American English and Vietnamese Use in Public Signs: A Pragmatic Cultural Comparison and Translation

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Public signs, Cultural schemas, Pragmatics, American English, Vietnamese, Translation	English public signs represent the development and welcome of Vietnam to visitors around the world. However, the Vietnamese-English public sign translation currently has many drawbacks, one of which is a lack of cultural and pragmatic factors to be taken into account. In order to improve the practice, a comparison of American English and Vietnamese use in public signs has been made, applying the framework of a pragmatic set by Sharifian (2017), which supports the idea that the public signs are realizations (practs) of the pragmemes underlying the situational contexts associated with some certain speech acts that can be precisely interpreted based on some pragmatic cultural schemas such as DIRECTING, PROMPTING, and COMPELLING. With the help of the street view tool on google maps, a corpus of more than 800 English public signs (in the US) and more than 800 Vietnamese ones (in Vietnam) is created for further corpus-based, metadiscourse, and contrastive analyses. The results show that both American English and Vietnamese pragmatic cultural schemas activate the same speech acts manifested in public signs. The differences are notified in the pragmemes related to territory indication, restriction, reminding, warning, command, and prohibition; also in the formulation and enactment of the practs. Many applications to translation of public signs from Vietnamese into English are also suggested at the end of the article.

Introduction

As a result of transnational trade, tourism and globalization, English has become the most popular foreign language to be used and taught in Vietnam (Sundkvist & Nguyen, 2020; Nguyen & Ngo, 2021; Quoc et al, 2021). However, as an international language, English embodies various cultures around to be concerned, and it cannot be utilized without an in-depth insight into its own associations, identities and experiences. As Wierzbicka (1998, p.

242) said, "in different societies and different communities, people speak differently, and not just in terms of lexicon and grammar" (for example, American English is different from British English and Australian English). Therefore, English in Vietnamese contexts reflects the varieties of the world and may also have its own life that is shared with the native speakers; but before using or localizing English, the Vietnamese should identify certain distinctive norms underlying it. One of the ways to do so, according to Wierzbicka (1998), is looking into *public sign* contexts, which she considers as a salient aspect to explore the social attitudes and cultural values of a speech community.

In Vietnam, public signs in English and bilingual Vietnamese-English constitute most of the linguistic landscapes, especially those in urban areas (Phan & Starks, 2019). The presence of English along with Vietnamese in public spaces in Vietnam can be seen as a sign of development and integration like many other similar contexts in the world (such as Kang & Zhang, 2008; Vettorel, 2013; Thongtong, 2016; ALHyari & Hamdan, 2019). However, the language transfer of public signs from Vietnamese into English in Vietnam currently has many shortcomings, which are reflected quite often in the local media and reports (such as Nguyen et al., 2017; Nguyen, 2018). These reflections focus on errors of spelling, grammar and lexical meanings caused by the negative interference of the source language, while the differences in cultural and pragmatic factors that affect the language use and translation are not adequately investigated. In fact, some public signs that are translated into English, though free from errors, may seem unfamiliar to people from English-speaking countries. For example,

(1)   A Vietnamese public sign: *Chúc   quý   khách   thương   lộ   bình an*
         Lexical meaning: Wish beloved guests (get to) the upper part road peace
         English translation: *Wish you the upper road of peace*

The sign in (1) is used as a goodbye to tourists who are leaving a place in Vietnam. The translation is reported to be strange or even confusing to visitors whose L1 is English since it is a direct transfer from Vietnamese meanings and culture without any consideration for the target counterparts, which do not encourage such use to express a farewell (instead, *have a good journey* may be preferred). Therefore, it is not only a matter of spelling, meaning and grammar, but also a matter of how the language is used from the speech community members' perception of their interactions with each other and the world.

It has been proved by many pragmaticians (such as Capone, 2010; Kecskes, 2013; Wong, 2010) that language use gives "living" to sentences, and it simultaneously is sheltered in cultural contexts. In other words, the language of a speech community has its own use, which reflects some cultural norms and values of the community itself. However, while the relationship between language use and situations has been significantly theorized, the one between pragmatic devices and cultural cognition seems to remain a research gap.

Sharifian (2017, p. 2) argues that human (culturally sensitive) experience is perceived and (re)constructed in the so-called "cultural conceptualizations," which are instantiated in

features of human language, including morphosyntax, semantic meaning, pragmatic meaning, and discourse. Sharifian (2017, pp. 11-14) also advocates that the cultural conceptualizations in relationship to language can be analyzed with *cultural schemas* which provide the structures, filling, encoding, retrieval, evaluation and anticipations of the experience or information that is "shared or assumed to be shared by the members of a speech community". According to Sharifian (2017, p. 14), for the pragmatic meanings to be concerned, cultural schemas may play as a basis of the shared knowledge underlying the practice of speech acts/events.

In short, Sharifian's theories seem to have filled the gap between culture and pragmatics by using cultural schemas as a tool to examine pragmatic devices. The approach may prove effective in studies concerning the triple relationship of language, pragmatics, and culture, which is carried out on public signs and their cultural contexts. The research questions include: (i) how is English used in public signs for specific situations and communicative purposes that are associated with certain cultural schemas inherent in the cognition of its own speech community; and (ii) how does it differ from Vietnamese in the similar contexts so that some pragmatic cultural approach to translation strategies can be taken into account?

This study aims to investigate English public signs, limited to those found in the United States (US) since American English is one of the most influential international languages. The observations are carried out in parallel with the corresponding cases in Vietnamese from the perspective of cultural linguistics and pragmatics by Sharifian (2017). The approach has been preferred in recent studies concerning the relationship between language use and culture (or cultural conceptualizations), which will be elaborated on in the following section.

Literature review

Cultural linguistics and pragmatics

Cultural linguistics (often mentioned as *ethnolinguistics*) is a recently developed discipline deriving from branches of cognitive sciences and anthropology. One of the tools that have been suggested and utilized in the theoretical and analytical frameworks of recent studies in the field is *cultural schemas*. The notion refers to a type of cognitive schema which explains the way meanings are constructed, practiced and interpreted in cultural domains. In the work *Cultural Linguistics* (2017), Sharifian highlights the roles of cultural schemas in the relationship with pragmatics. As he puts it:

> Cultural schemas (and subschemas) capture beliefs, norms, rules, and expectations of behavior as well as values relating to various aspects and components of experience (p. 7) […] that contain a significant portion of meanings encoded in human languages. In day-to-day conversation, inferences about the knowledge possessed by an interlocutor involve the assumption of shared cultural schemas. The knowledge that underlies the enactment and uptake of speech acts is part of that knowledge (p. 52).

Here is an example of a cultural schema in daily communication: when seeing an

acquaintance at the market by chance, a Vietnamese often says *Anh/Chị (cũng) đang đi chợ hả?* 'Are you (also) shopping now?', then both the listener and the speaker will immediately take it as an act of *greeting* because they share some common understanding of *politeness* culture (or the cultural schema of POLITENESS), which is associated with the act of greeting by asking each other about the actions they are performing without any expectation for the answers but a confirmation like saying yes, smiling or nodding head and asking back the same question.

Sharifian (2017) uses the term *pragmatic cultural schema* to describe the cultural schema that serves as a basis for communicating pragmatic meanings (such as meanings of speech acts). He also notes that such meanings can be interpreted from the *practs* that realize a number of *pragmemes* associated with a particular speech act (p. 54). Pragmemes are defined as "general situational prototypes of pragmatic acts that are capable of being executed in a particular situation or cluster of situations" (Mey, 2010, p. 2884), while practs refers to the enactments of pragmemes in the form of linguistic expressions (Kecskes, 2010; Sharifian, 2017). Sharifian (2017) argues that the pragmemes themselves have a close association with a certain (pragmatic) cultural schema, and thus they together with the speech acts and practs may form a hierarchical relationship, which is called *a pragmatic set* (p. 54).
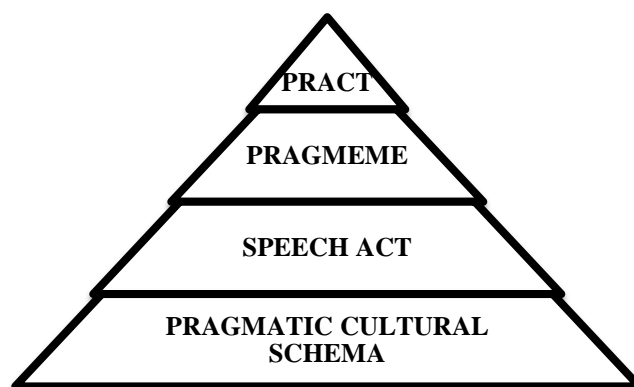

Figure 1. A pragmatic set (Sharifian, 2017, p. 54)

For example, the following pragmatic set is found in American English public signs:

(2)   Pragmatic cultural schema: DIRECTING
        Speech act: [Indicating the starting point of an area]
        Pragmeme: [WELCOMING THE COMERS]
        Practice: *Welcome to Florida*; *Massachusetts welcomes you*

As shown from the set, the American cultural schema of DIRECTING entrenched in public signs encourages indicating the starting point of an area by welcoming the visitors when they are entering the place. The rationale behind the welcome is inspired by the conceptualization that the destination is perceived as a host who is greeting the comers to the place, and this implies that the first steps into the area are already (or soon) taken and the visit has already begun.

This study aims to interpret and compare the use of American English and Vietnamese in public signs based on the framework of a pragmatic set so that English elements (assumed from the American backgrounds) can be contrasted with Vietnamese ones in the practice of public signs in Vietnam. Before the pragmatic meanings are discussed, the next section will present some brief information on public signs and their embedded pragmatic cultural schemas.

Public signs and pragmatic cultural schemas

In terms of lexicon, "sign" is defined in most dictionaries of English as a piece of paper, wood, metal or digital that has writing or a picture on it, giving information, instructions, a warning, command or direction (such as Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Oxford Learner's Dictionary). "Biển", the equivalent of "sign", is similarly defined in dictionaries of Vietnamese but includes an additional attribute of "being put in places where it (the sign) is easily seen by many people" (such as Hoang, 2003).

In terms of scientific recognition, "signs" are "public notices, indications, instructions, warnings and symbols as well as any written information and pictures closely related to human lives, work as well as ecological aspects" (Dai & Lü, 2005, p. 38). This is also confirmed by Kang & Zhang (2008), who define public signs as "words and/or pictures giving information about people's lives in public places in order to inform, indicate, suggest and warn the public […] to refine people's social behavior, human relationship, enhance manufacturing efficiency, deter the criminals, raise people's spirit, improve living conditions and help to build a harmonious society" (p. 124).

In short, *public signs* have three basic properties: (i) represented as words and/or images, (ii) put in public places, and (iii) performing informational and social functions.

The approach to public signs as images or symbols is concerned in fields of semiotics; this study mainly focuses on public signs as a part of linguistic landscape, which refers to "the use of language in its written form in the public sphere" (Gorter, 2006, p. 2). According to Landry & Bourhis (1997, p. 25), the linguistic landscape of a given territory serves the *informational function* (indicating the linguistic characteristics of a certain speech community) and the *symbolic function* (indicating the significance of a language compared with others within a bilingual or multilingual setting). These two functions of the linguistic landscape are on a general and larger scale, parallel with the informational and social functions of public signs on a more specific scale. Therefore, previous studies on public signs mostly deal with features of language as well as their applications in practical use within a speech community.

The most common functions of public signs that have been observed in prior studies are *announcing*, *explaining*, *instructing*, *displaying*, *warning*, *naming* (according to Dai & Lü, 2005), or *indicating*, *limiting*, *suggesting*, and *mandating* (Kang & Zhang, 2008; Ma, 2012). These functions can be categorized into three groups: (i) *directing* (giving information about what something is, how to do something, where to go, who is concerned, etc. so that public facilities are correctly accessed), (ii) *prompting* (providing reminders, warnings or persuasion

so that good decisions for the sake of safety can be made before action), and (iii) *compelling* (asking the public to take or not to take an action). The three categories of functions and their components are actually concepts associated with the cultural schemas of DIRECTING, PROMPTING and COMPELLING respectively which, according to Sharifian (2017, p. 52), "serve as possible sources of (assumed) shared knowledge – or common ground – that interlocutors draw upon" to practice and understand the actual language use (in public signs) appropriately.

However, as different speech communities have different systems of cultural conceptualizations, the cultural schemas may contain different meanings (such as pragmatic meanings) that are differently encoded in their languages. For example, Raddatz's report (1995) shows that the public signs in London are more polite compared to those in New York as the former often include *accounts* and *apology*, e.g. (i) *"In the interests of hygiene and amenity, the public are requested not to permit their dogs to foul the center reserve."* (It is the pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING underlying a *request* with an account); (ii) "*We apologize for any inconvenience resulting from the temporary closure of this station yesterday. A mechanical defect on a train caused a minor fire, requiring the attendance of the fire brigade.*" (It is the pragmatic cultural schema of DIRECTING entrenched in an *announcement* with apologies and reasons); (iii) "*This stairway has 175 steps. Do not use, except in an emergency.*" (They are the pragmatic cultural schemas of PROMPTING and COMPELLING reflected in the form of persuasion).

Wierzbicka (1998) finds that the pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING in German public signs is connected to the acts of *prohibition* and *command* while that in Anglo cultures is related to the acts of *instruction* and *request*. For example, instead of using *No Parking*, *Quiet work area*, *Thank you for not smoking*, or *May use full lane* (which are familiar in Anglo cultures), German public signs tend to favor *Parking prohibited*, *Please speak quietly*, *Smoking prohibited* and *Must use the full lane*. Besides, while the pragmatic cultural schema of PROMPTING in an Anglo point of view targets the addressees' needs and interests (e.g., *Attention – change of venue for symposium*), the corresponding German public signs are usually aimed at protecting the addresser's benefits (e.g., *Attention! Private property! Entry prohibited!*).

Halonen & Laihonen (2019) study the differences between *dog signs* in Finland and Romania. The results show that dog signs in Finland tend to follow Western cultures, seeing dogs as pets or family members; thus, the signs mostly target the dogs' owners and are usually constructed as an act of *instruction* though underlying the pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING (e.g., *No dogs*). In contrast, *dog signs* in Romania consider dogs as fellow workers, property guardians or shepherds of livestock; the signs thus target the passers-by and are usually in the form of a *reminder* (e.g., *Beware of the dog*), a *warning* (e.g., *Beware, the dog bites*; *Attention! The dog is dangerous*), or a *command* (e.g., *Stop! The dog bites*) encouraged by the pragmatic cultural schema of PROMPTING.

Jing (2014, p. 2531) argues that the act of *restricting* following the pragmatic cultural schema of DIRECTING in Chinese public signs tends to list all the individuals, objects or actions that

are permitted or prioritized, e.g. *Seats reserved for seniors, children, pregnant women*, whereas this case in English-speaking countries is just an act of *indicating*, that is, *Courtesy seating,* with or without any further explanation. A similar difference is also encountered in Hu's study (2016) with the finding that the pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING in Chinese public signs often inspires a *request* accompanied by a *metaphor*, e.g., *The grass is smiling, please walk on the path*; *The grass is sleeping, please do not disturb*; while the corresponding case in English-speaking countries is usually phrased as *(Please) Keep off the grass*.

In sum, public signs – as a part of the linguistic landscape – serve many informational-social functions that can be correctly analyzed with the relevant linguistic evidence so that some familiar cultural norms will be identified and noted for cross-cultural understanding and translation.

Methods

The data

This is qualitative research on public signs as a written language (with or without accompanying images) observed in public places, serving the functions of *directing*, *prompting* and *compelling*. The languages of the public signs are limited to American English and Vietnamese. With the help of the *street view* tool on google maps, more than 800 English public signs (randomly collected in different states of the US) and more than 800 Vietnamese ones (randomly collected in Ho Chi Minh City and many other provinces of Vietnam) are observed (for inductive reasoning) and checked (for deductive reasoning). Other samples are also received from the author's colleagues and friends around or taken from previous studies, shared pictures on the Internet or companies producing public signs in the US and Vietnam. The time range for the observation is between August 2018 and May 2021.

Corpus-based analysis

The database is first categorized into groups of functions, then similar structures or keywords with a view to detecting some characteristics concerning their formulations, contexts, frequency, and cultural conceptualizations. For example, the items that are used to sort out the English data include *stop*, *end*, *begin*, *welcome*, *here*, *no*, *do not*, *prohibit*, *notice*, *warning*, *caution*, *danger*, *please*, *must*, etc. The results are lists of linguistic expressions that may reveal the patterns of their semantic structures, pragmatic meanings, collocations, prevalence, and underlying cultural norms.

Meta-discourse analysis

The data is assessed with an order or a mix of the following operations, i.e., identifying linguistic markers that highlight pragmatic meanings (meta-discourse analysis stage); recognizing the scenarios that may be a basis for the evaluation of pragmatic meanings (discourse analysis stage), and examining the relationship between perception and assessment of pragmatic meanings with relevant cultural conceptualizations and cultural evidence

(conceptual analysis stage). The method is suggested by Sharifian & Tayebi (2017) and proves useful for the current research purposes as the three analysis stages are interconnected while the levels of meta-discourse and discourse are all related to cultural conceptualizations entrenched in the language.

Contrastive analysis

The use of American English and Vietnamese in public signs are described and compared with the framework of a pragmatic set by Sharifian (2017) concerning the relationship among pragmatic cultural schemas (DIRECTING, PROMPTING, COMPELLING), speech acts, pragmemes, and practs (Figure 1). Some comments are also made on the formulation and enactment of the practs in association with some cultural conceptualizations. The method will result in a list of L2 features paralleled with those of the L1 to constitute the problem areas (i.e., differences) that need focal attention while the similar areas are taken as assistance in the language acquisition and practice (Lado, 1957; Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Findings

The pragmatic cultural schema of DIRECTING

The pragmatic cultural schema of DIRECTING encoded in (American) English and Vietnamese public signs is associated with the speech acts/events of: presenting the tagged objects; indicating the starting point of a territory; indicating the ending point of a territory; offering assistance; announcing the inconvenience; giving directions to a place, and restricting. Some similarities and (marked) differences in the typical general situations (pragmemes) of the speech acts/events and their realizations in words (practs) can be discussed as follows.

Table 1. Analysis of speech act/event 1: [presenting the tagged object]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
1.1. NAMING	*Waiting room; Exit*	*Phòng chờ; Lối ra*
1.2. DESCRIBING THE STATUS	*Sold out; Reserved*	*Hết + OBJECT; OBJECT + đã đặt*
1.3. MENTIONING THE USAGE	*Push-button-to-open; Push*	*Ấn-nút-để-mở; Đẩy ra*
1.4. MENTIONING THE TAGGED OBJECT AS A PLACE TO GET SOMETHING (DONE)	*The dirt stops here* *Train stops here* *The muck stops here*	*Để-giầy dép-ở đây* ('Put-shoes-here') *Ở đây-có bán-gạo* ('Here-is sold-rice')

Besides the similarities in naming the tagged objects (1.1) and mentioning their usage (1.3), the difference observed from Table 1 is that English public signs usually describe the status of the tagged object without mentioning the object itself, whereas Vietnamese public signs must perform this with reference to the object (e.g., *Hết-vé* 'sold out tickets; *Bàn-đã đặt* 'Table-reserved') (1.2). Also, when mentioning the tagged object as a place to get something or have something done, English public signs are phrased as '*SOMETHING + stops here*' and target the addressees' needs or interests, while in Vietnamese public signs, *ở đây* 'here' occurs at the end of the phrase (i.e. '*DO SOMETHING + ở đây*') in case of targeting the addressees', or in the beginning (i.e. '*Ở đây + DO SOMETHING*') to emphasize the addressers' as advertising (1.4).

Table 2. Analysis of speech act/event 2: [Indicating the starting point of a territory]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
2.1. WELCOMING THE COMERS	*Welcome to Florida* *Massachusetts welcomes you*	. *Thành phố-Hồ Chí Minh-kính chào-quý khách* ('City-HoChiMinh-welcomes-you')
2.2. INDICATING THE TAGGED OBJECT AS THE STARTING POINT	*Student drop-off and pick-up begins here* *Maximum 50 km/h begins* *Begin one way* *Begin right turn lane*	*Đường cao tốc-TPHCM – Trung Lương-Lối vào* ('Highway-HCMC-Trung Luong-Entrance') *Lối vào-siêu thị* ('Entrance-supermarket')
2.3. MENTIONING THE DESTINATION WITH THE ZERO DISTANCE	*Florida scenic highway, mile 0*	*Hà Giang 0 km* *Tràng Vĩ 0 km*

As can be seen from Table 2, both English and Vietnamese public signs indicate the starting point of territory by welcoming the comers with the structure '*DESTINATION + welcomes you*' (2.1); however, the corresponding of '*Welcome to + DESTINATION*,' which is very common in English public signs, appears quite rare in Vietnamese ones except in speaking and spoken writing (2.1) due to a limited space allowed for wording on a public sign. Another significant difference that should be discussed here is that English public signs indicate the tagged object as the physical starting point of an area with the linguistic marker *begin* as in '*ZONE + begins (here)*' or '*Begin + ZONE*', while Vietnamese public signs perform this with the linguistic marker *lối vào* 'entrance' as in '*ZONE-entrance*' or '*Entrance-ZONE*' (2.2), not to mention that the zone in Vietnamese public signs is mainly highways, whereas this in the counterparts can be of various kinds such as school zone, lane zone, construction zone, quiet zone, speed zone, etc. Also, Vietnamese public signs usually show the starting point of an area by mentioning the zero distance to the destination (i.e. '*DESTINATION + 0 km*'), while this situation is not very often in English ones (found in the US) except some special routes (like the famous Florida scenic highway) (2.3).

Table 3. Analysis of speech act/event 3: [Indicating the ending point of a territory]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
3.1. SAYING THANKS (AND EXPECTING THE LEAVERS TO COME BACK)	*Thank you for shopping with us*	*Coop.Mart-cám ơn -quý khách* ('CoopMart-thanks-you')
	Oregon thanks you, come back soon	.
3.2. ANNOUNCING THE DEPARTURE (AND EXPECTING THE LEAVERS TO COME BACK)	*You are now leaving California Leaving KANSAS. Come again*	.
3.3. (SAYING GOODBYE AND) EXPECTING TO SEE THE LEAVERS AGAIN	.	*Đồng Văn-tạm biệt-quý khách, hẹn-gặp-lại* ('DongVan-goodbye-to you, want-to see-again')
3.4. WISHING THE LEAVERS SAFETY ON THE ROAD	*Drive carefully, come back soon.*	*Thành phố-Thanh Hóa-chúc-quý khách-thượng lộ-bình an* ('City-ThanhHoa-wish-you-on road-safety')
3.5. INDICATING THE TAGGED OBJECT AS THE ENDING POINT	*Public beach ends here* *Quiet lane ends* *End school zone*	*Cao tốc - Hà Nội – Hải Phòng -kết thúc* ('Highway- Hanoi-Haiphong-End/Exit')

Table 3 presents some typical situations in which the public signs indicate the ending point of territory. There are many differences in the pragmemes and practs observed between English and Vietnamese items. Specifically, both express thanks for indicating the exit point but Vietnamese ones hardly accompany an expectation to see the guests again like their English counterparts (3.1), except for speaking or other writing contexts where the wording is not limited to the number of words or the allocated space as it is on public signs (3.1). Next, while the English public signs usually indicate the ending point in the form of a departure announcement with the structure '*(You are) (Now) + Leaving + THE PLACE*' (3.2), the Vietnamese counterparts prefer to express '*THE PLACE + loves to see you again* (3.3) or '*THE PLACE + wishes you safety on the road*' (3.4). *Have a good/safe journey* and *drive carefully* might also be used in English ones to realize the pragmeme (3.4) but not very often as the former is preferred in speaking and the latter is only possible when it goes with the pragmeme EXPECTING TO SEE THE LEAVER AGAIN (e.g., *come back soon, come again, see you soon*) or it is rather a road reminder/request as in *Drive carefully, we love our children*, not to mention that the pragmeme itself is rarely used alone on signs to indicate a farewell as well as an ending point but usually appear with other pragmemes (such as 3.1; 3.2; 3.4) to perform the function. Last but not least, English public signs themselves can be a physical ending signal with the wording structure '*ZONE + ends (here)*' or '*End + ZONE*' used in various specific kinds of zones (such as school zone, lane zone, etc.), while Vietnamese counterparts, though in the similar wording and semantic structure, are only used for highway zones (3.5) as for the other kinds, mostly symbolic images are used with a big cross on to indicate "ending" and without it to indicate "beginning".

Table 4. Analysis of speech act/event 4: [Offering assistance]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
4.1. MENTIONING THE ADDRESSEES' INTERESTS AND SUGGESTING SOLUTIONS	*For questions or to report an incident, please call 410-436-3320*	
4.2. MENTIONING THE ADDRESSEES' PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTING SOLUTIONS	.	*Khi-gặp-sự cố-về-Internet, Hãy-gọi ngay: 18008119* ('When-having-problems-with-Internet-please-call:18008119')
4.3. SHOWING WILLINGNESS TO HELP AND SUGGESTING WAYS TO GET HELPED	*Do you need help?* *We can help* *Please call 540-344-8060* *Your safety is important to us. If you need to get up, use the call button for assistance.*	*Tổng đài-chăm sóc-khách hàng: 1800 1600. Chúng tôi-luôn-lắng nghe-và-trân trọng-ý kiến-của-khách hàng.* ('Phone service-caring-customers: 1800 1600. We-always-listen-and-respect-opinions-of-customers')

As shown from Table 4, English public signs are likely to offer assistance in cases of addressees wanting to know more about or do something (4.1), while Vietnamese ones tend to suggest solutions in cases of addressees having troubles (4.2). However, both English and Vietnamese public signs prefer to provide help with expressions of willingness (4.3).

Table 5. Analysis of speech act/event 5: [Announcing the inconveniences]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
5.1. EXPRESSING APOLOGY WITH A REASON	*We apologize for any inconvenience caused by the building construction* *We are temporarily closed, sorry for the inconvenience*	*Công trình-đang-thi công, chúng tôi-thành thật-xin lỗi-đã -làm cản trở-quý vị!* ('Building-under-construction, we-really-apologize-for-obstructing-you!')
5.2. ASKING FOR EMPATHY WITH A REASON	*Please excuse our appearance while we're under construction* *Please excuse our appearance. We are remodeling*	*Công trường-đang - thi công, xin lỗi-đã-làm phiền, mong-quý vị-thông cảm.* ('Building-under-construction, sorry-for-bothering, hope-you-empathize')

As shown from Table 5, there is no significant difference in the situations and their instantiations between English and Vietnamese public signs when they mean to announce the current inconveniences. The only difference that might be observed is that Vietnamese public signs usually take up asking for empathy right after the apologies, while in English public signs, apologizing and asking for empathy are not usually performed in the same situation.

Table 6. Analysis of speech act/event 6: [Giving moving directions]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
6.1. GUIDING THE ADDRESSEES ACCORDING TO THEIR INTERESTS	*South keep right* *West - left lane, East - right lane*	*TARGET* + (*mời đi lối này* 'please go this way) + *DIRECTION ARROW*
6.2. SHOWING THE WAY TO MOVE ON	*Enter here* *Sidewalk closed, Cross here/Use alternative route*	*TARGET/REASON* + (*mời đi lối này* 'please go this way) + *DIRECTION ARROW*

Table 6 shows the differences in the practs of English and Vietnamese public signs when they mean to give addressees moving directions. Specifically, the English items tend to be phrased as '*TARGET-DIRECTION*' (6.1) or '*MOVE + here*' (6.2), while the Vietnamese items mostly use arrow symbols to show the directions to the targets (e.g., Figure 2 and 3).

Figure 2. [Emergency Entrance]   **Figure 3.** [Pathway for staff only, please go this way]

Table 7. Analysis of speech act/event 7: [Restricting]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
7.1. ANNOUNCING THE AFFAIR WITHIN A LIMITED TIME PERIOD	*Buses may use shoulder 2pm-8pm, Mon-Fri*	*Khám-chữa-bệnh-vào-sáng-chủ nhật, 7h - 12h* ('Check-care-sickness-on-morning-Sunday, 7am – 12am')
7.2. ANNOUNCING THE ONLY OBJECTS ALLOWED	*Local traffic only* *Disabled badge holders only* *Reserved for church employees*	*Ghế-ưu tiên: Người già, Người bị thương, Phụ nữ có thai, Và trẻ nhỏ"* ('Seats-priority: Seniors, The injured, Pregnant women, And children')
7.3. ANNOUNCING THE OBJECTS NOT ALLOWED AND EXCEPTIONS	*No trucks except local deliveries*	(*SYMBOLIC IMAGE*: No cars) + *Xe buýt- được- phép- hoạt động* ('Bus-is-allowed-to run')
7.4. ANNOUNCING THE OBJECTS WITH LIMITED SCALES	*Speed limit 40* *2 hour parking*	(*SYMBOLIC IMAGE*) *Khu vực-dừng xe-không-quá-3 -phút* ('Area-parking-no-exceeding-3-minutes')
7.5. ANNOUNCING THE OBJECTS NOT PERMITTED FOR EXCEEDING THE ALLOWED MAXIMUM POINT	*Trucks over 2 tons excluded* *Trucks over 4 tons prohibited*	(*SYMBOLIC IMAGE*) *Cấm-xe tải-có-khối lượng-trên-1T* ('Prohibit-trucks-having-weight-over-1-ton')
7.6. NAMING THE TAGGED OBJECT WITH THE ONLY BENEFACTIVES ALLOWED	*Bike lane/ route/ path* *Staffroom*	*Nhà vệ sinh-Nam/ nữ* ('Restroom-male/ female') *Phòng-giáo viên* ('Room-teacher')

Table 7 presents some similarities and (marked) differences of English and Vietnamese public signs in providing some kinds of restrictive information. The similarities are that both English and Vietnamese items mean to restrict the access by showing the time range in which a specific affair can be handled (7.1), showing the permitted scales of the objects (7.4), prohibiting the objects exceeding the allowed scales (7.5) or limiting the people or things that are entitled to benefit from the object (7.6). The differences are that English public signs can express the access restriction with the structure '*BENEFACTIVES + only*' or '*Reserved for +* BENEFACTIVES', while Vietnamese counterparts express this with a list of eligible benefactives (7.2); in case of just one allowed, the only entitled person is mentioned alone on the sign (e.g., *Principal* means 'principal only'); and while English public signs frequently use words to convey some limit to the objects or their scales, the Vietnamese counterparts usually use symbolic images (7.3; 7.4; & 7.5) (e.g., Figure 4 and 5).

Figure 4. [(No cars) Bus is allowed to run]

Figure 5. [Speed limit 40]

The pragmatic cultural schema of PROMPTING

Reminding and *warning* might be the most common speech acts that are associated with the pragmatic cultural schema of PROMPTING encoded in both (American) English and Vietnamese public signs. Here are the analyses in which some differences in the pragmemes and practs are detected.

Table 8. Analysis of speech act/event 8: [Reminding]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
8.1. ANNOUNCING THE INACCESSIBLE OBJECTS	*Exterior restoration* *Waterproofing* *Interior renovation*	*Chú ý: Máy-đang-bảo trì, sửa chữa* ('Notice: Machine-under-maintenance, repair')
8.2. ANNOUNCING THE DISADVANTAGEOUS OBJECTS	*Dead-end* *Road narrow* *Gusty winds; Fog area; Icy*	*(SYMBOLIC IMAGE)* *(SYMBOLIC IMAGE)* .
8.3. ANNOUNCING THE UPCOMING OBSTACLES	*Red signal ahead* *Work zone ahead*	*(SYMBOLIC IMAGE)* *Phía trước-100M-Công trường* ('Ahead-100m-Work zone')
8.4. ANNOUNCING THE CONTINGENCIES	*School bus crossing* *Watch children* *Turtle May-August* . .	*(SYMBOLIC IMAGE)* *(SYMBOLIC IMAGE)* . *Đề phòng- kẻ gian móc túi* ('Watch out for-pickpockets') *Coi chừng-mất xe* ('Watch out for-motorbike thieves')
8.5. ANNOUNCING THE SUPERVISION	*Attention: parking lot under video surveillance* *Stay in lane, speed checked by radar*	*Khu vực-có-gắn-camera-an ninh* ('Area-having-attached-camera-security') *Đoạn đường-thường xuyên- bắn-tốc độ* ('Road-usually-check-speed')

It is quite clear from Table 8 that there are similarities in the situations where the speech act *reminding* is executed. In specific, both English and Vietnamese public signs refer to the inaccessible or supervised status of the objects (8.1 & 8.5) so that addressees may consider adjusting their plans or behaviors to fulfill their needs or interests related to the public places. On the other hand, the differences observed are that while English public signs favor wordings in mentioning some disadvantageous objects (8.2), upcoming obstacles (8.3) or contingencies (8.4) that might need more attention, the corresponding ones in Vietnam mostly utilize symbolic images (Figure 6, 7, 8 & 9) except for the situations of construction, in which words are often used with or without the attached images (8.3). Also, the objects mentioned in the signs are significantly different between the two cultures. For example, the disadvantageous objects on the road in English signs are often associated with weather problems while these are almost absent in Vietnamese ones; and while the former alert drivers to the possibility of crossing turtles, seals, deer or blind pedestrians, such contingencies are rare in the latter, which often mention cattle, children, crowded areas, pickpockets and motorbike/bike thieves (8.4).
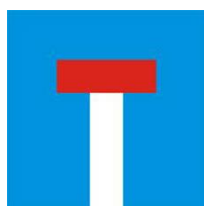
| **Figure 6.** | **Figure 7.** | **Figure 8.** | **Figure 9.** |
| [Dead end] | [Road narrow on left] | [Traffic signal ahead] | [Watch children] |

Table 9. Analysis of speech act/event 9: [Warning]

Pragmemes	**English practs (in the US)**	**Vietnamese practs**
9.1. MENTIONING THE OFFENSE AND THE PUNISHMENT	*Unpaid toll, subject to registration suspension* *Private property: no trespassing, violators will be prosecuted*	*Chạy-xe-quá-tốc độ-có thể-bị-phạt-tới-12-triệu-đồng* ('Driving-cars-over-speed-can-be-fined-up to-12-milion-dong')
9.2. ANNOUNCING THE DANGER	*Danger: Men working above* *Caution: Fall and Trip hazards* *Warning: Electrical hazard*	*Cẩn thận chó dữ* ('Watch angry dogs'); *Cảnh báo: khu vực nước sâu nguy hiểm, đề phòng đuối nước* (Caution: deep water area, beware of drowning')
9.3. MENTIONING ACCIDENT RECORDS	*128 persons have drowned in this lake* *Drive carefully, in memory of Anthony Tony Potter*	*Đoạn đường-hay-xảy ra-tai nạn-giao thông* ('On this road-often-occur-accident-traffic')

As can be seen from Table 9, there are many similarities in the situations as well as their practical language use through which the speech act *warning* is performed in both English and Vietnamese public signs. The differences which can be identified may lie in the contexts of each situation. For example, while punishment is likely to be mentioned in English public signs for various kinds of offense (such as *unpaid toll*, *engine brake*, *unauthorized parking*, *dumping*, *littering*, *not stop for crossing*, etc.), it seems limited and very often to the cases of *driving over speed or drunk*, *dumping* and *smoking* in Vietnamese counterparts (9.1), not to mention that the punishment itself varies between the two cultures, i.e. usually *registration suspension*, *tow-away*, *fine*, *the prosecution* in English items but just *paying fine* and *registration suspension* are attached in Vietnamese ones. Besides, while English public signs usually use words in any cases of danger (9.2) (with or without accompanying images), the corresponding Vietnamese items tend to utilize mostly symbolic images except for cases relating to *electricity*, *construction*, *guard dogs*, and *deep water area*, in which words will be included. Last but not least, the context to mention an accident record in Vietnamese public signs is mainly related to traffic while that in the English counterparts might be any (9.3), for example, a sign in a lab writes, "*Carol never wore her safety goggles, now she doesn't need them* (with the picture of the blind girl)" (Piqueen, 2018) to warn against neglecting the safety stuff when performing laboratory experiments.

The pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING

The pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING entrenched in (American) English and Vietnamese public signs encourages two typical speech acts/events, i.e., *asking addressees to take any action* and *asking addressees not to take any action*. Here are some discussions on their pragmemes and practs.

Table 10. Analysis of speech act/event 10: [Asking addressees to take an action]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
10.1. REQUESTING ADDRESSEES TO DO SOMETHING	*Please keep off the grass* *Please be courteous, take your personal call to the building lobby or outside*	*Vui lòng-tắt-máy-dẫn bộ* ('Please-turn off-motorbike-to walk it'); *Vui lòng-giữ-trật tự* ('Please-keep-silence')
10.2. COMMANDING ADDRESSEES TO DO SOMETHING	*All traffic must turn right* *Stop here on red* *High voltage, keep out!*	*Yêu cầu-đeo-dây đai-an toàn* ('Must-wear-belt-safety') *Dừng lại* ('Stop')

As shown in Table 10, there is no significant difference in the typical ask addressees to do something between English and Vietnamese public signs. For the more polite cases, the structure '*Please + DO*' in English and its corresponding '*Vui lòng + DO*' in Vietnamese are usually taken (10.1). For the more serious cases (such as danger or emergency), the actions can be required with a command (10.2).

Table 11. Analysis of speech act/event 11: [Asking addressees not to take any action]

Pragmemes	English practs (in the US)	Vietnamese practs
11.1. ANNOUNCING THE ABSENCE OF THE ACTION	*No parking anytime* *No smoking in this area*	*Khu vực-không-đậu xe* ('Area-no-parking')
11.2. ANNOUNCING THE ABSENCE OF THE OBJECT RELATED TO THE ACTION	*No trucks or buses* *No videos or photos allowed*	*Trường học-không-khói thuốc* ('School-no-cigarette-smoke')
11.3. SAYING THANKS FOR NOT TAKING THE ACTION	*Thank you for not smoking* *Thank you for not littering*	*Cám ơn-bạn-không-hút thuốc* ('Thank-you-not-smoking')
11.4. REQUESTING ADDRESSEES NOT TO DO SOMETHING	*Please do not drive or park on grass; Please do not block the driveway. Thank you*	*Xin-đừng-mang-túi-nilon-vào-rừng* ('Please-do not-bring-bags-plastic-into-jungles')
11.5. COMMANDING ADDRESSEES NOT TO DO SOMETHING	*Do not enter* *Do not block intersection* *Do not stand here*	*Không-kinh doanh, để xe-lấn chiếm-lòng lề-đường* ('Do not-sell, park-invading-main road-pavement-road')
11.6. PROHIBITING	*Discharge of firearms prohibited* *Recording, Photographing strictly prohibited*	*Cấm-xả rác* ('Prohibit-littering') *Cấm-đậu xe* ('Prohibit-parking')
11.7. PROHIBITING WITH LEGAL REFERENCES	*Loitering for the purpose of PANDHANDLING is prohibited by city code section 038/68B3* *Littering prohibited, State Law*	*Cấm-hút thuốc-khu vực-trong-nhà, Luật-phòng chống-tác hại -của-thuốc lá* ('Prohibit-smoking-areas-inside-building, Laws- preventing-effects-of-cigarettes')

As can be seen from Table 11, both English and Vietnamese public signs share the sense of desiring addressees not to do something when they inform them of the cases without such an action (11.1) or any object related to it (11.2). However, these situations of the speech act seem more often in English than in Vietnamese. A similar comment might be given on the case of expressing thanks to the addressees for the action they do not perform to imply that it is preferred they should not do it (11.3). According to Wierzbicka (1998), the structure '*No X*' and '*No X-ing*' in English public signs "imply rules rather than a prohibition" (p. 250) while '*Thank you for not X-ing*' is a mere "personal message" suggesting that the addresser wants something, not that the addressees "can't do something because of this" (p. 251). The above-mentioned cases, therefore, appear so implicit and friendly that they are favored in a large number of contexts in English public signs. For Vietnamese counterparts, such pragmemes might have been *imported* as a result of the profound language contact with English for a long time and are becoming a trend though still limited to a certain extent.

The similarities can also be observed in cases of requesting (11.4), commanding (11.5) and prohibiting (11.6 & 11.7). However, one significant difference here is that the command and the prohibition in Vietnamese public signs appear on a more regular basis compared to their English counterparts (11.6). Also, the prohibition can be encountered very often in Vietnamese public signs with or without the references to law or legal authority, while the same case in English ones tends to include the legal sources (11.7). The explanation for this might be that commanding and prohibiting acts are closely associated with the Vietnamese pragmatic cultural schema of COMPELLING, which encourages one to tell others not to do things that are dangerous or against laws or ethics, sometimes for the sake of their own benefits. In English, the schema only inspires a command or a prohibition in cases of danger, anti-social behaviors or granted authority; otherwise, the acts may seem odd (Wierzbicka, 1998, p. 250).

Discussion

Cultural conceptualizations in public signs and a glance at some other speech communities

The article has conducted a contrastive analysis of American English and Vietnamese public signs in which the pragmatic cultural schemas of DIRECTING, PROMPTING and COMPELLING are entrenched as "pools of knowledge to understand the enactment and uptake of speech acts" (Sharifian, 2017, p. 52). The results show that the schemas in both languages activate the same speech acts manifested in public signs; the differences lie in the following aspects concerning their pragmemes and practs, which can be explained with the cultural conceptualizations encoded in the language of each community.

First, to indicate the ending point of territory, American English public signs usually announce a departure (e.g., *You are now leaving X*), while Vietnamese ones usually say goodbye and wish the leavers safety on the road. The rationale is that the PROGRESSIVE PRESENCE IS PERCEIVED AS A FUTURE FACT in standard English (Leech, 2004, p. 61), which is supposed to be "irregular occurrence" or "distinguished prediction" (Calver, 1946, p. 325), and is mostly

equivalent to what can be inferred from the inversion form of the simple presence (Bolinger, 1947, p. 434), i.e., *You are now leaving X* is understood as 'you will actually leave X' or 'Away X you go!', which indicates not only the certain upcoming information but also the "sadness" mood of the place as a human being that witnesses the visitors leaving. Although such conceptualizations are shared in almost all English communities, the pragmeme of ANNOUNCING THE DEPARTURE characterizes the signs of border-ending indication in the US, but not those in the UK and Australia, which prefer SAYING THANKS (e.g., *Thank you for visiting X*). The pregame is also absent in Vietnamese public signs, which rather relate the activities of driving or walking on the road to the "farewell" concept (e.g., *Chúc quý khách thượng lộ bình an* 'wish you to drive on the road safely').

Second, the tagged objects in American English public signs are more active in "keeping" and "handling" things (*X stops here*) as well as representing the boundaries (*X begins here*; *X ends here*; *Begin/End X*), while those in Vietnamese counterparts play as places (*Here exists X*; *Do X here*) or names (*X-entrance/exit*) rather than actors. The cultural conceptualization underlying this is that THE PRESENT PLACE ('HERE') IS MORE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THINGS/EVENTS in American English than in Vietnamese public signs. More evidence for this can be found in the use of '*X stops here*' as a fixed construction originating from the famous expression in the US '*the buck stops here*, which means the responsibility ('the buck') will be taken in this place without being passed to anyone or anywhere else. Therefore, the structure '*X stops here*' is impossible without 'here' as a place where things and events will occur or be handled, while the equivalent of 'here' in Vietnamese public signs is an optional element that is used according to the addressers' intentions (see Table 1, pragmeme 1.4). Besides, the current place of public signs ('here' or the tagged object itself) is more often perceived as a boundary indicator (especially the starting point) in the US than in the UK and Australia, but not in Vietnam, where the boundaries are recognized with the tagged names as 'entrance' or 'exit', and also very limited to the highway contexts.

Third, command and prohibition are sensitive in American English public signs (as well as those of Anglo cultures) since they are mostly taken in cases of danger or granted authority, while the corresponding cases in Vietnamese items are encouraged to a large extent as a common way to prevent behaviors against the law, ethics, safety and one's wishes. The findings have contributed significantly to the understanding of COMPELLING schema in various speech communities. For example, the cultural conceptualization underlying the act of asking one to take or not to take an action in British English public signs is that EVERYTHING IS REQUESTED FOR OBVIOUS REASONS (e.g. *In the interests of Y/ For Y, the public are requested to/not to X*, Raddatz, 1995); in Chinese public signs, the act is performed based on the cultural conceptualization that THINGS ARE LIVING AND DESERVE MUTUAL RESPECT (e.g. *Y is smiling/sleeping, please X*, Hu, 2016); in German public signs, THE ACTIONS REQUIRED ARE INCLUDED IN REGULATIONS (e.g. *X is allowed/prohibited/not permitted*; *one must/must not X*, Wierzbicka, 1998); in American English public signs, the act is taken with the belief that THINGS ARE REQUIRED AS RULES OR PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS RATHER THAN PROHIBITION (e.g.

No X-ing; Thank you for not X-ing; *Please X*, Wierzbicka, 1998); and in Vietnamese public signs, the act can be carried out as a request (e.g. *Please X*), a command (e.g. *Do not X*), or a prohibition (e.g. *Prohibit X*) in various contexts without much restriction, usually depending on the relationship between the addressers and the addressees, for the purpose of TELLING ONE TO FOLLOW THE LAWS, THE SAFETY RULES, THE SHARED ETHICS AND THE OTHERS' EXPECTATIONS.

Last but not least, such contents as weather matters, crossing blind pedestrians, wild animals, car tow, and prosecution are common in reminders and warnings of American English public signs (and also of British English and Australian English) but almost absent in Vietnamese ones which usually mention cattle, guard dogs, thieves, and deepwater areas, not to mention that the pragmemes associated with restricted contents, disadvantageous objects, and contingencies are usually realized with wordings in American English public signs but usually with symbolic images in Vietnamese counterparts. Besides, such pragmemes as GIVING URGENT HELP and MENTIONING ACCIDENT RECORDS are not only more often but also of more various contexts in American English public signs than in Vietnamese ones, except for THE ZERO DISTANCE TO DESTINATIONS and THE CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN OBJECTS AND THEIR STATUS, which appear in the opposite direction. These mainly reflect the differences in the nature of geography and social customs of the two speech communities that should be highlighted for intercultural communication (Lado, 1957; Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Implications for the English translation of public signs in Vietnam

The study results may allow translating public signs from Vietnamese (L1) into English (L2) (assumed from the American backgrounds) with the optional focus on either the source language (to show and conserve the native identity) or the target language (to make it familiar to the English-speaking visitors, especially those from the US), or even some hybridity that can reflect both cultures.

In case of L1 being attended to, English is just a tool to encode Vietnamese cultural schemas and pragmemes, that is, although the wording is in English (grammar and vocabulary), the signs are actually written in the way that most Vietnamese people will find familiar (e.g. *Wish you safety on the road*). However, some aspects may be affected by the English counterparts as a result of the language contact so much so that they seem unlikely to be translated in the completely L1 sense. For example, the public signs such as '*Không được X*' ('Do not *X*') or '*Cấm X*' ('Prohibit *X*') are ubiquitous in Vietnamese but tend to be translated into English as '*Please do not X*' or '*No X*', '*No X-ing*'; also, the object-status signs such as '*Bàn đã đặt*' ('Table reserved') or '*Hết vé*' ('Sold-out tickets') will be often translated into English as '*Reserved*' and '*Sold out*'.

In case of L2 being concerned, it is advisable that the English pragmemes and their instantiations should be carefully noticed beforehand and should be strictly followed, while some differences in comparison with Vietnamese should also be acknowledged to prevent some negative interferences they may cause during the translation. For example, although the

Vietnamese formulations of the practs for indicating the tagged object as the starting or ending point of a territory (pragmeme 2.2 & 3.5) is limited to highway contexts, many others should not be ignored when translated into English. This might be a good chance for some cultural conceptualizations embedded in Vietnamese public signs to be reconstructed so that the pragmemes can be updated with more objects, situations and formulations involved in practs.

In the case of creating a hybrid translation, different pragmemes and their practs based on the pragmatic cultural schemas of both languages can be used together at the same sphere. For example, the hybrid sign like '*Now leaving Ho Chi Minh city. Wish you safety on the road. See you again soon*' is constructed on the common knowledge of farewell associated with territory separation from both English and Vietnamese; besides, the public signs with only symbolic images in Vietnam may include explanatory wording in English as a translation. According to Fludernik (1998, p. 13), such hybridity is not just a mixture of the two cultures but rather a "third place" where the two parties affect each other and the hybridization as well so that their experience, knowledge instantiated in the language meaning and use will be constantly cross-understood and updated.

Conclusion

Overall, this study is successful, to a certain extent, in interpreting and contrasting the American English and Vietnamese use in public signs from the perspectives of cultural linguistics and pragmatics. The results show that both American English and Vietnamese pragmatic cultural schemas trigger the same speech acts expressed in public signs. The differences are notified in the pragmemes related to territory indication, restriction, reminding, warning, command, and prohibition; also in the formulation and enactment of the practs. However, the study results are not meant to describe how all the public signs in American English and Vietnamese present, but rather to detect certain norms that are familiar to people of the speech communities no matter how conscious they are of these (Wierzbicka, 1998, p. 245). Sharifian (2017, pp. 60-61) also notes that a speech community member can choose a certain pragmeme with certain related practs based on the shared cultural schemas, but in fact, not all components of a cultural schema are understood in the way they are in the overall system. Given that, the study has finally made a positive contribution to the strategies of public sign translation from Vietnamese into English (based on the American assumptions) with a systematic background of pragmatic cultural factors. More research into public signs and their translation should be done on a larger scale and/or within many other languages so that the approach can be confirmed and updated with more significant findings.

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