you.</i>
<i>It was nice meeting you.</i>
<i>Have a good weekend.</i>
<i>See you next month.</i>
<i>I hope to see you again.</i>

PRACTICE 5: Write as many as you can English expressions for a general phone call. Compare your writing with your partner's.

PRACTICE 6: Complete the chart with the given idea. Compare your results with your partner's. What are the major differences between English and Vietnamese phone call?

Idea	English expression	Vietnamese expression
● introducing yourself
● asking for the caller's name
● saying who or what you want responding
● reason for calling
● leaving and taking a message asking for repetition

PRACTICE 7: The following English and Vietnamese versions have their own way of expressing, but they are equivalent in content. Discuss the (dis)similarities between two versions. Can you suggest another translation for English version?

English expression	Vietnamese expression
Mrs Scott bought a new house last year. The walls of the rooms had been painted a short time before.	Năm ngoái bà Scot mua một ngôi nhà. Trước khi mua ít lâu các phòng đều đã được sơn lại.

PRACTICE 8: The following English and Vietnamese versions are equivalent in content. Analyze the similarities and differences between their contents and the way of expressing.

English version	Vietnamese version
<p>Visitors to Siou Quan Village in Phong Dien District of Thua Thien-Hue province are impressed by the thick loc vung trees standing like a green belt protecting residents.</p> <p>Siou Quan Village covers 320 hectares, 70 percent of which are reserved for loc vung trees.</p>	<p>Đến làng Siêu Quân, điều làm những vị lữ khách ấn tượng nhất có lẽ là hệ thống những cây lộc vừng cổ thụ có tuổi đời vài trăm năm tuổi bao bọc quanh làng. Nó giống như một vành đai xanh để che chở và bảo vệ làng.</p> <p>Làng Siêu Quân có 320 ha rừng thì cây lộc vừng chiếm đến 70% diện tích.</p>

Assume that Vietnamese and English readers have their own images of loc vung, village, the value of green trees, forest, treasure, etc. the writers try to use simple, concrete, and familiar languages.

PRACTICE 9: Write as many invitations as you can in English and Vietnamese.

Idea/Content	Inviting expressions	Responses
	- Would you like a cup of tea?	-
	-
Offering someone a	-

cup of tea	- Cháu mời bác xơi nước ạ.	-
	-
	-

PRACTICE 10: Complete the chart below. Compare yours with the partner's.

Idea	English expression	Vietnamese expression
	- If you'll excuse me, I have to make a phone call.
.....	- If you'll excuse me, I must just go and say hello to someone.
	- Would you excuse me a moment? I'll be right back.

PRACTICE 11: Compare English versions (by Henry, 1995) with its translation into Vietnamese (by Ngô Vĩnh Viễn, 2002). Determine the (dis)similarities between them. Pay attention on speech acts, address terms, collocations.

English versions	Translation
'Give it to me quick,' said Dalla.	- Bà đưa tiền đây cho tôi, nhanh lên- Dala nói.
'Jim, darling,' she cried, 'don't look at me that way... You don't know what a	- Gim, anh yêu quý – cô kêu lên – Đừng nhìn em như thế... Anh biết không, em đã mua tặng anh một món quà rất tuyệt,

nice – what a beautiful, nice gift I’ve got for you.’

‘Tell me as soon as you have finished,’ said Johnsny, closing her eyes, and lying white and still as a fallen stature, ‘because I want to see the last one fall. I’m tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on evening, and go sailing down, down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves.’

một món quà rất đẹp, rất tuyệt.

- Bao giờ xong chị bảo em ngay nhé! – Giônxy nói rồi nhắm mắt lại, nằm yên và trắng bệch như một pho tượng đổ, vì em muốn được thấy chiếc lá cuối cùng rụng xuống. Em đợi mãi ngán lắm rồi, em nghĩ mãi mệt lắm rồi. Em muốn buông xuôi hết thảy và dong buồm xuôi dòng như một trong những chiếc lá mệt mỏi và tội nghiệp kia.

PRACTICE 12: Compare Vietnamese poem Quê hương by Giang Nam with its translation into English. Determine the (dis)similarities between them.

QUÊ HƯƠNG

Thưở còn thơ ngày hai buổi đến trường

Yêu quê hương qua từng trang sách nhỏ:

"Ai bảo chăn trâu là khổ?"

Tôi mơ màng nghe chim hót trên cao

Những ngày trốn học

Đuổi bướm cầu ao

Mẹ bắt được...

Chưa đánh roi nào đã khóc!

Có cô bé nhà bên

Nhìn tôi cười khúc khích

Cách mạng bùng lên

Rồi kháng chiến trường kỳ

Quê tôi đầy bóng giặc

Từ biệt mẹ tôi đi

Cô bé nhà bên - (có ai ngờ!)
Cũng vào du kích
Hôm gặp tôi vẫn cười khúc khích
Mắt đen tròn (thương thương quá đi thôi!)
Giữa cuộc hành quân không nói được một lời
Đơn vị đi qua, tôi ngoái đầu nhìn lại...
Mưa đầy trời nhưng lòng tôi ấm mãi...
Hoà bình tôi trở về đây
Với mái trường xưa, bãi mía, luống cà
Lại gặp em
Thẹn thùng nép sau cánh cửa...
Vẫn khúc khích cười khi tôi hỏi nhỏ
Chuyện chồng con (khó nói lắm anh ơi!)
Tôi nắm bàn tay nhỏ nhắn ngậm ngùi
Em vẫn để yên trong tay tôi nóng bỏng...
Hôm nay nhận được tin em
Không tin được dù đó là sự thật
Giặc bắn em rồi quăng mắt xác
Chỉ vì em là du kích, em ơi!
Đau xé lòng anh, chết nửa con người!
Xưa yêu quê hương vì có chim có bướm
Có những ngày trốn học bị đòn roi...
Nay yêu quê hương vì trong từng nắm đất
Có một phần xương thịt của em tôi!

Native Village

(Nguyen Quang Thieu, Nguyen Ba Chung, Bruce Weigl)

As a boy I went to school twice a day.
From the pages of my school book
I learned to love my native village
“Who says tending the water buffalo is a hard life?”
I listened to bird song from the trees as if in a dream.
Some days I played truant from school,
Catching butterflies by the pond
Until my mother caught me.
Although she didn't use the whip, I cried.
The little girl next door
Looked me and laughed and I was ashamed.
Then the revolution,
The long war started
And my native village was filled
With the shadow of the enemy.
Leaving my mother, I went away
Who could believe the little girl next door
Also joined the guerrillas
The day we met she laughed again
Her lovely eyes wide and black.
As we moved toward battle, I couldn't say a word.
As my unit passed, I turned my heart
The sky was full of rain but my heart was warm
In peace I returned
To the old school, the plowed fields, and sugar cane.
Again we met

Ashamed, she hid behind the door
When I whispered, "Are you married?"
She laughed. "I don't know what to say," she said
Grieving, I held her small hand in mine;
Her hand stayed in my burning hand.
Today I heard news of her
That I can't believe though I know it is true
Because she was a partisan
They shot her dead and threw her body away.
I feel my heart dead myself, my heart nothing but pain.
When I was young, I loved my native village,
Its birds and butterflies,
All my truant days from school
I love my native village, every clod of earth
Where the flesh and blood of my sister lie.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Investigate the lexical cohesion in English and Vietnamese (repetition, synonym, hyponym, superordinates, ...).
2. Do contrastive analysis of grammatical cohesion in English and Vietnamese (conjunction, reference, substitution, ...).
3. Do contrastive analysis of theme and rheme structure in English and Vietnamese.
4. Compare sociolinguistic characteristics in English and Vietnamese greetings.
5. Identify the (dis) similarities between English and Vietnamese invitations.

6. Write a letter application for a job in English and other one in Vietnamese. Determine the (dis)similarities between English and Vietnamese ones.

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