**VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

**UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

**FACULTY OF POST-GRADUATE STUDIES**

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**THE IMAGES OF MOTHER IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE SONG LYRICS – A STUDY BASED ON SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS APPROACH**

HÌNH ẢNH NGƯỜI MẸ TRONG LỜI CÁC BÀI HÁT

TIẾNG ANH VÀ TIẾNG VIỆT – MỘT NGHIÊN CỨU

DỰA TRÊN CÁCH TIẾP CẬN NGÔN NGỮ HỌC CHỨC NĂNG HỆ THỐNG

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Supervisor:

**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. RATIONALE

Song lyrics are one of the prominent types of data that have been discussed in a lot of studies. Out of different themes in songs, mother-themed songs especially draw my attention. Mother is an important person with an indispensable role in each person’s life. Apart from enjoying the rhythm of mother-themed songs, listeners or readers can learn more than a story or a message through song lyrics. As Machin (2010) stated, *“But when we look more carefully we find much deeper meanings that tie them to particular times, places and ideas”* (p.3).

Michael Halliday, whose interest in a language-based linguistics was inspired by his mentor, J.R. Firth, developed Systemic Functional Linguistics (henforth SFL) in the 1960s. The key point that distinguishes SFL from other models of language is that SFL sees language as a system of meanings while other models of language consider language as a set of rules. There have been a large number of discourses, texts, speeches, literary works, and especially songs studied with the theoretical framework of SFL. Songs are one of the prominent types of data that have been discussed in a lot of studies. Until now, there has not been any research on mother song lyrics in the light of linguistic theory. The reasons above have motivated the author to carry out the research *“The Images of Mother in English and Vietnamese Song Lyrics - A Study Based on Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach”.* The study employs Halliday’s theory of SFL as theoretical framework to figure out the images of mother in English and Vietnamese songs, which are constructed through experiential and interpersonal meanings.

## 1.2. AIM OF THE STUDY

To fulfil the aim and objectives, the following question with its three subquestions is raised for exploration:

1. What images of mother are constructed in English and Vietnamese mother song lyrics and how are they constructed?

1.1. What experiential resources are employed in English and Vietnamese mother song lyrics, and how are they employed?

1.2. What interpersonal resources are employed in English and Vietnamese mother song lyrics, and how are they employed?

1.3. What are the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese mother song lyrics in terms of experiential and interpersonal meanings?

## 1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Given the aim and objectives, the study covers two aspects of meanings, namely, experiential and interpersonal in English and Vietnamese war and peace mother song lyrics. Given the scope of the study, 50 mother songs in English and Vietnamese are selected. The selection of English and Vietnamese songs is based on theme. To be more specific, the songs about mother in war time are called “war mother songs” and the songs about mother in peace time are called “peace mother songs”.

## 1.4. RESEARCH METHODS

This is a comparative study on mother song lyrics in English and Vietnamese; therefore, the comparative method has been adopted as the main method in the study. In addition, the mixed methods (a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods) and descriptive have been also employed.

## 1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

With the achieved results, the dissertation is intended to contribute to the study of some aspects of meaning in mother song lyrics in English and Vietnamese through the mediation of a linguistic theory – SFL. Moreover, there have been no researches on the images of mother under SFL perspective; therefore, the study is intended to make a small contribution to using SFL framework to compare and reveal some aspects of the meaning of a text type in English and Vietnamese which seems not to have not received adequate attention from researcher – song lyrics.

## 1.6. STRUCTURE OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

The study is organized as follows:

**Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION**

**Chapter 2** **– LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Chapter 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Chapter 4 – TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR MOTHER SONG LYRICS**

**Chapter 5 –** **TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS**

**Chapter 6 – SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR AND PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS**

**Chapter 7** **– DISCUSSION ON THE IMAGES OF MOTHER IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE SONG LYRICS**

**Chapter 8 – CONCLUSION**

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1. AN OVERVIEW OF SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

## 2.1.1. Introduction

The theoretical framework employed in the research is Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth SFL). SFL is a model of language in context. We will begin by examining different levels of context and the relationship of context and language. Then we will end with a brief discuss of metafunction and two strands of meaning and their lexicogrammatical realizations.

### 2.1.2. Levels of context and language in relation to context

When it comes to the concepts of context, two types of contexts in SFL are introduced: context of culture and context of situation, respectively (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) suggested that the context of culture includes various semiotic systems but all members in the same community can interpret it. While the context of culture is an abstract notion, the context of situation (register) can be specifically investigated through three sub-concepts of: field, tenor and mode (Hasan, 1973; Halliday, 1978; Martin, 1992; Eggins, 1994; Halliday & Mathiessen, 2014). Three elements above are also the framework set up to describe the situation of a text (Halliday & Hasan, 1985).

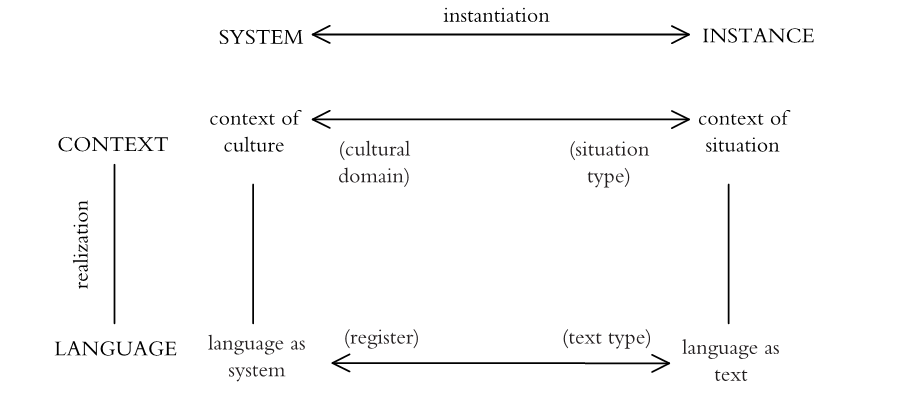
- Field is equated with the question “*What’s going on in the situation”* or describes the external reality.

- Tenor answers the question *“Who is taking part in the conversation?”* or establishes the relationships between those taking part in the conversation.

- Mode deals with the question *“What role is being played by language?”,* in other words*;* mode shows the means that the communication happens.

**Figure 2.1**

*The relation between language and social context (Halliday, 1999: 8)*



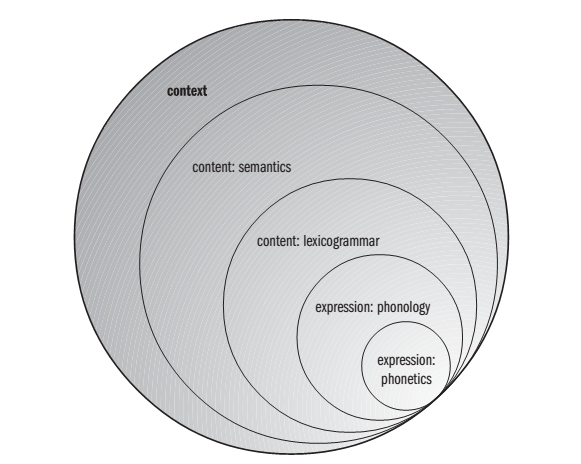
Two types of relationship illustrated in the figure include instantiation and realization. The relationship between context of culture and context of situation and that between language as system and language as text is instantiation. The relationship between context of culture and language as system and that between context of situation and language as a text is realization.

### 2.1.3. Levels of language

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) illustrated a model to explain different levels of language as well as the relationship between levels.

**Figure 2.2**

*Stratification (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014: 26)*



Language is a systemic resource that is organized in three different levels or strata. Each level is related each other by means of realization.

* Semantics is the resource for meaning. It is realised through lexicogrammar and relates upwards to context
* Lexicogrammar is the resource for wording meaning. It is realized through phonology and relates upwards to semantics
* Phonology is the resource for sound wording and relates upwards to lexicogrammar

### 2.1.4. Clause simplex as unit of analysis

There are several reasons why the clause simplex is chosen as the unit of analysis in the research. Firstly, clause simplex is seen as the highest unit in terms of grammatical rank. Next, the clause supplies an obvious indication of the distinct line of structures associated with different metafunctions. Thirdly, for the reason that the clause simplex can manifest all three metafunctions of language, the clause is considered as an effective tool for text analysis.

### 2.1.5. Metafunctions

Three main functions are suggested: ideational, interpersonal and textual. Firstly, language construes our outer and inner experience and we call it the ideational metafunction. The ideational metafunction involves two other components: that of experiential meaning in the clause, and that of logical meaning between clauses in clause complexes. Secondly, while construing, language also establishes our personal and social relationships with other people around us. This function of language is called interpersonal metafunction. Whether the construing and establishing is successful or not depends on how the discursive flow is cohesive and continuous. It means that the speaker or the writer has to decide sequences of discourse. We call it textual metafunction (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

### 2.1.6. Rationale for adopting SFL as the theoretical framework

There have been a lot of models of language functions applied to text analysis; however, SFL has been chosen as the theoretical framework for our study for some reasons. Firstly, SFL is a comprehensive model and the vast applicability of SFL to different disciplines has been discussed by a lot of scholars. Secondly, the distinctive features of SFL in comparison with other models also motivate us to do the research.

## 2.2. THE NOTION OF TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

### 2.2.1. Process types

**Material process** is the process of “doing and happening” which has the general structure: **Actor + Process + other Participants**.

**Mental process** is the second primary choice. It is the process of sensing.The general structure of mental process is **Senser + Process + Phenomenon.** The last primary choice is **Relational process**,the process of being, having and being at. Three subtypes emerging due to the unclear cut among three main types are **behavioural**, **verbal** and **existential**.

### 2.2.2. Circumstantial elements

Another participant that is associated with the process but optional is circumstance. Basically, the classification of circumstantial elements in English and Vietnamese share the same points. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) put them in nine types (extent, location, manner, cause, contingency, accompaniment, role, matter, angle) while Hoang (2012) grouped them in eight types. Although the number of type and names are a little bit different, the nature of circumstances stays the same. We will adopt the classification of circumstances by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) when identifying circumstantial elements in the clauses.

## 2.3. THE NOTION OF MOOD SYSTEM IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

### 2.3.1. Mood types

The grammatical system that realizes these speech functions above is MOOD system. The grammatical category used to exchange information is indicative. There are two subtypes in indicative: (i) the expression of statement is declarative; (ii) the expression of question is interrogative. Another primary mood type contrasting with declarative is imperative (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

### 2.3.2. Modality

Polarity is a choice between *“yes”* and *“no”*. However, there are not only two poles but other *“intermediate possibilities”*called Modality. Modality is divided into two types: Modalization and Modulation. Modalization includes two kinds: (i) degree of probability; (ii) degree of usuality. Modulation also consists of two kinds names: (i) degree of obligation; (ii) degree of inclination.

## 2.4. THE IMAGES OF MOTHER

The mother image has become the focus of numerous works in different fields such as literature, art or music. In reviewing the literature, the writer finds out that the images of mother are mostly generalized through literary works in both English and Vietnamese.

## 2.5. THE LYRICS IN SONGS

Halliday and Hasan conceptualize text as “any passage, spoken or written, whatever length, that does form a unified whole” (as cited in Hoang, 2018, p.3). If a song is sung, it is under spoken form. If it is read, it is under written form. Therefore, it can be concluded that song lyrics are a genre of text.

## 2.6. RELATED STUDIES

In the world, three distinct researches can be said to be relevant to the study of this disssertation writer’s research. The first study taken for review is *A comparative study of ideational meaning between the song lyrics written by the most popular American song writers in 1990 and Indonesian song writers in 2000s – A study based on SFL* by Ratih Wulan Sari (2009). The second study under review is *Interpersonal Meaning Analysis of Muse Song Lyrics in Black Holes & Relevation’s Album (A Study Based on Systemic Functional Linguistics)* by Rowiatun Amri Marhamah (2014). The third study is Ta Thi Thu Hang’s (2016) *Mother Image in English and Vietnamese Songs – a Literary Analysis Using Transitivity System in Systemic Functional Linguistics Perspective*. The study is conducted as an attempt to understand more about mother image from SFL perspective.

## 2.7. SUMMARY

This chapter is regared as essential to the whole dissertation because it not only supplies an informative picture of SFL (the development of SFL, the key points directly involving the study) but expounds the key terms in the title.

# CHAPTER 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. THE COMPARATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

As aforementioned, this is a comparative research; therefore, the main method for this study is comparative.

It can be seen that one can adopt quantitative, qualitative or both (mixed methods) in their comparative study. These methods mentioned above are also three main research approaches examined by Cresswell (2014). Based on the description of Cresswell (2014), the writer realized that the mixed methods approach is sastifactory to accomplish the objectives of the study and answer three research questions.

## 3.2. RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative method is adopted to count the number of process types, circumstance types, mood and modality types in clauses of song lyrics. From the obtained results, the author can make the evaluation of the dominant choices of Transitivity resources (process types, participants and circumstances) and Mood resources (mood and modality patterns) taken by the composers of songs in depicting the images of mothers by qualitative method. The researcher also shows the similarities and differences in terms of experiential and interpersonal meanings. Thus, the mixed methods approach offers a collection of flexible research designs that seem well suited to the research. In addition, the researcher also uses descriptive and comparative analysis. In an attempt to find out similarities and differences in experiential and interpersonal meanings employed in English and Vietnamese songs, comparative analysis is used. The underlying goal of comparative analysis is to search for similarity and variances.

## 3.3. CORPUS COMPILATION AND DATA PROCESSING

The first criterion to choose the songs is theme. The data chosen are English and Vietnamese war and peace mother song lyrics. Mother songs are not only the songs with a word meaning *“mother”* in the title but the songs with contents about maternal figures. Regarding war and peace songs, they are songs about the images of mother in war and peace time. Based on the criteria presented above, the data collection will follow two steps below.

**Step 1:** Mother songs are searched through different sources.

**Step 2:** The close reading is carried out for the researcher to familiarize with the song lyrics before selecting and classifying.

**Step 3:** The song lyrics are selected and classified on the basis of theme.

## 3.4. DATA ANALYSIS

### 3.4.1. Analytical framework

As mentioned earlier, the unit of analysis for this study is clause simplex. To identify the clause simplexes, the researcher bases the identification on lexicogrammar criteria. The researcher conducted the study using Transitivity and Mood resources using Halliday’s framework to answer one main question followed by three subquestions. The results collected from the quantitative method allow the researcher to compare the dominant process type, mood type and modality type in English and Vietnamese song lyrics. The quantitative results are seen as the base for the evaluation of the mother’s roles depicted in English and Vietnamese song lyrics that is carried out through the qualitative method. After the comparison in terms of the dominant process type, mood type and modality type is made, the researcher continues to compare the images of mother in two languages.

### 3.4.2. Baseline data analysis

To gain baseline information for further analysis, the data consisting of 50 songs are counted for the number of words, and then they are analyzed for the number of clause simplexes. With the total number of 50 songs, 1234 clause simplexes with 8975 words are analyzed in the research.

***Field, Mode and Tenor***

In terms of field, all of fifty songs depict the images of mother. Tenor establishes two types of communication: the communication between the writer and the listeners/readers, and the communication between the mothers and the children in each song. In the case of songs, mode is conceived in two forms, both written and spoken communication.

### 3.4.3. Data analysis steps

The analysis of Transitivity and Mood resources in clause simplexes in English and Vietnamese war and peace mother songs followed the following steps:

**Step 1:** The data in the forms of clause simplexes from mother songs’ lyrics in 50 songs in English and Vietnamese are selected. Total sampling technique are adopted in this step.

**Step 2:** The mother songs in English and Vietnamese are analyzed for baseline information (the number of clause simplexes).

**Step 3:** The mother songs in English and Vietnamese are analyzed for Transitivity, Mood & Modality to uncover the experiential and interpersonal meaning.

**Step 4:** The number of clause simplexes, process types, mood types and modality will be counted.

**Step 5:** The findings are used to make comparison between song lyrics in English and Vietnamese.

**Step 6:** When similarities and differences are established, the images of mother in two languages will generalized. Simultaneously, the possible reasons for similarities and differences will be discussed.

## 3.5. GLOSSES AND SYMBOLS

First, each clause of the song lyrics is contracted as *EW1.2*, *EP1.2*, *VW1.2* or *VW.2*... Two initial letters stand for language of song and the period (war or peace). The two next numbers represent the ordinal of the song and the clause in that song. Second, names of systems such as system of MOOD or system of TRANSITIVITY will be captitalized MOOD or TRANSITIVITY. Thirdly, names of functions will be writtent in the abbreviation form in parentheses if there is not enough space; for example, **Subject (Subj)**, **Senser (Sen),** and so on. The list of abbreviation was provided in **Appendix 1** at the first pages of the paper.

## 3.6. SUMMARY

A sufficient justification for research approach as well as research method is provided in this chapter. This chapter reasons why the comparative method is the most appropriate for the dissertation.

# CHAPTER 4

# TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR MOTHER SONG LYRICS

## 4.1. TRANSITIVITY RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR MOTHER SONG LYRICS

### 4.1.1. Transitivity in English war mother song lyrics

The number of process types and the percentage of process types in English war songs are illustrated in the following tables.

**Table 4.1**

*Process types in English war mother song lyrics*

**

As can be seen in Table 4.1, the total number of clause simplexes of English war songs analyzed is 253. Of 253 clause simplexes, material clauses comprise the largest proportion with 40%. Relational clauses rank the second and make up 21%. Mental clauses constitute the third largest percentage of total processes (19%). Next, verbal clauses account for 11% while behavioural and existential clauses have the same percentage (5% for each).

Regarding circumstances, the circumstance of location that owns two subtypes temporal and spatial is the dominant type (64%) in eleven English war songs.

### **4.1.2. Transitivity in Vietnamese war mother song lyrics**

The frequency and the percentage of process types in Vietnamese songs will be illustrated in the following tables.

**Table 4.3**

*Process types in Vietnamese war mother song lyrics*

****

Table 4.3 gives information about the percentage of process types in 282 clause simplexes of eleven Vietnamese songs. As shown in the table, the material process ranks the first with 46%. The relational process accounts for 23% after the material process. The next positions are the process of mental and the process of behavioural, at 15 % and 10%, respectively. The verbal and existential processes take up the remaining (3% for each).

## 4.2. MOOD AND MODALITY RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR MOTHER SONG LYRICS

### 4.2.1. Mood and Modality resources employed in English war mother song lyrics

#### **4.2.1.1. Mood types in English war mother song lyrics**

The number and the percentage of mood types in the song lyrics are shown in Table 4.6 (Percentage rounded to nearest figure).

**Table 4.6**

*Mood types in English war mother song lyrics*



The tables above show that declarative clauses take up the largest proportion (81%) in the total clauses of eleven English war songs. Declarative clauses are identified by the order of Subject and Finite in the Mood structure. In declarative type, this order is shown as *Subject^Finite^(Predictor)...*

**4.2.1.2. Modality in English war song lyrics**

The number and percentage of modalization and modulation are represented in Table 4.7 (Percentage rounded to nearest figure).

**Table 4.7**

*Number of modality types in English war song lyrics*

****

Table 4.7 shows that there is occurrence of both modalization and modulation in eleven English war songs. However, in modalization, there is no occurrence of modalization expressing usuality. In modulation, there is no occurrence of modulation expressing inclination.

### 4.2.2. Mood and modality resources employed in Vietnamese war mother song lyrics

#### **4.2.2.1. Mood types in Vietnamese war mother mother song lyrics**

The number and the percentage of mood types in Vietnamese war songs are shown in Table 4.8 (percentage rounded to nearest figure).

**Table 4.9**

*Mood types in Vietnamese war song lyrics*



#### **4.2.2.2. Modality in Vietnamese war mother song lyrics**

The presence of modality in eleven Vietnamese war songs will be displayed in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.10**

*Modality types in Vietnamese war mother song lyrics*

****

The data in the table indicates that there is no occurrence of the expression of usuality and inclination in Vietnamese war songs. The number of probability and obligation is not considerable.

## 4.3. SUMMARY

The chapter has shown the results of Transitivity resource (process types, circumstantial elements) and Mood resources (mood and modality types) found in English and Vietnamese war song lyrics.

# CHAPTER 5

# TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS

## 5.1. TRANSITIVITY RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS

### 5.1.1. Transitivity resources employed in English peace mother song lyrics

**Table 5.1**

*Process types in English peace mother song lyrics*



The analysis of clauses shows that all six types of process are employed in English peace songs to represent the image of mothers. Table 5.1 demonstrates that of 372 clauses, the material has the largest number (124, 33%). Rank the second is the relational with 111 clauses (30%). The third highest number is the mental with 75 instances (20%). Next to the mental is the verbal with 34 clauses (9%). Ranked the fifth is the behavioural with 20 clauses (5%). At the bottom list is the existential with 8 occurrences (2%). The findings in the table above reveals that the circumstance of location is the dominant type employed in English peace songs (48%).

### 5.1.2. Transitivity resources employed in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics

**Table 5.4**

*Process types in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics*

****

As can be seen from the table, relational clauses take up the largest proportion with 114 clauses (35%). Ranked the second is the material (105, 32%). The mental process accounts for the third highest percentage with 15%. Ranked the fourth is the behavioural with 10% while the verbal and the existential are equal at 10%. In terms of circumstances, the circumstance of location (31%) and the circumstance of manner (~31%) constitute the major part of song lyric texts.

## 5.2. MOOD AND MODALITY IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS

### 5.2.1. Mood and Modality in English peace mother song lyrics

#### **5.2.1.1. Mood types in English peace mother song lyrics**

**Table 5.7**

*Mood types in English peace song lyrics*



As with English war songs, the declarative continues to be the major mood type in fourteen English peace songs with 372 clauses taking up 97% of the total clauses. A small number of imperative and interrogative clauses are employed in these songs and both constitute the remaining percentage (3%). There is no occurrence of the exclamative in all songs.

#### **5.2.1.2. Modality in English peace mother song lyrics**

**Table 5.7**

*Modality types in English peace mother song lyrics*



As Table 5.7 shows, there is no occurrence of modalization expressing usuality and modulation expressing inclination in the songs. The number of obligation expressions is four. By comparison, that of probability expressions is much higher with 68 instances.

### 5.2.2. Mood and modality in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics

#### **5.2.2.1. Mood types in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics**

**Table 5.9**

*Mood types in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics*



As can be shown from the two tables above, four mood types are adopted in Vietnamese war songs. Like the choice of mood types in Vietnamese war songs, the declarative type is principally in the songs with a high proportion of 96%. The interrogative, imperative and exclamative come the second, third and fourth rank, respectively (2%, 2%, and 1 %).

#### **5.2.2.2. Modality in Vietnamese peace songs**

**Table 5.10**

*Modality types in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics*



As can be observed from Table 5.9, the percentage of modality in Vietnamese peace songs is not considerable. Specifically, there are two instances of modalization expressing probability (1%) and seven instances of modalization expressing usuality (2%) in the songs.

## 5.3. SUMMARY

The chapter has shown the results of Transitivity resource (process types, circumstantial elements) and Mood resources (mood and modality types) found in English and Vietnamese peace song lyrics.

# CHAPTER 6

# SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR AND PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS

## 6.1. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR MOTHER SONG LYRICS

### 6.1.1. Similarities and differences in Transitivity resources employed in English and Vietnamese war song mother lyrics

It is not difficult to see that all 6 types of processes are present in the song lyrics of the two languages. Of those processes, material clauses comprise the largest percentage (40% in English war songs and 46% in Vietnamese war songs). The second rank and the third one in both languages are relational processes and mental processes, respectively. The analysis above discusses the similarities and differences in terms of number. When material process in depicting the image of mothers in wartime in both languages is taken into account, it is concluded that song lyrics share a quite few of similarities. Verbs serving as material process in clauses in English and Vietnamese songs can be classified into three subgroups: (i) one that describes the happening of things around, (ii) one that describes the participation of soldiers in battles, and (iii) one that describes the outer experience of mothers.

The most remarkable difference between material clauses used in two languages is verbs describing mothers’ involvement in the battles. In English, mothers express their disapproval of the battle in Vietnam as well as their sons’ engagement in the battle. However, in Vietnamese, there are material clauses describing the mothers’ direct participation in the battle. There are two ways of supporting the battle from Vietnamese mothers. A number of them try hard to produce more and more to support the front line while others take part in the battle directly. Speaking of mental process, this type is employed to express the inner thoughts and feelings of both mothers and soldiers. Four subtypes of mental process are found in songs of both languages. The equivalence of verbs in this type is rather obvious in both English and Vietnamese songs. The observation on verbal clauses in two languages shows that there are occurrences of two subtypes of verbal process (activity and semiosis) in both languages. Moving on to the behavioural, this process type in song lyrics of two languages contributes to describing the doing process (near-material subtype) and establishing the process of consciousness (near-mental) of the mothers and the children. Another similarity that can be observed is the context of situation in a number of songs in both languages. In English war songs, readers witness soldiers’ sadness on Christmas day when they cannot come back home (*Christmas in Vietnam – 1965, Merry Christmas from Vietnam – 1967*). In Christian countries, Christmas is an important occasion to them like Tet holiday in Vietnam. Both are sacred occasions when all people from anywhere return home to reunite with their family members. Therefore, in a number of Vietnamese songs, the readers also have a chance to feel Vietnamese soldiers’ sentiment towards their hometowns and their mothers (*Xuân này con không về - 1960s, Mùa xuân của mẹ - before 1975*).

### 6.1.2. Similarities and differences in Mood resources employed English and Vietnamese war mother song lyrics

In terms of the number, it can be concluded that the dominant mood type in both languages is the declarative (81% in English and 96% in Vietnamese). In addition, the interrogative and imperative mood types are employed in songs of English and Vietnamese although the percentage of the two mood types in English is slightly higher than that in Vietnamese. However, one remarkable difference in terms of number is the presence of the exclamative. There is no exclamative mood type in English while two instances of this mood type are found in Vietnamese songs. Moving on to modality patterns, the analysis result shows that the modalization expressing probability and usuality is employed in both languages.

## **6.2. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TRANSITIVITY AND MOOD RESOURCES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS**

### 6.2.1. Similarities and differences in Transitivity resources employed in English and Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics

First and foremost, the similarities and differences in terms of the number of processes between songs in two languages will be shown through Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4**

*Comparison of the percentage of process types in English and Vietnamese peace songs*

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Table 6.4 shows that the material and relational take up the major percentage of process types despite the difference in the rank between the two types

### 6.2.2. Similarities and differences in Mood resources employed in English and Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics

Concerning the similarities between mood types used in English and Vietnamese peace songs, there are three notable points. Firstly, all three mood types: the declarative, the interrogative and the imperative occur in song lyrics of the two languages. Secondly, the declarative is the dominant mood type with the high percentage in each language (97% in English and 96% in Vietnamese). Thirdly, the declarative clauses in both languages are employed to either tell a story about the mother/the child or give information about the sentiment between the mother and the child. With regard to differences, two types of interrogative are found in Vietnamese while there is only one type (polar one) in English.

The similarity between modality in the two languages is not considerable. A minor similarity in modality two languages share is the use of the modalization expressing probability. However, speaking of the frequency of the probability modality, there is a sharp difference between the songs in the two languages. First, 67 instances of the probability are investigated in English song lyrics whereas this number in Vietnamese is two, a rather modest number.

The second difference that is clear lies in the use of the obligation and the usuality expressions in English and Vietnamese peace songs. Despite being not much, the obligation appears four times in English song while there is no instance of this modality type in Vietnamese.

## 6.3. SUMMARY

The similarities and differences between Transitivity resource and Mood resource in English war song lyrics and those in Vietnamese war song lyrics, between Transitivity resource and Mood resource in English war song lyrics and those in Vietnamese peace song lyrics have been made in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 7

# DISCUSSION ON THE IMAGES OF MOTHER IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE SONG LYRICS

## 7.1. THE IMAGES OF MOTHER IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE WAR MOTHER SONG LYRICS

With regard to the images of mother in English war song lyrics, it can be concluded that the images of mother in English war song lyrics are reflected with three outstanding characteristics. First, the mothers are represented as the pillar of strength and spiritual support for the soldiers whenever they are in trouble or in depressing situations.

Second, the mothers are depicted as the loving and affectionate one. The mothers’ hearts always turn towards their soldiers in the battle. Mental clauses (emotive and desirative subtypes) are deployed for them to express their feelings of missing for their children and long for their children’s return. In addition, in the mother often recalls memories of her child in material clauses that describe his/ her childhood activities. Most of material and mental clauses mentioned above are expressed through declarative mood type (81%).

Third, the mothers act as the protectors for their children. Their love for children is manifested by their protest against the war their children are forced to join. In this aspect, the combination of verbal clauses (11%) along with interrogative clauses (9%) becomes an effective tool to depict the images of mother.

Next, the images of mother in Vietnamese war songs will be generalized. The discussion in the previous part reveals the image of Vietnamese mothers in wartime with three prominent features. Different from the mother in English war songs, the mother in Vietnamese songs is characterized with her great devotion to their soldiers and their countries. In other words, they are great contributors. A high number of material clauses (46%) are employed to display the mothers’ participation in the war. The mothers through different activities considerably contribute to the success of the resistance.

*VP9.9*

The cultural settings behind the songs can be accounted for this representation of mothers in Vietnamese war song lyrics. When Vietnam was invaded by the enemy, all Vietnamese people regardless of the age or gender devote their life to protecting their country. The mothers not only let their children take part in the battle but they also devote their life to liberating their country.

Second, like mothers in English war song lyrics, they are loving and affectionate mothers. Vietnamese mothers who stay in the rear yearn for the news of their children day and night. Their love and affection for their children in the battle are expressed by means of mental (15%) and relational process (23%). The emotive subtype of mental process as well as the domain of attribution expressing subjective sensations of the relational process enables the mothers to express their thoughts and emotion.

Lastly, the mothers are seen as the symbol of heroic sacrifice and the soldiers’ strong motivation to fight in the war. The writers take advantage of the relational process to demonstrate this aspect. The images of mother are manifested in different aspects that become an indispensable part during the soldiers’ journey to the battle. In terms of mood type, the declarative (96%) takes up the major part of song lyrics to depict the images of Vietnamese mother in wartime.

The generalizations above indicate that the most noticeable difference between the images of mother in English war song lyrics and the images of mother in Vietnamese war song lyrics is the mothers’ significant engagement in the war to protect their children and their country. The possible reason is because the difference in the historical background and the nature of the battle.

## 7.2. THE IMAGES OF MOTHER IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE PEACE MOTHER SONG LYRICS

The first discussion will focus on the images of mother in English peace song lyrics. The analysis of Transitivity as well as Mood and Modality in English songs reveals two key features of the mothers in English peace songs. Firstly, they are dedicated caregivers who take care of their children both physically and mentally. This point is expressed through material clauses (33%) with concrete and abstract verbs. Concrete material verbs reconstruct the mothers’ activities or the jobs the mothers did to give their children a better life.

Secondly, the mothers are an indispensable part in the children’s lives. This time the mothers are compared to the light, another time the mothers play as the motivation for the children to firmly stay on the journey of life. The authors adopt relational clauses (30%) to display this aspect. In terms of mood types, like in English war songs, the declarative (97%) continues to be the primary mood type in depicting the images of mother in English peace songs. A small number of modal elements are employed in English peace song lyrics and most of them are modality expressions of probability (18%); only 1% is modality expressions of obligation. Although employed in a limited number, to some extent, modality assists the characters in the songs in expressing their attitudes or desire.

The next discussion will centre on the images of mother in Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics. The analysis of Transitivity in Vietnamese songs provides linguistic evidence for the researcher to reach the conclusion about some prominent features of Vietnamese mothers in peace-time. In the first place, the Vietnamese mothers devoted their youth and their life to bringing up their children. This feature is depicted effectively through relational processes (35%). In relational clauses in Vietnamese peace songs, even when the Carrier (Identified) in the clause is not the mother, the focus of the clauses is still the mother. It is because the domain or the Identifier (Attribute) targeted is the mother. The composers have adopted a wide range of epithets to ascribe precious values to the mothers, which are illustrated in the preceding pages. Let us take a look at some of examples again.

They are diligent women who are willing to accept a harsh life to bring a brighter future to their children. In addition, material processes (32%) also clarify specific the mothers’ actions in daily life to take care of their children. Although the circumstantial element is optional in the process, in some cases of Vietnamese clause, it is indispensable in completing the meaning of the clause. To put it differently, without the circumstantial, the clause cannot convey the meaning to the readers/listeners fully. As mentioned in the previous pages, the circumstantial elements provide the information about time, place, manner...that enable the readers/listeners adequately understand the mothers’ sacrifice. Circumstance of location (31%) and circumstance of manner (~31%) are employed with the highest percentage and form a major part in song lyrics to portray the images of mother in Vietnamese peace songs.

## 7.3. SUMMARY

In English war song lyrics, the images of mother are represented with three distinctive features: (i) the mother is the pillar of strength and spiritual support for the children; (ii) the mother is the loving and affectionate one; (iii) the mother acts as the protector for their child. In Vietnamese war songs, the mother is characterised with three features: (i) the mother is the great contributor to the victory of the war; (ii) the mother is the loving and affectionate one; (iii) the mother is depicted as the symbol of heroic sacrifice.

With regard to peace song lyrics, in both English and Vietnamese peace song lyrics, the mother is depicted with two images: (i) the mother is portrayed as the dedicated caregivers who is willing to sacrifice their youth and whole life for their children; (ii) they are also unique symbols which cannot be replaced.

# CHAPTER 8

# CONCLUSION

## 8.1. SYNOPSIS

### 8.1.1. Experiential and interpersonal resources to depict the images of mother in English and Vietnamese war mother song lyrics

Firstly, all six types of process are employed in songs of both languages, of which the material, the relational and the mental constitute the major part of the songs in both languages. However, a number of differences in the use of transitivity resources can be found in English and Vietnamese lyrics as well. Although all six process types are found in song lyrics, the number of process subtypes of each is not the same. The most noticeable difference is the focus of the material in each language. Material clauses in English mainly depict the engagement of the soldiers in the war while material clauses in Vietnamese mostly portray the image of mother directly joining the war to protect their children, the soldiers and their country. In terms of mood and modality types in English and Vietnamese war songs, it is clear from the account that both similarities and differences exist in song lyrics of the two languages. With regard to mood types, the declarative takes up the highest percentage of all mood types in both languages.

### 8.1.2. Experiential and Interpersonal resources to depict the images of mother in English and Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics

A close examination reveals that there are considerable similarities in English and Vietnamese peace songs. Specifically, three dominant process types in English and Vietnamese peace songs are the material, the relational and the mental. The three process types focus on describing the mothers’ sacrifice for their children on a regular basis. Noticeably, a lot of similar images compared with the image of mothers are found in both songs through relational clauses. In relation to mood types, like in English and Vietnamese war songs, the declarative is the dominant type in both languages. However, in Vietnamese, despite a modest number of interrogative and exclamative clauses, they still significantly contribute to the content of songs. It is because they help characters in the songs express their wonder as well as their inner feeling and emotion. Regarding modality, once again, like in English war songs, the authors in English peace songs employ a high number of modality expressions during the interaction between the mothers and the children.

### 8.1.3. The images of mother constructed in English and Vietnamese mother song lyrics

It can be concluded that through experiential and interpersonal meanings, the mother is represented with a number of images.

In English war mother song lyrics:

(i) the pillar of strength and spiritual support

(ii) the protector

(iii) the loving and affectionate one

In Vietnamese war mother song lyrics:

(i) the great contributor

(ii) the loving and affectionate one

(iii) the symbol of heroic sacrifice

In English and Vietnamese peace mother song lyrics:

(i) the dedicated caregivers

(ii) the unique symbols

## 8.2. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

First, two aspects of metafunctions (experiential and interpersonal meanings) were examined while the third metafunction named textual meaning has not been discussed. Second, the song lyrics in English and Vietnamese war and peace songs are explored at the rank of clauses; therefore, different ranks named Above, Below or Beyond Clause can be explored to give a more deep insight into the images of mother in English and Vietnamese war and peace song lyrics.

## 8.3. IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The research has been concerned with two strands of metafunctions at the rank of clause simplex in English and Vietnamese. There are other ranks left unaccounted, which can become a matter for future research.

Due to time and technical constraints, the selection of songs in the two languages is made at sufficient number with certain criteria. This suggests that to have a more comprehensive view on the image of mothers in both languages, enquiry into a larger number of songs and different aspects of SFL is needed.

# THESIS-RELATED PUBLICATIONS

***Journal articles***

(1). Ta, T.T.H. (2016). So sánh hình ảnh người mẹ trong các bài hát tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt theo quan điểm ngôn ngữ học chức năng hệ thống. *Tạp chí KHXH & NV*, *2*(2b), 268-276.

(2). Ta, T.T.H. (2021). An Analysis of Songs about Mother by Nguyen Van Ty from Systemic Functional Linguistics Perspective. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies, 37*(4), 39-54. **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4688>

***Conference proceedings*:**

(1). Ta, T.T.H. (2015, November 30 – December 2), *Mother in English and Vietnamese songs from systemic linguistics perspective* [Conference presentation]. Inter-Academia Asia, Hotel Associa Shizuoka.

(2). Ta, T.T.H. (2017). The representation of mother image in English and Vietnamese songs from systemic linguistics perspective. *Proceedings of 2017 National Graduate Research Symposium on Linguistics, Foreign Language Education Interdisciplinary Fields,*140-150. Hanoi, 2017. Hanoi: Vietnam.

(3). Ta, T.T.H. (2018). An analysis of interpersonal meaning used in selected mother songs by Trinh Cong Son. *Proceedings of 2018 International Graduate Research Symposium on Linguistics, Foreign Language Education Interdisciplinary Fields,* 268-276. Hanoi, 2018. Hanoi: Vietnam.

(4). Ta, T.T.H. (2021). “Nhat ki cua me” by Nguyen Van Chung and the English Translation by Ta Nguyen Tan Truong – a Systemic Functional Comparison*.* *Proceedings of 2021 National Conference on Linguistics, Foreign Language Education Interdisciplinary Fields,* 152. Hanoi, 2021. Hanoi: Vietnam.