

Chapter Four

4.0 Vietnamese collocational patterning

4.1 The aim of this chapter

Building on discussion in Chapters One and Two, this chapter will make a survey of Vietnamese lexical collocations based mainly on the data collected. Different aspects of their structures, semantics, and themes, as well as the method of data collection will be discussed.

4.2 Data collection

In choosing items for collection and storage, a translator-biased approach was adopted. In this approach, the translator is oriented towards selecting data from a variety of corpora, using his own knowledge of both languages under investigation as a benchmark. Most of the combinations chosen were those which possessed particular lexico-semantic features which are alien, unfamiliar, or unpredictable, from the point of view of an English-speaking translator of Vietnamese or a Vietnamese translator of English. Consequently, the items collected were characterized by (a) their language-specificity, (b) their culture-specificity, and/or (c) their new concept.

4.2.1 Sources

The sources for Vietnamese data are derived from the electronic as well as print media. These include Vietnamese-language radio talks, press articles, literary works, and public examination papers.

4.2.1.1 Radio talks

Through the use of the transcripts of a series of 14 radio talks, entitled *Anh Ngữ Học Mà Vui* ('Learning English can be fun'), broadcast on SBS Radio (Sydney and Melbourne) during the 1990-91 period, Vietnamese lexical collocations were collected for data analysis. These transcripts contain approximately 25 000 words of the spoken language of Vietnamese.

4.2.1.2 Press articles

A total number of five Vietnamese newspaper articles were also chosen for data collection. These articles were reports by Vietnamese journalists about issues involving the Vietnamese community in the Fairfield district of Sydney. Such issues as the shooting of John Newman, a member of the NSW Parliament, a so-called Mr. Big's control of gang warfare, the shooting of two young members of the 5T Gang, criticism of the Mekong Club in Cabramatta, and also replies from readers defending their reputations, after having been criticised by the same newspaper. These press articles comprise approximately 15 000 words of text.

4.2.1.3 Literary works

Two Vietnamese literary texts were used as sources of data collection. The first text was '*Bông hồng nào cho Mẹ*' ('What colour rose will I wear for Mom?'), comprising approximately 3 000 words, written by an American-based Vietnamese writer, Nhật Tiến. It tells the story of family devotion as felt by an old woman who feels alienated and alone since coming to America as a refugee. She sees her family changing as their values begin to reflect the Western way of life. The reader feels sadness and despair, and is also left to ponder on, and question certain values, as to whether they are good or bad.

The second text was a total of ten short stories *Những ngọn gió Hua Tát* ('The breezes of Hua Tát'), comprising approximately 20 000 words, written by Nguyễn Huy Thiệp, a Vietnamese writer living in Vietnam. These stories have a mythical quality, and centre around the life of the inhabitants of the village of Hua Tát in the North West Highlands of Northern Vietnam. The legends that abound in this village are told in a simple but beautiful fashion, and deal with Man's foibles, as well as his virtues. The stories are titled:

- (1) *Trái tim hổ* ('The tiger's heart'): The tale of a brave young man who is determined to overcome all obstacles to kill a ferocious tiger and possess the magic heart of the tiger which is believed to provide the cure for a paralysed girl whom he loves dearly.
- (2) *Con thú lớn nhất* ('The biggest beast of all'): An elderly hunter and his wife who lead a miserable existence, killing any creature which comes within range of gunshot, even a beautiful dancing peacock. His vile deeds are his undoing when he finally ensnares the biggest beast of all.
- (3) *Nàng Bua* ('A woman called Bua'): A special and unusual woman, lusted after by the men of the village, but shunning all tradition to raise her fatherless children. A magic jar changes her life from one of poverty to richness beyond belief, bringing with it acceptance and happiness before her untimely death.
- (4) *Tiệc xòe vui nhất* ('A most amusing dance party'): The story of E, the beautiful and carefree daughter of the chief who is courted by many suitors possessing various eligible qualities. Many celebratory parties are held, but it is Hac, her true and honest lover who wins her heart, and the biggest and happiest party of all is finally held.
- (5) *Sói trả thù* ('The wolf's revenge'): An emotive and hard-hitting story of a wolf and a favourite son named San, and the terrible revenge wreaked upon San's father by this wolf for past deeds done to its mother.
- (6) *Đất quên* ('The forgotten land'): Mr. Panh, an old and respected man goes back to the Forgotten Land--the scene of his youth. There he meets and woos a beautiful young girl who dallies with his affections and causes him to be an object of ridicule. His ardour finally is the cause of his death.
- (7) *Chiếc tù và bỏ quên* ('The forgotten horn'): An unloved and neglected horn, and the discovery of its lost chain amid a pile of ancestors' bones buried deep in the jungle. The story tells of how the wonderful old horn saved the village from a plague of worms and brought peace back to

Hua Tat.

- (8) *Sạ* ('A man called Sa'): An unstable young man, mistrusted and scorned by all, with a great hunger for life, goes away to seek his fortune. With his leaving, his reputation becomes legendary, and on his return, as a wizened one-legged old man, he finally finds acceptance and real meaning to his life.
- (9) *Nạn dịch* ('The plague'): An elderly couple, Lu and Henh, married for fifty years, but Lu, a ne'er-do-well husband leaves his faithful wife to go gambling, and on his return finds that the plague has taken her. In his sorrow and remorse, he believes that money can work miracles, but he ultimately finds that this is not true. A story with a twist at the end.
- (10) *Nàng Sinh* ('A girl called Sinh'): A poor and low-class girl and her encounter with a rich and handsome stranger who visits Khó's shrine, and tries to lift the mysterious and sacred but immovable stone. All try to do so, but it's Sinh who is transformed, and has great fortune bestowed upon her by the mysterious stranger.

4.2.1.4 Examination papers

Another source included a number of NAATI-chosen Vietnamese texts which were used for translation examinations between the years of 1991 to 1993. These texts were in the form of newspaper articles and press editorials dealing with various topics such as science, education, arts, commerce, agriculture and health, and of approximately 250 words in length each. These texts comprise approximately 2,250 words of text and are titled:

- 1) *Nghề buôn bán* ('Trade in Vietnam')
- 2) *Viễn ảnh xe lửa siêu tốc cho nước Úc* ('Prospects for the VFT in Australia')
- 3) *Tình trạng chế tạo thuốc men giả* ('Manufacture of fake pharmaceuticals')
- 4) *Qui chế về khu chế xuất* ('Regulations on export processing zones')
- 5) *Dạy dỗ con em ở nước ngoài* ('The upbringing of children overseas')
- 6) *Vũ trụ* ('The universe')
- 7) *Mỹ thuật Việt-nam* ('Vietnamese fine arts')
- 8) *Trồng nho tại Việt-nam* ('Grape growing in Vietnam')
- 9) *Phòng bệnh hơn chữa bệnh* ('Prevention is better than cure').

4.2.2 Method

4.2.2.1 Process

Unlike the collection of English data, the Vietnamese data was obtained by sorting out the word-combinations from the chosen Vietnamese texts, as well as from my personal repertoire of Vietnamese prefabricated multiword units, which appeared to pose a challenge to the translator largely due to their language-specifics and/or culture-specifics.

4.2.2.2 Storage

The application employed to store data and retrieve information is the Database in the Microsoft Works software, version 2.0. This application was produced in 1988 and was a powerful tool for filing information. Some 1,000 Vietnamese collocations were collected and stored on computer disk, using different headings, such as *Pattern*, *Head*, *Modifier*, *H Code*, *M Code*, *English*. The letters H, M stand for 'Head' and 'Modifier' respectively. Because Vietnamese items were stored on English-only readable computers, the coding of Vietnamese letters and tone-marks was used for the purpose of sorting them into alphabetical order, as had been done with the English data.

Under the *Pattern* heading, one can find abbreviated forms of the various combinations such as N-Adj (Noun+adjective), N-N (Noun+noun), etc. The label *Head* is short for 'headword'. Words entered under this heading can be either a noun, an adjective, any other word class, or a multi-word unit. The above are considered as Regular Items. On the other hand, Non-Regular Items are listed as Similes, Idioms, Sayings, Folkverses, and Catchphrases. The *Modifier* can be one word or a multi-word unit normally used to modify what is considered as the

headword. The *English* heading is included for the purpose of providing a translation into English of the items collected. Examples of how data was electronically stored and retrieved are listed below:

4.2.3.3 Retrieval

Like the retrieval of information from the English data, the Vietnamese information can be retrieved using the *Pattern* such as N-Adj.

PATTERN	HEAD	MODIFIER	ENGLISH
N-Adj	MÁI ĐẦU	xanh	[green head]; young people
N-Adj	MÁU	bết	covered with blood
N-Adj	MẮT	đỏ hoe	red eyes
N-Adj	MẮT	huyền	jet-black eyes
N-Adj	MẮT	long lanh	twinkling/sparkling eyes
N-Adj	MẮT	thâm quầng	eyes with dark rings around them
N-Adj	MẮT	ti hí	slitty eyes
N-Adj	MẮT	xanh	[green eyes]; beautiful young woman's eyes
N-Adj	MẮT	đỏ ngầu	blood-red eyes
N-Adj	MẶT	rỗ	pock-marked face; face covered in pock marks
N-Adj	MẶT	tròn	round-faced; moon-faced
N-Adj	MÂY	vãn vũ	lowering clouds
N-Adj	MÈO	mun	ebony-black cat
N-Adj	MIỆNG	nóng hổi	hot mouth
N-Adj	MIẾU	nhỏ	small shrine
N-Adj	MÔI	thâm	[black lips]; blue lips
N-Adj	MÒM MIỆNG	đỏ lòm	blood-red mouth
N-Adj	MŨI	nở	flared nostrils

Following on from this, a particular 'headword' and its range can be obtained by sorting through the *Head* column, as illustrated below:

PATTERN	HEAD	MODIFIER	ENGLISH
N-Adj	BỆNH	hiểm nghèo	fatal diseases
N-Adj	BỆNH	nặng	serious illness
N-Adj	BỆNH	nhẹ	slight illness
V-V	SỐNG	ẩn dật	to live as a recluse/in seclusion
V-Adj	SỐNG	bứt rứt	to live anxiously
V-Adj	SỐNG	chất-phác	to live honestly
V-Adj	SỐNG	cô đơn	to live alone; be lonely
V-Adj	SỐNG	đau khổ	to live a miserable existence/in misery
V-Adj	SỐNG	giản-dị	to live a simple live; live a monastic-type life
V-Adj	SỐNG	hòa-thuận	to live harmoniously/in harmony
V-Adj	SỐNG	lang thang	to live a vagabond life; live the life of a wastrel
V-Adj	SỐNG	lâm lũi	to live in isolation avoiding human contact
V-Adj	SỐNG	nghèo túng	to live in poverty
V-Adj	SỐNG	quanh quẩn	to live within the confines of the local area; live locally
V-Adj	SỐNG	sung-túc	to live in luxury/in affluence; be comfortably off
V-Adj	SỐNG	thui thủi	to live in isolation avoiding human contact
V-Adj	SỐNG	trơ trơ	to live unconcerned (about other people's opinion)
V-Adj	SỐNG	vất vả	to live a difficult life
V-Adj	SỐNG	vui vẻ	to live happily

On the other hand, a particular 'modifier'; eg. 'người', and its collocates; can be accessed by sorting through the *Modifier* column. An example of this is:

PATTERN	HEAD	MODIFIER	ENGLISH
Saying	CÁI RĂNG CÁI TÓC	là góc con người	[the teeth and hair represent a quarter of a person]
Adj-Adj	NẶNG	kinh người	extremely/incredibly heavy
Simile	NÓNG HÂM HẤP	như da người sốt	[hottish as if one touched the skin of someone who has a fever]
Catchphrase	NƠI ĐẤT KHÁCH	quê người	in a strange land/ foreign country
V-N	RỌN	người	to shiver/shudder with

			fear/fright
V-Adj	RUN	bắn (cả người)	to shudder/shake/quake with fear
N-N	TÌNH	người	human compassion
Simile	VÂN ĐỎ LI TI	nhu mạch máu người	tiny red streaks like human blood vessels

Finally, if so wished, a relatively exhaustive list of a particular word and its collocates can be sorted through both the *Head* and *Modifier* columns.

PATTERN	HEAD	MODIFIER	ENGLISH
Saying	CÁI RĂNG CÁI TÓC	là góc con người	[the teeth and hair represent a quarter of a person]
N-Adj	CON NGƯỜI	(đầy) bất trắc	unpredictable/unstable person
Adj-Adj	NẶNG	kinh người	extremely/incredibly heavy
N-V	NGƯỜI	buôn cao	trader in bone marrow
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	cầm chịch	the leader/helsman,conductor
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	chánh-trực	trustworthy/honest person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	cổ lỗ sĩ	old-fashioned people
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	dũng cảm	brave/heroic person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	hiền-lương	honest person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	khờ dại	gullible person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	thuận-thảo	devoted person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	tốt bụng	good/kind-hearted person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI	tùng trãi	worldly people
N-Adj	NGƯỜI CHỒNG	cao lớn	the husband is a big tall man
N-Adj	NGƯỜI CHỒNG	gầy guộc	the husband is a thin gaunt man
N-Adj	NGƯỜI CHỒNG	xứng đáng	worthy suitor
N-Adj	NGƯỜI KHÁCH	chính-trực	the visitor is an honest person
N-Adj	NGƯỜI KHÁCH	công-minh	the visitor is a fair and clear-sighted person
N-V	NGƯỜI TA	đồn	rumour has it that; it is rumoured that
N-V	NGƯỜI VỢ	âm thầm	unassuming/timid wife
N-V	NGƯỜI VỢ	im lặng	quiet wife
Simile	NÓNG HÂM HẤP	như da người sốt	[hottish as if one touched the skin of someone who has a fever]
Catchphrase	NƠI ĐẤT KHÁCH	quê người	in a strange land/ foreign country
V-N	RỌN	người	to shiver/shudder with fear/fright

V-Adj	RUN	bắn (cả người)	to shudder/shake/quake with fear
N-N	TÌNH	người	human compassion
Simile	VÂN ĐỎ LI TI	như mạch máu người	tiny red streaks like human blood vessels

4.3 Structural aspects of collocation

The data collected falls into two major categories: regular patterns and non-regular items.

4.3.1 Regular patterns

The regular patterns included collected items whose structure conforms to a certain grammatical patterning. The table below shows the different collocational types of the regular patterns, their instances, as well as their percentages and ranking:

Collocational types	Instances	Percent	Rank
Noun-adjective	290	34.5	1
Verb-noun	190	22.6	2
Noun-noun	130	15.5	3
Verb-adjective	110	13	4
Noun-verb	80	9.6	5
Adjective-noun	25	3	6
Verb-verb	15	1.8	7
Total	840	100	

The table above does not necessarily represent the exact ranking of such combinations, although it represents my own particular findings from the collected data. However, it would be fair to say that the Noun-adjective type would possibly rank as having the highest incidence in Vietnamese, no matter who randomly collected the data. As for the lowest ranking type, Verb-verb, again, it would possibly be the same case, if data was randomly collected by

someone else and from other sources.

The majority of the different patterns described people and their actions as well as Nature, which was an indication of their collection from literary sources. Media texts, covering radio talks and press articles, were also a basis for many of the collected items, which were either language-specific or culture-specific or both.

4.3.1.1 Noun-adjective

The most predominant patterning in the Vietnamese data was the Noun-adjective combination which showed 290 instances and comprised 34.5 percent of the collected material.

Below are some samples of culture-specific expressions:

<i>Ông Xanh</i>	[Mr. Blue]; God/Heaven/Creator
<i>Tháng Tư Đen</i>	Black April [April, 1975 when Saigon fell to the Communists; Black April vs Liberation Day depending which side of the war you were in]

4.3.1.2 Verb-noun

The second ranking combination was the Verb-noun pattern with 190 instances representing 22.6 percent of the total of 840 collected items. The majority of items in this data collection depicted human actions, which again reflected the prevalent literary texts as well as the press articles under investigation.

Below are some samples of language-specific expressions:

<i>bẻ cong ngòi bút</i>	[to bend the tip of the pen » to bend the truth]
<i>bỏ thói quen</i>	[to quit the habit » to break/kick the habit]
<i>cắt đường</i>	[to cut, road » to take a short-cut (of distance)]
<i>gửi xác</i>	[to leave one's dead body behind » to die (in a foreign country/on the battle field)]
<i>lấy khẩu cung</i>	[to take, mouth, word » take down one's statement]
<i>mò sông</i>	[to drag/dredge the river]
<i>móc tiền cử tri</i>	[to pickpocket, money, voter » to fleece the voters]
<i>nhe răng</i>	[to bare one's teeth]

<i>xé rách trán</i>	[to tear off one's forehead » to tear off one's skull]
<i>định thần</i>	[to adjust one's look » to look carefully]

Samples of culture-specific expressions below:

<i>chọi gà</i>	[chicken fighting » cock fighting]
<i>chụp mũ</i>	[to put a hat on someone's head » brand someone a Communist]
<i>đập nát nồi cơm</i>	[to smash one's pot of rice » to ruin one's bread and butter]
<i>nợ sách đèn</i>	[the debt of books and lamp » the moral debt owed to oneself for not having completed one's academic study]

A sample of a relatively new expression:

<i>bê hội đồng</i>	[whole-group attack (physical and/or sexual) » to gang bang/bash; gang/pack rape]
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4.3.1.3 Noun-noun

The fourth ranking combination was the Noun-noun pattern with 130 instances representing 15.5 percent of the total.

Samples of language-specific items below:

<i>bề dày lịch-sử</i>	[(thickness, history) » throughout the course of history]
<i>đàn sói</i>	[group of wolves » pack of wolves]
<i>đường công-danh</i>	[road to fame » career path]
<i>hội viên ma</i>	[phantom club members]
<i>kiến lửa</i>	[(ants, fire) » fire/bull/red ants]
<i>lưng ong</i>	[wasp's waist » hour-glass figure]
<i>lưỡi rìu</i>	[axe-tongue » axe-head/axe-blade]
<i>môi trái tim</i>	[heart-shaped lips » Cupid's bow mouth]
<i>mặt trái xoan</i>	[Japanese lilac-fruited face » oval-shaped face]
<i>ông chủ ma túy</i>	[narcotics boss » drug lord/baron; ringleader]
<i>sâu rượu</i>	[liquor worm » an alcoholic]
<i>thịt rừng</i>	[jungle meat » game meat]
<i>trẻ bụi đời</i>	[(children, dust, life) » street kids]
<i>tuần trăng</i>	[phase of the moon]
<i>vị thuốc thần</i>	[miraculous cure » miracle/wonder drug]

Samples of culture-specific items:

<i>bưng biền Cộng-sản</i>	[Communist outposts/marquis]
<i>đôi đũa</i>	[pair/set of chopsticks]
<i>lượng vàng</i>	[tael of gold » ounce of gold]

4.3.1.4 Verb-adjective

This combination produced 110 instances representing 13 percent of the total and ranking fourth.

Samples of language-specific expressions below:

<i>ăn bám</i>	[(to eat, clinging) » to be a parasite/dole bludger]
<i>bốc lên nghi ngút</i>	[to billow (of smoke)]
<i>chết ngay</i>	[to die, immediate » to die instantly]
<i>chém liên hồi</i>	[to hack into someone unceasingly]
<i>chơi khăm</i>	[to play tricks on someone]
<i>chống cự ác liệt</i>	[to fight back fiercely; retaliate strongly; fight to the death]
<i>cư-xử hào-hiệp</i>	[to behave extravagantly; treat people generously]
<i>cuội ngật ngưỡng</i>	[to ride, staggering » to totter; teeter]
<i>đứng tần ngần</i>	[to stand perplexed]
<i>đợi chờ khắc khoải</i>	[(to wait, restless) » to wait anxiously]
<i>giết đẫm máu</i>	[to cold-bloodedly kill]
<i>hành-quyết tàn-nhẫn</i>	[to execute brutally]
<i>hí vang</i>	[to neigh loud » to give a loud neigh]
<i>hiểu lơ mơ</i>	[to understand vaguely]
<i>kết-án vội vã</i>	[to condemn hurriedly » to prematurely condemn]
<i>khai thác kỹ lưỡng</i>	[to investigate carefully]
<i>lật úp</i>	[to tip over (of boat)]
<i>mưa bất thần</i>	[sudden/unexpected rain/downpour]
<i>nghe văng vẳng</i>	[to hear something from afar]
<i>ngồi [to sit]</i>	[<i>thu lu</i> (hunched up with one's arms around one's legs), <i>thụp xuống</i> (to squat on one's haunches)]
<i>nhập lậu</i>	[to smuggle; import illegally]
<i>nhai ngấu nghiến</i>	[to chew away voraciously]
<i>nhảy xổ</i>	[to jump, violent » to lunge]
<i>nói năng hoạt bát</i>	[to speak, well » to be articulate]
<i>nốc bí tỉ</i>	[(to drink, unconscious) » to be staggering/dead drunk]
<i>quấy tú tung</i>	[to swish around hither and thither]
<i>say khướt</i>	[(drunk, excessive) » to be dead drunk/totally inebriated]
<i>sống lâm lõi/thui thủi</i>	[to live desolately]
<i>thua sạch túi</i>	[(to lose, clean, pocket) » to lose all one's money (from gambling)]
<i>thức trắng đêm</i>	[(awake, white, night) » to stay up all night]
<i>trả hậu hĩ</i>	[to pay generously]

4.3.1.5 Noun-verb

The sixth ranking combination was the Noun-verb pattern with 80 instances representing 9.6 percent of the total.

Samples of language-specific expressions below:

<i>cảnh-sát ‘quần’</i>	[(police, interrogate) » to be ‘grilled’ by the police]
<i>con công múa</i>	[(peacock, dance) » a dancing/prancing/strutting peacock]
<i>con sâu quần quại</i>	[worm squirms/wriggles]
<i>con sói tru</i>	[wolf cries/howls]
<i>gan ruột cào xé</i>	[(liver, intestines, scratched, torn) » to burn the insides/guts out]
<i>gừng giã nhỏ</i>	[(ginger, pounded, small) » ground ginger]
<i>hổ rình rập</i>	[tiger stalks]
<i>ký ức sống dậy</i>	[(memories, revive) » memories stir up]
<i>lương tâm cắn rứt</i>	[(conscience, bite) » conscience pricks (somebody)]
<i>lưỡi rìu quần</i>	[(tongue, axe, buckled) » axe-head/axe-blade warps]
<i>ma [ghost]</i>	[ám (possessed by demons/evil spirits), chà (under the spell of evil spirits)]
<i>mạng nhện chăng</i>	[(web, spider, spread) » spider spins a web]
<i>mây xà xuống</i>	[clouds descend/gather]
<i>miệng nhay nhay</i>	[(mouth, nibble) » to gnash one’s teeth]
<i>mồ hôi vã ra</i>	[(sweat, discharge) » to sweat profusely/copiously]
<i>mắt trợn ngược</i>	[(eyes, wide-open, back) » one’s eyes rolled back]
<i>râu quặp</i>	[(whiskers, bent) » drooping whiskers]
<i>thịt sấy</i>	[smoked/dried meat]
<i>tòa tha bổng</i>	[(court, pardon) » to be acquitted]
<i>trái tim rung động</i>	[(heart, vibrate) » heart skips/misses a beat]
<i>trời trở chứng</i>	[(sky, play up) » weather goes beserk/turns nasty]
<i>xác thối rữa</i>	[(body, decompose) » decomposing/rotting body]

4.3.1.6 Adjective-noun

This pattern ranked second lowest in the findings. There were only 25 items which represented three percent of the total. The majority of items in this data described people’s actions or their state of being.

Examples included:

<i>buồn mồm</i>	[(idle, mouth) » feel like wanting to have something to chew]
<i>chối tai</i>	[(unpleasant, ear) » it jars/aggravates on

<i>dồi dào sức khoẻ</i>	someone] [(plentiful, health) » in the best of health; in perfect health]
<i>đau đớn điên cuồng</i>	[(pain, crazy) » excruciating/unbearable pain]
<i>đố lười</i>	[(hardened, tongue) » tongue-tied; lost for words]
<i>hoa mắt</i>	[(dazzled, eye) » to be bedazzled; be over-awed]
<i>im thin thít</i>	[(quiet, silent) » dead silence; one's lips are sealed]
<i>liệt hai chân</i>	[(paralyzed, two, leg) » paralyzed/immobile from the waist down]
<i>ngượng miệng</i>	[(shy, mouth) » to be shy in speaking up; be reserved]
<i>nhát tính</i>	[(coward, character) » cowardly nature/disposition]
<i>nhẹ dạ</i>	[(light, heart) » easily deceived, gullible/naive]
<i>suôi tai</i>	[(pleasant, ear) » it sounds right to the ear]
<i>sống giong</i>	[(rude, tone) » to speak rudely; be insolent]

Samples of language-specific expressions below:

<i>trơ xương</i>	[(exposed, bone) » skinny/boney]
<i>đầy ắp</i>	[(full, chock) » chock-full; full to the brim]
<i>chân tướng</i>	[(real, character) » the true picture/image]

4.3.1.7 Verb-verb

The lowest ranking combination with only 15 items and representing 1.8 percent of the total. Examples included:

<i>coi trọng</i>	[(to consider, respect) » to have a high regard]
<i>bắn chết</i>	[(to shoot, die) » to shoot someone dead; be shot dead]
<i>ham sống</i>	[(to love, live) » to love life]
<i>khóc thét</i>	[(to weep, scream) » to cry one's heart out; sob uncontrollably]
<i>nằm phục</i>	[(to lie, ambush) » to lie in ambush]
<i>vùng chạy</i>	[(to break loose, run) » to free oneself and quickly run off]

A sample of a language-specific expression below:

<i>tự nguyện dấn thân</i>	[to volunteer to involve oneself in something; to sacrifice personal gains for the common good by doing something]
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A sample of a culture-specific item below:

<i>nói thách</i>	[to push up the price in anticipation of bargaining]
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4.3.2 Non-regular items

The non-regular items which do not conform to the above regular patterning included Similes, Idioms, Sayings, Folkverses, and Catchphrases. The table below shows different collocational types of the non-regular items, their instances, as well as their percentages and ranking:

Collocational types	Instances	Percent	Rank
Similes	45	32.2	1
Idioms	35	25	2
Sayings	30	21.4	3
Folkverses	20	14.2	4
Catchphrases	10	7.2	5
Total	140	100	

Non-regular combinations figured prominently in the collected data, because of the source of the texts as well as from my personal repertoire of Vietnamese prefabricated multiword units. The non-regular types with 140 instances represented 14.3 percent of the total 980 collected items.

4.3.2.1 Similes

‘A simile’ is defined as ‘an expression which describes a person or thing as being similar to someone or something else’ (CCED, 1995). Similes are often characterized by the use of ‘*như*’ (as/like).

This collocational type ranked first in the collection with 45 instances representing 32.2 per cent. Below are some examples:

<i>đen xỉn như mực tàu</i>	[black as Chinese ink » as black as Indian ink]
<i>khỏe như voi</i>	[strong as an elephant » as strong as an ox/mallee bull; as fit as a fiddle]
<i>lưng như lưng kiến vàng</i>	[waist as slim as a yellow ant’s waist » an hour-glass figure]
<i>như đêm với ngày</i>	[like night and day; like chalk and cheese]
<i>răng đen hạt huyền</i>	[teeth as black as custard-apple seeds]

im ru như mặt nước hồ thu [quiet/still as the surface of a lake in Autumn » the silence is deafening]

4.3.2.2 Idioms

'An idiom' is defined as 'a group of words which have a different meaning when used together from the one they would have if you took the meaning of each word individually' (CCDE, 1995). A great number of idioms have both their literal and idiomatic senses.

Idioms of the non-regular types have the second ranking in the collection with 35 instances, representing 25 per cent of the total. Examples included:

<i>bán quần buôn quanh</i>	[to trade within the confines of the local area]
<i>cơm bưng nước rót</i>	[to be served with food and drink (usually by one's wife) » to wait on someone hand and foot]
<i>miệng còn hơi sữa</i>	[the smell of mother's milk still on someone's breath » a young, inexperienced person]
<i>tai nghe mắt thấy</i>	[(ears to hear, eyes to see) » to eyewitness; to see with one's own eyes]
<i>cong xương sống,</i> <i>cồng xương sườn</i>	[bending one's spine and ribs » a back-breaking task]

4.3.2.3 Sayings

'A saying' or 'a proverb' is 'a short sentence that people often quote, which gives advice or tells you something about life' (CCED, 1995).

The sayings/proverbs came third in ranking with 30 instances, representing 21.4 per cent of the total. Examples included:

<i>cơm không lành,</i> <i>canh không ngọt</i>	[the rice is not nice, soup is not tasteful » the relationship goes sour]
<i>không thầy,</i> <i>đố mày làm nên</i>	[without the teacher I bet you will never be successful in life]
<i>ông ăn chả, bà ăn nem</i>	[the husband has pork pie, the wife has spring rolls » extra-marital sex; adultery]
<i>thao trường đổ mồ hôi,</i> <i>chiến trường bớt đổ máu</i>	[more sweat in training means there'll be less blood spilt on the battle field]
<i>muu sự tại nhân,</i> <i>thành sự tại thiên</i>	[Man proposes, God disposes]

4.3.2.4 Folkverses

'Folkverse' is 'writing arranged in lines which have rhythm and which often rhyme at the end, and is traditional and typical of a particular community or nation' (adapted from CCDE, 1995).

Folkverse has the fourth ranking in the collection of non-regular items with 20 instances representing 14.2 per cent of the total. Examples are given below:

<i>Con gà cục tác lá chanh,</i>	[The hen is cackling for lemon leaves,
<i>Con lợn ừn ừn mua hành cho tôi.</i>	The pig is oinking for spring onions,
<i>Con chó khóc đứng khóc ngồi,</i>	The dog is crying out to Mum
<i>Mẹ ơi đi chợ mua tôi đồng riềng.</i>	For wild ginger from the market.]

4.3.2.5 Catchphrases

'A catchphrase' is defined as 'a sentence or phrase which becomes popular or well-known, often because it is frequently used by a famous person.' (CCED, 1995).

Catchphrases have the lowest ranking in the collection of non-regular items with 10 instances representing 7.2 per cent of the total. Below are some examples:

<i>phòng bệnh hơn chữa bệnh</i>	[prevention is better than cure]
<i>rộng đường dư-luận</i>	[for the scrutiny of the public; as a matter of public interest]
<i>ngậm cười nơi chín suối</i>	[beaming a smile in Hades/the Netherworld » to be happy after death]

4.4 Semantic aspects of collocation

For a better observation of lexical sets and their patterns, the concept of semantic fields and ranges is considered.

4.4.1 Semantic fields

Two major semantic fields of 'People' and 'Nature' were detected, together with their subfields as follows:

4.4.1.1 People

This field provides a listing of lexical sets concerning 'Appearance', 'Character', 'Life and death', 'Feelings and emotions', 'Bodily functions', and 'Law and order'.

4.4.1.1.1 Appearance

<i>bàn tay</i> [hands]	[<i>bụ bẫm</i> (chubby), <i>xinh xinh</i> (delicate), <i>chai sạn</i> (calloused)]
<i>bộ ngực</i> [breast/chest]	[<i>nở nang</i> (well-developed), <i>vạm vỡ</i> (well-built)]
<i>bắp chân</i>	[calves of one's legs]
<i>bắp thịt nhão</i>	[flabby muscles]
<i>đều tăm tắp</i>	[even/well-aligned (of teeth)]
<i>khóe mép</i>	[corners of one's mouth]
<i>lưng ong</i>	[wasp's waist » hour-glass figure]
<i>môi trái tim</i>	[heart-shaped lips » Cupid's bow mouth]
<i>mũi dọc dừa</i>	[nose like the vein of a palm leaf » straight nose]
<i>mũi nở</i>	[well-developed nose » flared nostrils]
<i>mặt</i> [face]	[<i>trái xoan</i> (Japanese lilac-fruited) » oval-shaped, <i>rỗ</i> (pock-marked)]
<i>mắt</i> [eyes]	[<i>đỏ hoe</i> (red), <i>đục</i> (glazed), <i>ti hí</i> (slitty), <i>long lanh</i> (twinkling, sparkling), <i>đỏ ngầu</i> (blood-red), <i>bồ câu</i> (dove eyes » beautiful), <i>một mí</i> (one-fold eye » the Oriental fold)]
<i>người chồng gầy guộc</i>	[the husband is a thin gaunt man]
<i>người vợ âm thầm</i>	[unassuming/timid wife]
<i>người</i> [person]	[<i>đầy bất trắc</i> (unpredictable/unstable), <i>cầm trịch</i> (the leader, helmsman, conductor), <i>chánh trực</i> (trustworthy), <i>cổ lỗ sĩ</i> (old-fashioned), <i>hiền lương</i> (honest), <i>tùng trãi</i> (worldly)]
<i>ông lão lụ khụ</i>	[stooped old man]
<i>rỗ chằng chịt</i>	[entirely covered in pock marks]
<i>thân hình</i> [body]	[<i>còm cõi</i> (skinny), <i>lăn chắc</i> (firm)]
<i>trán cao</i>	[high/broad forehead]
<i>tấm ngực trần</i>	[naked/bare chest]
<i>vẻ đẹp hiếm có</i>	[rare beauty]
<i>xác còng queo</i>	[hunched-up corpse]
<i>ướt sũng</i>	[soaked to the bone; wet to the skin]

4.4.1.1.2 Character

<i>cư-xử hào-hiệp</i>	[to behave extravagantly; treat people generously]
<i>đớ lưỡi</i>	[tongue-tied; lost for words]
<i>kẻ hà tiện</i>	[penny-pinching person; miser; scrooge]
<i>lòng phơi phới</i>	[light-hearted/carefree]
<i>lương tâm</i> [conscience]	[<i>thanh thản</i> (relaxed), <i>nhẹ nhàng</i> (clear)]
<i>lực-sĩ ghé bành</i>	[armchair athlete » couch potato]

lừa dối [lie/cheating]
người vợ âm thầm
người [person]

nhân vật nổi tiếng
nhát tính
nhẹ dạ
ông chủ ma túy
phường săn
tên viết thuê
tên dễ tiện
thú đỏ đen
trẻ bụi đời
ướt sũng

[*lố bịch* (ludicrous), *trắng trợn* (blatant)]
[unassuming/timid wife]
[*đầy bất trắc* (unpredictable/unstable), *cầm trịch* (the leader, helmsman, conductor), *chánh trực* (trustworthy), *cổ lỗ sĩ* (old-fashioned), *hiền lương* (honest), *tùng trãi* (worldly)]
[well-known identity]
[cowardly nature/disposition]
[easily deceived, gullible/naive]
[narcotics boss » drug lord/baron; ringleader]
[hordes/scores of hunters]
[journalist lackeys]
[mean/despicable person]
[joy of red and black » love of gambling]
[children living in dust » street kids]
[soaked to the bone; wet to the skin]

4.4.1.1.3 Life and death

cảnh sống
chân trời tím

chết ngay
chém liên hồi
chống cự ác liệt

công việc nương rẫy
cuộc sống [life]

đám tang cử hành

đảng-viên ma
đầy bạc
đêm hợp-cần
đường công-danh
đời oanh liệt
giết đẫm máu
hành vi tham nhũng
hành-quyết tàn-nhẫn
hội viên ma
khát vọng mãnh liệt
mắt trợn ngược
quãng đời
sống [to live]

[lifestyle]
[purple horizon » a gloomy future; depressing life to come]
[to die instantly]
[to hack into someone unceasingly]
[to fight back fiercely; retaliate strongly; fight to the death]
[farm work]
[*nghèo túng* (poverty-stricken), *thoải mái* (comfortable/high/good)]
[funeral, to take place » to hold a funeral; funeral held]
[phantom party members]
[full of silver » full of money]
[wedding feast night » wedding/nuptial night]
[road to fame » career path]
[glorious/illustrious life]
[to kill, saturated, blood » to cold-bloodedly kill]
[corrupt behaviour/practices]
[to execute brutally]
[phantom club members]
[strong thirst, desire; great ambition]
[one's eyes rolled back]
[a certain period of one's life » lifetime]
[*ẩn dật* (in seclusion/ a recluse), *bút rút* (anxiously), *cô đơn* (alone; be lonely), *giản-dị/chất-phác* (a simple life/ a monastic-type life), *hòa-thuận* (harmoniously/in harmony), *nghèo túng* (in poverty), *quanh quẩn* (within the confines of the local area), *sung-túc* (comfortably; be well-off),

tiếng tăm vang dội
trái tim rung động
tổ ấm gia-đình
vị thuốc thần
vợ chồng luống tuổi
xác [body/corpse]

vui vẻ (happily), đau khổ (a miserable existence/in misery), làm lủi/thui thủi (in isolation avoiding human contact/desolately), lang thang (a vagabond life; the life of a wastrel)
[fame spreads widely; renowned far and wide]
[heart skips/misses a beat]
[family warm nest » cosy nest]
[miraculous cure » miracle/wonder drug]
[elderly/ 'Darby and Joan' couple]
[thối rữa (decomposing/rotting), còng queo (hunched-up)]

4.4.1.1.4 Feelings and emotions

bô lão gật gù
buồn mồm

[elders nod their heads]
[(idle, mouth) » feel like wanting to have something to chew]

cảm giác nôn nao
chia sẻ niềm vui
chối tai
cười [smile/laugh]

[anxious/foreboding feeling]
[to share one's happiness]
[it jars/aggravates on someone]
[khẩy (to snigger; a sniggering laugh), phá lên (to burst out laughing), sằng sằng (to burst out cackling), vang (to roar with laughter; laugh uproariously)]

dồi dào sức khoẻ
đau đớn điên cuồng
đắm máu
đứng tần ngần
đầu gối [knees]

[in the best of health; in perfect health]
[crazy pain » excruciating/unbearable pain]
[saturated/covered in blood]
[to stand perplexed]
[chùn xuống (are sagging/go from under one), quỵ xuống (weak in the knees; become weak-kneed)]

đợi chờ khắc khoải
gan ruột cào xé
hoa mắt
im thin thít
khóc sục sùi
ký ức sống dậy
liệt hai chân
lương tâm cắn rứt
ma [ghost]

[to wait anxiously]
[to burn the insides/guts out]
[to be bedazzled; be over-awed]
[dead silence; one's lips are sealed]
[to sob/weep/cry]
[memories stir up]
[paralyzed/immobile from the waist down]
[conscience pricks (somebody)]
[ám (possessed by demons/evil spirits), chài (under the spell of evil spirits)]

mồ hôi vã ra
nằm [to lie]

[to sweat profusely/copiously]
[kín đáo (hidden/secreted/concealed), lim dim (to lie half-asleep)]

nơm nớp lo âu
nỗi tuyệt vọng đắng cay
nước mắt [tears]

streaming/running down (one's face)]
[constant sense of fear]
[bitter despair]
[ràn rụa (welled up/welling up), ròng ròng (tears quên hẳn/khuấy [to forget completely]
[to shudder/shake/quake with fear]

run bắn (cả người)

<i>suôi tai</i>	[it sounds right to the ear]
<i>sống giọng</i>	[to speak rudely; be insolent]
<i>tình người</i>	[human compassion]
<i>trả hậu hĩ</i>	[to pay generously]

4.4.1.1.5 Bodily functions

<i>chinh phục trái tim</i>	[to capture/win someone's heart]
<i>chơi khăm</i>	[to play tricks on someone]
<i>cưỡi ngật ngưỡng</i>	[to ride, staggering] » to totter; teeter]
<i>dở chứng</i>	[to go beserk/bananas/crazy; turn nasty]
<i>đóng chặt</i>	[to closely/tightly shut]
<i>đứng lom khom</i>	[to stand with one's back bent; be bowed]
<i>hiểu lơ mơ</i>	[to understand vaguely]
<i>hoàng-đế vi-hành</i>	[emperor mingles with/walks among his people]
<i>một sải tay</i>	[an arm's length]
<i>nghe văng vẳng</i>	[to hear something from afar]
<i>nhai ngấu nghiến</i>	[to chew away voraciously]
<i>nhảy xổ</i>	[jump, violently] » to lunge]
<i>nói năng hoạt bát</i>	[to be articulate]
<i>nước dãi nhỏ ra</i>	[saliva drips]
<i>say khướt</i>	[(drunk, excessive) » to be dead drunk/totally inebriated]

4.4.1.1.6 Law and order

<i>bài trừ tội ác</i>	[to eradicate/wipe out crime]
<i>bôi nhọ cá nhân</i>	[to smear/tarnish one's reputation]
<i>bóp méo sự thật</i>	[to distort the truth]
<i>cảnh-sát 'quần'</i>	[to be 'grilled'/interrogated by the police]
<i>dịch nguyên văn</i>	[to translate verbatim]
<i>gây nợ máu</i>	[to provoke a blood feud]
<i>khai thác kỹ lưỡng</i>	[to investigate carefully]
<i>khai tâm bậy</i>	[(to declare, nonsense) » to make a false statement]
<i>người ta đồn</i>	[rumour has it that; it is rumoured that]
<i>nhập lậu</i>	[to smuggle; import illegally]
<i>tin đồn bay</i>	[rumours fly/about]
<i>tòa tha bổng</i>	[to be acquitted]

4.4.1.2 Nature

This field provides a listing of lexical sets referring to 'Weather', 'Flora', 'Fauna', 'Objects', and 'Events':

4.4.1.2.1 Weather

<i>chiều vàng</i>	[(yellow evening) » when the sun goes down]
<i>ít nắng</i>	little sunshine]
<i>mưa bất thần</i>	[sudden/unexpected rain/downpour]

sương muối
trời trở chứng

[(salt frost) » hoarfrost]
[weather goes beserk/turns nasty]

4.4.1.2.2 Flora

cây cối [the trees]
cây gỗ lim
cây mây gai góc
hoa cúc dại
nhô không hạt
nhô xứ nóng
nhô ăn tươi
thông reo

[*khô héo* (are wilting), *xác xơ* (are almost bare)]
[mahogany tree]
[thorny rattan trees]
[wild chrysanthemums]
[seedless grapes]
[hot climate grapes/vines]
[table/dessert grapes]
[pine trees sigh]

4.4.1.2.3 Fauna

con công múa
con hổ tinh khôn
con sâu quằn quại
con sói mồi
con sói tru
con vắt nhẽo
dấu chân thú
đàn sói
hổ [tiger]
kiến lửa
sâu rượu
thịt rừng
vết cào cấu
xương cốt mủn nát

[dancing/prancing/strutting peacock]
[clever/cunning tiger]
[worm squirms/wriggles]
[bait/prey wolf » sacrificial wolf]
[wolf cries/howls]
[jungle leeches]
[animal footprints]
[pack of wolves]
[*gầm* (roars), *rình rập* (stalks)]
[(ants, fire) » fire/bull/ red ants]
[(worm, liquor) » an alcoholic]
[(meat, jungle) » game meat]
[claw mark]
[rotten and decayed bones]

4.4.1.2.4 Objects

bùa hộ mệnh
canh ba
đôi đũa
đũa mun
lượng vàng
lưỡi rìu
lầu xanh
mái nhà sàn
miếu nhỏ
ổ phân-phát
sao quả tạ
sừng rượu
trang nhất (tờ báo)
tuần trăng
viên đạn oan nghiệt

[life-protecting charm » magic charm; talisman; amulet]
[third watch (of night)]
[pair/set of chopsticks]
[ebony-black chopsticks]
[tael of gold » ounce of gold]
[(axe-tongue) » axe-head; axe-blade]
[(pavilion, green) » brothel; house of ill-repute]
[the roof of the house on stilts]
[small shrine]
[pockets of distributors]
[(stars, fruit, dumbbell) » unlucky/bad stars]
[horn of liquor]
[(first page) » front page (of a newspaper)]
[phase of the moon]
[(cruel bullet) » fatal bullet]

4.4.1.2.5 Events

<i>bung biên Cộng-sản</i>	[Communist outposts/marquis]
<i>bề dày lịch-sử</i>	[(thickness, history) » throughout the course of history]
<i>nguồn tin động trời</i>	[heaven-shattering news » earth-shattering news]
<i>Tháng Tư Đen</i>	[Black April (April, 1975 when Saigon fell to the Communists)]

4.4.2 Semantic ranges

Collected collocations are broadly grouped into three categories depending on their range of collocability.

4.4.2.1 Unrestricted collocation

This category includes the headwords which are open to partnership with a wide range of items (Carter, 1987: 63). Some samples are:

<i>nằm</i> [to lie]	[<i>kín đáo</i> (hidden/secreted/concealed), <i>lăn lóc</i> (neglected/unloved), <i>vất vưởng</i> (neglected/uncared for), <i>phục</i> (in ambush), <i>ngửa</i> (on one's back), <i>sấp</i> (on one's stomach), <i>liệt giường</i> (to be bed-ridden), <i>rạp (xuống đất)</i> (to slink low on the ground).
<i>sống</i> [to live]	[<i>giản dị</i> (a simple/monastic type life), <i>chất phác</i> (a simple/monastic type life), <i>vất vả</i> (a hard life), <i>trơ trơ</i> (without any worries), <i>hoà thuận</i> (harmoniously/in harmony), <i>nghèo túng</i> (in poverty), <i>lâm lũi</i> (desolately), <i>sung túc</i> [comfortably], <i>quanh quẩn</i> [within the confines of (the local area), <i>thui thủi</i> [in isolation avoiding human contact], <i>bứt rứt</i> [anxiously], <i>đau khổ</i> [a miserable existence/in misery]].

4.4.2.2 Semi-restricted collocation

This category embraces headwords in which the number of collocates which can be substituted in different syntactic slots are more determined (Carter, 1987: 63).

Samples of this are:

<i>nhô</i> [grapes]	[<i>ăn tươi</i> (eat, fresh) » table/dessert, <i>không hạt</i> (no, seed) » seedless, <i>nội địa</i> (inside, ground) » domestic, <i>ôn đới</i> (zone, temperate) » temperate zone, <i>tươi</i> (fresh), <i>xứ nóng</i> (country, hot) » tropical]].
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4.4.2.3 Restricted collocation

Partnerships of this category are generally more fixed and closed (Carter, 1987: 63). There are a small number of words which can attract a very limited number of words, often only a single item, as is evidenced in the collected data. Below are some examples:

<i>con công múa</i>	[dancing peacock » dancing/prancing/strutting peacock]
<i>hoàng-đế vi-hành</i>	[emperor mingles with/walks among his people]
<i>hổ gầm</i>	[tiger roars]
<i>lưỡi rìu quăn</i>	[(tongue, axe, buckled) » axe-head warps; axe-blade becomes bent out of shape]
<i>mũi nở</i>	[(nose, well-developed) » flared nostrils].
<i>mưa tạnh</i>	[rain lets up/stops]
<i>ngựa hí</i>	[horse neighs]
<i>nhe răng</i>	[to display one's teeth » to bare one's teeth]
<i>quên bẵng/khuấy</i>	[to forget completely]
<i>râu quặp</i>	[bent whiskers » drooping whiskers]
<i>thông reo</i>	[pine trees cheer » pine trees sigh]

4.5 Thematic aspects of collocation

Observations of the Vietnamese data make it possible to classify the collocations into nine major themes which are reflective of Vietnamese concepts and ways of thinking. These themes are 'Colour', 'Time', 'Appearance,' 'Weather', 'Relationships', 'Faith', 'Education', 'Work', and 'Entertainment'.

4.5.1 Colour

Colour terms are found to be associated with a wide variety of domains related to 'Beauty', 'Feelings', 'Luck', and 'Beliefs'.

4.5.1.1 Beauty

Colour terms denoting beauty in Vietnamese are not as widely used as they are in English. If we speak of beauty, in the past, the ideal for Vietnamese women was to have 'teeth as black as custard apple seeds'; however, today a beautiful woman

would have ‘even white teeth’, ‘lips like red lipstick’.

răng đen như hạt na; răng trắng và đều tăm tắp; môi như son đỏ.

4.5.1.2 Feelings

In expressing feelings and emotions, to be enraged is ‘to have a red face and crimson ears’. The expression ‘white hands’ indicates that someone is penniless or empty-handed. The English equivalent could be ‘to be bled white’. Purple is used to indicate melancholy as in ‘purple evening’ or ‘purple horizon’, although ‘yellow evening’ is more typically used.

đỏ mặt tía tai; tay trắng; chiều tím; chân trời tím; chiều vàng.

4.5.1.3 Luck

Luck has the quality of a colour in Vietnamese expressions. The term ‘red black’ signifies ‘red’ for ‘good luck’, ‘black’ for ‘bad luck’. The term ‘Black April’ is used by South Vietnamese people to describe the taking-over of Saigon by the Communists. If someone has a darker-coloured skin than normal they are called black-skinned even if they are not literally a black-skinned person. A genuinely black person is said to be ‘as black as a burned-out house pillar’. Gold signifies ‘luck’ and ‘wealth’ in English; however in Vietnamese parlance, there is no distinction in terminology between ‘gold’ as a metal and ‘yellow’ as a colour.

đỏ đen; Tháng Tư Đen; da đen; đen như cột nhà cháy.

4.5.1.4 Beliefs

In speaking about beliefs, the Creator (or God) is referred to as ‘Mr. Blue or Blue Heaven’). The word *xanh* is used to indicate the colour blue or green. Vietnamese make the distinction by using comparatives and saying ‘rice-seedling green’,

'banana-shoot green' or 'sea-water blue', 'sky blue' if they wish to be more specific. The word 'green' in English indicates a person is young and inexperienced. Similarly, in Vietnamese it is metaphorically expressed as 'green eyes', 'green head', 'green hair'. The Vietnamese equivalent of the 'red-light district' is the 'green pavilion'. Also a favourite Communist Party slogan is 'Better to be Red and Skilled'. Sino-Vietnamese *hồng* ('pink') is synonymous with *đỏ* ('red') in native Vietnamese. But it is interesting to note that Vietnamese people do not share the belief of *pink* for girls and *blue* for boys.

Ông Xanh; Trời Xanh; xanh lá mạ; xanh nõn chuối; xanh nước biển; xanh da trời; mắt xanh; mái đầu xanh; tóc xanh.

The colour black *đen* in Vietnamese has six different forms depending on the word with which it is associated. For example, if *đen* collocates with 'hair, eyes', it will become *huyền* ('jet-black'), with 'cat, chopsticks' it will become *mun* ('ebony-black'), with 'dog' it will become *mực* ('ink-black'), with 'horse, rooster/hen' it will become *ô* ('crow-black; raven-black'), with 'cow' it will become *hóng* ('soot-black'), with 'dress, pants, turban, lips, ring around the eyes' it will become *thâm* ('deep, blue-black')..

tóc huyền; mắt huyền; mèo mun; đũa mun; chó mực; ngựa ô; gà ô; bò hóng; áo thâm; quần thâm; khăn thâm; môi thâm; mắt thâm quầng.

The synonyms of *đen* and their corresponding collocates can be better illustrated in the following diagram:

	tóc	mắt/ môi	quần/ áo	khăn	đũa	bò	ngựa	gà	mèo	chó
huyền	+	+								
mun					+				+	
mực										+
ô							+	+		
hóng						+				
thâm		+	+	+						

As previously observed, colour words are not given as much prominence in the Vietnamese language as they are in English, even though many of their concepts and sayings relate to Nature.

4.5.2 Time

Expressions of time are associated with a range of concepts regarding 'measurement' and 'values'.

4.5.2.1 Measurement

As in Western countries, the measurement of time in the olden days was by way of natural phenomena such as sunrise and sunset. Shadow poles and watches by sentinels at night were also used, and people in olden days Vietnam used to say 'time passes like a weaving shuttle' signifies the same meaning as the English 'Time and tide wait for no man'. They used to think of 'five watches of the night' and 'six parts of the day'. The night was measured by five watches (*canh*) and the day by six parts (*khắc*). If someone is said to leave home for work at 'the third cock-crow', one should interpret it as the time which approximates the dawning of the sun.

Thời gian tựa thoi đưa; đêm năm canh, ngày sáu khắc; gà gáy canh ba.

Vietnamese people live by two calendars; ie. the Gregorian calendar used in

business, and the Sino-Vietnamese calendar which governs religious and social life. The Mid-Autumn Festival is also called the Children's Festival and is mainly for celebrating the harvest and for giving gifts to children.

4.5.2.2 Values

Values are expressed in the saying 'A 70-year-old man still has to learn from a 71-year-old man' conveys a high regard for older age and wisdom. Today, the Vietnamese people still honour knowledge and wisdom as being more important than material wealth.

Sexual prowess is described as 'seven times during the night, and three times during the day'. This description only applies to the attitude of Vietnamese men, as they consider it a privilege for a woman to have sex with them, an attitude which does not prevail in most Western societies.

It is most important for a girl to be a virgin before marriage in Vietnam, and the worldly advice given by parents to their daughters is 'three years of all the wisdom you have gained guarding your virginity, and in one hour of vulnerability you lose it'.

Ông già 70 tuổi còn phải học ông già 71; đêm bảy ngày ba; khôn ba năm dại một giờ.

4.5.3 Appearance

Descriptions of the features and bodily characteristics of men and women cover a range of concepts including 'clothing', and 'beauty'.

4.5.3.1 Clothing

Wearing of certain clothing indicates the adoption of certain attitudes in life and the appropriate course of action in dealing with various people, as indicated in

the following saying 'If you go with a Buddha, wear a monk's robe, If you go with a ghost, wear a paper tunic'.

The Vietnamese language usually uses a generic or superordinate term for articles of clothing as in the case of 'áo' (upper garment/top) 'quần' (lower garment), or 'giày' (shoes). When specifications are required, Vietnamese compounds are used. For instance, the word áo is used in Vietnamese to indicate an upper garment, however, in English the choice is a 'blouse', 'shirt', 'camisole', 'T-shirt', 'singlet', 'skivvy' or 'bodice'. The terms 'a cold upper garment', 'a wool upper garment', 'a warm upper garment' are English glosses of their Vietnamese specific terms denoting an item of warm clothing. In contrast to this, English makes use of a much wider range of single terms to describe the same item of clothing; eg. 'cardigan', 'jacket', 'jumper', 'waistcoat', 'vest', 'sweater', 'pullover', 'top'. More recently, Vietnam Airlines has coined a new word to translate the term 'life vest', or 'life jacket'. The term 'brocade tunic' was worn in olden days in Vietnam by upper class males complete with a turban on the head to offset the majestic picture of wealth and standing within society. And the word 'tunic' which is commonly used by translators to render the traditional Vietnamese men's upper garment, in fact, has a different meaning in English. The term 'tunic' is usually used to indicate 'a military uniform' or 'a school uniform' worn by girls.

By the same token, the generic term 'giày' (shoes) in Vietnamese has a wider range of English equivalents, be it a single-word term; eg. 'shoes', 'boots', 'trainers', 'joggers', or a compound-word, ie. 'gymshoes', 'sandshoes', 'jelly shoes', 'platform shoes', 'court shoes', 'flat shoes'.

Đi với Bụt mặc áo cà-sa, đi với ma mặc áo giấy; áo lạnh, áo len; áo ấm; áo phao; áo gấm.

4.5.3.2 Beauty

When describing racial appearance, many word-combinations in Vietnamese would be considered in the same context as they would be in English. For instance, a beautiful woman would be said to have 'heart-shaped lips', 'dove eyes', 'nose as straight as the vein of a palm leaf', 'oval face'. Also, 'smooth breasts' or 'well-developed breasts' are considered beautiful.

môi trái tim, mắt bồ câu, mũi dọc dừa, mặt trái xoan, bộ ngực mềm mại, bộ ngực nở nang.

The expression 'one fold eye' is translated as 'the Oriental fold' in English. Vietnamese women have eye operations to eliminate this fold, as they believe the Western-shaped eye to be better. Again, 'a slim waist' in English would be 'a waist as slim as a yellow ant's waist' or 'a wasp's waist' in Vietnamese.

Similarly, a man who is 'square-faced' or 'square-jawed', with medium-to-tall build showing strength both in the face and body, with perhaps having facial hair would also be considered handsome to Western eyes. In olden-time Vietnam, however, a man was regarded as handsome if he had 'the slim shape and leisured pace of a pale scholar'. It is also believed that if a man has a 'high forehead', 'big ears', 'flared nostrils', then fortune will smile upon him. A woman with a 'round face' or 'moon face', is also believed to be blessed by the gods and to be a good homemaker.

mắt một mí; lưng như lưng kiến vàng; lưng ong; mặt vuông chữ điền; dáng nhỏ nhắn thu-sinh; trán cao; tai to; mũi nở; mặt tròn.

On the other hand, if a woman has a wide mouth she is considered to be loud-

mouthed, and would break up a happy home. This feature in a man is, however, considered imposing and handsome. Vietnamese people do not regard 'bamboo-root hair' or 'wiry hair', 'slitty eyes', and 'drooping whiskers' as beautiful or handsome, a belief which is also generally held by Westerners. The Vietnamese saying 'the teeth and hair represent a quarter of a person' does not have an equivalent in English. The English saying 'The eyes are the windows of the soul' seems to be the nearest equivalent.

Đàn ông miệng rộng thì sang, đàn bà miệng rộng toang hoang cửa nhà; tóc rẽ tre; mắt ti hí; râu quặp; Cái răng cái tóc là góc con người.

4.5.4 Weather

Descriptions of the weather cover a range of concepts including 'vagaries', 'forecasting', and 'temperature'.

4.5.4.1 Vagaries

In Vietnam, descriptions of the weather cover the extremes, which are mostly experienced in the Northern part of Vietnam. Such expressions as 'black clouds gather', 'howling of the wind', 'a terrible weather', 'rain stops or lets up', 'a sudden or unexpected downpour', 'hailstorm', and 'weather turns nasty' are all associated with bad weather, and which have been gathered together in the collected data.

mây đen xà xuống thấp; gió hú; mùa đông khủng khiếp; mưa tạnh; mưa bất thần; mưa đá; trời trở chứng.

4.5.4.2 Forecasting

As in English, Vietnamese sayings are handed down through generations, for example:

'A cloudy sky in the east means watch out and run,
A cloudy sky in the south means work and play,
A cloudy sky in the north means a patchy rain'.

*Con mưa đằng đông vừa trông vừa chạy,
Con mưa đằng nam vừa làm vừa chơi,
Con mưa đằng bắc lắc rắc vài hột.*

or:

'If the sky-line looks like chicken fat (yellow), there will be wind.
If it looks like dog fat (red), there will be rain'

*Ráng mỡ gà thì gió,
Ráng mỡ chó thì mưa.*

4.5.4.3 Temperature

The description of temperature also begs some explanation as to the use of the words 'hot', 'warm', 'cool' and 'cold' in both languages. English tends to interchange these words, while the Vietnamese language makes no such interchange. In English, the word 'warm' can mean 'hot', and 'cool' can mean 'cold'.

trời nóng; trời ấm; trời mát; trời lạnh.

In English, 'warm' means 'nóng' as well as 'ấm' in expressing the 'comfort' as well as the 'discomfort', whereas in Vietnamese, 'ấm' means 'not cold' suggesting 'comfort' only. Similarly, in English, 'cool' means 'lạnh' and can mean 'mát' in Vietnamese, suggesting 'discomfort' as well as 'comfort'. In Vietnamese, 'mát' only means 'not hot', used in expressing 'comfort'.

The diagrams below will highlight the differences in temperature terms between the two languages:

warm	nóng (-comfort)
	ấm (+comfort)

cool	mát (+comfort)
	lạnh (-comfort)

4.5.5 Relationships

Vietnamese people have a wide range of concepts to cover 'family values', 'love', 'sex', and 'marriage'.

4.5.5.1 Family values

In a traditional Vietnamese family a good girl must possess ‘three obediences’; ie. ‘when at home obedient to her father’, ‘when married obedient to her husband’, ‘when widowed obedient to her eldest son’ and ‘four virtues’; ie. ‘proper work’ (công), ‘proper beauty’ (dung), ‘proper speech’ (ngôn), ‘proper decorum’ (hạnh). If a woman gives birth to children they often cared for the extended family.

tam tông; tại gia tông phụ, xuất giá tông phu, phu tử tông tử; tứ đức; sinh con để cái.

If a woman is widowed, in order to ‘set an example’ she must not remarry as a sign of respect to her dead husband. She has to ‘maintain her chastity to honour her dead husband’ instead of remarrying or ‘taking another step forward’ as it is metaphorically said in Vietnamese.

Also, the concept of the extended family which includes aunts, uncles, nephews as well as aged parents, shows the respect that is always given to the wisdom of elderly people. It is often said in Vietnamese: ‘For your own longevity, show respect for the elderly people’.

làm gương; thủ tiết thờ chồng; bước đi bước nữa; kính lão đắc thọ.

4.5.5.2 Love

As a Vietnamese saying goes, ‘Men are allowed to have concubines and women of good repute should marry only once’. This concept would not be acceptable in a Western culture. Sometimes, women do have extra-marital affairs, and then the Vietnamese expression referring to the husband as ‘stuck with horns on his head’. An English equivalent would be to say ‘he is cuckolded’. Women also fare badly in wartime, particularly women during the Vietnam War. It was unfortunate

that many times women had to prostitute themselves in order to survive, especially when there were no men left to support them. The slang expression 'jumping with a parachute' describes the situation, one which has no equivalent in English, particularly in Australia which has never experienced the privations of war to the same extent as other countries such as Vietnam.

If a husband and wife choose to both have extra-marital affairs, this is expressed as 'Mister has pork-pie, so Missus has spring rolls'. An English equivalent could be 'What's good for the goose is good enough for the gander', but not always just for love affair. The disintegration of family life is often blamed for those extra-marital affairs.

Trai năm thê bảy thiếp, gái chính chuyên chỉ có một chồng; vợ lớn; vợ bé; bị cấm sùng, nhấy dù; ông ăn chả, bà ăn nem; tan rã gia-đình.

4.5.5.3 Marriage

Marriage in Vietnam requires that the daughter must obey the parents and marry their choice as expressed by 'as a daughter, you are allowed to sit where being seated by your parents'. To be a good wife she also must realise that her husband is Lord, and the wife is servant as expressed in Vietnamese. Women are also required to be submissive even if the husband is not always reputable, for the blame would be put on her. The expression 'if the husband has a bad reputation, who else but the wife is to be blamed' refers to this concept, one which is not part of Western thinking, although in a Western court of law, a woman is not required to give testimony against her husband.

Cha mẹ đặt đâu con ngồi đó; bà vợ nền nếp; chồng chúa vợ tôi; người vợ âm thầm chịu đựng; xấu chàng hổ ai.

'Everlasting love' is the goal of married couples and the saying that expresses the compatibility of a married couple is 'if the couple is compatible they can bail out the South China Sea without too much effort'. An equivalent English saying would be to say that 'they could move mountains'. A husband that is waited on hand and foot by his wife is said to have 'rice carried and water poured' for him. A 'Darby and Joan couple' is said to be 'an elderly couple' in Vietnamese. On the other hand if the marriage is on the rocks, then the Vietnamese saying 'rice is not nice, soup is not tasteful' which is equivalent in English to saying 'the relationship went sour', or 'the adrenalin/chemistry is not there'.

tình chung thủy; Thuận vợ thuận chồng tát biển Đông cũng cạn; cơm bưng nước rót; vợ chồng luống tuổi; cơm không lành, canh không ngọt.

4.5.5.4 Sex

As previously stated, a grey area in Vietnam occurs when referring to matters of a sexual nature. Referring to women, Vietnamese people call them 'the pretty sex', 'the weak sex', 'willow bodies', while men are called, as in English, 'the strong sex'. Homosexuals and lesbians are called 'loving the same sex' for both men and women, 'loving between men', and 'loving between women'.

If a couple does have a relationship with sexual overtones, it is called 'come and go with each other', 'eat and sleep together' or 'share the blanket and the pillow'.

phái đẹp; phái yếu; tám thân bồ liễu; phái khoẻ; đồng tính luyến ái; nam-tính luyến ái; nữ-tính luyến ái; đi lại với nhau; ăn nằm với nhau; chung chăn chung gối.

The gaining of sexual knowledge is considered the man's privilege only; however, if a Vietnamese man is seen to have many purely platonic relationships, he is ridiculed as 'to have a lots of relationships, but at night you lie in bed on your

own'. The slogan promoting the use of condoms for disease in Australia 'Tell him if it's not on, it's not on' has been translated by me in Vietnamese as 'Tell him if he's not wearing a 'raincoat', there will be no 'cloud-and-rain affair' whatsoever'. Here the euphemisms 'raincoat' for 'condom' and 'cloud-and-rain affair' for sexual intercourse are used. The word 'rain' is repeated in the saying, as is intended to be a play on words using the word *mưa* in Vietnamese. Even though AIDS is also detected in Vietnam, the condom is primarily used as a birth control device, as sexual matters are still a taboo subject, especially among the women.

Lắm mối tối nằm không; Bảo cho chàng biết là không mặc áo mưa vào là không có chuyện mây mưa đâu đấy.

4.5.6 Faith

Expressions of beliefs cover 'ancestor worship', 'occultism', 'religion', and 'politics'.

4.5.6.1 Religions

Buddhism is the prevailing religion within Vietnam, and has a great influence on the lives of the people. A Buddhist believes that 'life is a sea of sufferings', and this is given even more credence at the time of birth because when a child is born it cries, indicating to a Buddhist that the child is lamenting for having been born into this world. The Buddhist concept of having to subdue your desires does not sit well with Christian philosophy, particularly in a materialistic world, and so there often arises a conflict when the religious philosophy of the East is forced to accept the Western philosophy. The Vietnamese sayings 'Buddha in one's home pagoda is not sacred' and 'living near the pagoda, one calls Buddha older brother' have their English equivalent in 'familiarity breeds contempt'.

Đời là bể khổ; Bụt chùa nhà không thiêng; Gàn chùa gọi Bụt bằng anh.

'Death', and the rituals and traditional customs associated with it provide many interesting expressions. Even though Buddhism is the traditional Vietnamese belief, the holding of a funeral requires relatives to practise 'ancestor worship'. The body is always 'laid to rest', buried in 'a shroud' and 'the departed' is given gifts or 'votive papers' to make them 'happy in the Netherworld'. After the body has 'decomposed' the bones are 'disinterred' and put into 'an earthenware jar'. This jar is then buried elsewhere and maybe 'a small shrine' is set up to pay homage to that person.

phong-tục cổ-truyền; cử-hành đám tang; thờ cúng ông bà; an nghỉ ngàn thu; vãi niệm; người quá cố; vàng mã; ngậm cười nơi chín suối; thối rửa; bốc mộ; hủ sành; miếu nhỏ.

On each anniversary of the death of the family member, 'an altar is set up' with a photograph, and an urn with ashes in which are placed 'incense sticks', and the family bow before the altar and pray that the ancestor will return and 'give blessings' to them. People will sometimes even have 'a small altar to worship the God of Earth' in their place of business, believing that luck will come their way.

ngày giỗ kỵ, lập đàn, hương nhang, phù hộ, bàn thờ ông Địa.

4.5.6.2 Occultism

Vietnamese people also place great store in the power to communicate with the spirits of departed ancestors. Mediums are often used to serve as intermediaries, much the same as English-speaking people use mediums. The 'communicating with spirits' and the means by which this is achieved, is to go into a trance. A person can be under the influence or possessed by evil spirits.

The term 'con cở' is the closest equivalent of 'a ouija board' in English, in that it is the Vietnamese belief that if you place a piece of rotten timber from a broken coffin on a table, together with a piece of cardboard with letters and numbers on it, then you will receive messages from the dead. The use of 'talismans', 'amulets' or 'lucky charms' is very prevalent in Vietnamese culture.

Astrology in the Vietnamese culture is referred to by most of the people in one way or another, even in such everyday things as seeking to find 'an auspicious/propitious date' to do something important, or to explain as to why a person may behave as they do. The Chinese astrology chart uses the symbolism of animals as well as the stars.

In asking a Vietnamese male person when he was born, the question would be 'What animal sign are you?', or 'What star animal do you hold?', and the answer would be one of the 12 animals relating to their zodiac; ie. *Tý* ('the Rat'), *Sửu* ('the Water-buffalo'), *Dần* ('the Tiger'), *Mão* ('the Cat'), *Thìn* ('the Dragon'), *Tỵ* ('the Snake'), *Ngọ* ('the Horse'), *Mùi* ('the Goat'), *Thân* ('the Monkey'), *Dậu* ('the Dog'), *Tuất* ('the Rooster'), *Hợi* ('the Pig').

đánh đồng thiếp; lên đồng; cầu cơ; ma ám; ma chài; con cơ; bùa hộ mệnh; bùa phép; ngày lành tháng tốt; Anh tuổi con gì?, Anh cầm tinh con gì?

If fortune has not smiled on someone, the Vietnamese sayings 'the stars are like a heavy metal ball against me' or 'I have unlucky stars' would express this very clearly to another person. Again if a person wanted their fortune told they would consult a 'fortune-teller' or 'physiognomist', or 'astrologer', who would, among other things, 'press his or her own fingers with their thumbs', which is the traditional method of telling what the future may hold.

The term '*cúng ma*' ('making offerings to evil spirits') finds no equivalent in English culture, as the Christian religion does not make offerings to spirits or other gods, other than the Holy Trinity of Christianity meaning God the son, God the father and God the Holy Ghost.

tôi bị sao quả tạ chiếu; tôi bị số xui; thầy bói; thầy tướng; thầy tử vi; bảm độn; cúng ma.

4.5.6.3 Politics

The phrase an 'armchair politician' in English, is 'lounge-room politician' in Vietnamese, which means an ordinary person who talks a great deal about politics but does not get actively involved. Keeping the politics theme, 'gutter politics' in English may be referred to as 'dirty politics' in Vietnamese, both terms inferring that something about politics is not clear, honest or above board.

chính-khách sa-lông, chính-trị bẩn tưởi.

4.5.7 Entertainment

'Play' or 'entertainment' covers the concepts of 'sport', 'gambling', 'eating and drinking'.

4.5.7.1 Sport

'Sport', as we think of it in Australia, is not the same as in Vietnam. Children may play similar games to Western children like hopscotch, marbles, skipping, jacks and fiddlesticks, but the adults tend to be spectators rather than participants. Sports such as 'wrestling', 'boat races' and '*đánh khăng*', which is a game played with sticks and similar to cricket, are enjoyed, but other popular past-times are 'water-buffalo fighting', 'cricket-fighting' and 'cock-fighting' the

likes of which are banned in Western society. The game of cricket in England and in countries following English traditions is considered to be a game which carries with it elements of snobbishness and 'upper-crust' living, however the Vietnamese equivalent is not class-oriented and is played by country kids only. The Vietnamese expression describes 'an armchair athlete' which has its counterpart in 'couch potato', used to describe a person who watches rather than participates in sport or games. The equivalent of 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again' is in Vietnamese 'if we lose this one, we must prepare for the next'.

đánh vật; đua thuyền; đánh khăng, chọi trâu; đá dế; chọi gà; lục-sĩ ghế bành; thua keo này bày keo khác

4.5.7.2 Gambling

'Gambling' in Vietnamese is favourably known as a 'joy of red and black', 'black' indicating 'bad luck' and 'red', 'good luck'. English does not use this terminology. It seems to Western eyes that Asian people like to gamble. This is possibly a legacy from the fact that they come originally from small villages where often the only form of entertainment may be gambling. Whether this is true or not, gambling does have a place in the culture of the people. One may 'lose one's all money' in gambling. As a warning to 'compulsive gamblers', the Vietnamese people often say: 'Gambling is the uncle of Mr. Poor, After you have your property sold up, you will go to jail'. However, as a consolation for losers, there is a 'black in gambling, red in love' which has its English equivalent as 'lucky at cards, unlucky in love'.

thú đỏ đen; thua sạch túi; tay cờ bạc; Cờ bạc là bác thằng Bần, Cửa nhà bán hết tra chân vào cùm; đen bạc, đỏ tình.

4.5.7.3 Eating and drinking

'Eating and drinking' is also regarded highly by the Vietnamese people. As an old saying goes 'without food, one cannot serve one's cause' or 'a man without alcohol is like a flag without wind'. It shows how important food and drink is to a Vietnamese person's life. The English saying 'An army marches on its belly' is a possible equivalent.

có thực mới vực được đạo; nam vô tửu như kỳ vô phong.

It seems to a Westerner that Vietnamese people put a great deal of emphasis on the rituals of eating and drinking, so it is not unusual that many of their little rhymes and limericks are associated with food. Take for instance the following rhymes pointing out the right spices to go with the various meats eaten by Vietnamese:

'The hen is cackling for lemon leaves,
The pig is oinking for spring onions,
The dog is crying out to Mum
For wild ginger from the market.'

*Con gà cục tác lá chanh,
Con lợn ỉn ỉn mua hành cho tôi.
Con chó khóc đưng khóc ngời,
Mẹ ơi đi chợ mua tôi đồng riềng.*

There do not appear to be such pearls of wisdom associated with food when it comes to English cuisine. It is a case of Vietnamese native wisdom being passed down from generation to generation, especially in regards to cooking. In Vietnam, especially in the villages food has always been scarce except for the wealthy, which is the minority. Most meat was either 'smoked/dried meat' or 'game meat' and many men became 'skilled hunters'. This scarcity of food has created sayings and rhymes associated with being thoughtful diners and not taking all the food,

as well as sitting in the appropriate place for eating, depending on one's age, sex and social status:

'When you eat, you had better watch out for the rice pot,
When you sit, pay attention to your seating position.'

Ăn trông nồi, ngồi trông hướng.

Drinking alcohol is mainly a feature of Western living, as Vietnamese people usually only drink water or tea with meals, and then not always. Older people may have a shot of hard liquor 'rice wine' or 'Vietnamese sake', and the Highland people used buffalo horns as wine receptacles, but on the whole, Vietnamese people frown upon drinking, especially if a woman does so. The Vietnamese saying attached to being fond of alcohol: 'He drinks as though he is drinking plain water' or 'He drinks like the Genie Luu Linh of drink', have some relationship to those used in English: 'He drinks like a fish' or 'He drinks like Bacchus (the Roman God of wine)'.

A person who is 'dead drunk' is said to be '*say khướt*' and someone who is an alcoholic is called a 'liquor worm' in Vietnamese, however, there is no equivalent saying in English. The idea of using a worm to illustrate this is because worms are associated with disease in Vietnam; thus a drunkard is considered as having a disease. Drunkenness is also recognized by Westerners as being a disease.

ruợu mạnh; ruợu đế; thợ săn lão luyện; hấn uống ruợu như uống nước lã; hấn uống như Thần Lưu Linh; say khướt; sâu ruợu.

4.5.8 Education

These concepts take in 'social class' and 'respect for scholarship', both of these playing a big part in the everyday lives of both olden-time and modern-day Vietnam.

4.5.8.1 Social class

In olden times Vietnamese people ranked social class thus: 'sĩ' (scholar) , 'nông' (peasant), 'công' (craftsman), 'thương' (merchant). A popular Vietnamese saying, however, points out that order of ranking is not always true in real life:

'Scholar ranks first, then comes the peasant;
But when rice runs out and you run wildly about,
Then peasant comes first, and scholar second.'
[Nguyễn Đình Hòa's Translation]

*Nhất sĩ nhì nông,
Hết gạo chạy rông,
Nhất nông nhì sĩ.*

Vietnamese people have always had a high regard for education and learning. The saying 'if a person becomes a mandarin then the whole clan will benefit', sums up the prevailing attitude, even of today, in Vietnam.

Up until about 30 years ago, it was possible to climb the social ladder in Vietnam through education. Today, in Australia and America, where the majority of Vietnamese refugees settled, the study for, and gaining of, a degree is still given prime importance, even though in these more egalitarian countries, an uneducated person can still achieve great wealth and stature in society.

Một người làm quan cả họ được nhờ.

4.5.8.2 Respect for scholarship

Vietnamese people believe that a student must show politeness to people, as reflected in the saying 'the first thing to do is to learn manners, then comes literacy'. Having gained an education 'a learned man must conduct himself properly'. A degree was also considered an advantage for a man in the marriage

stakes in the period up to the 1940s. 'If you are not a university/college student, I won't accept you as a husband' as it is said in Vietnamese.

The gaining of knowledge was and still is expected to be shared for the good of the community. Only the men were allowed to sit for examinations in the old days and 'one was not expected to enjoy the glory of his academic achievements solely for the benefit of his own family'. Vietnamese people also encourage their children to learn from their peer group, 'learning from your teacher is not so good as learning from a friend'. However, 'without the teacher, I bet you will never be successful in life' is another wise saying passed down through the generations.

Tiên học lễ, hậu học văn; có học phải có hạnh; Phi cao đẳng bất thành phu phụ; vinh thân phì gia; học thầy không tày học bạn; không thầy đố mày làm nên.

Vietnamese people have likened the teaching profession to 'trading lung soup' as it is believed that teachers have to use their voices so much that they are liable to harm their lungs, and thus contract tuberculosis. Another colloquial expression relating to teaching is 'knocking on the children's heads' as the teacher has always been depicted in the village school holding a ruler ready to hit the stubborn pupils on the head in order to make them concentrate or to maintain discipline. So even though the teacher is held in high regard, most Vietnamese parents nowadays want their children to become doctors, dentists, pharmacists or engineers to avoid the hard work associated with teaching and classroom discipline, and because it does not pay good money.

A favourite military school saying is 'more sweat in training means there'll be less blood spilt on the battlefield', and the moral debt owed to oneself for not having completed their academic study is described as 'the debt of books and

lamp’.

nghe bán cháo phở; nghe gõ đầu trẻ; thao trường đổ mồ hôi, chiến trường bớt đổ máu; nợ sách đèn.

4.5.9 Work

In observing the data associated with work, there are many combinations relating to the concepts of ‘working hard’. ‘Work’, as in any culture, is necessary for people to provide food and shelter for themselves, especially in a poor country such as Vietnam which does not have a ‘welfare mentality’. A non-worker who is considered a social parasite would find it difficult to stay alive. Vietnamese people describe a useless male person who does not do much work as someone who ‘carries his umbrella out in the morning and carries it home in the evening’. Most Vietnamese sayings describe the value of work such as in ‘unless your hands work, your mouth won’t have anything to chew’.

sáng vác ô đi, tối vác về; tay làm hàm nhai, tay quai miệng trễ.

During the Vietnam War, people in Communist North Vietnam were encouraged to work hard, as in a slogan: ‘If you can’t do all your work in the day, then you must finish it at night’. In order to describe someone who is working hard, it is expressed in English as ‘he is keeping his nose to the grindstone’ or ‘she is working flat-out’, or ‘up to your armpits/ears in work’ while in Vietnamese ‘he is having his face, head in work’ or ‘his ears are puffing in work’.

Làm ngày không đủ, tranh thủ làm đêm; làm đầu tắt mặt tối; làm bỏ hơi tai.

4.6 Summary

Vietnamese collocates were collected using a variety of corpora which were stored

and later retrieved according to the required format. A large amount of collected material was illustrated and analysed from its structural, semantic and thematic perspective. Towards this end, different aspects of collocation in terms of grammatical configurations, collocational meanings and ranges, as well as cultural groupings of the data were largely discussed.

The method adopted for the study of Vietnamese collocational patterning in this chapter foreshadows a contrastive approach, which will be the basis for the matching of comparable and non-comparable items of both languages under investigation in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

5.0 English and Vietnamese collocational contrasts

5.1 The aim of this chapter

Building on the surveys of English and Vietnamese collocations from Chapters Three and Four, this chapter will compare and contrast the collocational patternings between both languages and further discuss collocation in relation to translation.

5.2 Collocational comparison

Collocational similarities and particularly differences will be discussed. A large number of collected items relating to both languages will be either translated or matched with each other for illustrations (APPENDICES 5, 6, 7, 8).

5.2.1 Similarities

The English and Vietnamese data were examined in the light of their similarities in patterning, meaning and form.

5.2.1.1 Similar patterning

The structural, semantic and thematic patterns of both languages will be mentioned.

5.2.1.1.1 Structural patterning

The English and Vietnamese collected combinations of regular items are similar in five collocational types (eg. Noun-adjective, Verb-noun, Noun-noun, Noun-

verb, Adjective-noun). Within the ‘similar’ group, the ranking of Adjective-noun in English is highest, whereas the ranking of its Vietnamese counterpart is lowest. The ranking of Noun-adjective in Vietnamese is highest, whereas the ranking of Noun-verb in English is lowest.

The English and Vietnamese collected non-regular items are similar in all five collocational types; namely, Similes, Idioms, Sayings, Folkverses, and Catchphrases. The ranking of Sayings is highest in English, whereas its Vietnamese counterpart is in the middle range. The ranking of Similes in Vietnamese is highest, whereas its English counterpart is lowest. The table below shows the different rankings and collocational types in both English and Vietnamese.

Collocational types	English	Rank	Viet.	Rank
Sayings	+	1	+	3
Idioms	+	2	+	2
Folkverses	+	3	+	4
Catchphrases	+	4	+	5
Similes	+	5	+	1

5.2.1.1.2 Semantic Patterning

Collocational senses and ranges of both languages will be categorized according to their similarities.

5.2.1.1.2.1 Semantic fields

The English and Vietnamese data were broadly categorized into two major semantic fields of ‘People’ and ‘Nature’. The English ‘People’ field provided a

listing of seven subfields covering items ranging from ‘Appearance’, ‘Character’, ‘Life and prospects’, ‘Human actions’ to ‘Feelings and emotions’, ‘Relationships’ to ‘Mishaps’; whereas its ‘Nature’ field provided a listing of three subfields covered items ranging from ‘Weather’ and ‘Places’ to ‘Objects’.

The Vietnamese ‘People’ field provided a listing of six subfields concerning ‘Appearance’, ‘Character’, ‘Life and death’, ‘Feelings and emotions’, ‘Bodily functions’, and ‘Law and order’; whereas its ‘Nature’ field provided a listing of five subfields referring to ‘Weather’, ‘Flora’, ‘Fauna’, ‘Objects’, and ‘Events’.

5.2.1.1.2.2 Semantic ranges

There were observed a number of words in the English data which had a wide range of collocability or are semi-restricted in their partnership with other words. Most of these words have their corresponding ranges in Vietnamese and vice versa. Below are some of the examples:

5.2.1.1.2.2.1 Unrestricted

This category includes the headwords which are open to partnership with a wide range of items. Some English and Vietnamese examples, together with their respective translation equivalents, are listed and discussed below:

<i>experience</i>	[kinh nghiệm]
<i>appalling</i>	[hoảng hồn],
<i>bitter</i>	[đắng cay],
<i>daunting</i>	[sợ hãi],
<i>earth-shattering</i>	[động trời],
<i>fantastic</i>	[tuyệt vời],
<i>first-hand</i>	[đầu tay],
<i>frightening</i>	[hoảng sợ],
<i>hands-on</i>	[thực hành],
<i>horrendous</i>	[rùng rợn],

<i>humiliating</i>	[nhục nhã],
<i>life-threatening</i>	[hú vía],
<i>near-death</i>	[tưởng chết],
<i>out-of-body</i>	[hồn lìa khỏi xác],
<i>shattering</i>	[tả tơi/nát lòng],
<i>stunning</i>	[kì thú / tuyệt vời],
<i>terrifying</i>	[khiếp đảm],
<i>thrilling</i>	[thú vị],
<i>traumatic</i>	[kinh hoàng],
<i>undesirable</i>	[khó chịu],
<i>unnerving</i>	[bực rộc],
<i>unpleasant</i>	[bực mình].

'First-hand' and 'hands-on' could be used interchangeably, however, 'hands-on' infers experience in a practical sense. An interesting semantic collocational contrast could be found in 'earth-shattering' in the English and in Vietnamese 'heaven/sky-shattering'. Combinations which do not have typical or ready-made counterparts in Vietnamese, such as 'near-death' *experience*, 'out-of-body' *experience*, owe an explanation; one was rendered, using an explicatory equivalent, as 'experience in which one is thinking that he/she is going to die', the other as 'experience in which one's soul is leaving his/her body'. In most cases, the word 'experience' could be omitted in translation or substituted with 'sự/việc' (undertaking/event) when the Vietnamese context is obviously clear.

success [thành công]

<i>box-office</i>	[(vở kịch/cuốn phim) hốt bạc],
<i>extraordinary</i>	[vượt bậc],
<i>fairy</i>	[kì lạ],
<i>financial</i>	[về tài chính],
<i>galloping</i>	[mau chóng],
<i>huge</i>	[vĩ đại],
<i>instant</i>	[liền/tức thì],
<i>outstanding</i>	[vượt trội],
<i>phenomenal</i>	[kì lạ],
<i>rattling</i>	[nhanh chóng],
<i>resounding</i>	[vang dội],
<i>roaring/roaraway</i>	[rực rỡ],

<i>runaway</i>	[dễ dàng],
<i>tearaway</i>	[dễ như bốn],
<i>unbridled</i>	[thả dãn],
<i>unprecedented</i>	[chưa từng thấy],
<i>unqualified</i>	[toàn diện/có một không hai].

'Box-office success' relates only to the Performing Arts in English, hence the Vietnamese collocational equivalent should be understood in such context of use. The Vietnamese equivalent collocation literally means 'to scoop up/amass money'. The words 'roaring, roaraway, runaway, tearaway' could be interchangeable in English. They mean that something is so successful it seems to be out of control.

sống [to live]

<i>bút rút</i>	[anxiously]
<i>chất phác</i>	[a simple/monastic type life]
<i>cô độc</i>	[alone/by oneself]
<i>đau khổ</i>	[a miserable existence/in misery]
<i>giản dị</i>	[a simple/monastic type life]
<i>hoà thuận</i>	[harmoniously/in harmony]
<i>lâm lũ</i>	[a miserable existence/in misery]
<i>nghèo túng</i>	[in poverty]
<i>quanh quẩn</i>	[within the confines of (the local area)]
<i>sung túc</i>	[comfortably]
<i>thui thủi</i>	[desolately]
<i>trơ trơ</i>	[without any worries]
<i>vất vả</i>	[a hard life]

In combinations such as *sống* (cô đơn [to be lonely], *sung túc* [to be well-off]), the verb 'to live' is substituted with 'to be'. In English, you can 'lead a life', 'live a life' or 'to live an existence', whereas you can often do without the noun 'life' or 'existence' in Vietnamese.

5.2.1.1.2.2.2 Semi-restricted

This category includes the headwords which are open to partnership with a relatively wide range of items. Some English and Vietnamese examples together with their respective translation equivalents are given and discussed below:

<i>career</i>	[sự nghiệp/ngành nghiệp]
<i>blossoming</i>	[đang lên],
<i>brilliant</i>	[huy hoàng],
<i>burgeoning</i>	[bộc phát],
<i>chequered</i>	[thăng trầm],
<i>dazzling</i>	[sáng chói],
<i>embryonic</i>	[đầy hứa hẹn],
<i>stellar</i>	[chói chan],
<i>woman</i>	[phụ nữ].

The combination '*embryonic career*' is a relatively new one and means a person is on the threshold of having a '*dazzling/stellar/brilliant career*'. The modifier '*embryonic*' could be interchangeable with '*blossoming*' or '*burgeoning*'.

<i>chance</i>	[cơ hội]
<i>(every) conceivable</i>	[có thể thắng/đạt được],
<i>fighting</i>	[trong tầm tay],
<i>negligible</i>	[mong manh],
<i>poor</i>	[ít ỏi/nhỏ nhoi],
<i>realistic</i>	[thực tế],
<i>slender</i>	[mỏng manh],
<i>slim</i>	[ít ỏi/nhỏ nhoi].

The combination '*fighting chance*' means that the chance you have is 'within your reach', not necessarily something for which you have 'to fight'. The modifiers '*poor, negligible, slender, slim*' could be used interchangeably with the headword '*chance*'.

nho [grapes]

<i>ăn tươi</i>	[(eat, fresh); table/dessert]
<i>không hạt</i>	[(without, seed); seedless]
<i>nội địa</i>	[(inside, ground); domestic]
<i>ôn đới</i>	[(zone, temperate); temperate zone]
<i>tươi</i>	[fresh]
<i>xứ nóng</i>	[(country, hot); tropical]

Vietnamese translators would find it difficult to find the English term ‘table grapes’ or ‘dessert grapes’ for ‘*nho ăn tươi*’ (grapes eaten fresh), if not taught the English combination.

5.2.1.1.2.2.3 Restricted

There are a small number of words which can attract a very limited number of words, often only a single item, as is evidenced in the collected data. Below are some examples and their translation equivalents:

<i>boots squelch</i>	[giày ủng lội kêu ọc ạch]
<i>crane one’s neck</i>	[nghển cổ]
<i>gesticulate wildly</i>	[khoa/muá tay loạn xạ]
<i>push and shove</i>	[xô đẩy]
<i>rich and famous</i>	[giàu sang danh vọng]
<i>shrug one’s shoulders</i>	[nhún vai]
<i>violate blatantly</i>	[vi phạm trắng trợn]

‘*To crane one’s neck*’ in English and its equivalent in Vietnamese ‘*nghển cổ*’ both are very restricted.

Some Vietnamese examples and their English translation equivalents:

<i>hoàng-đế vi-hành</i>	[emperor mingles with/walks among his people]
<i>hổ gầm</i>	[tiger roars]
<i>ngựa hí</i>	[horse neighs]
<i>quên bẵng/khuấy</i>	[to forget completely]
<i>râu quặp</i>	[(bent whiskers); drooping whiskers]
<i>thông reo</i>	[(pine trees cheer); pine trees sigh]

5.2.1.1.3 Thematic patterning

The collected collocations in both English and Vietnamese were classified into themes, which amounted to ten in all. These themes were ‘Colour’, ‘Time’, ‘Appearance’, ‘Weather’, ‘Relationships’, ‘Faith’, ‘Entertainment’, ‘Appreciation’, ‘Education’ and ‘Work’.

The theme ‘Colour’ in the English data was divided into eight subthemes and four in the Vietnamese data. Both languages shared ‘Beauty’, ‘Feelings’, ‘Luck’ and ‘Beliefs’. In the theme ‘Appearance’, both languages share the subthemes of ‘Clothing’ and ‘Beauty’. In the theme ‘Weather’, both languages possessed a similar subthemes in ‘Forecasting’ and ‘Temperature’.

In the theme ‘Relationships’, the subthemes of ‘Love’ and ‘Marriage’ were detected in both languages. The theme ‘Entertainment’ shared common subthemes in both languages, other than the Arts. The Australian people particularly, are very sport-oriented and live in a young country with weather that is conducive to relaxation and recreation. The physical aspect of sport in Australia was always emphasized rather than the passive, such as gambling. It is only in recent years since gambling has been made available to the masses, through clubs and casinos, that it has equalled physical sport. That is not to say however, that Australians are not regarded as ‘inveterate gamblers’.

The table below aims to show diagrammatically the themes and subthemes in both data as mentioned:

Themes	Subthemes	English	Vietnamese
Colour		+	+
	Beauty	+	+
	Feelings	+	+
	Injuries	+	
	Road safety	+	
	Luck	+	+
	Beliefs	+	+
	Human character	+	
	Social class	+	
Time		+	+
	Measurement	+	+
	Values	+	+
	Prevention	+	
	Competition	+	
	Periods of a person's life	+	
Appearance		+	+
	Clothing	+	+
	Shape and size	+	
	Beauty	+	+
Weather		+	+
	Greeting	+	
	Vagaries		+
	Forecasting	+	+
	Feelings	+	
	Temperature	+	+
Relationships		+	+
	Family values		+
	Love	+	+
	Marriage	+	+
	Sex	+	+
	Divorce	+	
	Old age	+	
Faith		+	+
	Religions	+	+
	Occultism	+	+
	Government	+	
	Politics	+	+
Entertainment		+	+
	Gambling	+	+
	Sport	+	+
	Eating and drinking	+	+
Appreciation		+	
	The Arts	+	
	Sport	+	
	Charity work	+	
Education			+
	Social class		+
	Respect for scholarship		+
Work			+

5.2.1.2 Similar form

Samples of collected items of both languages, regular and non-regular alike, of similar meaning and form are listed and discussed below:

5.2.1.2.1 Regular items

English and Vietnamese examples of the regular patterns, together with their respective translation equivalents, are given below:

5.2.1.2.1.1 English-Vietnamese

English examples of the regular items are listed below, together with their Vietnamese equivalents and corresponding grammatical patterns.

5.2.1.2.1.1.1 Adjective-noun

Almost all of the instances of Adjective-noun combination could be rendered using their Vietnamese Noun-adjective corresponding pattern, except in a number of instances where additional words were used to make them sound more natural in the target language.

<i>rugged</i> coastline	[bờ-biển khúc-khủyu/hiếm-trở]
<i>split-second</i> decision	[quyết-định trong tích-tắc]
<i>long-stated</i> goal	[mục-tiêu đã nói đến từ lâu]
<i>shoulder-length</i> hair	[tóc để chấm/xoã ngang vai]
<i>scathing</i> letter	[lá thư đầy giọng chỉ-trích]
<i>cherished</i> memories	[những kỷ-niệm dấu yêu/hằng ấp ủ]
<i>monumental</i> novel	[tiểu-thuyết dài tràng-giang đại-hải]
<i>shopping</i> spree	[mua sắm thỏa thích/thả dãn]

The combination '*long-stated goal*' is rendered as 'goal which has long been mentioned', whereas the expression '*monumental novel*' is collocationally matched with 'novel which is as long as a river or as great as an ocean'.

5.2.1.2.1.1.2 Noun-noun

Almost all of the instances of Noun-noun combination could be rendered using their Vietnamese Noun-noun/adjective corresponding pattern, except in a number of instances where additional words were used to make them sound more natural in the target language.

<i>boomerang effect</i>	[hiệu quả dội ngược]
<i>gem world</i>	[thế giới châu báu/đá quý]
<i>food stall</i>	[quầy/quán bán thức ăn]
<i>smoke inhalation</i>	[bị ngạt thở vì hơi khói]
<i>traffic snarl</i>	[kẹt xe/tắc-ngẽn lưu-thông]

‘*Smoke inhalation*’ has its translation equivalent as ‘choked by smoke’. It infers that ‘discomfort’ is experienced because a person inhales smoke, whereas ‘*smoke asphyxiation*’ has the meaning of perhaps ‘causing death, not just discomfort’.

‘*Traffic snarl*’ or ‘*traffic jam*’ is rendered into Vietnamese by way of similar meaning and similar form as ‘traffic congestion’, but the English ‘*traffic snarl*’ insinuates that the person caught in congested traffic which is snarled, also feels angry and could perhaps feel like snarling like a tiger.

5.2.1.2.1.1.3 Verb-noun

Almost all of the instances of Verb-noun combination could be rendered using their Vietnamese Verb-noun corresponding pattern.

<i>cap rents</i>	[chặn tăng tiền thuê nhà]
<i>grant (someone) bail</i>	[cho (ai) tại ngoại hầu tra]
<i>insult intelligence</i>	[coi thường/sĩ-nhục trí thông minh]
<i>release the venom</i>	[nhả nọc độc]
<i>scale the fence</i>	[leo hàng rào]
<i>scream obscenities</i>	[la ó chửi bới]

5.2.1.2.1.1.4 Noun-verb

Almost all of the instances of Noun-verb combination could be rendered using their Vietnamese Noun-verb corresponding pattern.

<i>rumours fly</i>	[tin đồn bay]
<i>spirits soar</i>	[tinh-thần lên cao; lên tinh thần]

In English '*rumours fly*' and '*rumours spread*' have their perfect match in Vietnamese as 'tin đồn bay' and 'tin đồn lan truyền' respectively.

5.2.1.2.1.1.5 Noun-of-noun

Almost all instances of the Noun-of-noun combinations could be rendered using their Vietnamese Noun-noun corresponding pattern, except in a number of instances where additional words were used to make them sound more natural in the target language.

<i>hail of bullets</i>	[làn/trận mưa đạn]
<i>mountain of debt</i>	[nợ chất thành núi]
<i>ounce of cynicism</i>	[đôi chút hoài nghi]
<i>train of thought</i>	[luồng/giòng tư-tưởng/ý tưởng]

The expression '*mountain of debt*' which was rendered as 'debt piled up like a mountain' is in fact a Vietnamese collocation itself. The combination '*a train of thought*' meaning 'a succession of connected ideas' has its Vietnamese equivalent as 'a current of thought'.

5.2.1.2.1.1.6 Noun-and-noun

Almost all of the instances of Noun-and-noun combination could be rendered using their Vietnamese Noun-noun or Adjective-adjective corresponding pattern.

<i>cat and mouse</i>	[mèo vờn chuột]
<i>gloom and doom</i>	[buồn bã ảm đạm]

The order of '*gloom and doom*' can be reversible. The combination '*cat and mouse*' has its Vietnamese collocational equivalent as 'a cat toying with a mouse'.

5.2.1.2.1.7 Verb-adverb

All of the instances of Verb-adverb combinations could be rendered using their Vietnamese Verb-adjective corresponding pattern.

<i>die unnecessarily</i>	[chết lãng nhách]
<i>read voraciously</i>	[đọc ngấu nghiến]

The combination '*to die unnecessarily*' is synonymous with '*to die senselessly*' (chết vô lý), '*to die prematurely*' (chết yếu) or '*to die a bitter death*' (chết tức tưởi) when reference is made to the negative unexpected cause of the death.

5.2.1.2.1.8 Verb-and-verb

Instances of this Verb-and-verb type could be translated using the same type of English pattern, however, this is not always the case.

<i>divide and conquer</i>	[chia để trị]
<i>forget and forgive</i>	[quên đi và tha thứ]
<i>strip and search</i>	[khám lột trần truồng]

The order of '*forget and forgive*' can be reversible in English. The combination '*divide and conquer*' is collocationally translated as 'divide to rule'. The expression '*strip and search*' is translated as 'strip search', however the Vietnamese word order is reversed.

5.2.1.2.1.1.9 Adverb-adjective

Instances of this type are equivalent to those of Adjective-adjective type in Vietnamese.

<i>mortally wounded</i>	[tử thương]
<i>most likely</i>	[rất có thể]

The Sino-Vietnamese translation equivalent of ‘*mortally wounded*’ or ‘*fatally wounded*’ has the same word order as in English.

5.2.1.2.1.1.10 Adjective-and-adjective

Instances of this type are equivalent to those of Adjective-adjective type in Vietnamese, although the English context will be the telling factor in the rendition.

<i>alive and kicking</i>	[sống-động linh-hoạt]
<i>fast and loose</i>	[nhanh nhẩu ẩu đoảng]

Translations of English combinations of this type can be varied according to the English context of use. The Vietnamese equivalent of ‘*fast and loose*’ is in fact a collocational match.

5.2.1.2.1.2 Vietnamese-English

Vietnamese examples of the regular items which have similar meaning and form with English are listed below:

5.2.1.2.1.2.1 Noun-adjective

Almost all of the instances of Noun-adjective pattern could be rendered using their English Adjective-noun counterpart.

<i>bàn tay bụ bẫm</i>	[chubby hands]
<i>hoa cúc dại</i>	[wild chrysanthemums]

<i>trán cao</i>	[high/broad forehead]
<i>vợ chồng luống tuổi</i>	[elderly couple]

In Vietnamese *'bàn tay bụ bẫm'* refers to hands. If reference is made to fingers then it would become *'ngón tay bụ bẫm'* or *'ngón tay mũm mĩm'* (chubby fingers), the same as in English. But 'short fat fingers' would be likened to a special type of bananas as *'ngón tay chuối mần'* (banana fingers) in Vietnamese.

The term *'dại'* is a polysemous word in Vietnamese in the sense that it has a variety of collocational meanings depending on what word it occurs with (eg. 'stupid/unwise'; 'young/inexperienced'; 'mad'; 'wild'). The combination *'hoa cúc dại'* (wild chrysanthemums) means that the flowers grow randomly and have not been cultivated, much the same as we refer to 'wildflowers' in English. If the term *'dại'* is used in the expression *'vợ dại con thơ'*, it refers to an immature young wife with children, usually left to fend for herself while her husband dies or is away.

The combination *'trán cao'* or *'trán rộng'* is rendered as 'high/broad forehead'. A 'high forehead' indicates intelligence in the Western world, as it does in the Oriental world. The only difference is that in Vietnamese, a 'broad forehead' also denotes intelligence.

5.2.1.2.1.2.2 Verb-noun

Almost all of the instances of Verb-noun pattern can be rendered using the same pattern in English.

<i>bỏ thói quen</i>	[to break the habit]
<i>cắt đường</i>	[to take a short-cut (of distance)]
<i>nhe răng</i>	[to bare one's teeth]

The combination *'nhe răng'* is a restricted collocation in Vietnamese as *'nhe'* can

only occur with either ‘*răng*’ (teeth) or ‘*lợi*’ (tooth-ridge), whereas ‘to bare’ in English has a much more open partnership.

5.2.1.2.1.2.3 Noun-Noun

Almost all of the instances of Noun-noun or Noun-adjective pattern can be rendered using either the same Noun-noun, Noun-adjective or Noun-of-noun pattern in English.

<i>con sói mồi</i>	[sacrificial wolf]
<i>đêm hợp-cấn</i>	[(wedding feast night); wedding/nuptial night]
<i>khoé mép</i>	[corners of one’s mouth]
<i>lưỡi rìu</i>	[(axe-tongue); axe-head; axe-blade]
<i>vị thuốc thần</i>	[(miraculous cure); miracle/wonder drug]

The combination ‘*khoé mép*’ is a restricted collocation in Vietnamese in the sense that ‘*khoé*’ can only occur with ‘*mép*’ as in this case or more frequently with ‘*mắt*’ as in ‘*khoé mắt*’ (corners of one’s eyes). In English the word ‘corner’ which is used in a wider context has its Vietnamese equivalent as ‘*góc*’; eg. ‘*góc vườn*’ meaning ‘corner of the garden’.

5.2.1.2.1.2.4 Verb-adjective

Almost all of the instances of Verb-adjective pattern can be rendered using Verb-adverb pattern in English.

<i>ăn bám</i>	[(to eat, clinging to); to be a parasite]
<i>chơi khăm</i>	[to play tricks (on someone)]
<i>thức trắng đêm</i>	[(to stay awake throughout the night); to stay up all night]
<i>vỗ (cánh) uể oải</i>	[to flap (one’s wings) languidly]

The Vietnamese adjective ‘*uể oải*’ meaning ‘slow and sluggish’ or ‘nonchalant/without vigour’. Its co-occurrence with ‘*vỗ (cánh)*’ yields a good collocational match in English as ‘to flap (one’s wings) languidly’.

5.2.1.2.1.2.5 Noun-verb

Almost all of the instances of Noun-verb pattern could be rendered using either the same structural type or Adjective noun pattern in English.

<i>gừng giã nhỏ</i>	[ground ginger]
<i>mưa tạnh</i>	[rain stops]
<i>thịt sấy</i>	[smoked/dried meat]
<i>tòa tha bổng</i>	[the Court set (him/her) free]

The Vietnamese Noun-verb combination '*mưa tạnh*' is a restricted collocation as '*tạnh*' as a verb can only occur after the noun '*mưa*' or '*mây*' (clouds) as in '*trời quang mây tạnh*' (sky, clear, cloud, stop » clear and cloudless sky) used after the rain. '*Mưa ngớt*' in Vietnamese means 'the rain slackens but does not stop', whereas in English 'to let up' can mean both 'to slacken' or 'to stop'.

5.2.1.2.1.2.6 Adjective-noun

Almost all of the instances of Adjective-noun type could be rendered by way of an adjective:

<i>hoa mắt</i>	[(flower, eyes); bedazzled]
<i>dồi dào sức khoẻ</i>	[(plentiful, health); in the best of health/in perfect health]
<i>đau đớn điên cuồng</i>	[(pain, crazy); excruciating/unbearable pain]
<i>đều tăm tắp</i>	[even/well-aligned (of teeth)]
<i>đớ lưỡi</i>	[tongue-tied/lost for words]

The adjective-noun combination '*đớ lưỡi*' is translated as 'to be tongue-tied'. When you are tongue-tied you are unable to speak usually because of shyness, or even shock. The Vietnamese translation is 'to have a hardened tongue'.

5.2.1.2.1.2.7 Verb-verb

Almost all of the instances of Verb-verb pattern can be rendered using a variety

of patterns, as well as paraphrases in English.

<i>coi trọng</i>	[(to consider, to respect); to have a high regard]
<i>khóc thét</i>	[(to cry, to scream); to sob uncontrollably]
<i>nói thách</i>	[(to say, to challenge); to bring up the price in anticipation of a bargaining]
<i>vùng chạy</i>	[(to break loose, to run); to free oneself and quickly run off]

The Vietnamese expression '*nói thách*' is a culture-specific term which requires an explicatory equivalent.

5.2.1.2.2 Non-regular items

Similar meaning and similar form of non-regular items are discussed below:

Life hanging by a thread [tính mạng treo trên sợi tóc]

The saying *life hanging by a thread* in English culture is used to describe someone who is close to death, usually because of illness or injury. The expression *his life is hanging by a thread* is used. Vietnamese people refer to someone whose life is in danger by saying *tính mạng của hắn treo trên sợi tóc* ('his life is hanging by a thread of hair').

Chơi dao có ngày đứt tay [If you play with fire, you will get burnt]

The Vietnamese saying has a literal sense of 'If you keep playing with a knife, you will eventually cut your hand'. The only difference is that damage is caused by a fire in English rather than a knife in Vietnamese.

Ma cũ bắt nạt ma mới [the old hand pushes the new hand around]

The Vietnamese saying *Ma cũ bắt nạt ma mới* [lit. Old ghost bullies new ghost] is used in a workplace situation where 'the old-timers push the newcomers around and make life difficult for them'. This is a common saying in Vietnamese and has

the modern meaning of 'harrassment' as it pertains to happenings in an office situation. Its literal English meaning in this context means 'the old hand pushes the new hand around', or to put it colloquially 'to come the heavy'. In a different context it can also be used to indicate that people who are newcomers to a country can often be picked on by migrants who arrived earlier, such as happened in Australia when the Asian and the Second World War European settlers had to learn to live harmoniously together.

Ăn cơm nhà vác ngà voi [Charity begins at home]

In Vietnamese this literally means 'Eat rice at home, carry elephant tusks'. It in fact describes the situation in which 'you work hard for others for nothing, but you use your own means'. The English expression 'Charity begins at home' best describes this situation of doing too much for outsiders without remuneration.

Cả vú lấp miệng em [Power corrupts]

This is another common Vietnamese saying which literally means 'A big breast covers the baby's mouth', indicating that 'power ultimately smothers or stifles initiative of the ordinary person'. An English equivalent would possible be 'Power corrupts'.

5.2.2 Differences

The English and Vietnamese data were examined taking into account their differences in patterning, form and context of use.

5.2.2.1 Different patterning

5.2.2.1.1 Structural patterning

The English and Vietnamese collected combinations of regular items are different in nine collocational types (ie. Verb-adjective, Verb-verb, Noun-of-noun, Verb-adverb, Verb-and-verb, Adverb-adjective, Adjective-and-adjective, Noun-and-noun, Adverb-and-adverb).

Within the 'different' group as indicated in the data, the Verb-adjective and Verb-verb combinations are non-existent in English, whereas the remaining eight combinations (ie. Noun-of-noun, Verb-adverb, Verb-and-verb, Adverb-adjective, Adjective-and-adjective, Noun-and-noun, Adverb-and-adverb) are non-existent in Vietnamese. The table below shows the different rankings, together with similar and different collocational types in both English and Vietnamese.

Collocational types	English	Rank	Viet.	Rank
Adjective-noun	+	1	+	6
Noun-adjective			+	1
Noun-noun	+	2	+	3
Verb-noun	+	3	+	2
Noun-of-noun	+	4		
Noun-verb	+	5	+	5
Verb-verb			+	7
Verb-adverb	+	6		
Verb-adjective			+	4
Verb-and-verb	+	7		
Adverb-adjective	+	8		
Adjective-and-adjective	+	9		
Noun-and-noun	+	10		
Adverb-and-adverb	+	11		

5.2.2.1.2 Semantic patterning

Semantic fields and semantic ranges will be contrasted under this heading.

5.2.2.1.2.1 Semantic fields

The English ‘People’ field provided a listing of seven subfields covering items ranging from ‘Appearance’, ‘Character’, ‘Life and prospects’, ‘Human actions’ to ‘Feelings and emotions’, ‘Relationships’ to ‘Mishaps’; whereas its ‘Nature’ field provided a listing of three subfields covered items ranging from ‘Weather’, ‘Places’ to ‘Objects’.

The Vietnamese ‘People’ field provided a listing of six subfields concerning ‘Appearance’, ‘Character’, ‘Life and death’, ‘Feelings and emotions’, ‘Bodily functions’, and ‘Law and order’; whereas its ‘Nature’ field provided a listing of five subfields referring to ‘Weather’, ‘Flora’, ‘Fauna’, ‘Objects’, and ‘Events’.

The table below aims to show diagrammatically the similarities and the differences of the semantic fields and subfields of both languages in the data:

English	Vietnamese
People	People
Appearance	Appearance
Character	Character
Life and prospects	Life and prospects
Feelings and emotions	Feelings and emotions
Human actions	Bodily functions
Relationships	Law and order
Mishaps	
Nature	Nature
Weather	Weather
Objects	Objects
Places	Flora
	Fauna
	Events

5.2.2.1.2.2 Semantic ranges

There were observed a number of words in the English and Vietnamese data which had a wide range of collocability or are semi-restricted in their partnership with other words. Renditions of the headwords and collocants of these combinations would not always prove to be ‘a cup of tea’ for the translator. Below are some of the examples:

5.2.2.1.2.2.1 Unrestricted

<i>attack</i>	[đánh/tấn công]; [đả kích/ chỉ trích/công kích]
<i>arson</i>	[đốt phá, nổi lửa đốt phá]
<i>assassination</i>	[ám sát]
<i>coup</i>	[đảo chính]
<i>guerrilla</i>	[(theo lối/kiểu) du kích]
<i>hi-tech</i>	[tràn ngập kĩ thuật cao]
<i>machete</i>	[(bằng) mã tấu]
<i>stab</i>	[(bằng) dao/vật nhọn]
<i>twin</i>	[mũi dùi/gọng kìm]
<i>abortive</i>	[thất bại/bất thành]
<i>acerbic</i>	[gay gắt]
<i>barbaric</i>	[dã man/mọi rợ]
<i>bitter</i>	[cay độc]
<i>botched</i>	[thất bại/bất thành]
<i>bungled</i>	[thất bại/bất thành/không thành]
<i>callous</i>	[dã man/tàn nhẫn]
<i>cowardly</i>	[hèn nhát]
<i>fatal</i>	[chết người]
<i>frenzied</i>	[loạn đả]
<i>full-frontal</i>	[mạnh mẽ]
<i>hit-and-run</i>	[(đánh) rồi rút lui]
<i>premeditated</i>	[có dự mưu]
<i>repeated</i>	[lập đi lập lại/tái diễn]
<i>sadistic</i>	[ác tâm]
<i>scathing</i>	[cay độc/ gay gắt]
<i>sexual</i>	[hiếp dâm/cưỡng hiếp]
<i>spiteful</i>	[độc địa/ác mồm]
<i>stinging</i>	[xúc phạm]
<i>swingeing</i>	[dữ dội/ nặng nề]
<i>two-pronged</i>	[gọng kìm]
<i>veiled</i>	[úp mở/che dấu]

<i>verbal</i>	[mắng chửi]
<i>vicious</i>	[dữ dội/ kịch liệt]
<i>vituperative</i>	[chửi bới/lãng nhục]
<i>xenophobic</i>	[bài ngoại/(đánh) người nước ngoài]

Observations made from a Vietnamese translator's perspective would seem to place the different 'attack' combinations into four groupings, depending on its collocational meaning, namely, (1) *verbal* (đả kích/công kích/ chửi bới), (2) *physical* (đánh đập/hành hung/hành hạ), (3) *sexual* (hiếp dâm/cưỡng hiếp), (4) *attacked by a natural cause* (bị hành/lên cơn đau).

In talking about actual sexual attacks against a person, Vietnamese people would not say 'a sexual attack', but rather would use the word 'rape', and 'a physical attack' would be described as 'a beating' or 'physical assault'. The word 'beat' would be used most times in this sense. If verbal attacks against someone are made, again the Vietnamese equivalent would be 'to abuse' or 'curse someone' rather than to say 'a vituperative attack'. The headword '*attack*' is often left out in the Vietnamese translation, as in the case of 'sexual attack', and it is commonly used as a verb in Vietnamese, instead of a noun. The word '*spell*' in place of '*attack*' is used to indicate 'an attack by natural causes on a person's well-being', as in 'heart/asthma/bronchitis/headache/ringworm attack'. However, an English-speaking person would use the word '*spell*' in 'a dizzy spell' or 'a coughing spell', or as in '*He recovered well after a spell of ill-health.*' The nearest Vietnamese equivalent for the word '*spell*' in this instance would be '*cơn*' or '*thời kì*'.

<i>nằm</i>	[to lie]
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<i>kín đáo</i>	[hidden/secreted/concealed],
<i>liệt giường</i>	[to be bed-ridden],

<i>lăn lóc</i>	[neglected/unloved],
<i>ngửa</i>	[on one's back],
<i>phục</i>	[in ambush],
<i>rạp (xuống đất)</i>	[to slink low (on the ground)],
<i>sấp</i>	[on one's stomach].
<i>vất vưởng</i>	[neglected/uncared for],

In combinations such as *nằm liệt giường* [to be bed-ridden], *nằm rạp (xuống đất)* [to slink low (on the ground)], the verb *nằm* is not rendered as 'to lie' in English. The English combination 'to lie on one's stomach' or 'to lie on one's back' could be translated into Vietnamese with justifiable omissions of 'on one's stomach' or 'on one's back' by using the Vietnamese language-specific words. In Vietnamese this would be translated as *nằm sấp* 'prone' (literally 'lie, (face) down'). It is not necessary for this to be translated as **nằm sấp trên bụng* (literally 'lie, down, on, stomach'). By the same token, if someone is asked to 'lie on their back' the translation would be *nằm ngửa* 'supine' (literally 'lie, (face) up') in place of **nằm ngửa trên lưng của họ* as it is literally translated from the English text.

5.2.2.1.2.2.2 Semi-restricted

This category includes the headwords which are open to partnership with a relatively wide range of items. Some English and Vietnamese examples together with their respective translation equivalents are given and discussed below:

<i>meagre</i>	[ít ỏi]	
<i>beginning</i>		[thuở hàn vi]
<i>living</i>		[cuộc sống đạm bạc]
<i>supply</i>		[tiếp tế/cung cấp thiếu hụt]
<i>wage</i>		[lương ít ỏi/ba cọc ba đồng]
<i>plum</i>		[béo bở]
<i>job</i>		[việc làm/dớp thơm]
<i>offer</i>		[đề nghị béo bở]
<i>position</i>		[địa vị ngon lành]

5.2.2.1.2.2.3 Restricted

There are a small number of words which can attract a very limited number of words, often only a single item, as is evidenced in the collected data. Below are some examples together with their respective translation equivalents:

<i>to curry favour</i>	[lấy lòng/tâng bốc/nịnh bợ/nâng bì]
<i>to clench one's teeth/jaws</i>	[nghiến chặt răng/hàm răng]
<i>to clench one's fist</i>	[siết chặt nắm tay]
<i>to scale a wall/fence</i>	[trèo/leo tường/hàng rào]
<i>to abseil a mountain</i>	[tuột xuống núi]
<i>to tarnish one's reputation</i>	[làm ô uế/nhơ nhuốc thanh danh; bôi nhọ cá nhân]
<i>to bury a dead body</i>	[chôn cất xác chết]

To curry favour is very restricted in English. They are inseparable in the sense that any attempt to explain what *to curry* means on its own would prove a failure. If the combination as a single unit is to be translated into Vietnamese, there are a number of choices such as *to flatter*, *to toady to* and *to lift up someone's balls* if one were to use a more colloquial phrase.

The word *bury* is only used in Vietnamese to indicate 'the interment of a dead body', however, in English it is used in a less restricted manner, as *to bury your nose in a book* (chúi mũi vào cuốn sách), *to bury your head in a book* (vùi đầu vào sách vở), *to bury your emotion* (chôn vùi cảm xúc), *to bury your doubts* (chôn vùi mọi ngờ vực) or *to bury one's face in one's hands* (vục mặt vào lòng bàn tay).

Some other restricted collocations which could be deemed as brain-teasers for the Vietnamese translator are:

<i>flames lick the walls</i>	[ngọn lửa tấp bức tường (flames snap the walls)]
<i>perm drops</i>	[tóc uốn bị duỗi ra (the rolled hair straightens)]
<i>boots squeelch</i>	[giày ủng lội nước/bùn kêu ọc ạch/bì bồm]

The metaphorical sense of *lick* as in *flames lick the walls* cannot be translated

literally into Vietnamese without given an impression of being untypical. The combination 'boots squelch', is taken from the context of the Queen of England walking through the water and debris from the fire at the Windsor Castle. This would be translated into Vietnamese by using an onomatopoeic word 'ọc ạch/bì bồm' as 'giày ủng/ống lội nước/bùn kêu ọc ạch/bì bồm'.

<i>shoulder room</i>	[chỗ dành cho/để vai (chật cứng vì đông người)]
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This combination is no doubt a language-specific item, which was found to occur with the verb 'to vie' as in 'to vie for shoulder room'.

More evidence of limited partnership of word-combinations are detected in the Noun-of-noun pattern:

<i>a brick of cocaine</i>	[một cục cô-ca-in]
<i>a coat of paint</i>	[một lớp sơn]
<i>a gaggle of geese</i>	[một đàn/bầy ngỗng]
<i>a joint of marijuana</i>	[một mẩu cần-sa]
<i>a pack of wolves</i>	[một đàn/bầy sói]
<i>a pod of whales</i>	[một đàn/bầy cá voi]

The Vietnamese language appears to be lacking in word-groupings related to animals. In English there is a great variety of words to express those groupings as evidenced in the data 'a pod of whales', 'a gaggle of geese', 'a pride of lions' and 'a troop of monkeys', to name just a few (McIver, 1986). The limited Vietnamese rendition of those English terms is 'đàn' or 'bầy'.

Below are some samples of Vietnamese restricted collocations and their English counterparts:

<i>con công múa</i>	[dancing/prancing/strutting peacock]
<i>mũi nở</i>	[(nose, well-developed); flared nostrils].
<i>lưỡi rìu quăn</i>	[(tongue, axe, buckled); axe-head warps; axe-blade becomes bent out of shape]
<i>mưa tạnh</i>	[rain lets up/stops]

In Vietnamese the verb 'nhe' (to show) has a very close-knit partnership. It can only co-occur with 'teeth' (răng) or 'tooth-gum' (lợi), whereas 'to bare' in English is not restricted; one can 'bare one's teeth/breast/bum/chest/stomach/back'. In fact, the word 'bare' can be used to show any part of your body.

5.2.2.1.3 Thematic patterning

The collected collocations in both English and Vietnamese were classified into themes, eight for English, nine for Vietnamese. The missing themes of 'Education' and 'Work' were in the English data, whereas the missing theme of 'Appreciation' was not found in the Vietnamese data. The tables below highlight the differences:

Themes	English	Viet.
Colour	+	+
Time	+	+
Appearance	+	+
Weather	+	+
Relationships	+	+
Faith	+	+
Entertainment	+	+
Appreciation	+	
Education		+
Work		+

The theme 'Colour' in the English data was divided into eight subthemes and four in the Vietnamese data. In regards 'injuries', 'road safety', 'human character' and 'social class', as the data indicated, colour terms in English are more widely used than in Vietnamese. The reason for this could be strict Australian road safety regulations, and also colour words used to describe people's characters

which stem from the people's Anglo-Celtic origins. Table below shows the differences regarding the subthemes of 'Colour':

Colour	English	Viet.
Beauty	+	+
Feelings	+	+
Injuries	+	
Road safety	+	
Luck	+	+
Beliefs	+	+
Human character	+	
Social class	+	

There were more divisions regarding 'Time' in English than in Vietnamese. The effect of sport on the Australian way of life reflected an increase in expressions involving competition, and the expressions associated with periods of one's life were reflective of modern-day Westernized living. Table below shows the differences:

Time	English	Viet.
Measurement	+	+
Values	+	+
Prevention	+	+
Competition	+	
Period of a person's life	+	

In the theme 'Appearance', the English theme 'shape and size' was included, mainly because this data came from having to deal with criminal cases and police interviews and reports in newspapers.

In English, the subthemes of 'Divorce' and 'Old age' in 'Relationships' were given importance, because Western people regard both these situations as everyday and give more credence to them than would be given in Vietnam. This is not to

say that Vietnamese people do not venerate their elderly people, however, the issue of divorce is not deserving of as much attention in Vietnam as it is in Western countries. The investigator’s bias also have been at play in the collection of the data.

Relationships	English	Viet.
Love	+	+
Marriage	+	+
Sex	+	+
Divorce	+	
Old age	+	

A deficit in terms relating to ‘Government’ in Vietnamese was apparent when analysing the theme ‘Faith’. The Westminster system of government, the Western open show of appreciation and ardent love of sport were evidenced in a wider range of expressions in English. ‘Ancestor worship’ which is peculiar to Vietnamese beliefs is subsumed in the theme ‘Religions’.

Faith	English	Viet.
Religions	+	+
Occultism	+	+
Government	+	
Politics	+	

‘Appreciation’ as a theme was only discussed in the English data. English expressions of appreciation are related often to sporting prowess or the Arts, so it is no wonder that there is a bank of expressions on which to call, particularly when you consider the Australian obsession with sport.

‘Work’ or ‘Education’ as a theme was only discussed in the Vietnamese data. This is sheer bias on the part of the investigator. Australians do not appear to work

hard, nor do they appear to value education as much as the Vietnamese people do. Perhaps it is just that they do not have the benefit of a long and illustrious historical past on which to call. After all, Australia is only 200 years old in terms of Westernized beliefs and concepts, and up until the beginning of the 1900s, not many Australians could lay claim to having been educated.

Work, on the other hand, was hard, carving out tracks into the harsh inland and pioneering the land. There was little time to sit around and philosophize, for often the men and women were alone in the outback with only the Aborigines for company.

5.2.2.2 Different form

Samples of collected items of both languages, regular and non-regular alike, of similar meaning but different form are discussed below:

5.2.2.2.1 Regular items

English and Vietnamese examples of the regular patterns are listed below, together with their respective translation equivalents, explicatory equivalents or paraphrases and vice versa.

5.2.2.2.1.1 English-Vietnamese

English examples of the regular items which share similar meaning but different form are given below, together with their Vietnamese equivalents.

5.2.2.2.1.1.1 Adjective-noun

acute embarrassment
chemical castration

[ngượng chín người]
[trích cho tội-phạm chuyên-trị hiếp-dâm bằng
những hoá chất để khiến cho họ không còn thấy

<i>concerted effort</i>	hứng tình nũa; diệt dục tình bằng hoá chất]
<i>idealistic prank</i>	[nỗ-lực có phối hợp]
<i>meteoric rise</i>	[trò chơi răn đời]
<i>mile-wide grin</i>	[lên nhanh như điều gặp gió]
<i>personal best</i>	[cười toe toét]
<i>'Quit for Life' campaign</i>	[thành-tích cá-nhân]
<i>wet nurse</i>	[chiến-dịch 'Cai thuốc để sống trọn đời']
	[vú em]

'*Acute embarrassment*' means 'intense embarrassment', and the Vietnamese express it as 'embarrassed to such an extent that your body is well-cooked'. The English equivalent would be 'to turn red with embarrassment.'

'*Chemical castration*' is a new term. The word castration means to cut off a male animal's genitals to sublimate sexual desire. In the modern world, it is now possible to have the same effect by injecting chemicals rather than using mutilation. This neologism has no Vietnamese translation equivalent proper, except for an explanatory equivalent.

'*A concerted effort*' could apply to an individual or to a group, in that something is devised and pre-arranged and then put into action. Its Vietnamese translated version means 'a coordinated effort'.

'*An idealistic prank*' would refer to the action of a person or a group making mischief in order to draw attention to a particular cause or 'ideal'. For instance, putting blood-covered, dead wild ducks in front of a Government Ministers Office to draw attention to the fact that the group wanted a stop put to wild duck hunting.

The combination '*meteoric rise*' has its Vietnamese equivalent in the form of the simile as 'you rise like a kite catching the wind'.

'A mile-wide grin/smile' or another way to express this would be to say 'a smile from ear to ear', which appears to be very collocationally linked its Vietnamese expression 'to smile with one's mouth stretching as widely as to the ears' (cười miệng rộng đến mang tai). It has a positive connotation indicating great happiness. In Vietnamese, the language-specific adjective 'toe toét', describing the grin, is in the form of a reduplication.

'Personal best' is a relatively new term, which is used in reference to Sport, usually nothing else. It is often shortened to PB, meaning that the sportsperson has achieved their best performance so far. The Vietnamese translation equivalent 'thành-tích cá-nhân' has recently gained currency, and has an equivalent meaning of 'personal record or achievement'.

'Quit for Life' campaign is slogan which has a double meaning. Firstly it implores people 'to stop smoking in order to save their life'; secondly it asks that 'they do it for the rest of their life, and never take up the habit again'. My suggested translation is *Chiến-dịch 'Cai thuốc để sống trọn đời'* ('quit smoking to live your whole life' campaign).

'Wet nurse' has its collocational counterpart as 'vú em' (lit. breast for the baby). This is somewhat confusing if back-translated into English. A 'breast baby' or 'breast-fed baby' in English means the mother suckles the baby, not bottle-feeds it. To render the term 'wet nurse' properly would not be easy and could end up with the wrong meaning altogether from a Vietnamese point of view, because 'to wet nurse a baby' in English means another woman, not the mother, suckles the infant. Also, a colloquial meaning of 'to wet nurse' means 'to pander to and cosset someone'.

5.2.2.2.1.1.2 Noun-noun

Translations of this type could be in the main made by way of the Noun-adjective pattern.

<i>love affair</i>	[ngoại tình]
<i>midlife crisis</i>	[khủng hoảng lúc tuổi sắp về già; tuổi hồi xuân]
<i>movie preview</i>	[buổi chiếu phim ra mắt đầu tiên cho quan khách, kí giả xem]
<i>time bomb</i>	[bom nổ chậm]
<i>pet fish</i>	[cá kiểng]

'*Love affair*' is translated as 'extra-marital love/sex' in Vietnamese. To a Vietnamese mind, the English term 'affair' has its Vietnamese counterpart '*áp-phe*', a loanword from French '*affaire*', which means 'business', so it would not be thought of in the context of 'unfaithfulness' to a spouse.

'*Mid-life crisis*' in English means 'crisis in the declining years' and can be rendered as such into Vietnamese using a paraphrase. Its Vietnamese collocational counterpart could mean something like 'the age when you relive your youth' (tuổi hồi xuân). In English, the word 'crisis' gives a negative connotation because someone may revert to youthful behaviour patterns, such as chasing younger partners or dropping out from society. The Vietnamese combination '*tuổi hồi xuân*', implies a neutral, not negative connotation, although somewhat sarcastic.

'*Movie preview*' describes the situation of inviting celebrities and media people to the first showing of a film in order to gain favourable publicity.

'*Time-bomb*' or '*delayed action bomb*' is commonly known in Vietnamese as '*bom nổ chậm*' ('a slowly-exploded bomb') without using the word 'time'. If Vietnamese parents have many daughters they feel they are living with a 'time-bomb', in that the daughters may get pregnant and that will bring disgrace to the

family. They allude to this as ‘having a slowly-exploded bomb’ in the house. A couple of English-Vietnamese dictionaries have glossed the term ‘time bomb’ as ‘*bom thời chính*’ (time-set bomb/delayed action bomb) [*Từ-điển Quân-sự Việt-Pháp-Mỹ*, Bộ Tổng Tham Mưu. QLVNCH, 1962] or ‘*bom giờ*’ (literally, time bomb) [*Từ-điển Anh-Việt*, Viện Ngôn-ngữ-học, 1993], however, their Vietnamese equivalents have not as yet gained currency.

The Vietnamese collocation ‘*cá kiểng*’, which literally means ‘fish used as an ornament/decoration’, has its English collocational equivalent as ‘pet fish’.

5.2.2.2.1.1.3 Verb-noun

Almost all of the instances of this type listed below could be matched with the same target-language pattern, except for the combination ‘*hurl abuse*’, the Vietnamese verb meaning ‘abuse’ is used.

<i>hurl abuse</i>	[chửi bới/lãng mạ]
<i>launch a book</i>	[ra mắt cuốn sách]
<i>acknowledge the crowd</i>	[giơ tay đáp lễ lại đám đông hoan-hô/tán thưởng mình]
<i>cheat death</i>	[thoát chết/đùa rỡn với tử thần]
<i>impose an embargo</i>	[áp-dụng biện-pháp cấm vận]
<i>break the fall</i>	[đỡ/cản vật gì đang rơi/người nào đang ngã từ trên cao xuống]
<i>kick the habit</i>	[bỏ thói quen/tật xấu]
<i>turn the table</i>	[lật ngược tình thế]
<i>eclipse one’s targets</i>	[gần đạt được mục-tiêu]
<i>undergo an operation</i>	[bị/phải giải-phẫu]

The back-translations from Vietnamese into English of the above combinations might not be successful unless the translator is highly competent in English collocations. Interesting combinations are *hurl abuse*, *launch a book*, *break the fall*. The expression ‘*to cheat death*’ can be translated into Vietnamese either as ‘to escape death’ or ‘to trifle with death’. The only difference between ‘to cheat death’

in English and ‘to trifle with death’ in Vietnamese lies in the timing; one is said before what has happened, the other is said after. The collocation ‘*kick the habit*’ has its Vietnamese equivalent as ‘to quit the (bad) habit’.

5.2.2.2.1.1.4 Noun-verb

The Noun-verb combinations in which the verb is either a transitive or intransitive one can be converted into the same grammatical patterns in Vietnamese.

<i>boat capsizes</i>	[tàu đắm lật úp]
<i>boots squelch</i>	[giày ủng/ống lội kêu ọc ạch/lồm bồm]
<i>dream evaporates</i>	[mộng ước tan theo mây khói]
<i>flame licks (the walls)</i>	[lửa tấp (vách tường)]
<i>fortune swings back and forth</i>	[tiền bạc khi ra khi vô/lúc có lúc không]
<i>idea runs dry</i>	[ý tưởng cạn nguồn/hết ý]
<i>popularity sags</i>	[uy tín bị sụt giảm]
<i>rumours fly</i>	[tin đồn lan truyền]

The combinations ‘*boots squelch*’, ‘*fortune swings back and forth*’, ‘*dream evaporates*’, ‘*flame licks*’ would pose a big challenge for the Vietnamese translator. ✍

The combination ‘*dream evaporates*’ has its Vietnamese translation equivalent with a literary overtone as ‘dream is dissipating with clouds and smoke’.

5.2.2.2.1.1.5 Noun-of-noun

Only a few instances of the Noun-of-noun combinations could be rendered using their Vietnamese Noun-noun corresponding pattern. In the majority of cases, explicatory equivalents were used to make them sound more natural in the target language.

<i>flash of arrogance</i>	[thoáng hiện vẻ kiêu căng]
<i>flood of calls</i>	[điện-thoại gọi đến tới tấp]
<i>fountain of wealth</i>	[núi của; giàu nứt đổ đổ vách]
<i>lip of embankment</i>	[mép/rìa đường đê]

<i>peal of church bells</i>	[tiếng chuông nhà thờ đổ hồi]
<i>ring of artificiality</i>	[nghe có vẻ giả tạo]
<i>tears of happiness</i>	[vui mừng đến rơi/nhỏ lệ; khóc như thiếu-nữ vu- qui nhật]

The expression '*tears of happiness*' or '*tears of joy*' is rendered as 'overjoyed to the point of shedding tears' or 'weeping like a bride on her wedding day' in Vietnamese. The combination 'fountain of wealth' is translated into Vietnamese as 'mountain of wealth'. English people also refer to great wealth, using an allusion to mountains. The other Vietnamese translation implies that 'you are so rich you make walls crack and collapse'.

5.2.2.2.1.1.6 Noun-and-noun

<i>gloom and doom</i>	[thất vọng nào nùng]
<i>tooth and nail</i>	[quyết liệt]
<i>neck and neck</i>	[sát nút/khít khao]

The expression '*gloom and doom*', whose order is reversible, indicates a feeling of sadness and impending death or disaster. Its Vietnamese translation equivalent is back-translated as 'despair and sorrow'. '*Tooth and nail*' means 'in a determined way'. '*Neck and neck*' means 'to have an equal chance of winning or succeeding'.

5.2.2.2.1.1.7 Verb-adverb

Instances of this type could be converted to their Vietnamese Verb-adjective counterpart in translation.

<i>apologize profusely</i>	[xin lỗi hết lời]
<i>celebrate hugely</i>	[ăn mừng vĩ-đại/ tung-bùng cử-hành]
<i>criticize trenchantly</i>	[chỉ-trích mạnh-mẽ]
<i>die unnecessarily</i>	[chết vô lý/lãng nhất]
<i>gesticulate wildly</i>	[tay múa may/ra hiệu loạn cả lên trong lúc nói]
<i>give generously</i>	[rộng lòng cứu giúp, mở lòng từ-bi giúp tiền bạc cho nhiều]

<i>lie massively</i>	[nói dối khủng-khiếp/như Cuội]
<i>praise effusively</i>	[khen nức-nở]
<i>read voraciously</i>	[đọc ngấu nghiến]
<i>vote overwhelmingly</i>	[đồn phiếu cho ai]

The combination ‘*apologize profusely*’ was rendered as ‘apologize until running out of words/no more words left to do so’. Another of saying ‘*give generously*’ is ‘dig deep’ which could be translated by way of a paraphrase. The Vietnamese translation of ‘*lie massively*’ could be used in the form of the simile, ‘lying like Cuội’ (Cuội or Moon-boy is a legendary boy who lives in the moon and according to folklore, he lies massively)

5.2.2.2.1.1.8 Verb-and-verb

This combinatory type is by no means matched by the same type in Vietnamese, as indicated in the examples below:

<i>eat and run</i>	[vừa ăn vừa di chuyển]
<i>search and destroy</i>	[truy diệt]
<i>duck and weave</i>	[tránh né]
<i>forget and forgive</i>	[xóa bỏ hận thù]
<i>give and take</i>	[có đi có lại]
<i>cash and carry</i>	[tiền trao cháo múc]

The combination ‘eat and run’ means ‘to eat while you are on the move’ such as eating a hamburger for a quick lunch rather than sitting down and relaxing while dining. The meaning of ‘*eat and run*’ and its context of use as well as its translation equivalent (‘eating while moving’) is beyond most Vietnamese translators. Without prior knowledge of the English expression, the translator would easily misinterpret it as ‘you had a meal in a restaurant and then ran off without paying’.

The expression ‘*forget and forgive*’ was rendered as ‘to wipe off one’s

resentment/hatred’ using a different form, which is in fact related to the former South Vietnamese government’s slogan used in their political and diplomatic campaign ‘more friends, less foes’ (thêm bạn bớt thù).

The Vietnamese idiom ‘*tiền trao cháo múc*’ [lit. money, give/deliver, soup, scoop] means ‘Pay now, I will scoop you the rice soup’ or to put it differently ‘Unless you pay, you won’t get it’. In retailing, the terminology ‘Cash on Delivery’ or ‘Payment on Delivery’ is used in the English-speaking world. If speaking about smaller retailing situations, the terms ‘Cash and Wrap’ or ‘Cash and Carry’ are used.

5.2.2.2.1.1.9 Adverb-adjective

Instances of this type are equivalent to those of Adjective-adjective type in Vietnamese, although the Vietnamese word order is reversible as in the case of ‘profoundly deaf’ below:

<i>intensely loyal</i>	[hết lòng trung thành/
<i>profoundly deaf</i>	[điếc nặng]
<i>sadly missed</i>	[vô cùng luyến tiếc]
<i>superbly rich</i>	[rất giàu/giàu nứt đố đổ vách]

The English adverbial intensifiers; eg. *absolutely, intensely, superbly*, could be rendered as adjectival modifiers in Vietnamese; eg. ‘vô cùng’ or ‘rất’. The combination ‘sadly missed’ which is an English language/culture/context-specific item has no ready-made translation equivalent in Vietnamese. A paraphrase somewhat like ‘*mọi người đều thương sót/luyến tiếc ông/bà ấy*’ (everbody will sadly miss him/her) might be a better translation. However, in the Vietnamese discourse, this English concluding phrase can be dispensed with in order for the target language to achieve naturalness.

5.2.2.2.1.10 Adjective-and-adjective

Instances of this type can be safely converted to Adjective-adjective in translation.

<i>alive and kicking</i>	[sống-động linh-hoạt]
<i>clean and decent</i>	[thanh bạch]
<i>dead and buried</i>	[đẹp tiệm/khóa sổ]
<i>hard and fast</i>	[rõ ràng/minh bạch]
<i>high and dry</i>	[ngõ ngàng]
<i>high and mighty</i>	[cao ngạo/lên mặt thầy đời]

Translations of combinations are often subject to different English contexts of use. The examples ‘Don’t come the high and mighty with me’ or ‘Don’t act so high and mighty’ might help illustrate how the expression ‘high and mighty’ would be used in its own context.

5.2.2.2.1.2 Vietnamese-English

Vietnamese examples of the regular items which share similar meaning but different form with English are given below, together with their English equivalents.

5.2.2.2.1.2.1 Noun-adjective

<i>lương tâm nhẹ nhàng</i>	[(light conscience); clear conscience]
<i>trang nhất (tờ báo)</i>	[(first page); front page (of a newspaper)]
<i>viên đạn oan nghiệt</i>	[(cruel bullet); fatal bullet]
<i>vợ chồng luống tuổi</i>	[elderly/ Darby and Joan couple]

The first page of a newspaper is usually referred to in English as the ‘front page’, whereas its Vietnamese collocational equivalent is ‘*trang nhất*’ (first page) or ‘*trang đầu*’ (beginning page).

The combination ‘*viên đạn oan nghiệt*’, if literally translated as ‘cruel bullet’, does

not infer fatality if translated as such into English. A ‘cruel bullet wound’ would only mean a serious injury such as ‘knee-capping’ but a ‘fatal bullet’ indicates death. As an item in the data, it would be more contextually correct if rendered as ‘the fatal bullet’, as in the case of John Newman’s death.

‘*Darby and Joan couple*’ in English refers to ‘a long-term happily married couple’, which has no equivalent in Vietnamese. However, in the context in which the Vietnamese expression ‘*vợ chồng lương tửu*’ was used, it would serve as a good example of a collocationally translated item, as in the case of Lu and Hénh in Nguyễn Huy Thiệp’s story ‘The Plague’ (APPENDIX 12).

5.2.2.2.1.2.2 Verb-noun

<i>chinh phục trái tim</i>	[(to conquer someone’s heart); to capture/win someone’s heart]
<i>chụp mũ</i>	[(to put a hat on someone’s head); to brand someone a Vietnamese Communist]
<i>dịch nguyên văn</i>	[to translate verbatim]
<i>đập nát nồi cơm</i>	[(to smash one’s pot of rice); to ruin one’s bread and butter]
<i>gây nợ máu</i>	[(to cause a blood debt); to provoke a blood feud]
<i>móc tiền cử tri</i>	[(to pickpocket the voters); to fleece the voters]
<i>nợ sách đèn</i>	[(the debt of books and lamp); the debt owed by those who have not completed their studies]
<i>xé rách trán</i>	[(to tear off one’s forehead); to tear off one’s skull]

The Vietnamese equivalent of ‘*to capture/win someone’s heart*’ is ‘to conquer someone’s heart’.

The relatively new term ‘*chụp mũ*’ literally means ‘to put a hat on someone’s head’. However, colloquially it infers ‘to brand someone a Vietnamese Communist’ and is a language-specific item, undoubtedly springing from Vietnam’s turbulent history.

'To translate verbatim' means 'to translate word for word' in English, but the Vietnamese translation would be 'to translate exactly as it is in the text'.

The combination '*đập nát nồi cơm*' literally means 'to smash one's pot of rice'. English people refer to their means of earning a living as 'your bread and butter', whilst Vietnamese people refer to it as 'one's pot of rice'. This is a culture-specific item in both languages, and means that 'someone stops you from earning your livelihood'.

The combination '*gây nợ máu*', literally means 'to cause a blood debt' or rather 'to provoke a blood feud', to make it sound collocationally typical in English. The story of Romeo and Juliet is a classic English example of 'to provoke a blood feud'. The stirring up of resentment between two parties to the point where blood is shed, is the appropriate translation.

The Vietnamese colloquial expression '*móc tiền cử tri*' (to pickpocket the voters) has its English collocational translation equivalent as 'to fleece the voters'.

The culture-specific item '*nợ sách đèn*' is translated literally as 'the debt of books and lamp'. Figuratively, the expression '*sách đèn*' (books and lamp) symbolizes 'dedication to study which demands working late into the night and early in the morning', whereas '*nợ*' (debt) means 'the debt carried by a person if he or she has not fulfilled his or her true obligations in life by not passing the necessary examinations, which will provide status and fame.' Depending on the intention of the text, the readers and their cultural and language backgrounds, this would be rendered in a paraphrase fashion, or in a concise and compact manner as, 'has not finished University, as was expected'.

The combination '*xé rách trán*' (literally, 'to tear off one's forehead') is used in the context 'someone hit by a bullet'. English people do not say this, but rather they refer to 'tearing off one's skull'. Another way of saying this is 'to scalp someone'.

5.2.2.2.1.2.3 Noun-noun

<i>con sói mồi</i>	[(prey wolf); sacrificial wolf]
<i>mắt một mí</i>	[(one-fold eyes); Oriental fold]
<i>trẻ em bụi đời</i>	[(children living in the dust); street kids]
<i>kiến lửa/vàng</i>	[fire/bull/red ants]

The expression '*con sói mồi*' is rendered as 'sacrificial wolf'. In this context, it means that the wolf in a pack acts as a decoy and sacrifices its life to save the rest of the pack. This type of animal behaviour is quite common in large groups of animals with a set social structure.

The combination '*mắt một mí*' literally means 'one-fold eyes'. The English term, 'Oriental fold' to describe the shape of Asian eyes, would never be easily guessed by a Vietnamese.

The expression '*trẻ em bụi đời*' in Vietnamese refer to 'children living in the dust of life' which in English people would rather refer to as 'street kids'.

Vietnamese people refer to '*kiến lửa*', (fire ants) or '*kiến vàng*' (yellow ants), however, the popular Western terminology would be 'fire ants', 'bull ants' or 'red ants'.

5.2.2.2.1.2.4 Verb-adjective

Instances of this type can be translated using the English Verb, Verb-adverb pattern or Noun+prepositional phrase.

<i>cười khẩy</i>	[to snigger; a sniggering laugh]
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<i>cười sằng sặc</i>	[to burst out cackling]
<i>đứng lom khom</i>	[to stand with one's back bent]
<i>kết-án vội vã</i>	[to prematurely condemn]
<i>ngồi thu lu</i>	[to sit hunched up with one's arms around one's legs]
<i>ngồi thụp xuống</i>	[to squat on your haunches]
<i>nói năng hoạt bát</i>	[to be articulate]
<i>quẩy tú tung</i>	[to swish around hither and thither]

The combination '*nói năng hoạt bát*' literally means 'to speak easily and fluently'.

Its English translation equivalent is deemed to be intriguing in that the use of 'to speak' was omitted.

5.2.2.2.1.2.5 Noun-Verb

This pattern type can be matched widely in translation, as indicated below:

<i>ma ám</i>	[possessed by demons/evil spirits]
<i>ma chài</i>	[under the spell of evil spirits]
<i>mạng nhện chăng</i>	[spider spins a web]
<i>mây xà xuống</i>	[clouds gather]
<i>mũi nở</i>	[(well-developed nose); flared nostrils]
<i>nằm liệt giường</i>	[to be bed-ridden/be confined to bed]
<i>người ta đồn</i>	[rumour has it that; it is rumoured]
<i>tin đồn bay</i>	[rumours abound]
<i>tòa tha bổng</i>	[to be acquitted]
<i>thua sạch túi</i>	[to lose all one's money (from gambling)]
<i>trời trở chứng</i>	[weather goes berserk/turns nasty]

If the expression '*ma ám*' is literally translated as 'being obsessed/haunted by evil spirits', it might convey an entirely different meaning in English. Its English translational equivalent could be 'possessed by demons/evil spirits'.

The expression '*ma chài*' literally means 'the ghost traps you'. It has a negative connotation in Vietnamese; however, it may vary in its use in English, according to whether the 'spell' or 'irresistable power' is good or bad, as in the example: '*He was madly in love and completely under her spell*'. It depends on whether the person is doing something or having it done to them. Its English equivalent could

be ‘under the spell of/beguiled by evil spirits’.

The term ‘*mũi nở*, ‘*nở mũi*’ or ‘*phồng mũi*’ is translated as ‘flared nostrils’. The idea of having ‘*mũi nở* (flared nostrils) in Vietnamese takes on a positive meaning for it indicates happiness, whereas in English, ‘to have flared nostrils’ would be a negative feeling, in that it would mean you are angry or surprised, much like a horse reacts under the same circumstances.

The Vietnamese introductory phrase ‘*người ta đồn*’ (people rumour) deserves attention.

The English equivalent of ‘*Tòa tha bổng*’ (the Court sets (you) free’) is ‘to be acquitted’. This is a good example of items with similar meaning but different form.

5.2.2.2.1.2.6 Adjective-noun

Instances of this combinatory type were translated in various ways using different patterns.

<i>buồn mồm</i>	[(idle mouth)/feel like wanting to have something to chew]
<i>chối tai</i>	[it jars/aggravates on someone]
<i>đầy ắp</i>	[full to the brim]
<i>im thin thít</i>	[dead silence]
<i>liệt hai chân</i>	[paralyzed/immobile from the waist down]
<i>ngượng miệng</i>	[to be shy in speaking up]
<i>rỗ chằng chịt</i>	[entirely covered in pock marks]
<i>suôi tai</i>	[it sounds right to the ear]
<i>sống gọng</i>	[to speak rudely/ be insolent]
<i>tràn trề ánh sáng</i>	[suffused with light]
<i>trơ xương</i>	[skinny/bony]
<i>ướt sũng</i>	[soaked to the bone/wet to the skin]

The Vietnamese combination ‘*buồn mồm*’ literally meaning ‘sad mouth’ could be misleading without an explanation, whereas the restricted collocation ‘*ướt sũng*’

literally meaning ‘completely wet’ would be more idiomatically matched with English ‘soaked to the bone/wet to the skin’.

The literal English translation of *liệt hai chân* is ‘two (both) legs paralysed’. Its collocationally appropriate translation should read ‘to be paralysed from the waist down’, or else the word ‘paraplegia’ can be used as another equivalent.

5.2.2.2.1.2.7 Verb-verb

This combinatory type can be hardly matched with English as indicated below:

<i>coi trọng</i>	[to have a high regard]
<i>khóc thét</i>	[to cry one’s heart out]
<i>nói thách</i>	[to bring up the price in anticipation of a bargain]
<i>tự nguyện dấn thân</i>	[(to volunteer to bring oneself into something); to sacrifice personal gains for the common good by doing something]
<i>vùng chạy</i>	[to free oneself and quickly run off]

The combination ‘*nói thách*’ is a culture-specific item and requires a circumlocution. From the renditions of *khóc thét* and *vùng chạy* it would surely prove to be a challenge for most Vietnamese translators.

5.2.2.2.2 Non-regular items

Non-regular items of similar meaning but different form of both English and Vietnamese are discussed below:

To escape by the skin of one’s teeth [thoát trong đường tơ kẽ tóc]

The idiom ‘*to escape by the skin of one’s teeth*’ would be rendered in Vietnamese as *thoát trong đường tơ kẽ tóc* (‘to escape by a thread of silk, by a thread of hair’).

To carry coals to Newcastle [chở củi về rừng]

English people say ‘*to carry coals to Newcastle*’ (Newcastle in England and

Australia are well-known coal-mining cities), while a Vietnamese equivalent is *chở củi về rừng* ('carry firewood into the jungle') and even though the imagery may be different, the same meaning is conveyed.

Khỏe như voi [as strong as an ox]

The Vietnamese simile '*khỏe như voi*' ('as strong as an elephant') or '*khỏe như trâu*' ('as strong as a water-buffalo') has its English counterpart: *as strong as an ox*; and its Australian correspondence: *as strong /fit as a mallee-bull* or *as fit as a fiddle*.

Ăn cháo đá bát [to bite the hand that feeds you]

The Vietnamese idiom '*Ăn cháo đá bát*' or '*Ăn cháo đá bát*' literally means 'to eat the soup, to kick/urinate in the bowl'. This saying indicates 'ingratitude', and its closest English equivalent would be 'to bite the hand that feeds you'.

Chó ngáp phải ruồi [to wait for things to fall into your lap]

'*Chó ngáp phải ruồi*' [lit. Dog yawns, catches flies]. This expression indicates that 'a person often gets results without really trying hard or being deserving of it'. The equivalent would be 'to wait for things to fall into your lap', which in turn has its Vietnamese counterpart as '*há miệng chờ sung*' (to wait for the plums/figs to fall into your open mouth).

Được voi đòi tiên [You can't have your cake and eat it too]

The Vietnamese idiom '*Được voi đòi tiên*', glossed as 'you have an elephant but demand a fairy', basically means 'you are never satisfied'. Like most tetra-syllabic idiomatic expressions in Vietnamese, this expression makes use of a medial rhyme; eg. '*voi*' rhymes with '*đòi*', for the sake of creating a compact phrase which would make it easy for people to remember, so the sense may sometimes

override the true and logical meaning. This saying uses the symbolism of a big, tangible animal such as an elephant and compares it to a delicate, intangible object such as a fairy, indicating that ‘a greedy person would want something that is beyond reach’. The English equivalent is ‘you can’t have your cake and eat it too’. To the Vietnamese, the English equivalent is ambiguous, because they cannot think of ‘having a cake without eating it and thus enjoying it’.

Giận cá chém thớt [Don’t kill the messenger!]

The Vietnamese saying ‘*Giận cá chém thớt*’ is literally glossed as ‘you are angry with the fish, you chop the board’, meaning ‘you do not vent your anger on the fish, but do so on the chopping board’. This is an illogical symbolism. The English equivalent could be ‘Don’t kill the messenger!’. The English saying dates back from the ancient times when messages were relayed by runners. If the messengers brought bad news, especially to commanders in the battle fields, the messenger would often be killed by the recipient of the news.

Mẹ tròn con vuông [both mother and baby are doing well/fine]

The Vietnamese tetra-syllabic idiom *Mẹ tròn con vuông* which literally means ‘mother is round, baby is square’ is often used as a wish extended to the expecting mother before she is going to give birth to a baby. It could also be used as an announcement after the baby is born, indicating ‘mother and baby are both happy and well’.

Trâu buộc ghét trâu ăn [the tall-poppy syndrome]

The saying ‘*Trâu buộc ghét trâu ăn*’ literally means ‘the water-buffalo tied to a pole hates the buffalo freely grazing’. If we speak of ‘the tall-poppy syndrome’ in English, thus the imagery of a water-buffalo is used to indicate the same

meaning.

Trâu chậm uống nước đục [He who hesitates is lost]

The saying '*Trâu chậm uống nước đục*' ('the slow water-buffalo will drink only murky/muddy water') suggest that 'if you are not quick enough to take the opportunity to have or do something that will be of benefit, you will have lost out'. The three English expressions below would be the equivalents of the Vietnamese saying:

Strike while the iron is hot; Make hay while the sun shines; He who hesitates is lost.

5.2.2.3 Different context of use

Below are examples of similar meaning and form, but different context of use:

5.2.2.3.1 Regular items

English examples of regular items, together with their translation equivalents, are given below:

button eyes
pot belly

[mắt tròn nhỏ]
[bụng ỏng/phệ; bụng như thùng nước lèo]

The combination '*button eyes*' in English means 'small, round eyes' similar in appearance to that of a teddy bear. It is used to literarily describe the eyes of 'young babies' or 'toddlers'. It is used in a positive sense to denote 'cuteness' as in the case of 'button nose'. Its Vietnamese collocational counterpart would be 'marble eyes', used with a positive connotation to refer to beautiful, big eyes of young children, as in '*mắt nó tròn như hòn bi ve*' (his/her eyes are round like glass marbles). However, the Vietnamese context of use is different in that it often

refers in daily conversation, instead of in literature.

Pot belly alludes to the 'pot-belly stove' which was made of cast-iron and was round, so that warmth could be evenly distributed around the room. It can refer to the round, bloated stomachs of people suffering from malnutrition, as well as to stomachs which protrude on healthy men and women. The Vietnamese combination *bụng óng* refers to 'bloated stomachs' of children from tapeworms, whereas *bụng phệ* or *bụng như thùng nước lèo* (stomach like a beef soup vat) is used in relation to adults only.

5.2.2.3.2 Non-regular items

Life hanging by a thread [tính mạng treo trên sợi tóc]

The saying '*Life hanging by a thread*' in English culture is used to describe someone who is close to death, usually because of illness or injury, the expression *his life is hanging by a thread* is used. Vietnamese people refer to someone whose life is in danger by saying *tính mạng của hắn treo trên sợi tóc* ('his life is hanging by a thread of hair').

Rats desert/leave a sinking ship [Cháy nhà ra mặt chuột]

The English saying '*Rats desert a sinking ship*' indicates that 'When times are bad, you only think of yourself and not of others'. The Vietnamese saying '*Cháy nhà ra mặt chuột*' is glossed as 'When the house burns down, the rats show up'. The Vietnamese expression has a wider context of use than its English counterpart. The English expression insinuates selfishness, whereas the Vietnamese does not necessarily have this implication. With regard to translation, to play safe the Vietnamese idiom should be used to translate the English text, using the

technique of over-translation.

5.2.2.4 Different form and context of use

5.2.2.4.1 Regular items

English and Vietnamese examples of regular items, together with their translation equivalents, are given below:

<i>cash and carry</i>	[tiền trao cháo múc]
<i>press the flesh</i>	[bắt tay xã-giao]

The Vietnamese idiom ‘*Tiền trao cháo múc*’ [lit. Money, Give/Deliver, Soup, Scoop] means ‘Pay now, I will scoop you the rice soup’ or ‘Unless you pay, you won’t get it’. As a matter of fact, the Vietnamese expression can be used in a much wider context than in English, as it is not applied only to the situation where ‘money is changed hands’ following a business transaction. Its meaning could be extended to cover a ‘give and take’ situation.

The English combination ‘*press the flesh*’ is a language/culture-specific item in English and it has no literal equivalent in Vietnamese. The nearest Vietnamese translation equivalent would be ‘to shake hands socially’, however, it is by no means restricted to the narrow context of use in English. The more specific English context refers to hand-shaking with a political overtone. This is not the case in the Vietnamese translation. If the English expression is used to translate the Vietnamese one, it would be the case of ‘under-translation’.

<i>ăn bám</i>	[dole bludger]
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The combination ‘*ăn bám*’ is correctly rendered into English as ‘to be a dole bludger’. Its English literal translation is ‘to eat/live clinging to someone’

meaning you are 'a parasite'. The term 'dole bludger' is an Australian colloquialism and is used in the context of 'a recipient of unemployment benefits', whereas its Vietnamese counterpart is used in a wider context. With the social security payments in Australia such people need not be considered parasites.

5.2.2.4.2 Non-regular items

Below are non-regular items which have similar meaning, different form and different context of use:

to turn a blind eye / *to turn a deaf ear* [cháy nhà hàng xóm bình chân như vại]

This English idiom '*to turn a blind eye*' means that 'you are selfish and not affected emotionally by anyone else's problems or predicaments'. The Vietnamese idiom '*cháy nhà hàng xóm bình chân như vại*' is expressed as 'when your neighbour's house is on fire, you are as unmoved as an earthen water jar'.

to bell the cat [xiá răng cọp]

The idiom '*to bell the cat*' infers that 'one person undertakes a dangerous act on behalf of the whole group, to which they belong'. From the folk-tale of the mice who decided that it would be of great benefit to them if the cat had a bell put around its neck so that they could hear it coming; however none of them would volunteer to do this. (Kirkpatrick&Schwarz, 1982). The Vietnamese expression '*xiá răng cọp*' (to toothpick a tiger's teeth), which would be the English equivalent, has a much wider context of use than the English one. This Vietnamese idiom means to 'toothpick a tiger', which is obviously a most dangerous job, because instead of cleaning its teeth a person could easily end up as a meal for the tiger.

5.3 Summary

English and Vietnamese collocational patterns have been compared for their similarities and contrasted to show their differences. The similarities were in terms of their grammatical make-up, their collocational senses and ranges and their thematic or cultural groupings.

Differences regarding patterning, form and context of use were discussed and analysed. The collected items of different forms, be they a regular or non-regular nature which have a similar meaning but different form have also been discussed. Different context of use with similar meaning and form have been taken into account.

Chapter Six

6.0 Implications for translator training

6.1 The aim of the chapter

Based on the empirical research findings gathered from the surveys and the contrastive analysis in the previous chapters, this final chapter will discuss the importance of vocabulary and collocation teaching and testing in the training of professional translators. Strategies for matching English and Vietnamese collocational patterns, particularly those which are non-comparable, in search for translation equivalence, will also be discussed.

6.2 Vocabulary teaching

6.2.1 Historical background

The tendency to push vocabulary into the background in the teaching of foreign languages dominated in the 1940s, 50s and 60s and was epitomized by Fries and his works in 1945. This attitude predominated in America and consequently the period 1945-1970 was in limbo, so far as any emphasis being placed on learning vocabulary as a language skill.

Britain paid more attention to vocabulary but did not tackle the issue of learners and their needs to any large extent during this period. Wilkins (1972) brought to vocabulary teaching the insight of lexical semantics. He believed that the study of lexical semantics (1) helps us understand the process of translation; (2) enables us to organize the lexicon; (3) enables us to bring out the full meanings of words. Twaddell (1972&1973) also argued for learners' vocabularies at intermediate

level. He saw the necessity to teach guessing strategies to tackle unknown words. This marked the beginning of learning vocabulary as a language skill. Connolly (1973) and Donley (1974) argued that words should be learnt in 'context' and in 'contrast', whilst Lord (1974) stated that the relationship between thought and words is a 'process' not a 'thing'. His approach represented a shift from the vocabulary control approach to one concerned with acquisition of learning.

Brown (1974) brought collocation to the forefront and gave practical useable exercises, then followed Anthony (1975) and Nilsen (1976) with strong views on the role of semantics in vocabulary teaching. Richards (1976) brought the characterization of lexical competence down to eight broad assumptions, and his article was important in that it acknowledged the complex nature of vocabulary teaching and the learning processes. Judd (1976) published an article in favour of massive vocabulary instruction as early as possible, and stated that the learner must be allowed to be vague about meaning at first, and precision would come later. It was Cowie (1978) who brought the learner into focus, and the lexicon was beginning to be seen as a resource for the needs of the learner and for strategies used in gaining communicative objectives.

Wallace (1982), Allen (1983) and Rivers (1983) were three very important authors who fuelled approaches to vocabulary expansion and helped to give rise to the revival of interest. Also Aisentadt (1981) and the extra research carried out in the Netherlands, emphasized the importance of collocations and 'conventional syntagms' (Schouten-van Parreren, 1985). Following on from these came people such as Channell (1981), Ramsey (1981), Martin (1984), Crow and Quigley (1985).

From the 1970s and into the early 1980s there was a revival of interest in the teaching of vocabulary, especially in Great Britain. Vocabulary however had been a neglected aspect in the process of language learning, and until the 1970s emphasis was not placed on the teaching of vocabulary or word-combinations. Carter (1987) stated that as vocabulary learning develops it should be the main aim of vocabulary teaching to put students in the position where they are capable of deriving and producing meanings from lexical items, both for themselves and out of the classroom.

6.2.2 Later developments

As can be seen, many authors since the 1970s have stressed the importance of vocabulary learning and teaching. Authors such as Bahns, Channell, Allerton and Brown have gone further and devised exercises and work books to test collocation and vocabulary. Mackin, however, holds the pessimistic viewpoint about teaching collocation because of the sheer volume of the tens of thousands of collocations to be learnt. Bahns holds the viewpoint that we teach patterns which are not always comparable to the native language.

Works by Cowie and Mackin (1975 & 1983) certainly helped the cause and growing interest has led to proposals to include more fixed expressions in language course books and related materials (Yorio 1980, Nattinger 1980, Pawley and Syder 1983). The problem however is the nature of allusions and catchphrases, the restriction of certain stylistic formulae, the explanations of 'stereotypes', 'conversational gambits' and social 'formulae', which would all need to be sufficiently detailed to be used in the right context. Possibly these problems should be ignored in favour of arguments concerning the 'naturalness and

pervasive normality of such ‘universal’ relations in language (Makkai 1978).

Lexicographers also realize the importance of collocation and the use of the dictionary by learners of a foreign language. There has been rapid developments in lexicography based on works published by Cowie (1981), and Ilson (1988). Also Hornby (OALDCE 1974) and *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE 1978/1987) have contributed to development of dictionaries for non-native learners of English. Some units are less stable in syntactic patterning and they present particular problems for inclusion in learner dictionaries that go beyond economy of entry. These units are called ‘fixed expressions’, and their existence, and recent developments in attempting to represent them show the need for greater refinement. Finally we have the Cobuild Project, designed initially to lead to the publication of the monolingual foreign learner’s dictionary of English (Sinclair 1987).

6.3 Vocabulary and collocation testing

Some collocation testing and the development of vocabulary exercises have been carried out by linguists, teachers, and researchers to ascertain whether or not the lack of knowledge of collocations is a stumbling block in acquiring an advanced English vocabulary.

6.3.1 Brown

At the Regional English Language Centre in Singapore, it was Dorothy Brown (1974) who brought collocation to the forefront, so far as using it for vocabulary teaching, when she presented practical useable exercises for foreign learners in 1980. In that year she published a collection of papers entitled *Guidelines for*

Vocabulary Teaching, RELC in which she stated that: 'Learning vocabulary by learning lists of words translated into the mother tongue is both dull and has some dangers from the point of view of concept formation and usage.'

Her type of exercises did not include paradigmatic collocations, nor did she include clichés and idioms, because she regarded them as fixed parts of the language with a restricted verbal context. Her exercises presented the students with more open situations.

Dorothy Brown perhaps anticipated Cobuild when she made the comment that there was no existing work at that time, either intuitive or statistical, which gave the most frequent collocations for specific items. However, in the absence of such a work which would certainly help the learner to acquire 'that informed expectancy', she believed that her exercises, taking into account the eight C's (Collocation, Clines, Clusters, Cloze, Context, Consultation, Cards, Creativity) and a G (Guessing) of vocabulary teaching, were helpful to her students.

It is imperative that if we are to test collocational competence we must look to the type of work advocated by Dorothy Brown in her paper 'Advanced Vocabulary Teaching: The Problem of Collocation' and devise workbooks and resources to test collocations and their usage. If we choose the collocational group as a practice unit we are reinforcing the fact that we both read and speak in 'chunks' of language, therefore giving flexible variety, and letting the students get the 'feel' of useful groups of words. Another bonus of testing collocational groups is that these groups are often rhythm groups, so that spoken English practice can be accomplished with the same material.

Exercises should include such items as, which adjectives come before which noun, prepositions following a noun, preposition phrases after a noun, or a group of nouns which would best go with an adjective? Such exercises as above can be structured as listening and dictation exercises, and also the possibility of making mistakes can lead to useful discussion in group work, thus stimulating advanced level students to be able to suggest situations for each collocation chosen.

Proceeding from these types of exercises we can devise exercises where students are asked to be more discriminating in their choices of combinations of adjectives and verbs which collocate correctly.

It is possible to devise exercises covering all 7 types of syntagmatic collocations, as stated by Newmark in 1973, as well as take into account exercises involving paradigmatic collocations, such as colours, kinship terms and different sorts of antonyms and synonyms. The span of lexical items is important in the discussion of collocation, and exercises covering this concept should also be envisaged.

Strategies for teaching collocations also include listening and matching exercises, reading and matching exercises, translation tasks, gap-filling tasks, and cloze tests.

6.3.2 Mackin

Mackin (1987) took a set of one hundred phrases from the 1961 OALDCE Corpus which he used to conduct a sentence completion test on a small group of mature university graduates, who were also native speakers of English, as well as having a fairly wide experience of teaching English as a foreign language. His test

required fifty of the hundred phrases to be completed with one single word, and the other fifty required two or more words. It was considered that any time under twenty minutes to complete the test was good, and that those scoring only half marks would also be considered as having native-like command of the language at the collocational level.

6.3.3 Hussein

Hussein (1987) also conducted a test at Yarmouk University in Jordan with 200 Arabic-speaking third- and fourth-year students, majoring in English. The multiple-choice test comprised 40 items which required selection of one of four words. The majority of items were followed by synonymous words, used not to test their ability in vocabulary but rather in word-combination. Hussein found the level of performance far from satisfactory. Errors were made due to negative transfer, which are called interference errors. This is when those using their native language try to produce the equivalent form or pattern in the second language. Numbers of errors were made due to idiom structure because of the students' lack of familiarity with the structure of the idiom. Yet another area for errors was in overgeneralisation; ie. the substitution of a generic term for a specific term, thus reducing the target language to a simple system of generalisation.

He attributes the failure of his students to collocate English words correctly in the test to (1) The overemphasis of teaching and testing grammar; (2) The limited reading experience which does not expose them to idioms and collocations; (3) A reduction and simplification of the second language in order to bring about

learning economy; (4) The overuse of guessing strategies.

6.3.4 Channell

Joanna Channell (1981) gave a group of eight advanced students a classroom test of collocational competence, which underlined the necessity for teaching collocations. She presented the students with a collocational grid, and even though they scored well, they failed to recognise the potential of words they knew well, because they only used them in a limited number of collocations of which they were sure.

Her testing of collocational competence was based on the semantic field theory; ie. the vocabulary of a language has many interrelating networks of relations between words. She believed that once the learner is aware of the concepts of field theory, feature analysis and collocation, then his or her knowledge of the meaning and use of particular words can be re-inforced through exercises, designed to reflect these concepts. Channell tested this teaching theory with her own students at York University Advanced Summer School and it also was tested with twenty-two students at the University of Leuven in Belgium. All students reported having learned a great deal by drawing on theoretical constructs.

6.3.5 Trinh

A collocational competence test consisting of 50 items, requiring single-word answers, was devised for the testing of a group of non-native English speakers in Hanoi and a group of native and near-native English speakers in Sydney (APPENDIX 3).

6.3.5.1 Hanoi group

This test was given to 46 third- and fourth-year students majoring in English at a Hanoi university during the year of 1995. For purposes of analyzing the test results, they were categorized as good, medium and poor responses. The numeral in round brackets () at the beginning of each phrase indicates the number of correct answers.

6.3.5.1.1 Good response

A good response was considered to be 20 to 35 items correct. The reasons for a good response could be that there was either a similar concept in Vietnamese or else the context and inner structure of the phrase or sentence made it easy to guess the correct answer. Also antonyms seemed to play a part in answering correctly. From the graphs it can be seen that only seven questions gained such a response from the students, and these represented 14 percent of the total. Numbers 15, 24, 25, 30, 32, 33, 34 are found within this range.

- 15. (23) 'the cart before the horse'. Substitutes were *ox* and *cows*. The Vietnamese equivalent is 'the ploughshare before the water-buffalo' (cái cày trước con trâu).
- 24. (32) 'Once upon a time'. The Vietnamese equivalent is 'Long, long time ago' (Ngày xưa ngày xưa), however, exposure to reading English folk-tales could have aided students in answering correctly.
- 25. (35) 'in black and white'. This expression is also used in Vietnamese, but more commonly used in reverse order (as in 'cho rõ trắng đen', 'giấy trắng mực đen').
- 30. (20) 'I jumped from the frying pan into the fire'. Words used *flame*, *kettle*, *water* and *boiling point*. This answer, I feel, was a good guess on the part of students, as many clues were given in the accompanying sentence.
- 32. (21) 'a real man of the world'. Words used were *paradise*, *street* and *life*. Another good guess.

33. (21) 'though thick and thin'. Another good guess because of the opposites.
34. (21) 'to keep the ball rolling'. I feel this is also a good guess.

6.3.5.1.2 Medium response

A medium response was 10 to 19 items correct. The medium response group only represents 30 percent of students with correct answers. It could be that language and culture-specific problems are the culprits, except for those proverbs and sayings which are universal and which Vietnamese students are highly motivated to learn. However, it was surprising, that given the level of English-language training these students were receiving, there were not more correct answers in this particular group. Again, if you consider the graphs you find that only 10 questions fitted this criteria, and represented 20 per cent of the total. Numbers 3, 5, 10, 13, 19, 27, 28, 36, 41, 48 are found within this range.

3. (14) 'highs and lows'. Substitute words used were *deep* and *depth*. Guesswork would have been used here.
5. (19) 'a stitch in time saving nine'. Substitute word used was *money*. This English proverb makes it easy to remember because of its rhyming structure and its allusion to frugality and being careful.
10. (11) 'Bottoms up!'. Substitute for this was *Drink up!* and often when 'Bottoms' was used the students wrote 'Bottom up!' instead. This social discourse would have to be learned through experience in socializing with English-speaking people.
13. (13) 'As a matter of fact'. Words used *shock* and *surprise*. A common phrase in English, but alien to Vietnamese.
19. (13) 'a case of still waters run deep'. Word used was *silent*. There is no equivalent saying in Vietnamese.
27. (11) 'playing with fire'. Words used *death*, *knife*, *flame* and *ghosts*. Vietnamese have a similar expression, and it was surprising that more students did not correctly answer this.
28. (10) 'these odds and ends'. Words used *evens*, *adds* and *sewage*. A language-specific item.
36. (12) 'to give Grandma a helping hand'. Word used *right*. It would be

expected that there should be more correct answers from these particular students.

41. (12) 'always wearing a smile'. Words used were *stocking*, *dress* and *hat*. Vietnamese could hardly think of 'wearing' to co-occur with 'smile' but more likely with 'an item of clothing' so it is a language-specific problem.
48. (17) 'water has gone under the bridge'. This would be an easy guesswork because Vietnamese people say the same thing.

6.3.5.1.3 Poor response

A poor response was 0 to 9 items correct. This represented 31 items, as can be noted on the graph. This group was 66 per cent of the total and showed up as the largest response proportion. Numbers 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 29, 31, 33, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50 are found within this range.

1. (4) 'as flat as a pancake'. Words such as *wall*, *paper*, *chopping board*, *floor*, *field*, *plate* and *airport* were substituted. The word 'pancake' is a culture-specific item, which is hardly known in Vietnam, so it would not be associated with flatness. In Vietnam, in the 1960s when it was the epitome of style to own an Omega watch which was wafer-thin compared to other watches, the comparable saying used to be 'as flat as an Omega watch'.
2. (0) 'one for the road'. Words such as *last*, *night*, *end*, *health* and *friendship*. Two amusing ones were 'one for the God's sake' and 'one for the hangover'. The Vietnamese do not use the word 'the road' in the sense of leaving, to go home after having a drink. 'The road' signifies a journey such as going to war or going on a long trip.
4. (1) 'the battle of the bulge'. Words used were *flat*, *keeping fit* and an amusing one '*the battle of Waterloo*' from at least three students (obviously History majors). This is a neologism in English and Vietnamese people rarely have weight problems, so this phrase can hardly be a guesswork.
6. (7) 'off the top of your head'. Substitutes were *at* and *on*.
7. (2) 'the soccer team is on a roll'. Common substitution was *hay-day* followed by *high*, *break* or *top*. This is a reasonably new expression in the English-speaking world, so would possibly prove difficult for Vietnamese. It is used particularly in

regards to sporting prowess.

8. (0) the ebb and flow'. No answers. No such word combination in Vietnamese.
9. (1) 'the house looking spick and span'. Only one answer which was correct. The expression obviously has to be learnt in the process of growing up in an English-speaking environment.
11. (3) 'long time, no see'. Words used *meet*, *sight*, and *problem*. This phrase is hard to guess because it is ungrammatical in English, and obviously must be learnt.
12. (3) 'lying dead drunk'. Words used *deadly* and *badly*. Vietnamese students obviously did not know this saying so they used their knowledge of English grammar in an attempt to answer correctly.
14. (5) 'my arm felt as if it had pins and needles'. Words used *needle* and *picks*. Vietnamese often think of the combination of 'needles and thread' (kim chỉ) in their own language. It is obvious that most of them did not know the idiomatic meaning of the English expression 'pins and needles'.
16. (1) 'you smell a rat'. Hardly any response. Words used *observed* and *have*. Not a known idiom in Vietnamese.
17. (0) 'I thought you'd never ask'. Words used *accept*, *take it serious* and one student who obviously must have emotional problems with 'I thought you'd never touch me'. A culture-specific item which could not be guessed in Vietnamese.
18. (2) 'bumper to bumper'. Hardly any answers to this collocation. Motor vehicle traffic does not rate highly in Vietnam, so this could not be guessed unless taught.
20. (0) 'a chip off the old block'. Substitute words were *person* or *man*. This is hard to guess, as there is no equivalent Vietnamese saying.
21. (1) 'up the garden path'. Words used were *primrose*, *wrong*, *heaven* and *narrow*. Another phrase which is unknown. The answer 'the primrose path' was a typical collocation but incorrect in this context of use.
22. (0) 'a cash and carry store'. Words used were *real*, *bill*, *coin*, and *delivery*. In Vietnamese they have a saying 'Pay me first then I will serve you rice soup' (tiền trao cháo múc) meaning 'Unless you pay you don't get it', which is the closest in Vietnamese.
23. (0) 'the facts of life'. Words used were *contraceptive*, *sex*, *circles* and *love*. A language-specific problem.
26. (1) 'Women have ways and means'. Words used *charms*, *techniques* and *methods*. A hard piece of guesswork.

29. (1) 'a real feather in your cap'. Words used *flock, arm, head* and *throat*. It is inexplicable from the Vietnamese point of view as to why the substituted words were used.
31. (4) 'More haste, less speed'. Words used *noise* and *care*. There appears to be a modern day tendency to change this into 'More haste, less waste'.
35. (0) 'open it up to the floor'. An unknown word combination for all students tested.
37. (1) 'jump to it'. Words *conclusion* or *decision*. A language-specific item.
38. (0) 'please come forward'. Words used *up* or *down*. A language-specific.
39. (0) 'no fixed address'. Words used *permanent, specific, certain, clear*. A language-specific.
40. (3) 'at such short notice'. Words used; *hand, time, term* and *nap*.
42. (0) 'in the flesh'. Words used *distance, eyes, nature*. Vietnamese say 'in the meat and bone' (bằng xương bằng thịt) which is a closest equivalent.
43. (0) 'to sort the sheep from the goats'. The Vietnamese people would rather 'distinguish between gold and brass'.
44. (2) 'just put up and shut up'. The students might have thought of 'put up' as 'to put up with', instead of 'show me', so it is misleading.
45. (0) 'cool, calm, and collected'. Language-specific with no equivalent in Vietnamese. The word 'calm' (bình tĩnh) is an easy guess, but not 'cool' nor 'collected' in that particular order.
46. (1) 'shoulder to lean on'. Words used were *pillar, wall, tree* and *post*. This is culture-specific to English-speaking people, but it is alien culturally and linguistically to Vietnamese.
47. (6) 'turn the clock back'. Words used; *time* and *youth*. The correct answers indicated that the students had learned the saying. In their language, Vietnamese people usually do not differentiate between 'clocks' and 'watches' (đồng hồ).
49. (0) 'to fill his shoes'. Words used were *gap, dream, hope*, and *ambition*. Again, a language-specific item with no Vietnamese similar form and meaning.
50. (2) 'what the future holds'. Words used were *waits, waiting, is in store*. Vietnamese speakers would not be able to guess this restricted collocation.

Students at this advanced level obviously lack the necessary skills in 'putting words together' correctly. The results certainly bear out the fact that students

need vocabulary to improve both oral comprehension and reading speed, this being dependent on what is heard or read, or on what is expected. As Dorothy Brown stated in 1974, 'a native speaker will know there is a high probability of some words co-occurring within a given text, however, one way of helping students to know what to expect would be to give practice in collocational groups.'

6.3.5.2 Sydney group

The same collocational competence test was given to 20 English-speaking teachers of a Sydney primary school. Amongst this group were four people from ethnic backgrounds whose original first language was not English. The age range of the group was between 20 up to 60 years of age, with the predominant group being 30 to 40 years old. The reason for giving this test to this group was that I wanted to see if firstly, it was within the scope of knowledge of English-speaking people, and secondly, if mistakes were made, did these mistakes perhaps coincide with some mistakes made by the Vietnamese students?

The results indicated that the test was within the scope of knowledge of the group, but there were some interesting answers from individuals which pointed to their non-English speaking background (NESB), or else to their particular bias.

The most correct answers came from the 45 to 60 year-old group. It was concluded that this group had grown up with and learned many of the proverbs and sayings from parents. Also, this group had a good knowledge of sport, so they knew many of the sporting-oriented terminologies.

Modern sayings were well-known by the group up to 30 years of age. These included 'battle of the budge', 'on a roll', 'bumper to bumper', 'jump to it', 'put up

or shut up’.

The four NESB people had many of the problems encountered by the Hanoi-based students, even though they scored better marks. Such items as ‘wearing a smile’, ‘jump to it’, ‘off the top of your head’ proved to be obstacles, even though they had good command of the English language.

There was one comment from a female teacher about Item No. 26 ‘ways and means’, in that she refused to answer the question on the grounds that it was sexist and anti-female.

The saying ‘more haste, less speed’ is the original, however, amongst the younger people under 30 years of age, they tended to answer ‘more haste, less waste’, which indicates their concern about environmental issues.

‘Odds and ends’ was changed by at least one-quarter of the group to ‘odds and sods’, which is an indication of the ever-changing nature of the language or, in other words, the dynamic aspect of collocation.

A summary of students’ scores on tested items, together with the graphs accompanying the results to show, at a glance, the number of correct answers is shown in APPENDIX 4.

6.4 Problems of non-direct equivalence:

Problems of non-direct equivalence above word level can be examined when (a) the two languages have different collocational patterns; (b) the two languages have different fixed or idiomatic expressions (Baker, 1992).

6.4.1 Different collocational patterns

“Collocation is a phenomenon in which two or more words often go together in a ‘happy’ and natural way in a particular language.” (Newmark, 1988).

For example, the Vietnamese people say ‘trà đặc’ (*dense tea), ‘gội đầu’ (*wash one’s head), ‘đánh răng’ (*beat one’s teeth), ‘đỡ đẻ’ (*assist in giving-birth), ‘xóm chị em ta’ (*our sisters’ district), which sound right to their ears; whereas in English, people say ‘strong tea’ (*trà khỏe), ‘wash one’s hair’ (*rửa/giặt tóc), ‘clean one’s teeth’ (*làm sạch răng), ‘deliver a baby’ (*giao đứa bé), ‘red-light district’ (*xóm đèn đỏ).

English people say ‘break the law’ (*bẻ gãy/phá luật pháp), ‘beat shyness’ (*đánh thẹn-thùng), ‘kick the habit’ (*đá thói quen), ‘passport to recovery’ (*hộ-chiếu đi đến chỗ phục-hồi), or more commonly ‘passport to health’ (*hộ-chiếu đi đến chỗ sức khỏe); whereas the Vietnamese people say ‘phạm luật’ (*violate the law), ‘chữa thẹn’ (*fix shyness), ‘bỏ thói quen’ (*quit the habit), ‘chiếu-khán đi đến chỗ phục-hồi’ (*visa to recovery), which sound right to their ears.

The differences of the collocational patterning between the source and the target language are the seat of the problem, and are pitfalls for the unwary translator.

6.4.1.1 ‘Giả’

The adjective ‘giả’ has more than 10 equivalents in English, such as ‘fake, false, bogus, counterfeit, sham, imitation, reproduction, artificial, forged, assumed, replica, glass, prosthetic...’

So when translating ‘giả’ into English, the translator has to work out which word combines harmoniously with the concept ‘giả’ in English in order to choose the

right English word, and not do what the Vietnamese people often cite as ‘taking a gentleman’s whiskers and sticking them on a lady’s chin’ (râu ông nọ cắm cằm bà kia). For example, ‘*tiền giả*’ should be (counterfeit notes/coins), ‘*nữ-trang giả*’ (imitation jewellery), ‘*thuốc giả*’ (fake pharmaceutical products), ‘*hôn-nhân giả*’ (bogus/sham/fake marriage), ‘*giấy tờ giả*’ (forged/fake papers), ‘*chữ ký giả*’ (forged/fake signature), ‘*chân tay giả*’ (artificial/prosthetic limbs), ‘*mắt giả*’ (glass eye), ‘*răng giả*’ (false teeth), ‘*tên giả*’ (assumed/false name), ‘*cục vàng giả*’ (replica gold nugget), and ‘*bức tranh giả*’ (reproduction painting).

It is noted that the Australian press once referred to the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana as ‘a sham marriage’, pointing to a good example of typical English collocational patterning.

6.4.1.2 ‘Đen’

The adjective ‘*đen*’ meaning ‘*black*’ in Vietnamese has six synonyms depending on which word goes with it. For example, if it goes with: ‘*tóc*’ (hair on head) thus ‘*tóc huyền*’, with ‘*mèo*’ (cat) thus ‘*mèo mun*’, with ‘*chó*’ (dog) thus ‘*chó mực*’, with ‘*ngựa*’ (horse) thus ‘*ngựa ô*’, with ‘*bò*’ (cow) thus ‘*bò hóng*’, with ‘*áo*’ (upper garment) thus ‘*áo thâm*’.

With regard with ‘*mun*’, ‘*ô*’, ‘*huyền*’, there are other collocations such as ‘*đũa mun*’ (ebony chopsticks) and ‘*quạ ô*’ (black raven) or ‘*gà ô*’ (black hen/rooster). An interesting fact to note is that in English, it is not expressed as ‘*black chicken’ as it is in Vietnamese, but rather, there is a differentiation regarding whether it is male or female. ‘*Huyền*’ as in ‘*khói huyền*’ (black smoke) is expressed in the lyrics of a song by Dương Thiệu Tước: ‘*Khói huyền bay lên mây*’ (black smoke

billowing up to the clouds), and ‘hạt huyền’ meaning ‘*black seeds*’, as a Vietnamese simile ‘răng đen hạt huyền’ (teeth as black as custard-apple seeds) illustrates its use in this particular case. There are instances in English where other words can be substituted for ‘black’, however they are few and far between, and are positively used in a poetic sense, such as ‘ebony skin’ to express the beauty of a dark-skinned person, and ‘raven hair’ indicating beautiful black hair.

6.4.1.3 ‘Ruột’

In Vietnamese, when they talk about someone who goes through the pain of giving birth and bringing you into the world, they refer to the person as ‘mẹ (ruột, đẻ), while in English, the person is known as (biological, natural, genetic, birth) mother.

From this example, one learns another thing about collocational patterning in translation. When coming across the term ‘mẹ (ruột, đẻ), if the translator has not had enough experience of English to the extent that the four aforementioned English terms are not known, then if based safely on the Vietnamese meaning, it is hoped that he or she will choose ‘*birth mother*’ because ‘birth’ is related to ‘*đẻ*’ (giving birth), whereas ‘*mẹ ruột*’ if it is translated as ‘**intestinal mother*’, because ‘*intestine*’ means ‘*ruột*’ in Vietnamese, would sound alien to an English person, because it is not the typical English collocation.

6.4.1.4 ‘Instant’

The adjective ‘*instant*’ has a wide range of collocability in English such as: *instant* + (cash, coffe, fame, lawn, love, noodle, Scratchies, sell-out, signs, success, boiling water ...) but it does not have one-to-one correspondence with Vietnamese, so

each time this adjective is rendered, one has to work out how it would be expressed in Vietnamese.

On the whole, they can have various translation equivalents such as instant cash (tiền mặt trả liền), instant coffee (cà-phê hoà tan/cà-phê bột pha nhanh có liền), instant fame (nổi danh/tiếng liền), instant lawn (thảm cỏ mua sẵn trái liền), instant love (có tình/người yêu liền), instant noodle (mì gói ăn liền), instant Scratchies (vé số cào trúng lấy tiền liền /sổ số cào lĩnh thưởng ngay), instant sell-out (vé/hàng-hóa bán ra hết liền), instant signs (biển/bảng vẽ lấy liền), instant success (thành-công liền/tức thì), instant boiling water (nước sôi nấu có liền).

The word '*instant*' is more often translated as '*liền*', or to a lesser currency as '*ngay*', '*tức thì*', but it is not possible to automatically render it so we have to depend on the use of the word in combination with another. It has to be translated in an exploratory manner, perhaps adding bits here and there, to make it sound right to the Vietnamese ear. This phenomenon of 'sounding right to the ear' happens according to the process of analogy which we find in the English language as in the case of the word 'heavy' below:

6.4.1.5 'Heavy'

From combinations of the adjective '*heavy*' with various nouns which it modifies, we have *heavy* (smoker, drinker, sleeper, eater). This has lead to the English native speaker readily accepting the term '*heavy gambler*', whereas before, typical combinations to express this term such as '*(big, compulsive) gambler*', or '*(problem, addictive, excessive) gambler*' were the accepted norm.

6.4.2 Different fixed or idiomatic expressions

Fixed expressions are expressions which the translator would find difficult to translate, because they are groups of words which are difficult to change because they are closely combined, for example, *'tóc rễ tre'* (lit. bamboo-root hair » wiry hair), *'lên xe hoa'* (lit. get on a flowered cart » to get married), *'ruộng cả ao liền'* (lit. big rice field and endless ponds » the lord and master), *'khổ một nỗi'* (the problem is), *'khác nhau ở chỗ là'* (the only difference is).

Examples in English are *'as a matter of fact'*, *'Ladies and Gentlemen'*, *'all the best'*, *'crime does not pay'*, *'a leopard can't change his spots'*, *'waste not want not'*, *'as old as the hills'*, *'to jump out of the frying pan into the fire'*.

As for idioms or idiomatic expressions, they are defined as: "fixed expressions with established structures and meanings, and their meanings are emotive and/or characterised by imagery" (*cụm từ cố định, hoàn chỉnh về cấu trúc và ý nghĩa. Nghĩa của chúng có tính hình tượng hoặc/và gợi cảm*) (Mai, 1991:176).

Examples of these are *'ba cọc ba đồng'* (meagre wages), *'chó cắn áo rách'* (lit. a dog biting a person in tattered clothes » to kick a dog when he is down), *'nhà ngói cây mít'* (lit. a tile-roofed house with jackfruit trees » a wealthy person), *'ông nói gà bà nói vịt'* (lit. Mister talks chickens, Missus talks ducks » to talk nonsense).

Examples in English are *'to go to the dogs'*, *'to make a mountain out of a molehill'*, *'to carry coals to Newcastle'*.

As stated in the definition above, idioms are understood as being allergic and resistant to any change being imposed upon them. They are different from fixed expressions in that their meanings are 'obscure' or 'opaque'. The total meaning of

their individual components does not convey the full and proper meaning of the expression. For example: 'to have cold feet' meaning 'to be afraid'; or 'to drop a brick' meaning 'to make mistakes'.

6.4.2.1 'Yêu chó chó liếm mặt' (love, dog, dog, lick, face)

The Vietnamese idiom 'Yêu chó chó liếm mặt' (love, dog, dog, lick, face) means 'you are too friendly towards your inferiors and would allow them to depise you'.

If this idiom is explained in its literal sense to Westerners, who traditionally love to have pets, it would be misconstrued by them, for they would automatically think: 'We love the dog, we pat and stroke it and it returns affection and love for us by licking our face'. To Westerners there is nothing strange about this. To the Vietnamese, dogs are used solely to guard the house against intruders, and in rural areas, the dog is, to put it delicately, the baby's nappy. So one can imagine what sort of feeling someone would have when he or she is licked on the face by a dog. If we wish to translate this idiom into English, it is possible to determine its nearest equivalent as *Familiarity breeds contempt*.

In Vietnamese, this can also be similarly expressed as *Gần chùa gọi Bụt bằng anh* (lit. Living near the Buddhist temple, you call Buddha your elder brother). This saying insinuates that 'you feel yourself equal to the Buddha, when you really are inferior to him'.

There are three problem areas which cause difficulty to translators when dealing with the rendition of idioms and fixed expressions, as explained by the following:

6.4.3 Collocational gaps

Because each language is free to choose the way it wishes to express itself, and as language is reflective of its own culture, culture-specific terms vary accordingly. It is not expected that one language will use the exactly equivalent words expressed in the other language in order to simplify translation or to make translation easier. The translator would merely be translating words, and not ideas.

The translation of idioms and fixed expressions requires consultation of books and dictionaries of sayings, idioms and proverbs, to seek out equivalent ideas.

6.4.3.1 'To carry coals to Newcastle'

With the saying 'to carry coals to Newcastle', translators from different countries would render this in their own particular way. Vietnamese translators would say: *chở củi về rừng* (to carry firewood to the forest). The French would say: *porter de l'eau à la rivière* (to carry water to the river); while the Germans would say *Die Eulen nach Athen tragen* (to carry owls to Athens).

Whatever language is used in rendering the English saying, the focus is on one idea, which is 'doing something which utterly useless' by transporting items to places where there is a surplus of needs.

However, there are instances where no equivalents can be found, both in terms of words and ideas, such as *nợ sách đèn* (the debt of books and lamp), *tiên học lễ hậu học văn* (first comes manners, then comes literacy), *phi cao đẳng bất thành phu phụ* (no university, no marriage). Paraphrase or circumlocution of these expressions has to be employed to provide their explanatory equivalents in

English.

6.4.3.2 'Nợ sách đèn'

Let's take as an example '*nợ sách đèn*' which is first translated literally as 'the debt of books and lamp'. Next comes the figurative translation in which '*sách đèn*' (books and lamp) symbolize 'dedication to study which demands working late into the night and early in the morning', whereas '*nợ*' (debt) means 'the debt carried by a person if he or she has not fulfilled his or her true obligations in life by not passing the necessary examinations, which will provide status and fame.' Depending on the intention of the text, the readers and their cultural and language backgrounds, this would be rendered in a paraphrase fashion or in a concise and compact manner as 'has not finished University, as was expected'.

Supposing that one is translating a short story or a novel, in which '*nợ sách đèn*' (the debt of books and lamp) is mentioned, then one can use the paraphrase as a footnote, whereas the concise and compact rendition can be used as a replacement for that expression.

6.4.4 Different context of use

An expression may have similar meaning and form in the other language, but different context of use. Below are some examples:

6.4.4.1 'To go to the dogs'

The English expression '*to go to the dogs*' meaning 'to lose one's good qualities', has a similar German expression '*Zum Teufel gehen*', but in German its context of use refers to a person only, whereas in English it refers to both a person and a

place. In German, it can also indicate ‘a person’s death’ or ‘to perish’ (Baker, 1992:69) The English expression ‘*to go to the dogs*’ presents a collocational gap in Vietnamese. When it is expressed in Vietnamese in reference to a person, it could be paraphrased as *thằng/con đó coi như tiêu đời rồi* (that’s the end of him/her; he/she’s finished). In reference to a place, it could be translated as: *nơi/khu đó nay bị mang tiếng quá rồi* (that place/area now has a bad name).

6.4.4.2 ‘Cháy nhà ra mặt chuột’

In Vietnamese, the expression ‘*Cháy nhà ra mặt chuột*’, literally means that ‘when the house burns down, the rats nesting in the house swarm out and are no longer hidden’. Its idiomatic meaning is ‘when there is upheaval or a disturbance, one cannot hide or cover up the truth’. In English, we say ‘*Rats desert a sinking ship*’; meaning literally ‘rats leaving a ship when it’s sinking’, but its idiomatic meaning is ‘when a bad incident occurs, people run away instead of supporting or helping others’.

Both English and Vietnamese idioms are similar in that they both refer to ‘rats’, implying reference to ‘bad people’. They both refer to ‘facing difficulty or danger’, and to ‘showing your true colours’, but the Vietnamese idiom does not mention it clearly enough as to ‘what bad characteristic of your nature you are trying to hide’, whereas the English idiom clearly indicates ‘the bad characteristic of being selfish and only caring about the well-being of yourself, rather than worrying about the welfare of others, whether they be alive or dead’. Its context of use is somewhat different.

The technique ‘over-translation’ appears to be appropriate if applied to render

the English expression '*Rats desert a sinking ship*' into Vietnamese by using its Vietnamese counterpart '*Cháy nhà ra mặt chuột*'* (when the house burns down, the rats show their ugly face), but not vice versa.

6.4.5 Use of both literal and idiomatic senses

With this third problem, let us illustrate this with an example where the translator has to translate into Vietnamese, a paragraph carried in an English language newspaper to this effect:

“After the girl, named Mary, aged 9 years of London, England was found to have contracted AIDS, she was boycotted by the parents who protested to the Principal and the School Board that she be banned from the school, for fear that she might transmit the virus to their children. Agreeing to the protest, the school decided to send Mary to Coventry.”

The English idiom ‘to send someone to Coventry’ was used in both its literal and idiomatic sense on this occasion, and as such it conveys two meanings, thus:

- (a) She was transferred to the school at Coventry, a large town north-west of London;
- (b) She was boycotted by not being allowed to attend her present school.

In Australia, in the late 1980s at the onset of the AIDS epidemic, a young girl named Lee Van Graf Host, living in Gosford, NSW, faced a similar dilemma, when parents demanded that she not attend their children’s school. She too was sent to Coventry. A translator from a Vietnamese-language newspaper, not understanding the English idiom, translated it literally, and thus missed the point altogether, as far as English-speaking people in Australia were concerned.

In a case such as this, Vietnamese does not have an idiom which expresses both meanings as English does, so the translator would be deemed to have his or her

arms tied, unable to clearly express the intent of the play on words by the English writer. Also when it comes to translating jokes, if the translator comes across a joke in which the crux of the joke is a play on words, he or she would have to ‘cop it sweet’ or as the Vietnamese say: *Cười ra nước mắt* (You laugh till the tears come), the English equivalent of which is: ‘*Laughing on the outside, crying on the inside*’, or ‘*Laugh till you cry*’.

6.5 Collocation in translation

‘Translation’ is defined as ‘a piece of writing or speech that has been translated from a different language’ (CCED, 1995). This definition is only successful in telling us what translation is, and not what is involved in translation. For the purpose of this study, my modified version is preferred: ‘Translation is the conversion of words and ideas from a given text in one language into another language by means of using equivalent words and ideas in written form.’ (Trinh, 1999).

Let’s consider the following strategies for matching collocations in search for translation equivalence.

6.5.1 Transference

Generally, when translating from English into Vietnamese, for readers living in an English-speaking country, use is made of transference, that is, the direct use of the original English word into the Vietnamese text, as in *đi shop* (go shopping), or *đi pub* (go to the pub), *ở flat* (live in a flat), *bán sale* (clearance sale), *mua đồ sale* (buy at a sale), *lãnh lump sum* (receive a lump sum).

However, if an advertisement saying *Dịch vụ Break Even* ('Break Even' Service) uses transference, perhaps this has gone too far, because very few Vietnamese people would understand what the words 'break even' would mean. A Vietnamese advertisement broadcast recently on SBS Radio Melbourne talked about assistance to problem gamblers. Did it indicate that this service is aimed at gamblers who don't suffer heavy losses, or at gamblers who would need help after they have suffered financially and healthwise because of their gambling, thus affecting their loved ones? If people insist on leaving the word as it exists in English to create curiosity, their argument is not convincing enough. My reasoning is that, to a Vietnamese speaker, 'break even' is not only difficult to pronounce but also difficult to remember. It was also noted that in *Dịch vụ Lifeline* (Lifeline Service) the word 'Lifeline' is left as a transference. This is a service that helps problem gamblers. Wouldn't it be better to use the Vietnamese rendition with a transference in brackets; namely, *Dịch vụ Mạch sống* (Lifeline) and *Dịch vụ Thủ hòa* ('Break Even')?

6.5.2 Naturalization

Another translation strategy is termed 'naturalization'; ie. mimicking or imitating the English pronunciation and then transcribing it phonetically into a Vietnamese word. For example, *lên* (lane), *ghê* (gay), *com-bồ* (compo or compensation), *Cao-xô* (City Council), *lãnh bách-kết* (to receive redundancy package), *chơi xít-tâm* (to use a system), *bán xeo* (to sell at a sale), *làm nêu* (doing one's nails), *thịt cầy-gu-ru* (kangaroo meat).

Foreign names associated with people, countries and cities have been rendered

by way of this strategy. An example is when the Vietnam War was still in its early stages, one of the U.S. Secretaries for Defense was referred to as *Cờ-lác Cờ-líp-phót* (Clark Clifford) by the Southern Vietnam-based radio station operated by the so-called National Liberation Front. Another example is the Australian Embassy in Hanoi has a plaque, on the front of their building, engraved with the words *Đại-sứ Quán Ốt-x-trây-li-a* (Australian Embassy) in which *Ốt-x-trây-li-a* (Australia) is used instead of the more commonly used '*Úc-đại-lợi*' (transliteration from Chinese).

And finally present-day Northern Vietnamese people only know of the capital city of France by its name *Pa-ri* (*Paris*), and not *Ba-lê* (transliteration from Chinese), as commonly known by the people living in the former South Vietnam.

6.5.3 Cultural equivalence

In this translation procedure, culture-specific terms in the source language text are rendered into the target language by using their cultural equivalents. For example, *HSC* (Higher School Certificate, NSW State), or *VCE* (Victorian Certificate of Education, Victoria State) has been translated as *Tú-tài Úc* (Vietnamese equivalent of 'Australian HSC') or *Tú-tài HSC* or *Tú-tài VCE* (Vietnamese VCE) or it can be rendered as *Bằng Tốt-nghiệp Phổ-thông Trung-học Úc* (Australian General High School Graduation Diploma), if it is intended for readers living under the Communist regime in Vietnam.

There is an irony, however, with regard to the position of a Vice Chancellor in an Australian or a British university. If the term *Vice Chancellor* is translated in terms of a cultural equivalent, it should be translated as *Viện-trưởng* (Chancellor)

to be correct, instead of *Phó Viện-trưởng* (Vice Chancellor), because this post is considered to be the head of the University, both academically and in an administrative sense. If it is rendered in Vietnamese as '*Phó Viện-trưởng*' (Vice Chancellor), the role of the person holding the post might be misconstrued by Vietnamese people.

To a Vietnamese, when you act in a position nominated as '*Phó*' (Vice/Deputy), you are acting 'as second fiddle', with no significant power. The same applies to the time of the Second Republic in South Vietnam when Vice-President Nguyễn Cao Kỳ sarcastically and bitterly referred to his position as one of being like 'a worthless guest doing nothing but sitting and sipping tea' (a king without a throne).

It should be noted that as an Air Vice-Marshal and Chairperson of the Central Executive Committee; ie. Prime Minister, Nguyễn Cao Kỳ was pressured by the Council of Revolutionary Military Leaders into accepting the post of Vice-President in the late 1960s, when he had been forced to stand for election on the same ticket as Lieutenant General Nguyễn Văn Thiệu, the then Head of State.

As for the word '*Chancellor*' it would be better rendered in Vietnamese as '*Viện-trưởng Danh dự*' (Honorary Chancellor) because the person holding this post is not involved in the administration of the university. It is just an honorary post as in the case with Ms. Pat O'Shane, the first Australian aboriginal magistrate, who is the Chancellor of the University of New England in New South Wales. Ms. O'Shane was defended in the Sydney-based *The Daily Telegraph* (Dec. 9th, 1999) by the University's Vice-Chancellor, after letters to the editor ridiculed her worth as Chancellor.

When talking about giving birth, depending on the cultural knowledge and educational level of the reader, it is necessary in Vietnamese to refer to the length of the pregnancy in terms of months and days, not weeks, as often happens in Australia. For example, with the English expression '*She's 20 weeks pregnant*', the translation for a Vietnamese reader living in Australia or Vietnam would most likely be a culturally-equivalent term, as in '*She is five months pregnant*'. Likewise, '*the baby weighs six pounds*' is rendered as '*the baby weighs over 2.7 kilograms*' or '*The two houses are 100 yards apart*' would become '*The two houses are about 100 metres apart*'.

If these are translated for Vietnamese-American readers, who are familiar with the British and American system of measurement, then it is a different story. In other words, we should always be aware of for whom we are translating, their educational background, and the type of language and expressions with which they are familiar.

6.5.4 Functional equivalence

Again, with culture-specific terms in the source language text, it is necessary to make use of a translation strategy using functional equivalence in the target text, that is, to use a neutral word, but in addition to that, to use another word or phrase, to describe in detail the act or function of that word or phrase. For example, '*Shadow Cabinet*' rendered as '*Nội các Đối lập*' (Opposition Cabinet). *Nội các* (Cabinet) and the word '*Shadow*' literally meaning 'semi-darkness' or 'bóng tối'. This Vietnamese word 'bóng tối' may not be understood, so the use of the word '*Đối lập*' (Opposition) is the better word to use.

Another way is to use ‘transference’, then explain functional equivalence; eg.

Open Day (Ngày mở cửa giới-thiệu cho công chúng xem sinh-hoạt/tiện-nghi trường sở) [the day when the school/university is open to the public to introduce activities and facilities]

as in universities or schools.

Similarly, the term ‘*Red-Nose Day*’ which is rendered as:

Red-Nose Day (Ngày quyên tiền yểm-trợ cho công cuộc nghiên-cứu hiện-tượng trẻ em chết trong nôi) [the day funds are raised to support research into the phenomenon where infants die in the cot].

However, it lacks the components of ‘unexplained death’, and ‘buying a plastic red nose to wear on the day’, as a sign that you have supported the cause.

6.5.5 Descriptive equivalence

In addition to the translation strategy of functional equivalence, use can also be made of descriptive equivalence as another approach. Its use all depends on the intention of the source language text, in that we have to weigh up between description as well as function. For example ‘*boomerang*’ is described as: ‘a hard bent stick carved into a crescent shape associated with the Australian Aboriginal culture’, and its function is ‘to be used as initial back-up weapon for the hunting of birds’.

When translating the term ‘*Continental breakfast*’, it is described as ‘light breakfast consisting of bread/croissants, to be eaten with conserves, and accompanied by coffee or tea as a beverage’.

This type of explanatory equivalence can be used as a footnote, if translating a short story or novel. The details are not significant, so in the story, we could call it ‘*a light breakfast*’, which would be enough, even though mention is not made in

distinguishing between the 'continent of Europe' and the 'country of England'.

The term '*hitch-hiking backpackers*', if translated using descriptive equivalence, would be 'tourists with packs on their back who often stand on the roadside thumbing a ride from passing motorists or truck drivers.' In Vietnam, at present, they are called '*khách du-lịch ba-lô*' (backpack tourists), or '*Tây ba-lô*' (backpack Westerners). Probably the act of 'thumbing a ride' does not apply in Vietnam, obviously because of lack of ready transport and more importantly for consideration of personal security.

Another example is '*cot-death*'--a technical term which does not have a corresponding term in Vietnamese. Hence, the use of descriptive equivalence strategy is brought into place saying '*trẻ chết trong nôi*' (babies die in the cot), although translating it as such, there exists in the rendition a lack of at least two components; ie. 'suddenness' and 'without cause'. This phenomenon is termed in English as *Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)* and has been translated in Vietnamese as '*Hiện-tượng Đột-tử nơi Trẻ em*' (Sudden Death Phenomenon in Infants).

The term '*chemical castration*' meaning 'to inject a repeat sex offender with a chemical substance which causes their sex drive to diminish' is another example. The concept of castration is not unknown to the Vietnamese, because they are familiar with the castration of dogs, cats and roosters, and with the concept of eunuchs, but they have no idea of 'using a chemical substance in castration'. At this point in time, the word '*thiến*' still suggests in the Vietnamese speaker's mind the physical act of removing the testes with the resultant loss of sexual desire or activity, whereas the English word '*castrate*' means the same as '*thiến*'

but with added meaning of ‘loss of vigour’. A colleague of mine, Dr. Bửu Khải, has suggested a neologism for Vietnamese as ‘*thiến bằng hoá chất*’. If we say ‘using a chemical substance to sublimate desire’, could it be misconstrued as part of the Buddhist philosophy, which advocates the sublimation of all worldly desires--which is believed to be the cause of earthly suffering? And if sexual desire is to be sublimated by a chemical substance in a repeat sex offender, my coin term for this context of use would be ‘*diệt dục bằng hoá chất*’ which is in fact a functional equivalent.

6.5.6 Calque

This translation strategy is commonly known as ‘*calque*’ which is also called ‘through-, loan, semantic or literal translation’. The verb ‘*calquer*’ in French means ‘to trace’ or ‘to copy’. This approach is used in the translation of common collocations, names of agencies and organizations and components or word-compounds. For example, when translating *galloping inflation*, it is rendered in Vietnamese as ‘*lạm-phát phi-mã*’ (flying-horse inflation), *European Union* is rendered as ‘Liên-hiệp Châu Âu’, *International Monetary Fund (IMF)* as ‘Quỹ Tiền-tệ Quốc-tế’, *call-girl* as ‘gái gọi’, *eye-ball* as ‘nhãn cầu’, *Superman* as ‘siêu nhân’. At a glance, it can be noted that each expression is translated by tracing the original meanings of individual components of the term, with the exception of word-order, which is arranged in such a way as to conform with Vietnamese syntax. With the exception of Sino-Vietnamese expressions; eg. ‘eye-ball’ as ‘nhãn cầu’, ‘*Superman*’ as ‘siêu nhân’ used in target language texts, the word-order remains unchanged, because it is the same as that of English word-order.

As a translator, it is wise to be careful when using the calque technique, and not to take too free a hand. A term which is rendered using calque, should sound familiar, otherwise it will become typical of translationese. In other words, the lack of naturalness in the target language texts, if compared to food, would be alluded to as 'something smelling like cheese' to a native-Vietnamese reader, or as 'something smelling like fish sauce' to a native-English reader. This analogy first came to my notice at a Seminar on Translation held at the then Macarthur Institute of Higher Education by Nguyễn Ngọc Phách (1987). Cheese is readily acceptable to English people while fish sauce is readily acceptable to Vietnamese people, so the comparison should be self-explanatory.

Likewise if *'body language'* is translated, using 'calque', as *"ngôn-ngữ thể-xác"* (the language of the body), it would be considered wrongly rendered because of its ambiguity. I have personally heard this rendition on a local Vietnamese radio program. The word *'thể-xác'* (body) in Vietnamese suggests 'the sexual desires of a person', therefore, depending on the context, 'body language' should be translated as *'cử chỉ'* (gesture), *'bộ điệu'* (bodily movements), *'vẻ mặt'* (facial countenance), *'thái-độ'* (attitude), *'hành-động'* (behaviour), *'ứng-xử không lời'* (non-verbal communication), or *'ngôn-ngữ không lời'* (non-verbal language).

There would be those who would not accept *'ngôn-ngữ không lời'* for the simple reason that if it is language, there must be spoken words. They might conclude that such a rendition is wrong, contradictory and illogical. In answer to the argument, two points are cited for consideration:

- (a) We should not expect language to be logical. One might find the logic in a particular language in this instance, but not in the next. Or if we

think that there is logic in our own language, then there is no logic, to our minds, in another language, and vice versa;

- (b) In English, the term 'human language' is used, and it is rendered in Vietnamese as *ngôn-ngữ loài người* ('the language of humankind'), and in literature, the term animal language has been encountered, which has been rendered in Vietnamese as *ngôn-ngữ loài vật* ('the language of animals').

This translated term sounds familiar and is acceptable to native speakers of Vietnamese, even though it is known that animals do not utter words as such or have a language. If they do communicate, it is commonly accepted that they dance, cry or call to each other, but they do not speak as human beings do.

'Calque' is a technique which should only be used if the terms are such that they are already universally recognizable, and not initiated by the translator. For example, '*Season's Greetings*' might be translated as '**Những Lời Chào mừng của Mùa*' (The Greetings of the Season), instead of Sino-Vietnamese '*Cung Chúc Tân Xuân*' or in genuine Vietnamese '*Chúc Mừng Năm Mới*'. The term would be used in much the same way as Westerners say '*Happy New Year*', although '*Season's Greetings*' is not used by Westerners just to indicate the New Year but to cover the twelve days of Christmas from Christmas Eve to the New Year, and even the period before Christmas.

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that deals with the meanings and effects which come from the use of language in particular situations' (CCED, 1995). To put it more simply, it is a branch of linguistics which studies the speaker's intention and the hearer's interpretation of what has been said. It is important also to mention the part that Pragmatics play in correct translation. To illustrate this, if an automatic application of the calque technique was made to 'Rape

Centre' into *'Trung-tâm Hiếp-dâm'* (Centre for Rapes) for a Vietnamese reader, unintentionally the rendition would be understood as 'you can go to that place and rape someone'. Such a rendering is tantamount to what a Vietnamese would say is *'nối giáo cho giặc'* (giving a spear to your enemies). By the same token, if you translate *'Justice of the Peace (JP)'* onto your business card, as *'Thẩm-phán Tòa án Công-lý Hòa-bình'* (the Judge of the Court for Justice of the Peace), when dealing with people in Vietnam, you intentionally confuse your true role in Western society, as has been evidenced in Vietnam, as the target readers would naturally think of you as belonging to the judiciary and being a fully-fledged judge. Such a rendition is tantamount to what a Vietnamese would say is *'lập lờ đánh lận con đen'* (faking ignorance to cheat innocent people). In Australia, the JP's most common duty is to certify a person's signature to be true and correct for statutory declarations.

6.6 Sample text

After the discussion on translation equivalence, a sample text was chosen as an illustration of the work undertaken by a translator, and the thought processes which he or she has to undergo. The chosen text takes the form of a type of 'Letter to the Editor', entitled 'Readers' Opinions'. This article was published in the November 1999 Issue of the Vietnamese-language, Californian-based monthly magazine, *21st Century*. The choice of the article, written and also translated by myself, was advantageous when it came to understanding the intention of the author, as well as the translator (APPENDICES 9, 10). Particular problems can arise above word level, and will be analyzed carefully to illustrate translation equivalence.

6.6.1 Translator's analysis

6.6.1.1 General problems

6.1.1.1.1 Title:

No problem: 'Readers' Opinions'

6.1.1.1.2 Intention:

To comment upon and convey appreciation of five articles in three successive issues published by a monthly Vietnamese-language magazine in Southern California.

6.6.1.1.1.3 Type of text:

Informative

6.6.1.1.1.4 Readership

Vietnamese readers throughout the world, particularly those Vietnamese emigrés in the United States.

6.6.1.1.1.5 Language

Educated. It has a variety of colloquialisms and sayings. Its tone is somewhat sarcastic.

6.6.1.1.1.6 Intention of the translator

To render the source text for general English readership in order to give an insight into the thinking, as well as the style and tone used by an educated reader/writer.

6.6.1.1.1.7 Method

A reader-oriented, communicative approach.

6.6.1.2. Particular problems

Problems of this type involve the rendition of lexical items.

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Problems of this type involve the rendition of lexical items.

6.6.1.2.1 Sàigòn, Tháng ngày trôi nổi (lit. Saigon, months, days, adrift, floating)

This is the title of a short story describing the life of a South Vietnamese young man living under the Communist regime in 1982. After Liberation Day (30 April 1975), this young man recognized the many reasons why he could not live in his own hometown in Central Vietnam, so he went out of his way to leave and travel south. After trying to live here and there in various towns and cities in Southern Vietnam, he finally ended up living in Saigon. As someone who had travelled from afar, homeless and with no ration cards, he wandered the streets by day, selling second-hand clothing, and then lottery tickets, in order to make a meagre living. At night, he slept on top of the graves in the cemetery on the outskirts of the city. The story depicts his vagabond lifestyle. Finally the police raided the cemetery, handcuffed him and other tombstone-sleepers like himself, and took them to the police station for investigation. This raid was aimed at making a clean sweep of grave-robbers, who steal precious jewellery that has been buried with the dead.

The suggestion for the title of the short story is 'Saigon: Days and Months of Uncertainty', referring to the drifter's lifestyle in Saigon experienced by the story's main character. Saigon could also be used as a metaphor for 'having no clear purpose or sense of direction' in relation to the city itself. Bear in mind that the order of the compound word 'tháng ngày' (month, day) has been reversed, to fit in with the more common English usage of the phrase. However, in Vietnamese,

6.6.1.2.2 Ngày giải phóng (lit. day, emancipate, release)

Vietnamese refugees, as a rule, avoid using this term ‘Ngày giải phóng’ (Liberation Day). Instead, they designate it the day that the country was lost, or the forced occupation day of South Vietnam by the Communists. At the same time, the collapse of the South Vietnamese Government was reported in English by all the media as ‘The Fall of Saigon’. In this article, the writer uses the phrase ‘Liberation Day’ to sarcastically refer to the fact that the South Vietnamese people, after that day, still had an unstable, drifting lifestyle. When rendering the phrase into English, the word ‘so-called’ is used before ‘Liberation Day’ with a touch of irony, and equates best with the English saying, ‘Seeing is not believing’.

6.6.1.2.3 Trường Võ khoa Thủ Đức (lit. school, Thu-Duc, military, skill)

This was an army officers’ training school which was also called Thu Duc Infantry School. The English rendition of the school as Thu Duc Military School is readily understood by the English reader, however, the term ‘College’ or ‘Academy’ can be used as a substitute for ‘School’. The most preferred choice would be ‘Academy’.

6.6.1.2.4 Cái đêm hôm ấy đêm gì? (lit. CLASSIFIER, night, day, that, night. what)

The writer, when referring to the ‘fond memory’, did not ‘spill the beans’ as to what the memory was, as only two people shared it. The purpose is to initially arouse curiosity among the readers, but later on he indirectly revealed the secret to the readers, as well as to the friend’s wife, by using the line: ‘Cái đêm hôm ấy đêm gì?’ (What sort of a night was that?) from a well-known lyric poem *Cung Oán Ngâm Khúc* (Lament in a Royal Harem) by the 18th century writer Nguyễn Gia

to the readers, as well as to the friend's wife, by using the line: 'Cái đêm hôm ấy đêm gì?' (What sort of a night was that?) from a well-known lyric poem *Cung Oán Ngâm Khúc* (Lament in a Royal Harem) by the 18th century writer Nguyễn Gia Thiều. It was hoped that this had reminiscences of the next line: 'Bóng trăng lồng đóa trà mi chấp chùng' (The camellia enveloped by the moonlight in a gentle caress). In the translation, the translator would not expect a reader from the English-speaking world to search high and low for information about this romantic encounter. Therefore, he has had to add further detail and elaborate upon the 'fond memory' by adding 'sneaking away from camp at night time' to make it clearer to the English reader, as well as to stretch their imagination.

6.6.1.2.5 Lỗi tại tôi (lit. fault, because, me)

The word 'lỗi' and 'tội' are used interchangeably by Vietnamese people to mean 'fault, mistake, crime or sin'. But in English, the word 'sin' has a far more religious overtone, and when it is used, it is most likely rendered as 'tội' in Vietnamese. In the Vietnamese text, the word 'lỗi' is used sarcastically at least twice to mimic the common phrase 'Lỗi tại tôi, lỗi tại tôi mọi đảng' (It's my fault, it's all my fault) as used by the Vietnamese Roman Catholic Churchgoers. This is a play on words. Catholics in Vietnam and indeed, all over the world, are taught they are all sinners, and they even attend weekly Confession to lay bare their sins to the priest in order to gain absolution. Being a person who has no particular religious beliefs, when I did not fully understand the Catholic Father's writing, I used the ironic touch of implying to the reader that 'it was my fault' in much the same way I used it when responding to the second writer's shortcomings. Vietnamese people who scorn the Catholic Church would readily understand my

strategy, but to an English reader, I doubt if I could achieve the same sense of irony by just using the word ‘fault’, as opposed to ‘sin’ because ‘sin is breaking the law of God whether in thought or word or deed’, according to the teachings of Christianity. Hence, there is a loss of meaning in the English translation.

6.6.1.2.6 Toát mồ hôi hột (lit. secrete, sweat, drop)

When someone ‘toát mồ hôi hột’, they sweat profusely, especially out of fear. Another English rendition of ‘toát mồ hôi hột’ is ‘perspire profusely’, ‘break out in a lather of sweat’, ‘break out in beads of perspiration’, or ‘break out in a sweat’. English people prefer to use ‘sweat’ for animals and ‘perspiration’ for human beings.

6.6.1.2.7 Ngu si hưởng thái bình (lit. stupidity, enjoy, peace)

When referring to his lack of knowledge about the Catholic Father’s intentions, the writer admitted that his mind was not allowed to be left to rest in peace by the second writer Nguyen Hung Vu. This is a typical case of collocational differences between the two languages under study. Vietnamese people say: ‘stupidity enjoys peace’, while English people say: ‘ignorance is bliss’, or as in the target text, ‘ignorance prevails’.

6.6.1.2.8 Vơ về một mối (lit. grab, return, one, knot)

The Vietnamese expression refers to the case in which someone grabs hold of a few things or ideas to make it into one whole. It does not necessarily have a negative or positive connotation. The English nearest equivalent is ‘to put all your eggs in one basket’ meaning that, for economy’s sake, you lump all the same things or concepts together and deal with them as a whole, rather than individually.

6.6.1.2.9 Đơm bông kết trái (lit. bloom, flower, bear, fruit)

In English it is expressed as ‘to blossom and bear fruit’. Incidentally, a tree can ‘break out in blossom’, however a young girl ‘blossoms’, meaning ‘she develops into a young woman’.

6.6.1.2.10 Người ngoại đạo (lit. person, outside, religion)

The derision against the Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam is evident in the use of the words ‘người ngoại đạo’. Some Catholics believe they are the only true religion, and all others are ‘outsiders’. In English, the word ‘outsider’ means ‘someone who does not belong to a particular group or organisation’, but it is not likely to be the right term to be used in this sense. A better term, which has strong religious overtones attached to it, would be ‘non-believer’ and it means ‘a person who is not sure that God exists and that others’ religions are not necessarily the true religions’.

6.6.1.2.11 Vải thưa không che được mắt thánh (lit. cloth, thin, no, cover, gain, eye, saint)

The commonly used expression in Vietnamese is: ‘Vải thưa che mắt thánh’ (lit. a thin cloth is used to cover the eyes of a saint). When taking a piece of thin cloth to cover the eyes of a saint, it means you are being naive in thinking you can hide your weaknesses or wrong doings easily from the eyes of someone who is omnipotent and all-knowing. Talking about the differences in collocational patterning ‘vải thưa’ can be glossed as ‘thin cloth’ or ‘fine cloth’. However, the combination ‘fine cloth’ would be more appropriate for use here, as mention of a saint conjures up the idea that a saint would be decked out in only the best of finery; therefore the word used is ‘fine’, indicating something ‘delicate and thin in

nature’.

6.6.1.2.12 Bối lông tìm vết (lit. part, hair/fur, find, trace)

Nguyen Dinh Hoa’s *Vietnamese-English Dictionary* explains this idiomatic expression as ‘to go out of the way to discover weak points’. However, the writer sarcastically tries to play down the critical, though well-deserved, comments, to somewhat defend the author of the dictionary which has been published eight times. The word ‘nitpick’, best fits this Vietnamese phrase, for it describes the action of looking in fur to find nits or lice, as you see monkeys doing. Its English dictionary meaning is ‘to be unduly critical and concerned with insignificant details,’ however, of late, it has developed a wider range of meaning which does not necessarily indicate that the investigation is insignificant.

6.6.1.2.13 Kính cận dày cộm (lit. glasses, near, thick, bulge)

The English translation is ‘thick-lensed spectacles’ indicating that the person who wears them has poor eyesight. A very colloquial saying in Australia years ago was ‘milk-bottle glasses’, which alluded to the thick glass base on milk bottles as being the same thickness as spectacles worn by short-sighted people.

6.6.1.2.14 Thích ăn nhậu (lit. like, eat, drink)

This is a colloquial Vietnamese phrase, and to match it in English, the translator has two options. The first is to say ‘(he) is good on the tooth’ and ‘(he) likes to bend the elbow’, the second is to say ‘likes wining and dining’. If the term ‘(he) likes to bend the elbow’ is used, the translator is mindful of the fact that this term insinuates, in some people’s minds, that the person likes to drink too much. The expression ‘(he) likes wining and dining’ is a far more appropriate and sophisticated rendition.

6.6.1.2.15 Thích cho nhau nụ cười (lit. we, like, bring/give, each other, smile)

The Vietnamese expression has a touch of poetry in it and is not considered common parlance. When rendered into English as ‘we like to make each other laugh’, it sounds better because it fits in well with the English context, even though it could be expressed as ‘we like to bring a smile to each other’s face/lips’. The second choice has an advantage of being the seemingly nearest Vietnamese equivalent in terms of similar meaning and form and it fits in with the poetic nature of the expression, however, does not seem to be contextually appropriate.

6.6.1.2.16 Sản phẩm trí tuệ (lit. product, intellectual)

This expression is a typical collocation used in Vietnam nowadays. Even though the *Macquarie Dictionary* states the words ‘intellectual property’ as meaning ‘the rights of creative workers to protect their work’, the word ‘intellectual products’ (sản phẩm trí tuệ) smacks too much of the commercial marketing world to be used to describe academic work. The English collocational equivalent ‘intellectual activities’ is preferred.

6.6.1.2.17 Lời vàng ngọc (lit. word, gold, pearl)

The English phrase ‘pearls of wisdom’ closely relates to the Vietnamese expression, because it indicates that advice or information given is the finest and most precious example that can be presented, just as pearls and gold are considered precious.

6.6.1.2.18 Người đưa thư (lit. person, deliver, mail)

The word ‘messenger’ is the correct word in English, not ‘postman’ or ‘mailman’. The word ‘messenger’ has a far wider range of meaning than delivering mail and in fact, it is not used in reference to mail but relates more to the carriage of

official messages.

6.6.1.2.19 Tầm chương trích cú (lit. look into, chapter, extract, phrase)

The Vietnamese expression suggests the attempt to ‘consult books and extract excerpts for some specific purposes’, which often indicates a negative connotation. As the writer, I use this expression to refer to the explanation of the term ‘plagiarize’ which the author of the dictionary wrongly glossed as such. The *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* defines ‘plagiarize’ as ‘If someone plagiarizes another person’s idea or work, they use it or copy it and pretend that they thought of it or created it’. This term shows disapproval.

6.6.1.2.20 Ông chắc sẽ chỉ cười ‘khà’ (lit. He probably will just laugh: Ha! ha!)

A literal or semantic translation of the Vietnamese text was avoided. Instead, the following was suggested: ‘He will get a good laugh out of my doing him such a service’. The phrase ‘out of my doing him such a service’, which gives more information to the target text, is accepted as a justified addition within the translator’s circle. The reason the translator chose to do this was to help the English reader to understand the full implications of the argument, and also to finish off the piece of writing in a less abrupt manner.

CONCLUSION

The hypothesis which was and could originally be expressed as 'No collocation, poor translation', is proved correct in this study. Evidence has shown that translators who translate out of their first language are collocationally incompetent. The low success rate of less than five percent during the last decade of Vietnamese NAATI Level 3 candidates translating into English is a good indication of the problems involved in translating out of one's native language.

With regard to translations into English such as press-monitoring, literary works and official documents by NAATI-accredited practitioners, problems are minimal and cause no concern, as post-editing by English native speakers is part of the process.

Nevertheless, evidence has also shown that even with translators who translate into the language of habitual use, their problems with collocation still exist. Their shoddy work is also characterized by their literalness, ungrammaticalness, and non-idiomaticity. Problems can be explained by the practitioners' misconception of the work, their lack of commonsense, cultural sensitivity, influence by language interference, and the lack of proper feedback from readers and/or other translators. Other contributing factors are due to the fact that (a) texts chosen for NAATI testing are not a proper reflection of the text-types translators encounter in their work, as they are usually in the form of 'informative' texts or press editorials; (b) texts of 'vocative' nature, such as slogans and advertisements are more demanding and even more challenging than others, but this has not been taken into serious consideration by NAATI.

However, more recently, as a result of efforts made by some government and private agencies by way of translator-checker process, the Vietnamese translations have achieved a somewhat higher degree of readability.

Research results from this study have shown a number of approximately 4,000 non-comparable collocations existing between the two languages under study. Samples of these are listed in APPENDICES 5, 6, 7, 8. Regular and non-regular items from the collected data were compared and contrasted structurally, semantically and thematically for their similarities and differences.

With regards to structural patterning differences, collected combinations of regular items are different in nine collocational types (eg. Verb-adjective, Verb-verb, Noun-*of*-noun, Verb-adverb, Verb-*and*-verb, Adverb-adjective, Adjective-*and*-adjective, Noun-*and*-noun, Adverb-*and*-adverb). Within the 'different' group as indicated in the data, the Verb-adjective and Verb-verb combinations are non-existent in English, whereas the remaining seven combinations (eg. Noun-*of*-noun, Verb-adverb, Verb-*and*-verb, Adverb-adjective, Adjective-*and*-adjective, Noun-*and*-noun, Adverb-*and*-adverb) are non-existent in Vietnamese.

With regards to semantic patterning contrasts, the English 'People' semantic field provided a listing of seven subfields covering items ranging from 'Appearance', 'Character', 'Life and prospects', 'Human actions' to 'Feelings and emotions', 'Relationships' to 'Mishaps'; whereas its 'Nature' semantic fields provided a listing of three subfields covered items ranging from 'Weather', 'Places', and 'Objects'. The Vietnamese 'People' semantic field provided a listing of six subfields concerning 'Appearance', 'Character', 'Life and death', 'Feelings and emotions', 'Bodily functions', and 'Law and order'; whereas its 'Nature'

semantic field provided a listing of five subfields referring to 'Weather', 'Flora', 'Fauna', 'Objects', and 'Events'. The table below highlights the 'haves' and the 'havenots' of semantic fields in both data as mentioned:

English	Vietnamese
People	People
Appearance	Appearance
Character	Character
Life and prospects	Life and prospects
Feelings and emotions	Feelings and emotions
Human actions	Bodily functions
Relationships	Law and order
Mishaps	
Nature	Nature
Weather	Weather
Objects	Objects
Places	Flora
	Fauna
	Events

In so far as semantic ranges are concerned, a number of words were observed in the English and Vietnamese data which had a wide range of collocability or were semi-restricted in their partnership with other words. Renditions of the headwords and collocates of these combinations would not always prove to be 'a cup of tea' for the translator, as discussed, as well as suggested, throughout the dissertation, and particularly in the last four chapters.

Regarding thematic patterning contrasts, the collected combinations were classified into themes, eight for English, nine for Vietnamese. The fact that the missing themes of 'Education' and 'Work' were not found in the English data, and the missing themes of 'Appreciation' were not found in the Vietnamese data was entirely due to the investigator's bias. The table below highlights the 'haves' and

the 'havenots' of themes in both data:

Themes	Subthemes	English	Vietnamese
Colour		+	+
	Beauty	+	+
	Feelings	+	+
	Injuries	+	
	Road safety	+	
	Luck	+	+
	Beliefs	+	+
	Human character	+	
	Social class	+	
Time		+	+
	Measurement	+	+
	Values	+	+
	Prevention	+	
	Competition	+	
	Periods of a person's life	+	
Appearance		+	+
	Clothing	+	+
	Shape and size	+	
	Beauty	+	+
Weather		+	+
	Greeting	+	
	Vagaries		+
	Forecasting	+	+
	Feelings	+	
	Temperature	+	+
Relationships		+	+
	Family values		+
	Love	+	+
	Marriage	+	+
	Sex	+	+
	Divorce	+	
	Old age	+	
Faith		+	+
	Religions	+	+
	Occultism	+	+
	Government	+	
	Politics	+	+
Entertainment		+	+
	Gambling	+	+
	Sport	+	+
	Eating and drinking	+	+
Appreciation		+	
	The Arts	+	
	Sport	+	
	Charity work	+	
Education			+
	Social class		+
	Respect for scholarship		+
Work			+

While this study has provided justified criticism of translation practice on the Australian scene, useful general discussion of collocation, and a large amount of illustrative material, it will no doubt help in the curriculum design of professional translator training courses. The two-word and multi-word approach to vocabulary-collocation teaching and testing is highly recommended. Numerous non-comparable collocations, whether they be regular or non-regular items, will form the basis for the translator educator to devise exercises and work books to teach and test their students' vocabulary in the form of 'words in chunks'.

With a solid knowledge of collocations under his or her belt, the translator's road to achieving naturalness in the target language can be achieved by adopting different techniques and strategies; namely, conversion, over-translation, under-translation, culturalization, functionalization, descriptivization, and translationalization. Potential difficulties in using 'vocative' texts as test items by NAATI can be tackled head-on in training sessions whereby discussion on creativity in search of equivalent effect of dynamic equivalence in translation can be deemed ideal.

To make the long story short, the reader-biased approach, as opposed to the writer-biased approach, should always be kept in mind, for the simple reason that community information translation is the predominant translation form in the Australian context.

