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**HA THI CHUYEN**

**SIMILE IN TAY ETHNIC'S IDIOMS, PROVERBS,  
AND FOLK SONGS**

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- National library of Vietnam;
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## THE AUTHOR'S PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1. Ha Thi Chuyen (2016), "Cultural sediments simile in Tay ethnic's proverbs," *International conference Cultures and languages in the intersection among South East Asian countries*", pages. 503 - 507.
2. Ha Thi Chuyen (2017), "Factors used as a standard of simile in Tay ethnic's proverbs ", *Language and life*, (5), pages.68 - 71.
3. Ha Thi Chuyen (2017), "The element is simile for in Tay ethnic's idioms", *Proceedings of the National Linguistics Conference "Language integration and development in Vietnam"*, pages.1958 - 1965.
4. Ha Thi Chuyen (2018), " Nature mounting area shown simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs", *Lexicography & Encyclopedia* , (3) pages. 100 - 103.
5. Ha Thi Chuyen (2018), "Ethnic minority thinking through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs", *"International conference proceedings linguistics in Viet Nam – the stages of development and internationnai integratin"*, pages. 530 - 539.

## OPENING

### 1. The reason for choosing the topic

1.1. In addition to the function of communication, language also play a role as a material means of expressing thoughts, which is reflected very clearly in languages from common logic similes to art similes.

1.2. Language in general and Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in particular are a part of Tay culture. Simile research in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs to clarify the characteristics in structure, semantics, cultures and thoughts hidden in them is still an open research.

1.3. Language and culture of the Tay ethnic group is in danger of disappearance. Simile research in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs will contribute to introducing, honoring, preserving and promoting the language and culture of an ethnic minority community and enriching Vietnamese cultural identity.

1.4. Currently, although the propaganda and promotion of the cultural identity of the ethnic minorities in general and the Tay ethnic group's in particular is carried out, it has no achievements as desired. Therefore, simile researches in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs will contribute to introducing, honoring, preserving, promoting the language and culture of an ethnic minority community and enriching Vietnamese cultural identity.

For the above reasons, we choose the topic **“Simile in Tay ethnic’s idioms, proverbs, and folk songs”** as the research object for the thesis.

### 2. Object and scope of the study

The research object of the thesis is simile in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs of the Tay ethnic group.

The research scope of the thesis is characteristics in form, semantics, cultures and thoughts reflected through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs. The topic mainly conducts a comparative survey in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in Tay language through documents published by the researcher and collected by the author through fieldwork.

### **3. Purpose and mission of the study**

The thesis aims at the following research purposes: Clarify formal and semantic characteristics of simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs. Through the analysis of formal and semantic characteristics of comparison, the thesis contributes to clarify the cultural features and ethnic thinking reflected in Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs. In addition to affirming the uniqueness for Tay ethnic group's ethnic idioms, proverbs, and singing, the thesis wants to introduce, preserve and promote the cultural identity of the Tay ethnic group.

For achievement of purposes above, the thesis needs to perform the following tasks: systematize the studies in simile for Vietnamese in general and simile for Tay ethnic group as well as in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in particular. To identify conceptual basis, structure, classification of simile, relationship between language and culture. To set a database of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in form of simile structure. To analyze linguistic data to indicate the characteristics in forms, semantics and culture and thinking hidden in simile of Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs.

### **4. Study document**

The materials for research of the thesis include idioms, proverbs, and folk songs taken from dictionaries, monographs and fieldwork documents of the researcher.

## **5. Research method**

The thesis mainly uses the following methods: fieldwork linguistic investigation and other methods: description; statistics and classification, language analysis.

## **6. The meaning of the thesis**

### ***6.1. Theoretical implications***

The research results of the thesis will contribute to clarify some theoretical issues on simile, relationship between language, culture and thinking expressed through comparison in Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs.

### ***6.2. Practical implications***

The research results of the thesis can be a reference for the compilation of textbooks, references on characteristics of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in particular and Tay language and culture in general. Besides, this result can be applied in translation from Vietnamese into Tay language and vice versa. The thesis not only has practical implications in the field of researching on language and culture of Tay ethnic group, but also contributes to preserve, maintain and develop the rich culture of an ethnic minority community as well as enrich cultural identity of Vietnam.

## **6. The structure of the thesis**

Apart from *introduction, conclusion, references, appendices*, the thesis consists of 4 chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview on research situation and theoretical basis.

Chapter 2: Formal characteristics of simile in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs of Tay ethnic

Chapter 3: Semantic characteristics of simile in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs of Tay ethnic.

Chapter 4: Cultural characteristics and thinking reflected through simile in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs of Tay ethnic

## **7. The main research results of the thesis**

Established theoretical bases for the topic (by clarifying the concepts, structure, classification of comparison; characteristics in culture and language of the ethnic Tay), thereby facilitating researching on characteristics of forms and semantics of comparison in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in order to highlight the cultural characteristics and thinking reflected through Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs.

### **Chapter 1**

## **OVERVIEW ON RESEARCH SITUATION AND THEORETICAL BASIS**

### **1.1. Overview on research situation**

Simile has long been the subject of research by overseas as well as in Vietnam scientists in many aspects with a lot of achievements. However, these studies mainly focus on the language data of the Kinh people while the studies on languages of ethnic minorities account for a small proportion.

Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs have long been a concern of literary and folklore researchers. However, in terms of linguistics, the number of studies is very limited. Simile research in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, folk songs to highlight characteristics in forms, semantics and cultural features and thinking is a new orientation but has not been fully researched.

## **1.2. Theoretical basis**

### **1.2.1. Overview on comparison**

- *Concept*: Simile is to put two things and phenomena side by side to compare a certain different-type aspect with identifiable similarity in order to remind image and perception of readers and listeners.

- *Structure*: a complete simile structure consists of four factors: A: simile object; x: simile basis; y: simile word; B: similed object.

- *Types of comparison*: On the basis of form, the simile will have two types: full simile and variant simile; on the basis of semantics, the simile will have the following types: equal simile and unequal simile.

### **1.2.2. Overview on idioms, proverbs, and folks**

- *Idiom* is a fixed phrase with semantic monolithic nature, forming an identity whole with a general meaning that is different from the total number of meanings from constituent elements, i.e, no literal meaning and playing a role as a separate word.

- *Proverb* is a short sentence in a relatively stable structure, taken from life experiences, ethics and knowledge of a people.

- *Folk song* is the poetry of folk songs when separating the lyrics from cadence.

### **1.2.3. Overview on word(s) and phrase**

According to the Vietnamese dictionary, the word is “*smallest unit of language with complete meaning and stable structure, used to make sentences*” [64, pg. 1375].

Phrase “*is a language unit equivalent to the words in Vietnamese*” [25, pg. 69]. It is a combination of “*two or more real words (without or with the meaningless words which are bound in meaning and grammar), expressing a unified concept and a complex name expressing phenomena of objective reality.... It is also known as phrase, group of words*” [101, pg. 176].



#### ***1.2.4. Concept on culture and the relationship between language and culture***

Culture is an organic system of material and spiritual values created by humans and accumulated through practical activities, in the interaction of human with the natural and social environment.

The relationship between language, culture and thought is a close one that regulates and governs each other.

### **1.3. Practical basis**

#### ***1.3.1. Overview of the Tay ethnic group***

Tay ethnic group has the second largest population in Vietnam, just behind the Kinh. They live mainly in the lowlands of northern Vietnam, from the left bank of the Red River to the northern Gulf. Tay people are originally agricultural residents. Their language belongs to the Tay - Thai - Kadai branch - one of the linguistic families with a long history in mainland Southeast Asia. In terms of script, the Tay language has an ancient script based on the Han script, called Nom Tay. Since the 20th decade of the twentieth century, a number of Tay intellectuals used the national words to record the Tay language. The Tay people distribute in scattered areas in the north of our country. Therefore, the Tay language forms the dialect regions.

#### ***1.3.2. Overview of Tay folk literature***

Tay ethnic group owns a rich treasure of folk literature in variety of genres such as: ancient stories, poetic stories, idioms, proverbs, folk songs, puzzles, etc. Idioms, proverbs, folk songs play an important role in the life of the Tay ethnic group. But it is in danger of extinction. The disappearance of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs is a sign of the disappearance of a language and culture.

#### **1.4. Sub-conclusion**

Chapter 1 presents two main contents: a) Overview of the research situation; b) Determine the theoretical basis of the topic (through clarifying the relevant basic issues such as: concept, structure, classification of comparison; concept of idioms, proverbs, folk songs; generalization of words, phrases, culture and the relationship between language and culture. c) Determine the practical basis of the topic (through clarifying the relevant basic issues such as: an overview of Tay folk literature).

### **Chapter 2**

#### **FORMAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SIMILE IN TÀY ETHNIC'S IDIOMS, PROVERBS, AND FOLK SONGS**

##### **2.1. Introduction**

Content of chapter 2 focuses on statistics and analysis for characteristics of simile structures in full form and variant form in Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs and application of each simile structure in each of these units.

##### **2.2. Survey result**

In order to have a quantitative basis for the thesis, we surveyed 2251 Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, folk songs and obtained 140/782 simile structured idioms, 183/1034 simile structured proverbs, and 141/435 simile structured folk song. Thus, the above data shows that the number of simile structures in Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs account for a significant proportion.

Based on the above model of simile structure, we surveyed the linguistic data and obtained the following results:

**Table 2.1. Number of simile structures in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Number of appearances in the text</b>
Idiom	140	142
Proverb	183	225
Folk song	141	236
<b>Total</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>603</b>

Table 2.1 shows that the number of simile structures in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs is higher than that of simile structured units. Therefore, it is seen that a surveyed unit can exist from two or more simile structures.

### **2.3. Simile forms of Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

**Table 2.4. Simile forms of Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

<b>Comparative forms</b>	<b>Idiom</b>	<b>Proverb</b>	<b>Folk songs</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Full form	35	21	35	91	15,1
Incomplete form	107	200	201	508	84,2
Variant form	0	4	0	4	0,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2.4 shows that the Tay people mainly use incomplete similer structure in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, which may be due to the absence of factors making the imagination in the simile richer and more diverse.

## 2.4. Simile structure in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs

**Table 2.8. Forms of simile structure in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

Form of structure	Idiom	Proverb	Folk songs	Total	%
Single	138	95	24	257	55
Double	2	88	101	148	41
Repetition	0	0	16	16	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2.8 shows that the number of single simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is much more dominant than the double and repetition ones. However, each category has its own characteristics. Single simile is often used in idioms and proverbs, double simile is often used in proverbs and folk songs, the repetition similar is only used in folk songs.

## 2.5. Structural characteristics of simile factors

### 2.5.1. Structural characteristics of the simile object (A)

**Table 2.9. Composition of the simile object (A) in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

Composition		Idiom	Proverb	Folk songs	Total	%
<b>Word</b>	Noun	81	60	113	254	56,1
	Verb	6	0	4	10	2,2
	Adjective	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Phrase</b>	Noun phrase	0	29	9	38	8,4
	Phrasal verb	0	30	83	113	24,9
	Adjective phrase	0	0	0	0	0
	C – V phrase	0	24	14	38	8,4
<b>Total</b>		<b>87</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2.9 shows that the simile object (A) of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs is mainly composed of words while the phrase is rarely used. Regarding the types of words, noun is absolutely dominant in taking the role of the simile object (A) in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs.

### 2.5.2. *Structure characteristics of the similed object (B)*

**Table 2.10. The structure of factor (B) in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

Composition		Idiom	Proverb	Folk songs	Total	%
<b>Word</b>	Noun	79	91	28	198	32,8
	Verb	0	2	0	2	0,3
	Adjective	0	8	0	8	1,3
<b>Phrase</b>	Noun phrase	34	69	111	214	35,5
	Phrasal verb	2	21	44	67	11,1
	Adjective phrase	0	0	0	0	0,0
	C – V phrase	27	34	53	114	18,9
<b>Total</b>		<b>142</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>603</b>	100

Table 2.9 shows that the factor (B) in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is mainly composed of phrases rather than words. The factor (B) in the simile of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is mainly composed of nouns, noun phrases, phrasal verb, while verbs, adjectives, adjectives are used very limited.

### 2.5.3. Characteristics of comparative word (x)

According to our statistics about simile word in the similer of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, use of words is dominant than phrase with rate of 289/345, accounting for 84% of the total number of simile word surveyed. For the origin of the simile word in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, it is a combination of Tay-based words and others borrowed from Vietnamese.

### 2.5.4. Characteristics of simile basis (y)

**Table 2.12. The factor of simile basis in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

NO.	Type of comparative structure	Idiom	Proverb	Folk songs	Total	Total surveys	%
1	A - x - y - B	35	19	35	89	142	14,7
2	x- y - B	52	32	8	92	225	15,3
<b>Total</b>		87	51	43	181	603	30

Table 2.11 shows that in the simile of Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, the number of structures included with simile basis factor is not large with 181/603 structures, accounting for 30% of the total surveyed simile structures.

## 2.6. Sub-conclusion

Chapter 2 presents four main contents:

1. Survey results: Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs are composed by various structural forms, in which simile is an indispensable one.

2. In terms of form, simile in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, folk songs can be divided into three categories: complete form, incomplete form and variant form. The complete simile consists of four factors. Incomplete comparison includes one or several factors in the structure. Variant simile is created by adding, or reversing the position of elements in the structure. In which, the incomplete simile is used the most.

3. Based on the number of simile structures in each category, the simile in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs includes: single simile structure, double simile structure, repetition simile structure.

4. The factors in the simile structure of idioms, proverbs, and folk songs of the Tay ethnic group are extremely diverse in composition. In terms of composition, these factors can be undertaken by words or phrases, but in terms of word types, the simile factors are made up of: nouns, verbs, adjectives, noun phrases, phrasal verbs, adjective phrases, subject - predicate.

## **Chapter 3**

### **SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SIMILE IN TÀY ETHNIC'S IDIOMS, PROVERBS, AND FOLK SONGS**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter 3 focuses on researching layers of meaning, their relationship, semantic characteristics of similar factors, the relationship between similar factors and similar factors in Tay idioms, proverb and folk songs.

### **3.2. Semantic structure of similar**

The semantic structure of simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is not simply the combination of meanings from single word, but it is the whole generalized from the meaning of structural elements. The semantic structure of similar in Tay idioms, proverbs and folk songs will consists of outer and inner structure. The outer structure is the meaning deduced from the sentence, called explicit or literal meaning. The inner structure is all the content that can be deduced from a specific simile structure, also called implicit meaning or symbolic meaning.

### **3.3. Semantic relation in comparison**

#### ***3.3.1. Semantic relation in a simile structure***

In a simile structure, the semantic role will be in one of the structural factors which is called the nucleus of simile. The nucleus meaning of simile in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs can be divided into two forms:

- *The first form*, the nucleus meaning of simile structure is in the simile basis (x). These are simile structures with the presence of factor (x).

- *The second form*, the nucleus meaning of simile structure is in the factor of compared object (B). This form of structure will not have presence of a simile basis (x).

#### ***3.3.2. Semantic relations between comparative structures***

The factors of simile object and the similed object in the form of meaning combination according to similarity relation must have



similar, close or related semantic relation, so this relation does not highlight the simile value. Therefore, the combination of similarity meaning in Tay ethnic group’s idioms, proverbs and folk songs is not popular.

The combination of meanings according to opposing relationship in the simile in Tay ethnic’s idioms, proverbs, and folk songs accounts for a large proportion. Use of this relation increase the contrast between the simile factor and the similar factor, thereby enhancing the simile value.

**3.4. Semantic characteristics of the simile factors**

**3.4.1. Semantic characteristics of the simile object (A)**

By survey of the simile object factor (A) through the linguistic data, we obtained the following results:

**Table 3.1. Semantics denoted by factor (A) in Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

Meaning field		Total	%
<b>Human</b>	Human in general	134	33.6
	Human body parts	84	21.1
	Activity, status, nature	135	33.8
<b>Nature</b>	Physical objects, natural phenomena	13	3.3
	Plants and animals	28	7.0
<b>Supernatural things and phenomena</b>		5	1,2
<b>Total</b>		<b>399</b>	<b>100</b>

The data in the table 3.1 shows that the factor of simile in Tay ethnic’s idioms, proverbs, and folk songs towards human is much

dominant than nature, things and abstract phenomenon. This shows that the Tay ethnic group tends to perceive the human nature.

### 3.4.2. *Semantic characteristics of the simile object factor (B)*

**Table 3.8. The meaning field of factor (B) in Tay idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

<b>Meaning field</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Human</b>	Human in general	24	4,3
	Human body parts	37	6,6
	Activity, status	46	8,2
<b>Nature</b>	Natural objects, things, phenomena	97	17,4
	Plants	97	17,4
	Animals	181	32,4
<b>Objects</b>		57	10,2
<b>Supernatural things and phenomena</b>		18	3,2
<b>Characters in ancient stories</b>		2	0,3
<b>Total</b>		<b>559</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.8 shows that the factor of simile object in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs has the meaning field of nature used with the most frequency followed by the meaning field of human and objects. The meaning field of supernatural things and phenomena, and characters in ancient stories are used very little, which indicates that the Tay ethnic group's people tend to choose natural things and phenomena as a standard for comparison.

### 3.4.3. *Semantic characteristics of the simile basis (x)*

The factor of simile basis (y) often denotes the general properties of objects and phenomena that are compared with each other.

The factor of simile basis in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is a factor that can exist in the form of appearing on words or hiding. However, advent (manifest meaning) or absence (implicit meaning) of this factor has its own advantages.

#### **3.4.4. Semantic characteristics of the simile word (y)**

**Table 3.17. Statistical table of the simile words in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

<b>Comparison type</b>		<b>Times</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Equal</b>	Absolute	150	43
	Relative	132	38
<b>Unequal</b>	Better	6	2
	Worse	46	13
<b>Total</b>		347	100

Table 3.17 shows that the Tay people use the equal simile words more than the unequal ones. In which the words denoting simile relation in type of absolute equality are used with highest frequency followed by similar simile.

#### **3.5. Semantic relation between the simile object (A) and the simile object (B) in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

The semantic correlation between the factors of simile object and the simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is not the same. In which, the correlation of the simile factor (A) belonging to the human - the similerfactor (B) but the human is more dominant than the other correlations. Therefore, it can be seen that, in the simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, human is the

center of perception which is recognized by comparing with the normative non-human factors to self-describe.

### **3.6. Sub-conclusion**

Chapter 3 presents three main contents:

1. The semantic structure of similar in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs includes the outer and inner structures. Semantic relation of simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, including semantic relations in a structure and semantic relations between structures.

3. The meaning field of the simile object factor (A) and the similerobject factor (B) is mainly human, nature, supernatural things, objects, characters in the ancient stories. The factor of simile basis in the simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is the factor in the visible or hidden form. The simile words in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs consists of similar words denoting equal meanings and those denoting unequal meanings.

4. The semantic relations between the simile object factor (A) and the similed object factor (B) in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs includes: A is human - B isnon-human, A is non-human - B is non-human, A is human - B is human, A is non-human - B is human.

## **Chapter 4**

### **CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AND THINKING REFLECTED THROUGH SIMILE IN TÀY ETHNIC'S IDIOMS, PROVERBS, AND FOLK SONGS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

Chapter 4 aims to analyze the relationship of simile in reflecting cultural and thinking characteristics of Tay people.

#### **4.2. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflecting cultural characteristics**

##### ***4.2.1. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflecting the living environment***

The mountainous-characterized things and phenomena with high frequency of appearance in simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs do not reflect art but the reality of their living space. It shows the domination of nature in the daily life as well as the consciousness of the people. Besides, these images contribute to the reflection of the mountainous geography in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs. Not only that, the images of mountainous-characterized nature also contribute to uniqueness for simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs.

##### ***4.2.2. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflecting production characteristics***

Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflects the diverse production activities of the Tay people, which is a harmonious combination between agriculture, forestry and blacksmithing.

#### ***4.2.3. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflecting the social - human community***

The simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflecting Tay people does not follow an orthodox religion, but gets influenced by the three religions (Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism). In addition, the simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflects the rich religious life of the people.

Regarding family relation, the Tay people follow to the patriarchy. Therefore, the simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs promoting men is shown quite clearly. The relationship between villages and neighbors is close.

Through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, folk authors have contributed to portraying the portrait and character of an ethnic minority community. They are agricultural residents who are hard in working, frank, honest and generous in social relations, but for themselves, they are self-reliant, uphold honor, are always optimistic in life.

### **4.3. Ethnic minority thinking through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs**

#### ***4.3.1. Thinking and ethnic thinking***

*Thinking* can be understood as a process by which a new understanding can be achieved (such as perception, transition from unknown to already known). Each country almost exists multi-ethnicity and each ethnic group possesses specific cultural characteristics, thereby forming ethnic cultural characteristics of ethnic thinking. This is most clearly demonstrated through the preferred or dominant tendency of a certain type of thinking, speech.

#### ***4.3.2. Thinking mode through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs***

*Thinking mode*, is the synthesis between the trend and operation mode of perception. Simile survey in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs shows that the imagining emotional thinking mode is a thinking mode commonly used by the people.

#### ***4.3.3. Characteristics of ethnic minority thinking through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs***

Through a simile survey in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs, we found that the thinking of Tay ethnic group has the following characteristics: *flexibility, experience, dichotomy, exaggeration, use of visual images; use of innocent images.*

### **Sub-conclusion of chapter 4**

Chapter 4 presents two main contents:

1) Cultural characteristics are expressed through simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in three aspects: simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflects the living environment and production characteristics, social community - human.

2) Thinking is a process by which a new understanding can achieved (such as perception, transition from unknown to already known). Human thinking consists of two levels: emotional thinking and rational thinking. Thinking mode is the synthesis between the trend and operation mode of perception. Simile structure in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs not only reflects cultural characteristics but also the thinking characteristics of the Tay ethnic group.

## CONCLUSION

Simile is an operation of thinking and is divided into rhetorical simile and logical simile reflected in language. When conducting research on simile in literature, the concept of simile is equivalent to the concept of rhetorical simile. Through the chapters of this thesis, the picture of simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs is illustrated in the following aspects:

1. The concept of simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs in terms of connotation and basic structure is similar to the concept of rhetoric simile in Vietnamese. Tay ethnic group is an ethnic minority in Vietnam with its own cultural identity. Idioms, proverbs, and folk song in Tay language are an indispensable part of the Tay culture. However, it is currently in danger of disappearance.

2. To have a base for thesis writing, we have surveyed 2251 idioms, proverbs and folk songs of Tay ethnic group. The results obtained 463 units constructed based on simile structure with 603 times using this structure. Through quantitative analysis, we find that the Tay ethnic minorities mainly use the simile form of minimizing elements in idioms, proverbs and folk songs. However, respectively, each category has its own characteristics of simile structure type. Single simile is a characteristic structure in idioms, double simile is used mostly in proverbs, folk songs, and repetition simile is often used in folk songs.

3. In terms of composition, the factors in the simile structure of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs have their own



characteristics. The simile object factor (A) is mainly similed of words. The c similed object factor (B) in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs is mainly similed of words, while in folk songs (B) it is mainly similed of phrases. The simile word factor (x) is composed of words used more frequent than phrases. The simile basis factor (y) in idioms mainly exists in present form while in proverbs and folk song mainly exists in hidden form.

Regarding the word type, factor (A) is mainly composed of nouns and noun phrases. For the factor of compared object (B), nouns and noun phrases are more dominant than verbs, adjectives, phrasal verbs, adjective phrases. The factor of simile basis (y) in the simile structure of Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs and folk songs often denotes the general properties of things and phenomena, so they are mainly verbs and adjectives. The simile word factor (x) is mainly a word relation composed of words.

4. The semantic structure of simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs includes the outer and inner structure and it can be inferred directly from the sentence or from the correlation between the factors in one structure.

Semantic relations in a simile structure in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs have the nucleus meaning mainly at the compared object factor (B). For the semantic relation between the simile structures, the meaning combination based on opposing relation has a higher frequency of use than that of the semantic combination based on similarity relation.

In terms of the meaning field, the simile object factor (A) with meaning field of human is dominant compared to the non-human ones. And the compared object factor (B) with meaning field of non-human factors dominate over the meaning field of human. The simile basis factor (y) that often denotes the general properties of objects and phenomena are compared with each other. For the simile word factor (x), the equal simile word is used with the higher frequency compared to unequal ones.

In terms of the semantic relation between the simile object factor and the compared object factor in idioms, proverbs, and folk songs, we found that the Tay people tend to concern about the relationship between human with nature than other relations.

5. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs reflects the cultural characteristics of the Tay people through three aspects: living environment, production activity and social community - human. For living environment: people often use natural images that characterize the northern mountainous regions. Production activities of the Tay are very diverse with a harmonious combination between agriculture, forestry and blacksmithing. Regarding social community and human, the Tay people are influenced by many religions and beliefs. In family relations, they follow the patriarchy. The relationship among villages and neighbors is always close. The main community living space is often associated with the image of stilt houses. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs contributed to illustrate the portrait and character of an ethnic minority community, including

agricultural residents who are very hard in working, frank, honest, generous in social relations, but for themselves, they are self-reliant, uphold honor, are always optimistic in life.

6. Simile in Tay ethnic's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs not only reflect cultural characteristics but also ethnic thinking. Through simile, the Tay ethnic group's thinking appears with the mode of sensory and imagining thinking. Also, through analysis of linguistic material, we find that their thinking is characterized by flexibility, experience, dichotomy, exaggeration, use of visual images; use of innocent images.

7. In the framework of the thesis, there are still several issues that we currently have no chance and conditions to learn and thoroughly study such as: To compare simile structures in Tay ethnic group's idioms, proverbs, and folk songs with other ethnic minorities; also not survey deeply the use of structures in the daily life of the Tay people; survey and evaluate the use of simile structures in bilingual individuals; survey the use of simile structures by age, sex, geography, etc. which are orientations for the thesis to research in the future./.