Kết hợp giữa những dấu hiệu tình thái nhận thức khác nhau trong truyện trinh thám của Conan Doyle và bản dịch tiếng Việt tương ứng

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TÓM TẮT

Bài báo nghiên cứu về sự kết hợp của những dấu hiệu tình thái nhận thức khác nhau trong truyện trinh thám của Conan Doyle và bản dịch tiếng Việt tương ứng của chúng. Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện bằng các phương pháp mô tả và đối chiếu, theo cách tiếp cận định tính nhằm kiểm tra các thiết bị ngữ pháp và từ vựng thể hiện tình thái nhận thức về đặc điểm cú pháp và ngữ nghĩa trong tiến trình suy luận. Phát hiện đáng chú ý nhất của nghiên cứu là sự tương đồng và khác biệt trong việc sử dụng kết hợp các dấu hiệu tình thái khác nhau giữa cách diễn đạt quy nạp và diễn dịch của tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Nghiên cứu này hy vọng sẽ giúp người Việt Nam học tiếng Anh có thể sử dụng tốt hơn các dấu hiệu của tình thái nhận thức trong suy luận, thảo luận và dịch thuật.

Từ khóa: *Sự kết hợp, dấu hiệu tình thái nhận thức, truyện trinh thám, Conan Doyle, bản dịch tiếng Việt tương ứng.*

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Combination of different Epistemic Markers in Conan Doyle's detective stories and in Vietnamese Translational Equivalents

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined combination of different epistemic markers in Conan Doyle's detective stories and their Vietnamese translational equivalents. This is a descriptive and contrastive research, following the qualitative approach to examine the grammatical and lexical devices showing epistemic modality in terms of syntactic and semantic features in process of inference. The most significant findings of the study are the similarities and differences in using different epistemic markers between English and Vietnamese ways of expressing induction and deduction. The study hopefully helps Vietnamese learners of English have better use of markers of epistemic modality in inference, discussion and in translation.

Keywords: *Combination, epistemic markers, detective stories, Conan Doyle, Vietnamese translational equivalent.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Detective stories are one of the types of popular literature in which a crime is introduced and investigated and the culprit is revealed. In order to achieve the purposes of detective stories, authors have to develop their ability of judgment, inference and speculation. Modality is particularly concerned with these abilities. Therefore, it is obvious that studying modality of sentences in detective stories is necessary for Vietnamese learners of English. To make clear the semantic values of the markers expressing modality of sentences in general and of English–Vietnamese epistemic markers (EM) in detective stories in particular is useful.

As for detective stories, we think immediately of the series of Sherlock Holmes, one of the most famous detectives in literary history. Conan Doyle (CD), one of the greatest writers of humanity, spent much time thinking to this outstanding and smart detective character. He got much great success with the character. In total, there are 56 short stories and four novels about Sherlock Holmes that Conan Doyle launched. In this article, we describe and analyze the combination of different Epistemic Markers in the novel "A Study in Scarlet"[1] (aSiS) and two short stories "Scandal in Bohemia"[1] (SiB) and "The Blue Carbuncle"[1] (TBC) and their Vietnamese translational equivalents Chiếc nhẫn tình cờ[2] (CNTC), Vụ xì-căng-đan của xứ Bôhême[2] (VXcXB) and Cuộc phiêu lưu của viên kim cương[2] (CPLcVKC), respectively.

A big difficulty that Vietnamese learners of English and translators face with modality

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is its meanings. Each modal has more than one meaning and each meaning expresses its own modal aspect. Therefore, understanding the meaning of modals and how to use and translate them correctly requires not only knowledge of modality, but also pragmatic factors involving their use as well. When translating one modal, we have to pay attention not only to the surface position of that modal nor its wide range of meaning, but also to find out the relation between the modal with its right meaning and put it in the appropriate context. Thus, it is not an easy task for learners and translators to learn how to express and translate epistemic modality as a second language.

For the above-mentioned reasons, **combination of different Epistemic Markers in Conan Doyle's detective stories (CD's DS) and Vietnamese translational equivalents (VTE)** is chosen as the title of the article. We hope that the research will partly provide some useful knowledge of combination ability of epistemic markers for Vietnamese teachers and learners of English as well as for those who are interested in modality in general and epistemic modality in particular.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCHES RELATED TO THE STUDY

Modality has so far been an interesting topic drawing much attention from many linguists all over the world, and there are also a wide variety of researches on English and Vietnamese modals.

Quirk[3] may be one of the linguists whose research can be considered one of the most useful contributions of English modals within grammatical scope. He divides modality into two different kinds of modal meanings: *intrinsic* and *extrinsic*. *Intrinsic* concerns actions and events which are directly controlled by humans or other agents, and are results of permission, obligation, volition or intention. *Extrinsic* reveals a certain degree of likelihood in terms of possibility, necessity, or prediction. It can be said

that the logical status of events is observed by the extrinsic modality. The two above mentioned terms can be also referred to as *deontic* (intrinsic) and *epistemic* (extrinsic).

For Palmer,[4] modality is a semantic phenomenon and mood is a grammatical phenomenon. The difference between the two phenomena is similar to the difference between time and tense, or between sex and gender. There are two kinds of modality: deontic and epistemic.

Epistemic modality refers to the judgements about possibility, probability, etc. in the sense that something is or is not the case. This modality distinguishes modalized and unmodalized (in Lyon[9]'s terms, categorical and non-categorical) assertions by signaling that writer's commitment to the truth of the proposition in the utterance is qualified. He also suggests a distinction between objective modality and subjective modality.

Studying speech act in contexts is very useful because it can help participants understand communicative strategies and achieve their communicative purposes during the conversation.

Givón[6] reveals that modality expresses the speaker's attitude to the utterance. According to him, there are four main subtypes of epistemic modality in human language: presupposition, realis, irrealis and negative assertion.

In addition, many other younger linguists such as J. Nuyts,[7] R. Huddleston & G. K. Pullum,[8] etc. also pay much attention to modality and also give some remarkable results.

In Vietnam, the modal system has also been studied well by Ngũ Thiện Hùng[9] with his very significant Ph.D dissertation in Vietnamese of "Some functional characteristics of Vietnamese auxiliaries", "Some means of expressing the modality in Vietnamese compound sentences" and "Survey of lexical and grammatical means of expressing epistemic modality in English and in Vietnamese", respectively.

The books, articles and researches of these linguists are helpful sources for us to collect the corpus for our study as well as knowing the notions of modality. Accordingly, we follow what has been established by these researchers about the close relation between modality and epistemic modality, and we personnally dig into epistemic markers in CD's DS and their VTE.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1. Epistemic modality

Deduction, induction and prediction, which are being studied in this research, are parts of epistemic modality. They are directly influenced by the elements considered as characteristics of epistemic modality. Therefore, we will present what epistemic modality is and what its characteristics are; then we will base on this theoretical foundation to analyze EMs in CD's DS and their VTE.

In his study of the semantic function of modality, Lyons[9] defines epistemic modality as "any utterance in which the speaker explicitly qualifies his commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed by the sentence he utters, whether this qualification is made explicit in the verbal component... or in the prosodic or paralinguistic component"; and epistemic modality is concerned with matters of knowledge and belief.

According to Nuyts[7], epistemic modality is defined "as (the linguistic expression of) an evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affair under consideration (or some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring, or has occurred in a possible world which serves as the universe of interpretation for the evaluation process, and which, in the default case, is the real world (or rather, the evaluator's interpretation of it)".

Palmer[4] studies on the content of modality from documents of many different languages. For him, epistemic modality indicates the status of the proposition in terms of the speaker's commitment to it; and it is divided into two main categories: judgment and evidence. Evidentiality is a part of the epistemic modal system. Opinions and conclusions involve judgement by the speaker but evidence is indicated by reports. Judgements and evidentials can be seen as devices for the speaker to reveal that he wishes to modify his commitment to the truth of his speech utterance.

3.2. Categories of epistemic modality

As presented in 3.1, epistemic modality is divided into two basic categories: judgements and evidentials. The former includes all epistemic notions involving possibility and necessity, particularly with regard to speculation and deduction of the speaker as subject or perceiver of the information. It can also assert the possibility of the truth of a proposition without any clear indication of the grounds for that assertion. In contrast, the latter encodes the grounds on which a speaker makes an overtly qualified assertion. It explicitly signals the collateral that a speaker takes as justifying an assertion.

There are at least four ways in which a speaker may indicate that he is not presenting what he is saying as a fact:

(i)　that he is speculating about it

(ii)　that he is presenting it as a deduction

(iii)　that he has been told about it.

(iv)　that it is a matter only of appearance, based on the evidence of (possibly fallible) senses.

All four types are concerned with the indication by the speaker of his (lack of) commitment to the truth of the proposition being expressed. They can be appeared in the structures below:

(i)　It is possible that…/ I think that…

(ii)　It is to be concluded that …/ I conclude that…

(iii)　It is said that…. X said that…

(iv)　It appears that…..

(Palmer[4])

3.3. Linguistic devices of epistemic modality

Linguistic devices used to express modal meaning are various. It can be expressed through modal nouns, modal verbs, modal adjectives, modal adverbs, modal particles, intonation… But in this article, the main devices are usually of grammar and lexicology.

3.3.1. Grammatical devices in English and in Vietnamese

In this article, grammatical devices include two forms: mood and tense, and their equivalent meanings are modality and time (Huddleston[8]). We describe such modal auxiliaries as: *must, may, will, should, might, would. Can* is not considered as a modal auxiliary expressing epistemic modality because it shows dynamic meanings in many cases. Remote past and future tenses may be regarded as modal markers of epistemic modality.

However, the distinction between grammatical devices expressing epistemic modality in Vietnamese has not set strictly yet. The adjuncts *đã, sẽ, đang*, and the modal verbs such as *có thể, phải, muốn, dám*, and the particles *à, ư, nhỉ, nhé* can be considered as either lexical devices or lexical-grammatical devices. According to the study,[9] the modal verbs in Vietnamese such as *cần, muốn, có thể, phải, toan, định, dám* are light verbs, which have been grammaticalized but have not become true function words yet. We agree with this concept and classify them as grammatical devices. On the one hand, these words act as an auxiliary of the verb with grammatical meaning, they are on the other hand used in the way of the speaker's subjective assessment of reality. In addition, *đã, sẽ, đang, cũng, vẫn, đều, lại, cứ* are considered as devices attached to a predicate.

In terms of word order devices, Ngũ Thiện Hùng[9] shows that word order in English is a way of changing the order of some words or of an entire sentence in a compound sentence, or moving a part of information to give it a position recognized in the argument. Similarly, word order in Vietnamese is often used to emphasize the utterance, such as marking the modal component for the remaining component which is the proposition.

3.3.2. Lexical devices in English and in Vietnamese

In the both languages, we can consider five groups of words used especially to express epistemic modality:

- Epistemic adjectives in English: *possible, likely, certain, obvious, evident…*, and in Vietnamese: *chắc chắn, rõ ràng, có thể…* in the structure:

It + Be + Adj

(1) It is *impossible* that it should be a mere coincidence.[1]

Đây *không thể* là một chuyện ngẫu nhiên được.[2]

- Epistemic cognitive verbs in English: *know, think, believe, guess, reckon…* and in Vietnamese: *biết, nghĩ, (tiên) đoán, hy vọng…*in the structure:

I + V (that) + P

(2) Well, we *reckoned* we'd strike another river soon, d'ye see.[1]

Thế đấy! Lúc ấy chúng ta *tính* sẽ gặp được một con sông khác.[2]

- Epistemic adverbs in English*: probably, possibly, certainly, obviously, of course, in fact, no doubt …* and in Vietnamese: *chắc chắn, rõ ràng, dĩ nhiên, có lẽ ...* in the structure: **Adverb + P**, for example:

(3) *No doubt* you *think* that you are complimenting me in comparing me to Dupin.[1]

Có lẽ anh tưởng so sánh tôi với Dupin là khen tôi sao?[2]

- Epistemic nouns in English: *possibility, probability, likelihood, prediction, rumour…* and in Vietnamese: *thực tế, sự thực, điều chắc chắn, lời tiên đoán …* in the structures:

There/ It + BE + N

the/ a N + BE that + P

I Have a N (that) P, for example:

(4) The *prediction* of the Mormon was only too well fulfilled.[1]

Lời tiên đoán của Cu-pơ quả không sai.[2]

- Epistemic auxiliaries in English *must, should, will, would, may, might…*, and in Vietnamese: *phải, có lẽ, có thể…* in the structure: **S + Maux + Vinf**, for instance:

(5) My dread is, however, that in your eyes and in the eyes of others he *may* appear to be compromised.[1]

Tôi lo là lo rằng dưới con mắt ông và con mắt người khác, nó *có thể* bị coi là có liên can.[2]

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Data collection

Our investigation into epistemic modality in English and in Vietnamese is based on the corpus collected from the conversations in the novel "A Study in Scarlet" and two short stories "Scandal in Bohemia" and "The Blue Carbuncle", which were written by the very famous writer Conan Doyle and their Vietnamese translational equivalents. In this scope of the study, the data are collected from the samples of instances of the characters' inferences, deductions, speculations, which come from the extracts of the conversations between the well-known detective Sherlock Holmes and his best friend, Dr. Watson. In spite of all their efforts, the translators could not transfer the precise degree of the speaker's commitment to his assertion and even his real intent in actual situation. This is really because the differences between the two cultures and the absence of extra linguistic factors such as body language, personal mood and some speech fillers such as *um, ah or err…* But our selection of the utterances, to some extent, shows a convenience: the utterances selected are not so lengthy and their modal meanings encoded are not so fuzzy.

4.2. Data analysis

Following the data collection, from all the rough data, we classified and put them in groups in accordance with each type of EMs that we focused on. At last, we analyzed, compared and contrasted them in terms of syntax and semantics. Based on the qualitative method, data analysis was carried out following these steps:

- Identifying the syntactic features of EMs in CD's DS and in VTE respectively.

- Making a comparison and contrast EMs between CD's DS and VTE in terms of syntactic features.

- Describing the semantic features of EMs in CD's DS and in VTE respectively.

- Making a comparison and contrast EMs between CD's DS and VTE in terms of semantic features.

- Uncovering the semantic and syntactic characteristics of EMs in CD's DS and VTE. In syntax, for example, EMs were investigated in the form of words, phrases, sentences under the analysis and its occurrence. And in semantics, we paid attention to the property of the state of affairs mentioned in the proposition of the utterance.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In English, evidential markers do not always appear singly. In fact, they have got a special ability in which they can cluster together. This ability may be regarded as a harmonic combination. We found out in the data many instances in which EMs were combined together, it means that at least one kind of EMs co-occurs with one or many others.

5.1. Modal auxiliary (Maux) + Modal cognitive verb (Mcog)

Maux and Mcog often accompany with each other. Their combination gives a result about changes in degree of commitment of reliability.

In CD's DS, many instances of the combination between one Maux and one Mcog

were yielded, but the translators did not use both these modal words in their translation process. In some cases, they used only one modal word to translate, and in others, they used two or more modal words in translating: at the beginning and at the middle of the utterance to emphasize the inference of the speaker, for example:

(6) This last statement appeared to me to be so startling that I *could* hardly *believe* that he was in his sober senses.[1]

Lời khẳng định này quá đỗi kỳ dị khiến tôi *khó* mà *tin rằng* bạn tôi còn đầy đủ lý trí.[2]

(7) "I *should imagine* that they are soluble in water," I remarked.[1]

Tôi *nghĩ* nó dễ hòa tan trong nước.[2]

(8) I *ought to have known* that before ever I saw the box at all.[1]

Lẽ ra tôi *phải hiểu* điều đó ngay trước khi mở hộp.[2]

(9) You *may know* the strict principles of her family.[1]

Chắc chắn ông *biết* lễ giáo khắt khe của gia đình này.[2]

5.2. Modal adjective (Madj) (that) Modal auxiliary (Maux) + Modal cognitive verb (Mcog)

In CD's DS, some Madjs are able to appear in the independant clause and combine with one Maux and one Mcog in the dependent clause; however, sometimes they were translated and sometimes not translated into Vietnamese, e.g.

(10) I was *sure that I might rely on* you.[1]

Tôi rất *tin* anh.[2]

(11) I am *sure you could* never *guess* how I employed my morning, or what I ended by doing.[1]

Tôi *chắc là anh sẽ* không bao giờ *đoán* được là tôi đã sử dụng buổi sáng như thế nào, và sau cùng tôi đã làm gì.[2]

5.3. Modal cognitive verb (Mcog) (that) Modal auxiliary (Maux)

In order to show the speaker's opinion, the author used many structures with one Mcog in the independant clause and one Maux in the dependant clause in both CD's DS and VTE, e.g.

(12) To do him justice, I *think* that he *would* take it himself with the same readiness.[1]

Công bằng mà nói, tôi *tin tưởng* bản thân anh ta cũng *có thể sẽ* dùng thử một cách sốt sắng không kém.[2]

(13) I *know* that she *will* do it.[1]

Tôi *biết chắc* cô ta *sẽ* làm.[2]

However, in other cases, the translators omitted the modal value in the independant clause and only paid attention to modal words in the dependant clause, e.g.

(14) I *trust* that we *shall* soon have some good news for you.[1]

Tôi *sẽ* có ngay những tin tức tốt.[2]

(15) I *think* that I *could* be of assistance to you.[1]

Tôi *có thể* giúp anh.[2]

5.4. Modal cognitive verb (Mcog) + Modal cognitive verb (Mcog)

Some Mcogs typically co-occured with another Mcogs in CD's DS, but it seems that the translators forgot Mcogs in their process of translating into Vietnamese:

(16) I *suppose* you *know* what you have got?[1]

Ông *có biết* trong tay ông có cái gì không?[2]

(17) Even after I became suspicious, I *found* it hard to *think* evil of such a dear, kind old clergyman.[1]

Thậm chí, sau khi bắt đầu ngờ vực, tôi cũng *khó* mà *nghĩ* xấu về ông mục sư tốt bụng.[2]

5.5. Modal cognitive verb (Mcog) + Modal adverb (Madv)

In some cases, Mcogs (in terms of parenthetical) and Madvs can appear together in CD's DS but it seems that this rule does not exist in VTE, e.g.

(18) That is excellent. I *think, perhaps*, it is almost time that I prepare for the new role I have to play.[1]

Tuyệt lắm.[2]

(19) I *suppose* that you have been watching the habits, and *perhaps* the house, of Miss Irene Adler.[1]

Có lẽ anh đã quan sát những thói quen và ngôi nhà của Iren.[2]

5.6. Modal adverb (Madv) + Modal cognitive verb (Mcog)

However, it is natural to get a combination between a Madv and a Mcog in both languages. Let us consider the examples below:

(20) *Maybe* you don't *know* us.[1]

Có lẽ ông không *biết* chúng tôi.[2]

(21) *No doubt* you *think* that you are complimenting me in comparing me to Dupin.[1]

Có lẽ anh *tưởng* so sánh tôi với Dupin là khen tôi sao?[2]

5.7. Modal adverb (Madv) + Modal adjective (Madj)

In CD's DS, one Madv can combine with one Madj to emphasize that Madj. However, they were translated sometimes by using two Vietnamese modal words: one Madv and one Madj, and sometimes by using only one modal word, e.g.

(22) That, however, is *surely impossible*.[1]

Dù sao, *chắc chắn là không thể* nào có chuyện đó.[2]

(23) That the man was highly intellectual is *of course obvious* upon the face of it, and also that he was fairly well-to-do within the last three years, although he has now fallen upon evil days.[1]

Người đàn ông này rất trí thức, ba năm trước đây ông ta khá giả, bây giờ đã kém hơn xưa. Sự sa sút về tinh thần và sự sa sút về sự nghiệp, *dường như* đã có một ảnh hưởng xấu.[2]

5.8. Modal adverb (Madv) + Modal Auxiliary (Maux)

In CD's DS, some Madvs can also combine with Mauxs. In these cases, the Madvs take initial position of the utterance, but we cannot find out any combinations like this one in VTE, e.g.

(24) *Surely* no man *would* work so hard or attain such precise information unless he had some definite end in view.[1]

(No translational equivalent)

(25) By the way, in view of recent occurrences, *perhaps* I *ought to* ask Mrs. Hudson to examine its crop.[1]

(No translational equivalent)

5.9. Modal auxiliary (Maux) + Modal adverb (Madv)

In my observation, Mauxs are able to combine with Madvs in CD's DS, but most of them seem not to be translated in VTE, e.g.

(26) There *will probably* be some small unpleasantness.[1]

(No translational equivalent)

(27) Your Majesty *will, of course*, stay in London for the present?[1]

Bệ hạ vẫn còn lưu lại Luân Đôn chứ?[2]

To sum up, in English and in Vietnamese, there exist lexical and grammatical devices of expressing epistemic modality. The basic characteristic of these EMs in English is the cluster together, which means that at least one kind of EMs co-occurs with one or many others, and makes up the predicate. They have got nine specific abilities of combination. In contrast, in Vietnamese we found out in the data only one obligatory ability of combination (Madv + Mcog), four inabilities of combination and

four other ones in which EMs can be combined together or not.

The table below shows the combination ability of different EMs in CD's DS and in VTE:

Table 1. Combination of different EMs in CD's DS and in VTE.

Combination	In CD's DS	In VTE
Maux + Mcog	+	+ / -
Madj (that) Maux + Mcog	+	+ / -
Mcog (that) Maux	+	+ / -
Mcog + Mcog	+	-
Mcog + Madv	+	-
Madv + Mcog	+	+
Madv + Madj	+	+/-
Madv + Maux	+	-
Maux + Madv	+	-

Notes: + with combination; - without combination

5. CONCLUSIONS

Typologically, in both English and VTE, there is a variety of the lexical devices employed to express epistemic modality: Maux, Mcog, Madv, Madj and Mn. In general, English Maux is the most predominant group because they can be used in the present form and the past form, modal adverbs and modal cognitive verbs are also used very widely. In addition, the phenomenon of changing lexical categories and word derivation between lexical devices such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs occur rather frequently, for example, the change from structures of verbs to structures of nouns, from structures of nouns to structures of adjectives, or from structures of adjectives to structures of adverbs.

In general, the Vietnamese speakers with habit of using language do not use epistemic markers as frequently as the English ones do in some semantic categories and in some positions, Vietnamese learners and translators may not use various types of modals in their utterance or modalized sentences. Besides Maux, epistemic modality can be marked by Mcog and Madv which are used formally in English discourses with distinctive functions. Vietnamese learners of English may actually ignore this linguistic fact and may only use some common epistemic markers. Therefore, some transfers may not occur in VTE as the result of this imbalance.

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