

## SO SÁNH ĐỐI CHIẾU THÀNH NGỮ CHỈ SỰ QUYẾT TÂM TRONG TIẾNG ANH VÀ TIẾNG VIỆT TỪ GÓC NHÌN LIÊN VĂN HÓA

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Để giao tiếp hiệu quả, người học ngoại ngữ cần phải có kiến thức về ngôn ngữ, kỹ năng ngôn ngữ và văn hóa. Đơn vị ngữ cú, cụ thể trong nghiên cứu này là thành ngữ, là gốc của hầu hết mọi nền văn hóa cũng như một phần quan trọng trong việc tiếp thu ngôn ngữ. Thông qua việc phân tích ngữ nghĩa và đặc điểm liên văn hóa, nghiên cứu này nhằm mục đích chỉ ra những điểm tương đồng và khác biệt về thành ngữ chỉ lòng quyết tâm trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt trên cơ sở ngôn ngữ học đối chiếu. Từ đó nghiên cứu rút ra những khác biệt theo định hướng liên văn hóa giữa hai ngôn ngữ về hình tượng liên tưởng trong việc dùng thành ngữ. Hơn thế nữa, giáo viên có thể khuyến khích tinh thần ham học hỏi của học viên trong quá trình khám phá vẻ đẹp của thành ngữ trong hai ngôn ngữ. Từ cơ sở nghiên cứu này người học ngôn ngữ sẽ tìm ra mối quan hệ của hai ngôn ngữ và hai nền văn hóa, từ đó làm giàu kinh nghiệm về ngôn ngữ và đời sống. Các nhà biên soạn sách giáo khoa cũng có thể dùng nó để tăng yếu tố bản địa Việt Nam trong quá trình biên soạn sách học tiếng Anh.

**Từ khóa:** *determination proverbs, English proverbs, Vietnamese proverbs, contrast.*

*For the purpose of effective communication, every learner of a foreign language needs knowledge of the language, skills and culture. Phraseological units, particularly proverbs in this study, are the root of almost all cultures as well as a critical part of language acquisition. This research, based on cross-cultural features and semantic analysis, aims to point out the similarities and differences of English and Vietnamese determination proverbs. This research can, therefore, explore the cross-cultural gaps between the two languages in terms of proverbs' referents. Moreover, teachers can promote the learning spirit of students in their exploration of the beauty of proverbs in both languages. From this study, students can find out the relationship between the two languages and cultures, as well as gain more background knowledge and experience. Coursebook designers can also use this research as a source of reference to localize English coursebooks in Vietnam.*

**Keywords:** *determination proverbs, English proverbs, Vietnamese proverbs, contrast.*

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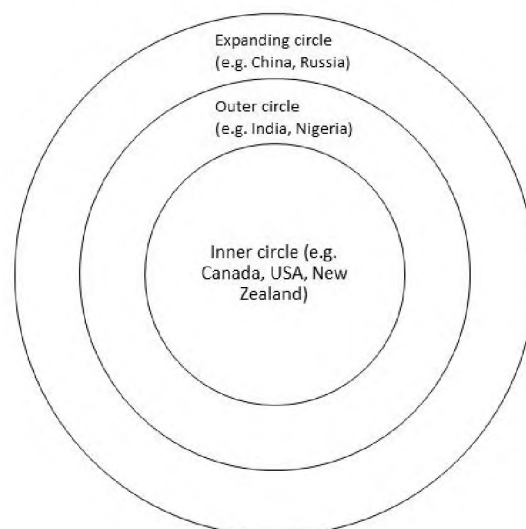
## DETERMINATION PROVERBS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE: A CROSS-CULTURAL CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. The importance of proverbs

Language learning requires not only language awareness and skills but also intercultural capacities (Liddicoat, 2016; Chau & Truong, 2019). Therefore, the more we integrate into the world of English, the more we may realize that English, as a lingua franca, is not only a tool to understand lexical resources but is a bridge between two languages in which cultures are woven. The role of English teaching and learning now does not merely focus on getting to know the cultures within the inner cycles, but English helps the nations in the outer and expanding circles to introduce their civilizations to the world. It is one of English language teachers' missions to facilitate students' gaining knowledge and skills to learn the cultures of countries that use English as a native language while providing them with a powerful tool to get the essence of their cultures understood and appreciated by others (Figure 1). Nunan (2003) and Deardorff (2006) developed six basic principles for integrating intercultural competence into language education. First, intercultural capacities should be embedded in language lessons. Second, there should be a balance between linguistic and intercultural features in lessons. Third, intercultural capacities can be taught and included implicitly and explicitly in

language lessons and learning outcomes. Fourth, teachers and learners should be aware of intercultural features in the acquiring and learning process. Fifth, foreign language teachers should make efforts to develop learners' intercultural rather than native-speaker competence. Finally, class activities and tasks assigned by the teachers should facilitate the learning of intercultural competences.



**Figure 1.** Circles of English  
in the twentieth century

(Adapted from Schmitz, 2014)

To fulfill this mission, besides other approaches, teachers may consider phraseological units, particularly proverbs (Irujo, 1986). If students get adequate knowledge of proverbs in both Vietnamese and English, they can communicate their ideas with fewer limitations, especially if students continuously use avoidance strategies in

communication (Irujo, 2009). Although proverbs may reflect almost every aspect of life, the researcher would rather start investigating one topic that plays a crucial part in our life – “determination” (Gelbrecht, 2011; Hung, 2019; Meunier & Granger, 2008). Determination is one of the qualities that most people need in life, particularly for English learners who usually need the motivation to conquer a new language. For all these reasons, this study aims to investigate the similarities and differences of proverbs conveying the meaning determination in English and Vietnamese. In particular, it attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the semantic, syntactic and socio-cultural features of English proverbs conveying the meaning of determination?

2. What are the semantic, syntactic and socio-cultural features of Vietnamese proverbs conveying the meaning of determination?

This research report has four sections. Section 1 mainly focuses on problematizing the setting of Vietnamese English study and poses the main question and two sub-questions for research. Section 2 is a review of the existing relevant studies of phraseological structures and proverbs. Section 3 presents the description of English and Vietnamese proverbs to point out the similarities and differences. Section 4 gives the explicit answers to the questions and suggests some implications for language pedagogy.

## ***1.2. Proverbs as a lexical and cultural repertoire***

Hernadi and Steen (1999) believe that almost all civilizations possess a repertoire of proverbs as the symbol of the accumulated knowledge and experience of each culture. Proverbs appear in almost every civilization around the world. They are part of a country’s lexical resources that represent cultures’ frame of mind physically and culturally (Hayran, 2017).

There are many different definitions of proverbs. Ghazala (1995) defines that proverbs are “special, fixed, unchanged phrases which have special, fixed, unchanged meaning,” while according to Mollanazar (2001: 53), a proverb is “a unit of meaning in a specific context through which the speaker and the hearer arrive at the same meaning.” From a socio-cultural perspective, Mieder (2004: 2) described proverbs, passed down from ancestors to antecedents, as brief, widely known sentences of folk wisdom, moral, ethical, and customary views in a metaphorical, fixed, memorable form. Proverbs are advice that is brief enough to remember and formulations of socially sanctioned, which are intuitively convincing (Hernadi & Steen, 1999).

In Vietnamese, a proverb is a concise and complete sentence that has rhythms that convey judgments about social experiences, knowledge, and moral lessons. A proverb can be seen as a complete work of art because of its

cognitive, educational, and aesthetic functions (Nguyễn, 2007). Nguyễn (2007) also suggests a framework with four criteria to determine whether a sentence can be classified as a proverb, including syntactic structure, literary functions, logical relationship, and linguistic function.

Although this study solely focuses on proverbs, the authors find it necessary to clarify the term “idiom” and “proverbs” since there are a lot of overlapping classifications or misconceptions. While idioms are phrases, proverbs are complete sentences. Proverbs are used to make judgments about the attributes of the world. Idioms, on the other hand, are only used to define these characteristics. Therefore, when proverbs function aesthetically, cognitively, and educationally, idioms are mainly used to increase the poeticism of the saying. In sum, this research follows the narrow approach by isolating proverbs from other phraseology units. This means that only phraseological units in the form of a complete sentence will be considered in this research. For example: in English, “birds of a feather” is an idiom, and “Birds of a feather flock together” is a proverb. Likewise, in Vietnamese, “bình chân như vại” (remain calm) is an idiom while “Cháy nhà hàng xóm, bình chân như vại” (If the neighbor house is burnt instead of your house, you will remain calm) is a proverb.

In terms of applying contrastive linguistic perspective to ELT, the richness of the vocabulary existence gives students superiority in terms of human relations and learning; however, there is insufficient research into the extent which represent the vocabulary in terms of proverbs, idioms, dilemma, etc. (Haryan, 2017). Teachers believe that proverbs play a crucial role in developing a student’s linguistic ability, especially for communication (Gözpınar, 2014). Mieder (2004) believes that proverbs have been used and should be used in teaching as didactic tools because of the content of educational wisdom. Liddicoat (2004) and Biebricher, East, Howard, and Tolosa (2019) also stress the importance of teaching and learning of intercultural competence in foreign language classes; therefore, metaphorical meanings should be included because metaphors are culturally conceptualized construction projected in the language (Hung, 2017; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Onysko, 2017). By comparing the proverbs in both Vietnamese and English, teachers can give vivid and practical examples to improve learner motivation and active engagement in their lessons. Also, Vietnamese students can enlarge their vocabulary, transfer their ideas poetically, and express their wisdom when speaking English (Nguyễn, 2014). Determination proverbs can have positive effects on the students as it reminds them of the right attitude to face difficulties and overcome obstacles in

their English learning journey as well as in life. However, there has been hardly any study written to compare and contrast Vietnamese and English determination proverbs.

## **2. Research methods**

### ***2.1. The analytical approach***

Resting on the weak version of the Contrastive Analysis proposed by Wardhaugh (1970), the contrastive analysis only requires the linguists to use the best linguistic knowledge available to account for the observed difficulties in language learning. Therefore, this analysis starts with the evidence providing linguistic relations to explain the similarities and differences of Vietnamese and English proverbs rather than trying to predict learner's errors and difficulties resulting from both languages. Accordingly, from this perspective, the authors should compare and contrast the two languages based on their experience and intuition rather on the theories of difficulties prediction. To analyze the phraseology units in this genre, the authors should look at both semantic networks and how the idioms are actually used in text and discourse (Ishida, 2008). This choice of research method means that the researcher must pay attention to the semantics as well as adopt the cultural orientation by Hofstede (2001) to analyze proverbs. Moreover, while contrastive analysis can focus on micro-level (lexis, structures, and grammar) and macro-level

(language use) (Ke, 2019), it is more appropriate for the authors to inspect the macro contrastive analysis in this article than the micro level, for the linguistic incomparability in language structures of the two languages. According to Nguyễn (2008), analytic studies on Vietnamese linguistic structures should only adapt syntactic structures (Subject-Verb models) for clauses, but for sentences, like proverbs, an analysis should use thematic structures (theme – rheme model). As Vietnamese proverbs are full sentences, it is of enormous difficulty to compare their syntactic features with a merely analytic language like English, which relies on the Subject – Verb models in both clauses and sentences. Our study, therefore, approaches this topic by analyzing the main semantic features, accompanied by several syntactic features when appropriate, and the cultural orientation by Hofstede (2001), as suggested by Ishida (2008).

### ***2.2. Instruments, data collection, and analysis***

The researcher used various specialized dictionaries of English and Vietnamese proverbs to ensure the inclusiveness and extensiveness the important proverbs. Two English and two Vietnamese dictionaries were chosen as the source of data:

*Proverbs - A Handbook* (Mieder, 2004)

*Oxford dictionary of Proverbs* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) (Simpson & Speake, 2008)

*Tuyển tập Thành ngữ Tục ngữ Ca dao Việt - Anh thông dụng* (Nguyễn, 2007)

*Từ điển Thành ngữ & Tục ngữ Việt Nam* (Nguyễn, 2014)

The English proverbs selected in this study were full sentences to be distinct from idioms. On the other hand, as Vietnamese proverbs do not always follow the syntactic S-V structure but rather the theme-rheme model, the researcher had to consider the function of a proverb. In terms of functionality, a Vietnamese proverb was chosen if it had aesthetic, required cognitive analysis to understand, and could educate the readers (Nguyễn, 2007).

After that, proverbs in both Vietnamese and English were coded into a corpus wordlist and imported into the corpus software named Wordsmith concord version 5.0. These corpora were read through carefully, and proverbs related to determination were chosen. As many as 61 proverbs about determination were chosen for the analysis (variations not counted). The proverbs were then classified into subgroups according to their use of figurative language and their cultural referents. Finally, the researcher conducted a contrastive analysis of their semantic, syntactic (where relevant), and cultural-oriented features. Also, English translation for Vietnamese proverbs is provided for later references. The analysis of this research is mainly based on the researcher's intuition and experience with

the two languages, as suggested by Wardhaugh (1970).

### 3. Contrastive Analysis

#### 3.1. Description of determination proverbs in English

Previous studies by Syzdykov (2014), Kramer (2009), Charteris-Black (2010), and Barus (2018) mainly focused on English proverbs for pedagogical implications, proverbs in Anglo-Saxon literature, English proverbs in communication, and Karonese proverbs. There was a lack of interest in contrasting English and Vietnamese determination proverbs. The proverbs appear to use both literal and figurative language (including metaphors, hyperbole, (de)personification) to talk about determination.

##### 3.1.1. Proverbs with literal language

Proverbs using literal languages about determination may act as an explicit encouragement like: ***Never say die. Never give up.*** These trope-less proverbs also include cause-and-effect relationship: ***Hard work brings rewards, or when the going gets tough, the tough get going, or Where there's a will, there's a way.*** It is noticeable when explicitly stated, determination proverbs make use of poetical devices like puns for example ***going, tough*** in ***When the going gets tough, the tough get goings*** or ***will*** in ***He who wills the end wills the means*** and anaphora (The...,the....; There...there...) for instance, ***He who makes no mistakes makes nothing.***

### 3.1.2. *Proverbs with figurative language*

English proverbs can use metaphors to talk about trying hard is the key to success; for example, ***Diligence is the mother of good fortune.*** In addition, synecdoche is also used to refer determination by talking about parts of the human body: ***Elbow grease is the best polish.***

Also, English proverbs are found to use personifications to encourage us to be persistent towards our goal no matter how many times we fail: ***Failure teaches success.*** In this sentence, for instance, failure and success are two abstract terms, so they cannot teach or communicate with each other. However, by using the word “teaches,” we can infer that the more we are acceptant to the fact that everyone fails, the more likely we are to succeed.

Besides personifications, proverbs in English regarding persistence may “depersonalify” human beings by comparing with inanimate beings: ***The harder you fall, the higher you bounce.*** Because a human is not a ball, he/she cannot “bounce” if he/she “fall” hard. By using the physical activity of a ball, the proverbs are intended at human’s determination.

### 3.1.3. *The referents in English determination proverbs*

Long-term processes, meteorological phenomena or physical objects or natural

cause-and-effect relationships are referred to as a means to teach us about persistence, for example:

***Constant dropping wears away a stone, or the constant dripping water can wear away the toughest stone. (long term processes, cause-and-effect relationship)***

***Rome was not built in a day, or Gardens are not made by sitting in the shade. (long term processes)***

***Every path has its puddle. (inanimate objects)***

***A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner. Alternatively, A calm sea does not make a skilled sailor. (cause-and-effect relationship, meteorological phenomena)***

Last but by no means least, god, heaven, or angels are also referred to in English proverbs of determination: ***God helps those who help themselves.***

## 3.2. *Description of determination proverbs in Vietnamese*

Proverbs in Vietnamese in this research can be divided into two categories, including proverbs with literal language and proverbs with figurative language.

### 3.2.1. *Proverbs with literal language*

Vietnamese proverbs with literal language usually state explicitly that we must be persistent even if there are a lot of hindrances. Like all proverbs, Vietnamese proverbs of determination or persistence make the judgment of one attribute and

therefore conclude the consequences or benefit of practicing this in real-life. These Vietnamese proverbs usually follow the cause-and-effect order with structures like **Có X, (thì) Y** (If you have A, (then) B happens) for example **Có chí có gan, gian nan vượt tuốt. or Có chí thì nên.** (if you have determination, all hindrances can be overcome).

### 3.2.2. Proverbs with figurative language

Vietnamese proverbs make use of many figures of speech, including metaphor, synecdoche anaphora, paradox, and exaggeration. Regarding metaphors, Vietnamese proverbs usually specify that the process is more important than the result as in **Thất bại là mẹ thành công** (failure is the mother of success) or **Kiên nhẫn là mẹ thành công** (Patience is the mother of success).

Anaphora (Có...có; chớ...chớ; đừng...đừng...; etc...) and other deliberate repetitions **Verb + a, Verb + b** are a frequently used method to produce proverbs in Vietnamese for example: **Ăn (EAT) đến nơi, làm (DO) đến chốn** (nothing should be done by half) or **Xem (watch) hội, đi (go) cho đến chùa.** or **Có công mài sắt, có ngày nên kim** or **Còn nước, còn tát** (never give up hope) or **Chớ thấy sóng cả, mà ngã tay chèo.**

Also, some Vietnamese proverbs can be a combination of many different figures of speech, for example, synecdoche, metaphor, exaggeration, and

paradox like **Chân cứng đá mềm.** (Foot is hard, and stone is soft). The foot as a part to represent a human being (synecdoche); stone is the difficulties (metaphor); the foot is hard, and stone is soft is a paradox in which the human foot is exaggerated to overpower stone.

### 3.2.3. The referents in Vietnamese determination proverbs

Vietnam is a country that is a part of the Eastern aqua-cultural civilization. Therefore, the Vietnamese proverbs closely reflect the mind-set of the Eastern people. As proverbs usually refer to the cause-and-effect relationship, Vietnamese follows the East's traditional framework of dynamics of five elements that constitute life (mental – water – wood – fire – earth) as in **Lửa (fire) thử vàng (gold), gian nan thử sức.** or **Nước (water) chảy, đá (earth) mòn.** Vietnamese proverbs also use meteorological phenomena as a source of challenges that human determination must get through, **Chớ thấy sóng cả mà ngã tay chèo.**

In the past, farming and aqua-farming are the main livelihoods of the Vietnamese, so the Vietnamese usually take inspiration from the creatures that are closely related to their daily life like frogs, ants, chicken,... or activities conducted on the fields. Some examples of these proverbs can be **Kiến (ant) tha lâu đầy tổ.** or **Còn gà trống, gà mái thì còn gà giò (chicken).** or **Còn nước còn tát** (As long as there is still water in the fields, the farmers continue to bail the water out).



One striking feature of the referents of Vietnamese determination is God but not as a supporter but a hindrance, for Vietnamese culture believes in the existence of a pre-determined fate. Sometimes, rather than acting as an encouragement, Vietnamese proverbs can dishearten people from moving forward or persuade them to be passively acceptant. For example, *Mưu sự tại nhân, thành sự tại thiên* (*No matter what you do, God will decide if you can succeed*) or *Số phận lao đao, phải sao chịu vậ* (*Life is hard, and we cannot change it*).

### 3.3. Comparison

#### 3.3.1. The similarities of English and Vietnamese proverbs of determination

Regarding semantics and syntax, both English and Vietnamese proverbs of determination can be divided according to the level of figurativeness. While some zero-trope proverbs (**verb...**, **verb...**), as mentioned in the description, do not adopt any elements of figurative language at all, others combine a wide variety of figures of speech to enhance the poeticism. Metaphor, synecdoche anaphora, paradox, and exaggeration are witnessed in the formation of proverbs in both languages with formulaic structures of *The...*, *the...* or *Có...thì.....*. Noticeably, there is a significant number of proverbs in both languages contain the formula **Prerequisite A, consequence B** in which determination or symbolic substitutes persistence determines the good results.

Negative forms of sentences are also present in many proverbs of both countries, for example, *Chớ (Do not) thấy sóng cả, mà ngã tay chèo* or *Rome was not built in a day*.

There are many coincides between English and Vietnamese proverbs of determination in that Vietnamese and English both adapt natural meteorological phenomena, long-term processes, vegetation, animals, and inanimate objects to talk about determination. Interestingly, English and Vietnamese both have some identical ways of choosing images as a subject for the determination theme. For instance, *Constant dripping wears away stone*. In English, and *Nước chảy đá mòn* in Vietnamese both talk about water and stone; or *A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner* in English, and *Chớ thấy sóng cả mà ngã tay chèo* in Vietnamese also use big waves and sailor/sailing. What is more, proverbs in both languages make many references to paranormal and supernatural forces like “god” and “fate,” which demonstrates the religious faith background of both cultures.

#### 3.3.2. The differences between English and Vietnamese proverbs of determination

In respect of semantics and syntax, while English proverbs can easily be recognized as a full English sentence can be identified using a constituent tree diagram, it is more challenging for Vietnamese proverbs because not all follow the **SV** or **SVO** structures, for

example, *Có chí, thì nên*. To identify whether a Vietnamese saying is a proverb (full sentence), we must consider its theme and as well as the function of making a judgment about the experience in the sentence itself. One noticeable feature in terms of semantics is that English proverbs particularly like to “de-humanify” human subjects while this method is hardly adopted in the Vietnamese proverbs. On the other hand, the Vietnamese proverbs tend to present paradoxes where human power overtakes the hindrances.

In terms of cultural-oriented contrastive analysis, there are four main differences. Firstly, it is more likely for proverbs of determination in English to have a real geographical name than in Vietnamese, for example, Rome in while Vietnamese proverbs tend to generalize or anonymize the objects in their proverbs. Secondly, since Vietnam is a country that depends on aqua-farming, the way that Vietnamese choose to develop images in proverbs relate more closely to fish or amphibians, while English proverbs put more emphasis on domestic land animals. Thirdly, while natural elements appear in both language, Vietnamese proverbs appear to relates these with the five elements concept that brings the elements that conflict together in proverbs like fire and metal, water, and stone... Finally, Vietnamese proverbs are sometimes susceptible to an archaic ideology in which human is powerless, and fate is cut-and-dried like *Mưu sự tại nhân, thành sự tại thiên*. This old

ideology, to some extent, may act as words of discouragement the prevent people from fighting against their adversities.

## 4. Conclusion and discussion

### 4.1. Key findings

In terms of semantics, Both Vietnamese and English determination proverbs contain two main categories that are proverbs with figurative and without figurative language. With non-figurative proverbs, Vietnamese and English offer direct encouragement for people to stay persistent despite hardships. There is a great quantity of figurative language used in the formation of proverbs in both languages, including synecdoche anaphora, paradox, and exaggeration. Besides, regarding syntactic structures, no-trope proverbs, there are numerous proverbs in English and Vietnamese that are in the form of negative structures. Vietnamese and English bear some striking resemblances in terms of socio-cultural use of referents. They all take inspiration from a wide variety of objects and phenomena that are easily encountered in daily life. Vietnamese and English skillfully use many combinations of figurative language to increase the practicality and liveliness, which help increase memorization.

In contrast, each language’s proverbs also possess many characteristics that differentiate them, namely, the levels of preference over the image chosen and the recognition of a proverb. While it is easier

to recognize a proverb of determination in English, it requires more effort to consider if a Vietnamese saying is a proverb or an idiom since sometimes, they do not follow SV (Subject-Verb) or SOV (Subject-Verb-Object) structures. Semantics-wise, one noticeable feature is that English proverbs particularly like to “de-humanify” human subjects as they usually compare human beings with concrete objects or use the verbs that collocate with non-human objects. This method is hardly adopted in the Vietnamese proverbs. On the other hand, the Vietnamese proverbs tend to present paradoxes where human power overtakes the hindrances, which is not encountered with English proverbs.

#### ***4.2. Cross-cultural gap***

From the analysis of English and Vietnamese proverbs rise the cross-cultural gaps. As Vietnamese proverbs use more images that remind us of the wet cultivation for example “ếch” (frog), “tát nước” (bail water out) or the images that relate to the five elements that go together “sắt,” “kim,” “vàng,” “lửa,” etc. Also, English proverbs sometimes do not go as deeply into farming experience as the Vietnamese counterparts. For example, the Vietnamese proverbs introduce some lexical gaps that cannot be found in English like “gà giò” (young chicken).

On the other hand, determination English proverbs make more use of real legendary geographical destinations, for example, *Rome was not built in a day*, while the Vietnamese culture tends to

generalize or anonymize the objects in their proverbs. Surprisingly, even though determination is deemed a good virtue in both cultures, there are some Vietnamese proverbs that show the weakness of will and the passive inferiority to the supernatural forces since the Vietnamese people believed in the predetermined fate ideology.

#### ***4.3. Limitations, implications and recommendations***

As it is virtually impossible to find a dictionary or a corpus that synthesizes all the existing Vietnamese and English proverbs, this study, albeit against the authors’ will, cannot account for all the determination proverbs in both languages. Also, within this article, the authors cannot cover all linguistic and cultural aspects of Vietnamese and English proverbs of determination. Also, there are not previous studies about determination proverbs from the cross-cultural contrast analysis perspective to confirm or elaborate more on the findings of our research. However, there are still invaluable implications and recommendations to draw from our studies:

From the pedagogic perspective, teachers should promote the learning spirit of students by teaching proverbs of determination in both languages because they can find their own culture in the process of personalizing English learning. Also, the teachers should give examples of the two languages to trigger the

students' interest in the discovery of a foreign language as well as show them that humanity, despite the geographical and political distance, may share surprisingly similar mindsets. However, as contrastive linguistics is a broad field of study, we suggest that the teacher should not overemphasize in the classroom for this can create a burden upon students.

Students should read the proverbs of determination, which will be helpful when they are disoriented in life. This will spark off the love for Vietnamese and English as well as motivate students to explore the similarities and differences in both languages. This will help students familiarize themselves with the target culture, enhance learning performance as well as accept differences.

Coursebook developers, with this analysis of English and Vietnamese determination proverbs, can underscore the cross-cultural gaps in lingua franca coursebooks, which students can use not only to learn the target language but also to promote the understanding of their native culture, particularly Vietnamese. Also, by applying this research into coursebook development, the coursebook designers can choose what is suitable for teaching in the classroom and applying to an authentic communicative situation.

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