NOMINATIVE FEATURES OF ENGLISH-VIETNAMESE WEAPON TERMS

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ABSTRACT: *Contrasting a phenomenon in two languages is an interesting thing to do in order to find out similarities and differences between them. The findings may reveal similarities and differences about cultures or thought of native speakers. The findings may also support language leaners. That is why this article will investigate similarities and differences about nominative features between English weapon terms and Vietnamese ones with a view to providing some knowledge useful for aiding learners of English for special purpose.*

KEYWORDS*: nomination, nominative feature, term, weapon, contrastive*

INTRODUCTION

In Vietnam, contrasting English terms with Vietnamese ones has been carried out in various specialized fields such as law, finance, crime science and so on. These contrastive researches not only show similarities and differences between two languages constrasted but also support teaching and learning English for special purposes in universities. Until now there are very few researches that focus on contrasting nominative chacteristics between English weapon terms and Vietnamese equivalents. According to our survey, weapon terms was just investigated into nominative features of weapon terms in English in [4]. In addition, [7] and [8] attempted to carry out surveys of Vietnamese military terms with respect to formative and nominative characteristics. Therefore, this article will make an attempt to compare and contrast nominative chacteristics between English weapon terms and Vietnamese equivalents in order to identify similarities and differences in nominating weapons. The results are also likely to reflect certain similarities and differences in the manner of naming weapons.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Weapon Terms

As referred in [3] and [4], weapons are defined as substances, technical devices or a system of technical devices used to destroy enemies in armed warfare. pIt includes a direct part killing targets (poison, explosive, sword, spear, arrow, bomb, round,...), a device taking it to targets (bow, crossbow, gun, artillery, missile,...). Therefore, English and Vietnamese weapon terms that are collected are words or phrases that express "concepts about substances, technical devices or a system of technical devices used to destroy enemies in armed warfare. It includes a direct part killing targets (poison, explosive, sword, spear, arrow, bomb, round,...), a device taking it to targets (bow, crossbow, gun, artillery, missile,...)".

Nomination
According to Nguyen's point of view, nomination is to give a name to a thing, a phenomenon, an action, a process, … [[5], p.191].
In addition to that, the Russian linguist Gak says: "In natural language, the process of naming is inevitably associated with the sorting behavior. If it is necessary to denote an object X without a name in a language, then on the basis of features extracted from this object, it is referred to the concept "A" or "B" which that language has its own way of denoting and giving a corresponding name" as cited in [[4], p. 192]. In short, there are 2 steps in the the nomination process including: (1) classifying concepts of objects nominated and (2) selecting distinctive features [[5], p. 192-194].

Contrastive linguistics
Contrastive linguistics was formed and developed a long time ago. However, its most significant development took place in the 1970s when there were centers and science journals of contrastive linguistics established in European countries. Contrastive linguistics is applied theoretically and practically. In terms of theory, contrastive linguistics helps illuminate, add and adjust principles of general linguistics, typology, descriptive linguistics and so on. In terms of practice, it shows similarities and differences about structures and activities between languages contrasted. Besides, contrastive linguistics also plays an important role in finding out characteristics of a language that are just attended and understood more deeply when they are compared and contrasted with another language. Furthermore, contrastive linguistics is really helpful to teaching and learning foreign languages, especially to detecting and correcting learneres' errors [1].

Nominative characteristics of English-Vietnamese weapons terms
In this study, in order to find out similarities and differences about ways of naming weapons between English and Vietnamese we will describe nominative characteristics of 764 English weapon terms first, then compare and contrast with those of 764 Vienamese ones. These terms were mainly collected in [6] and some military English coursebooks for cadets in military schools in Vietnam.

Nominative characteristics of English-Vietnamese weapons terms in terms of nominative methods
In terms of naming methods, there are two manners to give names to weapons. Each name can be nominated directly or indirectly. Direct names of weapons are usually given by weapon inventors or specialists.
Among 764 English terms, there are 741 ones (making up 96.99%) which are direct names such as *bow, arrow*, *lance, bomb, bullet, gun, missile, air defense ship, air gas bomb.*
Whereas there are 755 out of 764 Vietnamese terms nominated directly, accounting for 98.82%. Those include *cung (bow), kiếm (sword), thương (lance), chùy (mace), bom (bomb), đạn (round), mìn (mine), súng (gun), tên lửa (missile), tàu sân bay (aircraft carrier), xe tăng (tank), etc.*
Indirect names of weapons are those whose original meanings do not express any names of weapons. In other words, indirect weapon names are terms that are created by terminologizing normal words. Taking *mine* as an example, it has two meanings: *1) a deep hole or holes under the*

ground where minerals such as coal, gold, etc. are dug; and *2) a type of bomb that is hidden under the ground or in the sea and that explodes when somebody/something touches it* [Oxford dictionary 7th, 2005, p.934]. The first meaning is original and direct, and the second one, which is indirect, is created by transferring or terminologizing the first meaning. The statistics show that there are 23 out of 764 English terms nominated indirectly, making up 3.01%, including *drone, escort, carrier, tank, mortar, mace, shell, shooter, thrower*. While 9 out of 764 (1.18%) Vietnamese terms are named indirectly like *dao (knife), rựa (machete), tàu (ship), máy bay (aircraft), bộc phá (petard), etc.*

The investigation results above can be summarized in Table 1:

Table 1: English and Vietnamese weapon terms nominated directly and indirectly

Name	English weapon terms		Vietnamese weapon terms	
	Number	*Scale (%)*	*Number*	*Scale (%)*
Direct	741	96.99	755	98.82
Indirect	23	3.01	9	1.18
Sum	764	100	764	100

Similarities
Table 1 shows that there is a large majority of English and Vietnamese weapons terms (both over 95%) which are direct names. There is also a limited amount of names (both under 5%) that nominated indirectly. These real numbers prove that there is a great similarity between methods of nominating weapon terms in the two languages - English and Vietnamese.

Differences
According to Table 1, the number of English weapon terms which are indirect names is nearly three times higher than that of Vietnamese ones, 3.01% in comparison with 1.18%. These statistics apparently indicate that nominative subjects of English weapon terms have higher tendency toward changing meanings of existing words to create new terms than ones of Vietnamese weapon terms. However, the gap of this tendency between subjects is quite narrow.

Nominative characteristics of English-Vietnamese weapons terms in terms of indications
According to Gak, nominative characteristics of things can be expressed through their indications such as synthetic or analytic names and features selected to create names [as cited Nguyen, 2015, p.276-283]. Therefore, the article will investigate synthesis or analysis as well as features of names.

Nominative characteristics of English-Vietnamese weapons terms in terms of synthesis or analysis
In term of synthesis and analysis of names, the synthesis shows that those terms are single words or if they are compounding words/phrases, they are idioms because their meanings cannot be referred from the meanings of their components. For example, the meaning of the term *gunship*, which is *a military helicopter armed with heavy guns, used to help soldiers on the ground* cannot be referred from the meaning of each component, which are *gun* and *ship*.

According to the investigation, there are 103 out of 764 (13.48%) English weapon terms, which are nominated synthetically. These terms encompass 60 (7.85%) single words such as *lance, sword, bomb, grenade, pistol, rifle, torpedo*, etc and 43 (5.63%) compounding words/phrases-idioms, including *hunter-killer, booby trap bunker-buster, half-track, sindwinder, land cruiser, etc*. However, there are just 17 out of 764 (2.22%) Vietnamese weapon terms which are all single words such as *bom (bomb), đạn (round), cung (bow), tên (arrow), nỏ (crossbow), kiếm (sword), cối (mortar)*, etc.

Terms that are nominatied analytically are ones consisting of at least two formative components and their meanings can be referred correspondingly from the meanings of components. That is each formative component is equivalent to a semantic component of a term. For instance, *guided missile* has two formative components - *guided* and *missile* and its meaning can be guessed from the meanings of *guided* and *missile*. The statistical data shows that the number of this kind of terms in English are 661 out of 764 (86.52%), including *broadsword*, *laser gun*, *nuclear bomb*, *antitank missile system*, *armored combat vehicle, etc*. The amount of Vietnamese terms is much higher with 747 out of 764 (97.78%) such as *mìn âm thanh (sonic mine), mìn hạt nhân (atomic mine), súng ngắn giảm thanh (silenced pistol), tên lửa chống tăng (antitank missile), máy bay trực thăng bọc thép (armored helicopter), bom xuyên thép (armor-piercing bomb), etc*.

 According the data mentioned above, we can see some following similarities and dissimilarities:

Similarities
It is clear that there is a large number of terms which are nominated analytically in both English (661/764 equivalent to 86.52%) and Vietnamese (747/764 equivalent to 97.78%). This means that most of weapon terms in the two languages are given names by employing their distinctive features. This also tells us that the weapon terms almost formed by compounding words together.

Differences
Synthetically, the Vietnamese weapon terms have a lower degree of synthesis than the English ones with 2.22% and 13.48% respectively. There are two reasons that can explain this difference. First, English is the polysynthetic language but Vietnamese is the isolating language so the former uses more single words to name weapons and in contrast the latter uses more compounding words/phrases to name things. Another reason is that nominative subjects of English weapon terms tend to create idioms to name weapons at a higher degree than those of Vietnamese ones. It seems that the English subjects are more imaginative than the Vietnamese ones. This is likely to be the result of spending more time with weapons thanks to freedom of owning private weapons like what is happening in the United States.

Nominative Features of English-Vietnamese Weapon Terms
Next, in order to identify nominative features used to name English and Vienamese weapon terms, we will concentrate on investigating the last feature of analytic weapon terms because that is helpful for distinguishing things with respect to names. Therefore, 661 analytic English weapon

terms and 747 Vietnamese ones will be investigated to find out nominative features of weapons in each language. The statistic data is sumerized in Table 2:

Table 2: Nominative features of English and Vietnamese weapon terms

Ord	English weapon terms		Vietnamese weapon terms	
	Features	*Number*	*Features*	*Number*
1.	purpose/function	274	purpose/function	287
2.	component	95	component	105
3.	manoeuvrability	53	manoeuvrability	64
4.	manner	46	manner	56
5.	location	38	location	45
6.	rank	36	rank	43
7.	assignment/ equipment	27	assignment/ equipment	33
8.	operation range	27	operation range	30
9.	levels of control	16	levels of control	17
10.	speed	12	speed	12
11.	shape	8	shape	18
12.	operation principle	7	operation principle	7
13.	scope of mission	7	scope of mission	7
14.	size	6	size	10
15.	energy	3	energy	3
16.	chemical reaction	2	chemical reaction	2
17.	quantity	1	quantity	2
18.	sound	1	sound	2
19.	state	1	state	1
20.	time	1	time	1
21.	material	0	material	2
	Sum	**661**		**747**

Below are examples for each nominative feature:

Purpose/function is a feature which is made use to name 274 out of 661 English terms such as *antiaircraft* tank, *mine-clearing* tank, *antiremoval* mine, *antitank* mine. In these terms, *antiaircraft, mine-clearing, antiremoval* and *antitank* denote the feature on purpose/function, specifying the main elements following them and making a difference to other terms.

This feature is utilized 287 out of 661 Vietnamese terms, including súng trường *tiến công (assault* rifle*),* súng máy *phục kích (ambush* machine gun*)* và súng phóng lựu *chống tăng (anti-tank* grenade launcher*). Tiến công (assault), phục kích (ambush)* và *chống tăng (anti-tank)* are features expressing *purpose/function* of weapons.

Component is a feature used to name 95/661 English terms. For example, in terms like *napalm* bomb, *petrol* bomb, *germ* bomb, *biological* bomb, *winged* bomb, *napalm, petrol, germ, biological, winged* show the feature on component of the weapons. There are 105/747 Vietnamese ones with this feature, encompassing súng máy *hai nòng (twin-barreled* machine gun), súng ngắn *cưa nòng (sawn-off* shotgun), súng *không có cò (hammerless* gun) in which hai nòng (twin-barreled), cưa nòng (sawn-off), không có cò (hammerless) denote the feature on component of weapons.

Manoeuvrability is a feature appearing on 53/661 English terms, including *mobile* anti-aircraft gun*, man-portable* artillery*,* and *buoyant* mine, in which *mobile, man-portable* and *buoyant* emphasize the feature on *manoeuvrability*. This feature appears on 64/747 Vietnamese ones such as pháo phòng không *cố định (fixed* anti-aircraft gun*),* pháo *kéo tay (man-propelled* gun*)* và súng cối tự hành *lội nước (amphibious* self-propelled mortar*)*. In these terms, *cố định (fixed), kéo tay (man-propelled)* và *lội nước (amphibious)* show *manoeuvrability* of weapons.

Manner is utilized to give names 46/661 English terms. For instance, in terms such as *improvised* mine*, step-upon* mine*, radio-controlled* mine, *improvised, step-upon, radio-controlled* are components denoting the feature on *manner* of weapons. There are 56/747 Vietnamese ones with this feature, including tên lửa *điều khiển bằng dây dẫn (cable-controlled* missile*)*, tên lửa *điều khiển từ mặt đất (ground-guided* missile*)*, thuốc nổ *tự chế (home-made* explosive*)*, in which *điều khiển bằng dây dẫn (cable-controlled), điều khiển từ mặt đất (ground-guided), tự chế (home-made)* are the feature on *manner* of weapons.

Location is made to use to name 38/661 English terms, encompassing *land*mine*, bottom* mine*, water* mine with *land, bottom, water* expressing the feature on *location*. And 45 out of 747 Vietnamese ones which are nominated with this feature include pháo *bờ biển (coast* artillery*)*, pháo *trận địa (trench* artillery*)* và vũ khí *nổ trên không (air burst* weapon*)*, in which *bờ biển (coast), trận địa (trench)* và *trên không (air)* are words emphasizing the feature on *location*.

Rank is a feature employed to give names to 36/661 terms, including *light* gun, *medium* bomber, *superheavy* bomber and *front-line* fighter as well as to name 43/747 Vietnamese terms such as máy bay ném bom *hạng nhẹ (light* bomber*)*, tên lửa *hạng nặng (heavy* missile*)*, vũ khí chống tăng *hạng nhẹ (light* antitank weapon*)*.

Assignment/Equipment is utilized to name 27/661 English terms such as *airborne* missile, *army* missile, *fleet* ballistic missile and *mortar* shell and to name 33/747 Vietnamese ones like vũ khí *hàng không vũ trụ (air-space* weapon*)*, tên lửa *lục quân (army* missile*)*, tên lửa *pháo binh (artillery* missile*)*, *etc*.

Operation range is a feature appearing on 27/661 English terms, encompassing *short-range* attack missile, *medium-range* guided missile, *long-range* strategic missile, *intercontinental* bomber and on 30/747 Vietnamese ones taking in tên lửa *tầm trung (intermediate range* missile*)*, tên lửa đạn đạo *tầm xa (long-range* ballistic missile*)* và tên lửa đạn đạo *vượt đại châu (*intercontinental *ballistic missile)*.

Levels of control is a feature for 16/661 English terms including *guided* missile, *unguided* missile, *unmanned* combat aerial vehicle, *terminally guided* submunitions, and also a feature for 17/747 Vietnamese ones such as tên lửa *có điều khiển* (*guided* missile), tên lửa *không có điều khiển* (*unguided* missile), phương tiện bay chiến đấu *không người lái* (*unmanned* combat aerial vehicle).
Speed is a feature employed to name 12/661 terms like *nearsonic* missile, *hypervelocity* missile, *subsonic* aircraft, *hypersonic* aircraft and to nominate 12/747 Vietnamese ones encompassing tên lửa *siêu tốc (hypervelocity* missile*)*, tên lửa *cận âm (nearsonic* missile*)*, đạn *siêu thanh (high-velocity* bullet*)* và đạn xuyên thép *siêu tốc (hypervelocity* armor-piercing projectile*)*.
Shape is a feature on 8/661 English terms, involving *barrel* bomb, *pipe* bomb, *parcel* bomb, *cross*bow and on 18/747 Vietnamese terms including bom *ống* (*pipe* bomb), bom *thùng* (*barrel* bomb), lựu đạn *chai* (*bottle* grenade)*, etc.*

Operation principle is employed to give names to 7/661 English terms including *auto*rifle*, automatic* pistol, *self-loading* rifle and to nominate 7/747 Vietnamese ones like súng trường *tự động (auto*rifle*)*, *automatic* pistol (súng lục *tự động*), *self-loading* rifle (súng trường *bán tự động*).
Scope of mission is used to nominate 7/661 English terms, encompassing *strategic* ballistic missile, *tactical* infantry missile, *strategic* bomber, *tactical* light bomber, and to name 7/747 Vietnamese ones such as vũ khí hạt nhân *chiến lược* (*strategic* nuclear weapon), tên lửa đạn đạo *chiến lược* (*strategic* ballistic missile)*,* tên lửa đạn đạo *chiến thuật* (*battlefield* ballistic missile).

Size is a characteristic used for 6/661 English terms, taking in *baby* bomb, *parent* bomb, *broad*sword as well as 10 Vietnamese ones such as bom cháy *cỡ nhỏ* (*baby* incendiary bomb)*,* bom *cỡ nhỏ* (*baby* bomb) và lượng nổ *dài* (*line* charge).

Energy is a feature that appears on 3/661 English terms, encompassing *laser* gun, *laser* cannon, *laser* rifle and on 3/747 Vietnamese ones like pháo *lade* (*laser* gun)*,* pháo nòng dài *lade* (*laser* cannon) và súng trường *lade* (*laser* rifle).

Chemical reaction is a characteristic utilized for 2/661 English terms like *fusion* bomb*, fission* bomb as well as 2 Vietnamese terms namely bom *nhiệt hạch (fusion* bomb)*,* bom *phân hạch (fission* bomb)*.*

Quantity is a feature on 1/661 English terms namely *six*-shooter and on 2/747 Vietnamese ones such as đinh *ba (*trident*)* and súng *lục* (*six*-shooter).

Sound a feature appearing on 1/661 English terms like *shrieking* bomb but on 2/747 Vietnamese ones, including bom *rít (shrieking* bomb*)* and thuốc *nổ* (explosive).

Time is a characteristic employed for only 1/661 English terms namely *night* bomber and only 1/747 Vietnamese terms like máy bay ném bom *đêm* (*night* bomber).

State is also a feature used for only 1/661 English terms (*plastic* explosive) as well as for only 1/747 Vietnamese ones thuốc nổ *dẻo* (*plastic* explosive).

Material is a feature that is not utilized to name any English weapon terms but to name 2/747 Vietnamese ones like chông *tre (*punji) and thuốc nổ *bông* (gun cotton*).*

According to statistical data and description above, we can see a few similarities and differences as follows:

Similarities

The number of nominative features which are employed to name weapons in both the languages is rather diverse and equal. In English, there are twenty features utilized to create different weapon terms and there are twenty one features for the Vietnamese ones.

Apart from that, the orders of nominative features which are used from most to least frequently are very slightly dissimilar between the two term systems, especially for the top ten features (see Table 2).

Differences

The similarity between the two systems of weapon terms is very large so the difference is not much. The first diffence is that the system of English weapon terms has one more feature than that of Vietnamese ones. That is the feature on materials. This difference is due to the difference about both the typology of language and methods of nomination. English is the synthetic language but Vietnamese is the analytic one (this is the case of *punji* in English and its Vietnamese equivalent-*chông tre*), and nominative subjects of English terms would rather create idioms for weapons (this is the case of *gun cotton* in English and its Vietnamese equivalent-*thuốc nổ bông*).

Another diference is that for each feature, the number of English weapon terms is lower than that of Vietnamese ones. It is also because not a few idioms are coined to name weapons.

CONCLUSION

After contrasting nominative characteristics of English weapon terms and Vietnamese ones, in general, it is likely to conclude that both the system of English weapon terms and the system of Vietnamese ones have vast similarities and minor differences.

With respect to methods of nomination, a great scale of weapon terms (over 95%) in English and Vietnamese are nominated directly. A slight scale of terms is named indirectly with 3.01% in English and 1.18% in Vietnamese respectively.In terms of synthesis and analysis of names, most of terms in the two languages are analytic names (English terms accounting for 86.52% and 97.78% for Vietnamese ones). For the synthesis, unlike the system of English weapon terms, the system of Vietnamese ones has just 2.22% of terms which are nominated synthetically and are all single words. In contrast, the system of English weapon terms has 13.48% of terms which consists of 7.85% of single words and 5.63% of idioms.

For nominative features of weapon terms, one of the similarities is that there is a diversity and homogeneity in the numer of features employed to nominate weapon terms in both English and

Vietnamese. Nominative subjects in English use 20 features to give names to weapons and the subjects in Vietnamese use 21 features to nominate the same weapons. The other similarity is that features used from the most to least frequently between the two languages are quite equal. The considerable difference is that the system of English weapon terms has one feature fewer than that of Vietnamese ones because they belong to different linguistic typologies of and more idioms are made use to name weapons in English.

Based on the great similarities and slight differences, it is obvious that there are a lot of significant similarities in denotating international concepts of weapons between English and Vietnameses.

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