

Nominalization as grammatical metaphor in political discourse in English and Vietnamese from the perspective of systemic functional grammar = \b Nghiên cứu danh hóa như một hình thức ẩn dụ ngữ pháp trong các diễn văn chính trị tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt theo quan điểm ngữ pháp chức năng của hệ thống. M.A Thesis Linguistics: 60 22 15 / \c Nguyễn Thu Hiền

Halliday (1998a) points out that grammatical metaphor of nominalization is as the main lexicogrammatical characteristic of the academic language. Grammatical metaphor of nominalization is a resource language used to condense information by expressing concepts in incongruent form which is very valued as a way of expressing “objectification”, abstraction”, “mystification”, “a mark of prestige and power”. Nominalization has been of particular importance in the evolution of academic language. Especially, in political discourse, nominalization has ideological functions such as deleting agency, reifying processes, creating cohesion and exerting power. Therefore, it has a great contribution to three metafunctions namely, ideational, interpersonal and textual. This thesis is an attempt to explore nominalization in English and Vietnamese in theory and in a specific political discourse in English and one in Vietnamese. The analysis of nominalization gives some indication of beliefs and ideologies. And these beliefs and ideologies need to be corroborated through the consideration of the situational and socio-cultural contexts. Additionally, by comparing nominalization in these two languages, we work out the similarities and differences on linguistic and cultural properties. The differences outweigh the similarities because English and Vietnamese belong to two different language families and two different cultures. This exploration enables us to have a better understanding of nominalization in English and Vietnamese and helpful to the reading or to the translating of political discourse to some extent.

PART A: INTRODUCTION

1. Justification of the study

Our thesis is entitled “Nominalization as grammatical metaphor in Political Discourse in English and Vietnamese from the perspective of Systemic Functional Grammar”. The choice of our thesis is based on three reasons. Firstly, the nominalization, as explained in later sections, is the nominalizing process, which is “the single most powerful resource for creating grammatical metaphor” (Halliday: 1994: 352). The absence of sufficient research on nominalization as grammatical metaphor in political discourse poses an interesting challenge for us. Secondly, an insight into the nature and the functions of nominalization in political discourse can help the researcher to make comprehensive and comprehensible presentations of nominalization and help readers to realize its importance for the comprehension of English and Vietnamese political speeches. Finally, we set out a view of the interrelationship of language and society, with the emphasis on power and ideology. Ideology is pervasively present in language, that fact ought to mean that the ideological nature of language should be one of the major themes of modern social science. Particularly, there is a close connection between a linguistic choice and a certain ideology maintained by relations of power, and the power phenomenon is manifested in a variety of linguistic structures.

2. Aims and Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to make an inquiry into the nature of nominalization in English and Vietnamese in general.

This study also points out the functions of nominalization in political discourse and therefore explains why nominalization should be given special treatment in working with this specialized genre. Its impacts on the message content are also explored.

In carrying out the study this way, the following questions are raised for exploration.

1. What is the Nature of Nominalization in English and in Vietnamese?
2. What are the Linguistic Structure and the Functions of Nominalization in English and Vietnamese Political Discourses?
3. What are the Linguistic and Cultural Similarities and Differences between Nominalization in English political discourse and that in Vietnamese one?

3. Scope of the study

This study attempts to explore the concept of nominalization in English and in Vietnamese in terms of linguistic structure to find out the similarities and differences of the concept between the two languages. It is also the intent of this study to analyze the use of

nominalization in political speeches in English and Vietnamese to figure out how it contributes to the metafunctions of the discourse, the overall meanings of the discourse and how it serves the speakers' ideologies.

4. Methods of the study

We begin this study with a descriptive method to identify the phenomenon, then compare and contrast the phenomenon between English and Vietnamese. The researcher adopts the statistical method and analyzes the data in terms of quality and quantity. The study conducted is an inductive approach where data is collected from English and Vietnamese political discourses to describe nominalization as a natural linguistics process.

In the exploration of nominalization in political discourse, the systemic functional theory as developed by Halliday (1994), Dik (1997), Matthiessen (1995), and other systemicists is adopted as the theoretical framework.

5. Format of the study

The paper includes three parts namely Part A- Introduction, Part B- Development and Part C-Conclusion. Part B is divided into four chapters:

Chapter 1 explores theoretical background of Systemic Functional Grammar, the concept of Grammatical Metaphor and the Language of Political Discourse.

In chapter 2, the emphasis is on Nominalization in English and Vietnamese as a general description.

In chapter 3, the focus shifts to Nominalization in political discourse in English and Vietnamese with a case study on two speeches: one of the President Bush and the other of the President Nguyen Minh Triet.

Chapter 4 brings focus on a comparative and contrastive analysis between nominalization in English and Vietnamese to find out both the similarities and the differences. Therefore, the researcher can suggest some implications for teaching and translating.

PART B : DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Systemic Functional Grammar

Systemic functional linguistics (hereafter abbreviated "SFL") conceives of text as social interaction. Systemic functional linguists view language as systems of meaning potential in human interaction that are realized by various structures. The organizing concept is not a structure described by rules, but as communicative behavior, as meaning making in a

context of a culture, the behavior matrix within which all social interaction take place and the general context that gives meaning to culturally recognized activities. In addition, systemic functional grammar develops a profound analysis of language on the base of regarding reality- representational and communicative functions of language. These functions, termed by Halliday as *metafunctions* including *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual metafunctions* of language, are related to the issue how it is shaped to meet human needs.

1.2 Grammatical Metaphor

1.2.1 What is Grammatical metaphor?

Functional Grammar defines metaphors as variations in the expression of meaning rather than just variations in the use of words. Functional Grammar looks at metaphors from a different perspective, not asking “how is this word used?” but “how is this meaning expressed?” or “how is grammar structured to make the text effective in the achievement of purpose?” There is a kind of transference going on, the transfer of representation between different grammatical categories. The difference in the message is the kind of meaning variation which Halliday (1994) calls *Grammatical Metaphor*. Therefore, grammatical metaphor means a substitution of one grammatical class, or one grammatical structure by another. Similarly, Matthiessen (1995) discusses grammatical metaphor as a way of expanding the semantic potential of the system; or Thompson (1996) as the expression of a meaning through a lexical- grammatical form which originally evolved to express a different kind of meaning.

1.3 The Language of Political Discourse

1.3.1 Political Discourse

Politics is concerned with the power: the power to make decisions, to control resources, to control other’s people behavior, and to control their values (Jones, J. & Peccei, J. S., 2004: 36).

1.3.2 The Language of Politics

Politics has its own code, a language variety particular to a specific group. Language is a means of communication, a means of representing and shaping argument and political argument is ideological, in that it comes from a series of beliefs.

CHAPTER 2: NOMINALIZATION IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE: A GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Nominalization is a relatively familiar term in modern linguistics. It can be found occur frequently in English and Vietnamese. For examples:

(1) *FBI agents arrested Bill in New York* → *the arrest of Bill by FBI agents in New York*

(2) *Các đặc vụ FBI bắt Bill ở New York* → *Việc các đặc vụ FBI bắt Bill ở New York*

This kind of nominalizing metaphor probably evolved first in scientific and technical registers, where it played a dual role: first, it made it possible to construct hierarchies of technical terms, and second, to develop an argument step by step, using complex passages ‘packaged’ in nominal form as Themes. Gradually, it has developed into most other varieties of adult discourse and becomes “a mark of prestige and power” (Halliday, 1994: 353). According to Thomson (1996: 170), nominal groups have two qualities which are useful. First, a noun typically refers to a ‘thing’, i.e. something which exists and the meaning can now be treated as existing, as a kind of abstract thing. Second, nominalization is available to function as a participant in another process, and also as Theme. Furthermore, nominalization is in harmony with ideology of science, and of academic, formal writing because it allows processes to be objectified, non-finite and unarguable. This is intimately connected with the fact that it is “thingified” by being expressed as a noun. For reasons mentioned above, in linguistic terms, academic, formal writing shows preference for nominalization which represents “fossilised” processes whose primary function is to express not dynamic action but the relationship between the nominals.

We can find out that nominalization in both English and Vietnamese is the process of forming a new noun or nominal from other parts of speech namely, verbs, adjectives or even clauses. The nominalized nouns or nominals, which are abstract and stylistic, can fulfill the functions of nouns such as subject, predicate, complement or adverbial. However, there are some differences. First, English lexical nominalization can be formed by adding suffixes like *-ant*, *-er*, *-or*, *-ism*, *-ment*, *-ness*, *-tion*, etc. to the root which can be an adjective or a verb. On the contrary, Vietnamese lexical nominalization can be created by the adaptation of such morphemes or nominalizers as *cái*, *nỗi*, *niềm*, *sự*, *việc*, *cuộc*, *điều*, *điểm*, *tính*, etc. to the front of the word which can be an adjective or a verb. In addition, a clause in Vietnamese can often be nominalized by adding *Sự/ Việc/ Cái* to the verb or adjective + *của* + complement. Nevertheless, the case which is called converted nouns in English is the same as the case of turning some verbs into nouns without any adaptation of any morpheme in Vietnamese. As for clausal nominalization, in English it

occurs not only with finite clauses (*that*-clauses and *wh*-clauses) but also with non-finite clauses (*to*-infinitive clauses and *ing*-clauses). Unlike in English, when nominalization appears at clause level by adding *Việc/Điều/Cách* to the clause, its structure is “*Việc/Điều/Cách + subject + predicate*”.

The following sections will focus on a detailed description of *Nominalization* in English and Vietnamese political discourses. Nominalization can be used by politicians as a powerful device to establish and maintain ideologies; and influence people’s political and ideological views.

CHAPTER 3: NOMINALIZATION IN POLITICAL DISCOURSES IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

3.1 Nominalization in President Bush’s Speech: Address to Congress (September 20th, 2001)

On September 11th, 2001, two hijacked aircraft crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, causing great damage. Another plane hit the Pentagon, headquarters for the U.S military, outside Washington D.C. A fourth plane, believed to be heading for Washington D.C., crashed in the rural Pennsylvania when passengers attempted to retake control from the hijackers. Almost 3,000 people were killed in the attacks. The U.S government blamed the attacks on terrorists. Speculation centered around the al Qaeda organization and its leader Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden was believed to be operating out of Afghanistan, a nation controlled by the Taliban. As from the very first day of the attacks on the Twin Towers, on September 20th, 2001, President George W. Bush spoke a joint session of Congress in the U.S Capitol. His speech served many purposes. It stated the feelings of the nation as well as the government’s intention to confront and defeat those that had caused such great damage to the country in an implicit way. It honored those who had died in the attacks, and those who were struggling to deal with the aftermath. The president also sought to reassure Americans that they were safe and that steps were being taken to prevent future attacks. Nevertheless, the central message of the speech was that the United States remained strong and unafraid, and that it intended to eliminate terrorist threats. The President went on to make it clear to the American people and the world that a protracted struggle against not only al Qaeda, but also world terrorism as whole, was underway and not only American’s pursuit, but the world’s as well. President Bush’s speech helped to honor the fallen and reassure the living; however, he did not convince the

Taliban to give in to his commands. The America was, in the end, successful in driving the Taliban out of power and destroying much of the terrorist's infrastructure.

3.2 Nominalization in President Nguyen Minh Triet's Speech: Diễn Văn Khai Mạc Đại Lễ 1000 năm Thăng Long (October, 10th, 2010)

Draped in red Communist banners and propaganda slogans, Ha Noi, Vietnam's capital, was opening an extravagant ceremony to celebrate its 1000th birthday. The ever biggest national-level event, the most important event in the 10-day program to celebrate the 1000th birthday anniversary of Thang Long-Ha Noi, which received UNESCO's certificate to be recognized as a World Cultural Heritage Site, started at 7.30 a.m of October 10th at the historical Ba Dinh Square. Party, State and Government leaders, ambassadors, representatives from international organizations in Vietnam and a large number of Vietnamese attended the grand millennial anniversary. Ba Dinh square was flooded with banners and flowers. At 8.00 a.m, State President Nguyễn Minh Triết delivered a speech praising the proud history of Vietnamese nation and the 1000-year-old capital of Ha Noi. A millennium ago, in 1010, King Ly Thai To transferred the imperial capital from Hoa Lu to Thang Long (nowadays Ha Noi), opening a new state for the development of Viet Nam. Experiencing its 1000 years of ups and downs, Thang Long- Ha Noi is always been united by patriotism, indomitable spirit, heroism and glorious feats of arms. The capital is the county's heart and the place of convergence of national traditions and values. Thang Long-Ha Noi is a place that represents the aspiration for peace, friendship and solidarity with all nations around the world. The capital will continue to develop and flourish in the future, being a worthy heart and the capital of the Vietnamese nation- the capital of heroism, peace and friendship. That is the President's main ideology, is what he emphasizes to the listeners. That is not only the President's hearted words but also Vietnamese people's and the nation's.

3.3 Summary

Nominalization is the main lexicogrammatical characteristic of the language of the two speeches. It is a resource language used to condense information by expressing concepts in incongruent forms which are very valued as a way of expressing "objectification", abstraction", "reification", "a mark of prestige and power". It is therefore has existential presupposition and ideological uses because of its potential mystification. It helps conceal speaker's attitude or power relation between the speaker and the hearers. Nominalization in

these two speeches serves as an effective tool to fulfill the two Presidents' ideologies. Therefore, two different pictures have been built up clearly by using the same strategy namely, nominalization.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: A CONTRASTIVE COMPARISON

4.1 The Similarities and the Differences on Linguistic Properties

4.1.1 The Similarities

Nominalization in the two languages occurs at both word and clause level. Lexical nominalization includes de-verbal, de-adjectival and conversion.

4.1.2 The Differences

Among lexical nominalizations, those having verbs as roots in English account for 35% while in Vietnamese only 18.6%. As for the case of conversion, all converted nouns in English have the same forms with verbs. On the contrary, in Vietnamese, the bases converted into nouns are mainly adjectives (16 out of 17). The prominent difference is that many nominal groups in Vietnamese having the structure: *nominal prefix + adjective/verb + của + complement* to express the meaning of possession occupying 30.5%. At clause level, clausal nominalizations in the English speech are used relatively often (41%). They include both finite and non-finite clauses. In contrast, in the Vietnamese one there is only one case. What's more, nominalizations in English are used more often than in Vietnamese (77 and 38 nominalizations per 1000 words respectively). Furthermore, nominalizations are available to function as participants of other processes and as Theme or Rheme. In these two speeches, both speakers put nominalization in Rheme position (88% in English speech and 91.5% in Vietnamese speech) the speakers want to facilitate the expression of general truths, claims about the nature of world; therefore, they can avoid arguing or disagreeing. Nominalization of processes also allows the processes to become the *Head of a Nominal Group*, or *Modifier or Qualifier in a Nominal Group*, which can be found in the English speech.

4.2 The Similarities and the Differences on Cultural Properties

4.2.1 The Similarities

To begin with, both speakers obey the language of politics genre: conciseness, logic, political terms, persuasiveness, syntactic and rhetoric rules such as repetition, parallelism, the rule of three, etc. Besides, the speakers have the habit of using a lot of nouns.

4.2.2 The Differences

First of all, there are more nominalizations in English than in Vietnamese. Additionally, we often find the nominal groups containing the word “*của*” + *complement (possessor)* in Vietnamese. Moreover, in Vietnamese language and culture, subjectiveness is more prominent while in Anglicist language and culture, objectiveness encroaches.

Regarding the vocabulary used, there is a big difference in word choice which expresses different cultures and leads to different ideologies conveyed. In the wake of the September 11 attacks, and on the American popular culture: having the virtues of national independence and economic development, the habits of seeking to remark the region in the US image and pretensions about the universality and superiority of American ideas and ways of doing things, the Bush administration has been able to advance policies and invoke solidarities. Such behaviour is quite appropriate with Western culture: ironclad, hungry for success in dealing with the outside world. On the contrary, in the Vietnamese speech, nominal groups express Vietnamese culture and ideologies: love-based rule, the collective thinking way, flexibility, harmonized behaviour and the patriotic doctrine, consciousness of the national spirit and traditional undauntedness and indomitability.

Furthermore, hidden power always governs the stylistic expressions of American politicians in general and President Bush in particular. There is always an element of hidden power in American political speeches because of the American's strong individualism, the psychology of individual-respecting, wanting to be free to make choice, to pursue their own ideas. Therefore, the speaker's political stances are often hidden. On the contrary, Vietnamese have collective thinking way, which make people aware of the strength of group, of community and pay attention not to each individual elements consisted but to the whole reciprocal relations between them. Thus Vietnamese politicians put aside their individual elements and emphasize the collective elements. That is why the speaker's hidden power on the Vietnamese hearers is not much, and here it is the whole nation's hidden power on the hearers of other nations. Besides, affected by Hồ Chí Minh's style: “writing and speaking is to make others understand precisely” (Ho, C.M., 2002), Vietnamese political speeches are to make every class of citizens perceive the speakers' ideas or ideologies. As a result, the speaker's political stances are often clear, logic and precise.

PART C : CONCLUSION

1. Recapitulation

Let us now briefly summarize the main issues addressed in this thesis. We have begun by giving an overlook on SFG and Grammatical Metaphor. Then great effort has been put on describing nominalization- the most powerful resource for creating grammatical metaphor and can be understood simply as the drift towards “thinginess”-in English and Vietnamese theoretically. In these two languages, nominalization occurs at the word and clause level.

The functions of nominalization in the discourses which is fully exploited can be summed up under the labels: deletion, reification, objectification, abstraction, mystification, exertion of power. It is also a device of cohesion and helps the discourses go further step by step when appearing in Theme or Rheme position or being repeated. Nominalization in these political discourses serves as an effective tool of expressing the speakers’ ideologies. Two distinct ideologies are presented by the use of the same a strategy namely, nominalization. These different ideologies are controlled by the differences on cultural properties

2. Implications

To the teachers: A conclusion drawn from this study is that nominalization allows denseness of information and of meaning.

Thus it should be taken into consideration in developing writing material for students. Additionally, making a comparison between nominalization in English and Vietnamese, the teachers should work out the similarities and the differences for their students to have a better understanding about the languages.

To the translators: Therefore, a good knowledge of the functions of nominalization can help the translators understand the deep structure of discourse or the so-called implicatory mechanism, then they can pick out the strokes of meaning needed translating.

3. Limitation and Suggestions for Further Studies

On the small scale of our minor thesis, it has been limited to instances of nominalization in two political speeches: one in English, the other in Vietnamese. Besides, among two types of grammatical metaphor- ideational and interpersonal, much of our effort has been focused on the analysis of nominalization- a sub-type of ideational grammatical metaphor. Therefore, further studies, if possible, should cover a wider range of grammatical metaphor by paying attention to interpersonal metaphor to have an overall picture of speakers’

ideologies and presuppositional and implicatory mechanism in political discourse. Moreover, as the focus of this study is on nominalization in political discourse in English and in Vietnamese, further research of nominalization in other genres in the two languages such as journalism or legal would be of great value.