

# Conceptual Metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS in Vietnamese Advertisements: An Analysis From National Cultural and Historical Approach

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**Abstract**—The study aims to explore the use of the conceptual metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS in Vietnamese advertisements and analyze its nature from the national cultural and historical approach. Three research methods have been used to accomplish these aims, specifically discourse analysis, statistical analysis and categorization on the basis of a linguistic corpus consisting of 200 Vietnamese advertisements collected from different means of media, including newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, billboards, leaflet for 12 categories of products such as food and drinks, electronics and home appliances, mobile phones, cosmetics, real estate and resorts, telecommunications services, etc. The research findings demonstrate that the metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS is used extensively in Vietnamese advertisements; its mappings are constructed on the two domains of PRODUCTS and WARRIORS. Not all the aspects of the source domain are mapped but only the most distinctive ones, including *missions of warriors, strengths and powers of warriors, weapons used in the fight, tactics used in the battle, victory gained by warriors and battlefields*. The six corresponding aspects of the target domain are *functions, impacts on users, nature, operations, superior values of products and areas that products function on*. The study also provides some general analysis of this metaphor based on the typical historical and cultural characteristics of Vietnam.

**Index Terms**—advertisements, conceptual metaphor, mappings, products, warriors

## I. INTRODUCTION

In 1980, with their legendary book titled *Metaphors We Live by*, Lakoff and Johnson “revolutionized” the linguistic research arena by introducing a new view of metaphor that challenged all the aspects of the powerful traditional theory, laying the grounds for the development of cognitive linguistics that is still thriving nowadays. Under the traditional view, metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon which is used by language talents for artistic and rhetorical purposes; under the cognitive view, metaphor is “a property of concepts, not of words and often used effortlessly in everyday life by ordinary people” and “metaphor is an inevitable process of human thought and reasoning” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

The cognitive view of metaphor has drawn the attention of numerous scholars as research on metaphors opens the door to exploring how humans see the world (Johnson, 1987). Researchers have identified the use of metaphors in various aspects of life, which consolidates the view developed by Lakoff and Johnson that “metaphor is conceptual in nature. It ceases to be the sole device of creative literary imagination; it becomes a valuable cognitive tool without which neither poets nor you and I as ordinary people could live” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

As a conceptual device, metaphors manifest themselves in many ways other than linguistics. Kövecses (2010) identifies 13 most common non-linguistic realizations of metaphors, including movies and acting, cartoons, drawing, sculpture, etc., of which advertisements rank third. He claims that a major manifestation of conceptual metaphors are advertisements as “part of the selling power of an advert depends on how well chosen the conceptual metaphor is. An appropriately selected metaphor may work wonders in promoting the sale of an item” (Kövecses, 2010).

Numerous studies have been conducted on advertising, exploring the communication effects of metaphors (Baek, 2008; Li & Guo, 2016; Svaziene, 2010; Yu, 2009; Zhang & Gao, 2009), expressions of metaphors in advertising discourses (Ruiz, 2006; Yu, 2009; Svaziene, 2010; Agnes, 2009; Morris & Waldman, 2011; Ngũ, 2010; Hãng, 2012; Tuấn, 2010), the variations of metaphors in accordance with cultures (Morris & Waldman, 2011; Li & Rodriguez, 2015; Li & Guo, 2006). In this study, we focus on one commonly-found metaphor in Vietnamese adverts: PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS. We aim to identify the linguistic expressions of this metaphor, discuss how the source domain

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WARRIORS helps to clarify the attributes of the target domain PRODUCTS, measure the frequency of this metaphor and briefly explain it from the national cultural and historical approach.

## II. THEORETICAL GROUNDS

### A. Conceptual Metaphors and Related Concepts

Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 2003, p. 5) define *conceptual metaphors* as “conceptualizing a domain in terms of another”. Kövecses (2010, p. 6) gives a more technical definition of conceptual metaphors as “a systematic set of correspondences between two domains of experience” so as to understand the concept more easily and effectively.

There are two domains in the conceptual metaphors. The domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another domain is called the *source domain* while the one which is understood through the use of the source domain is the *target domain*. The source domain is usually concrete, visible and familiar in human mind (such as JOURNEY, WAR, PLANT, etc.) while the target domain is often abstract, invisible and still novel to people’s experience (like LIFE, DESIRES, POLITICS, etc.). That way, the target domain becomes more comprehensible to readers. The set of systematic correspondences between the source and the target in a sense that constituent conceptual elements of the target domain correspond to constituent elements of the source domain is referred to as *mappings*.

It should be noted that not all aspects of the target domain are mapped onto the corresponding ones in the source domain but only some. When a source domain is applied to the target, only some aspects of the target are brought into focus, creating the so-called *metaphorical highlighting*, those that are not activated create *hiding*. For instance, ARGUMENT IS WAR highlights the conflicts of the arguments (He won the argument; I can’t protect my view, etc.) but hides the ordered and organized development of the arguments, which is focused in ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (We will move up steps and steps; We have gained many reasons, etc.). The highlighting and hiding form the *partial mapping* between the two domains.

One key point about the nature of conceptual metaphors is that as a means of reasoning, metaphors are closely linked with culture, reflecting the main values of the culture where they are formed (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). This is why conceptual metaphors keep drawing attention of many researchers as investigating them from national cultural and historical approach facilitates our understanding about how humans perceive the world.

### B. Advertising and Conceptual Metaphors in Advertising Discourses

Kotler and Armstrong (2012) define advertising as “a non-personal presentation of goods, services, or ideas aimed at a mass audience” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012, p. 58). Advertising communicates to customers the unique features of products in order to persuade them to buy.

From linguistic perspectives, advertising is a special form of communication – a one-way communication channel from advertisers to customers. Therefore, in order to promote sales, advertising discourses must create strong-enough linguistic force to motivate customers to make buying decisions. To this end, advertising discourses usually register an extensive use of rhetorical devices (Cook, 2006).

There have been many studies on conceptual metaphors in advertisements in different aspects. Regarding the *communication effects*, researchers agree that the use of metaphors makes the advertising messages short and quite incomprehensible at first, but this is what keeps audience trying to work out the message, thereby remembering the product (Li & Guo, 2016; Zhang & Gao, 2009), more impressive and attractive (Yu, 2009), creates positive attitudes towards advertised products, especially with hedonic products (Baek, 2008) and metaphor can act as “a heavy weapon” that can “brainwash” and keep readers’ attention (Svaziene, 2010).

As for the *impacts of cultures on metaphors*, researchers have demonstrated two opposite schools of thought. Some believe that cultural differences result in differences in the use of metaphors (Morris & Waldman, 2011; Li & Rodriguez, 2015) while others argue that in nature, metaphors are conceptual and reflect the way humans see the world, so there is no significant difference no matter where they live as they people everywhere share similar living experience (Li & Guo, 2006).

The *expressions of metaphors* in advertisements report the biggest number of studies with multiple metaphors being identified (Ruiz, 2006; Yu, 2009; Svaziene, 2010; Agnes, 2009; Morris & Waldman, 2011; Ngür, 2010; Hång, 2012; Tuán, 2010). Some common metaphors include EATING IS A DESTRUCTOR, KNOWING IS SEEING, HUMANS ARE ANIMALS, LIFE IS A SUBSTANCE, DESIRES ARE A SUBSTANCE, PRODUCTS ARE A SUBSTANCE; some common source domains are PHYSICAL CLOSENESS, FRIENDS, JOURNEYS, EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE, HEAT, PHYSICAL DESIRES, GOODNESS AND HAPPINESS, FOOD, HEALTH, etc. Very few studies have identified metaphors with PRODUCTS as the target domain, among which are BRANDS ARE VALUABLE FORCES, BRANDS ARE CONTAINERS, BRANDS ARE COMPANIONS, BRANDS ARE MOTIONS. This modest number motivates our study on a particular conceptual metaphor that is used quite extensively in Vietnamese advertisements: PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS.

### C. Overview of Vietnam’s Culture and History

Vietnam is located on the eastern edge of mainland Southeast Asia with an area of 331,212 square kilometres and a population of over 100 million people.

To analyze the formation of conceptual metaphors from the cultural approach, this study chooses Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension model as this model investigates cultures of 90 countries via cultural indexes to present overall comparisons of different cultures in the world. The model originally shows 4 cultural dimensions and some distinctive features of Vietnam's culture are briefly presented as follows.

The first one is *power distance* index (PDI), which describes the extent to which the less powerful members of an organization accept that power can be distributed unequally. Vietnam scores 70 out of 100 in PDI, indicating a high hierarchy between people of different social classes. Therefore, in communication, Vietnamese people are supposed to pay attention to hierarchy, resulting in their habits of expressing opinions less directly, a kind of "beating around the bush" rather than going straight to the point like what Westerners usually do in a culture with a lower PDI.

The second dimension is *individualism* (IDV), which measures "the level one feels independent rather than interdependent as a member of the community," as opposed to *collectivism*. The IDV index of Vietnam is 20 out of 100, indicating that Vietnam has a highly collectivist society where people attach higher importance to goals and well-beings of the group. From linguistic perspectives, people in a collectivist society tend to be more indirect in their verbal communication.

The third one is *uncertainty avoidance index* (UAI), which reflects the extent to which members of the society tend to cope with their anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. Vietnam has a low UAI of 30, which means that people accept and feel comfortable in unstructured situations or changeable environments and try to have as few rules as possible. They are more likely to accept different views and more open to discussions.

The last index is *masculinity* (MAS) vs. *femininity*, which looks at how much a society values traditional masculine and feminine roles. Vietnam has a quite low MAS score of 40 out of 100, which indicates that Vietnam has a feminist culture, in which people prioritize harmony and emotion while avoid conflicts in communication. From linguistic views, people from a feminist culture often consider the use of words cautiously to avoid hurting others, therefore tend to use descriptive language, rather than choosing technical terms, to express their ideas.

Regarding the history, Vietnam has a long-lasting history which can be traced back to 20,000 years ago. In its historical development, the country has gone through many wars, noticeably the wars against different Chinese empires in the feudalism time (with the total length of approximately 1000 years), the French colonists from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1954, then Americans from 1955 to 1975. The country gained its independence in 1975, starting a new era of national unity and freedom.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

Three research methods are used in this study, including discourse analysis, statistical analysis and categorization. Discourse analysis helps to identify the conceptual metaphor in the sampled advertisements, statistical analysis helps to quantify the use of the metaphor in the corpus while categorization helps to classify the metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS into sub-groups according to its mappings.

The corpus used for this research is 200 Vietnamese advertisements with a total length of 9,670 words. These advertisements are collected from different media, including newspapers, magazines, leaflets, billboards, TV and radio, promoting different kinds of products. The advertisements are chosen for the research via the quota sampling method, i.e. choosing advertisements randomly but making sure that the number of advertisements in different groups of products is somewhat similar. For the ease of our research, only verbal advertisements are chosen rather than just-visual-and-audio ones. Collected advertisements are downloaded, transcribed into manuscripts, labelled from V1 to V200 and classified into 12 groups of products and services, including food and drinks (with 21 adverts), electronics and home appliances (16), mobile phones and telecommunication services (15), vehicles (16), chemical and cosmetic products (20), real-estate and resorts (15), finance – banking – insurance (15), healthcare services and medicines (15), fashion (15), construction and interior (21), education and training (15) and air travel and tourism (16). Examples presented in the study are translated *literally* by the researchers from Vietnamese to English to illustrate how the metaphorical lexical units and expressions work in the native language.

To identify the metaphors, the researchers use the metaphor identification procedure proposed by the Pragglejaz Group with 4 steps as follows: (1) Read the advertisements to get a general understanding of the meaning; (2) Determine the lexical units in the advertisements; Identify the contextual meaning of each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context; (3) Identify the potential metaphorically-used lexical units, determine if they fit in the source and target domains; (4) If yes, mark the lexical units and expressions as metaphorical.

### IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS is used quite extensively in the sampled corpus. It is found in 41 advertisements (accounting for 20.5%) with 52 metaphorical expressions via 31 metaphorical lexical units which appear 93 times.

PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS is constructed from two domains: the source domain is WARRIORS and the target one is PRODUCTS. According to Wikipedia, a warrior is "a person specializing in combat or warfare, especially within

the context of a tribal or clan-based warrior culture society that recognizes a separate warrior aristocracy, class, or caste.” As warriors seem to have been present since the earliest pre-state societies, this source domain is very familiar to humans, particularly to people in a country that has gone through various battles and wars in its formation and development history like Vietnam. In the meantime, the target domain PRODUCTS, although not something abstract and invisible but tangible and concrete, is considered to be new to customers’ experience. Therefore, using the familiarity of the source domain to map onto the target one helps to make features of the advertised product, even when it is still new in the market, clear and comprehensible to customers.

The source domain owns some typical attributes: a warrior is associated with power, fighting, weapons, tactics, battlefield, victory, injuries, sacrifice/death, enemy, loss, failure, etc. but not all of these attributes are mapped onto the target domain. An investigation of the research sample shows that only some aspects which depict positive images of the warrior in his fight (including missions, power, tactics, victory, battlefield, weapons) are highlighted while others conveying the quite negative images like failure, loss, injuries, death are hidden. This is rational since advertising discourses normally aim to impress the audience via positive ideas, making them satisfied with and more likely to buy the product. This also reflects the nature of partial mapping that has been recorded in theories of conceptual metaphors as presented earlier.

In total, there are 6 aspects of the source domain of WARRIORS activated and mapped onto the target domain of PRODUCTS and numerous metaphorical lexical units and expressions identified in the 200 surveyed advertisements. The mappings and metaphorical lexical units of the metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS, together with some examples of metaphorical expressions, are presented in Tables 1 and 2 in the following pages.

TABLE 1  
MAPPINGS OF THE METAPHOR PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS IN VIETNAMESE ADVERTISEMENTS

Source domain WARRIORS		Target domain PRODUCTS	Sample metaphorical expressions
Missions of warriors in the fights	→	Functions of products	... <i>bảo vệ bạn khỏi vi khuẩn</i> ... [... <i>protect you from bacteria</i> ...]
Strength and power of warriors	→	Impacts of products on users	<i>Uy lực dũng mãnh</i> , hiệu quả tức thì [Super power, immediate effects!]
Weapons warriors use in the fights	→	The nature of products	... <i>lá chắn vững chắc</i> cho thị ân thần của bạn [ <i>a firm shield</i> for your angels]
Tactics warriors use in the battles	→	Operations and functions of products	... <i>tuyên phòng ngự vững chắc</i> cho hoạt động tài chính của bạn [ <i>a strong defense</i> for your financial transactions...]
Victory warriors gain in the fight	→	Superior values of products	Sunlight – <i>Khử sạch</i> mùi tanh khó chịu! [Sunlight – <i>Kill off</i> disgusting fishy smell on your plates]
Battlefield on which warriors fight	→	Areas that products function on	Vũ khí của bạn trong <i>trận chiến</i> với nếp nhăn [Your weapon in the battle against wrinkles]

Source: the researchers’ collection from sampled corpus

NOTE: the expressions are literally translated into English by the researchers and put in pairs of square brackets

TABLE 2  
 LEXICAL UNITS OF THE METAPHOR PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS IN VIETNAMESE ADVERTISEMENTS

Aspects of source domain	Lexical units	No. of occurrences
Missions of warriors	Đẩy lùi [push back]	1
	Đánh bật [remove]	1
	Xua tan [dispel]	1
	Thách thức [challenge]	1
	Chinh phục [conquer]	4
	Tiên phong [lead the troops]	5
	Ngăn ngừa [prevent]	3
	Bảo vệ [protect]	13
	Tăng cường [strengthen]	4
	Kiểm soát [control]	3
	Đề phòng [guard against]	1
<i>Total occurrence (11)</i>	<i>37</i>	
Strength and power of warriors	Uy phong, Uy lực [power]	3
	Sức mạnh [strength]	11
	Manh mẽ, Hùng mạnh, Dũng mãnh [strong]	10
	<i>Total occurrence (6)</i>	<i>24</i>
Tactics used by warriors	Chiến lược [strategies]	1
	Hợp lực [join forces]	2
	Phòng thủ [defense]	4
	Tấn công [attack]	6
	<i>Total occurrence (4)</i>	<i>13</i>
Victory gained by warriors	Tiêu diệt, Khử [kill off]	5
	Hạ gục [knock out]	1
	Chiến thắng [victory, win]	2
	Đánh bại [defeat]	3
	<i>Total occurrence (5)</i>	<i>11</i>
Battlefield on which warriors fight	Trận chiến [battle]	1
	Chiến trường [battlefield]	1
	Tiền tuyến [battlefront]	1
	<i>Total occurrence (3)</i>	<i>3</i>
Weapons used by warriors	Lá chắn [shield]	3
	Vũ khí [weapon]	2
	<i>Total occurrence (2)</i>	<i>5</i>

Source: the researchers' collection from sampled corpus

NOTE: the lexical units are literally translated into English by the researchers and put in pairs of square brackets

Of the 6 aspects of the source domain that are mapped onto the target one, missions of warriors is the mostly-widely used, creating the metaphor FUNCTIONS OF PRODUCTS ARE MISSIONS OF WARRIORS. It is found in 23 advertisements (making up 11.5%) with 11 lexical units appearing 37 times in the sample. The typical missions of a warrior like dispelling and pushing back enemies, leading the troops, conquering the targets, protecting people's safety, etc. are mapped onto the functions of the advertised product, helping readers visualize how product can help them in their life more easily. For example,

- (1) Cùng chia sẻ. Thêm gắn bó. Vượt gian khó. Đến thành công. Tienphong Bank – vững bước *tiên phong*. [Sharing things. Getting connected. Overcoming difficulties. Reaching success. Tienphong Bank – *Leading the Troops*] (V36)
- (2) Kem Nivea Q10 Plus: *Đẩy lùi* mọi dấu hiệu lão hóa [Nivea Q10 Plus Cream: *Pushing back* all signs of aging] (V93)
- (3) Khi mệt mỏi, uống một viên Enervon C mỗi ngày. Enervon với Vitamin nhóm B và 500mg vitamin C hỗ trợ tăng đề kháng và *xua tan* mệt mỏi. [When you are tired, take one Enervon C a day. Enervon with Vitamin B and 500 mg vitamin C helps to increase immunity and *dispel* tiredness] (V138)
- (4) Không chỉ làm sạch và chăm sóc như kem đánh răng thông thường, kem đánh răng dược liệu Ngọc Châu với thành phần dược liệu, vitamin và muối giúp chăm sóc và *bảo vệ* răng lợi từ gốc, *ngăn ngừa* vi khuẩn, tụt lợi, chảy máu chân răng, *phòng* sâu răng, đau răng hiệu quả. Kem đánh răng dược liệu Ngọc Châu – *khử* mùi tốt, giúp răng trắng sáng tự nhiên [Not just cleaning and providing care like other kinds of toothpaste, Ngọc Châu herbal toothpaste with herbal ingredients, vitamin and salt helps to care and *protect* teeth in their roots, *prevent* gingivitis, tooth bleeding, *guards against* tooth decay and pain effectively. Ngọc Châu herbal toothpaste – *kills* bad smell, whitens teeth naturally] (V86)

As cited in the Defense Strategies Group, a warrior is a person of war who specializes in warfare and has the skills and tactics to engage in combat. Warriors exist to protect a nation, borders, and the lives of others, so they take typical missions of protecting and safeguarding their people, preventing threats to national territorial integrity, fighting against enemies. These typical missions can be seen clearly in the actions that the advertised products are claimed to take. In V36, the bank *leads the troops* in a fight against enemies, which are difficulties that customers are facing in their life; In V93 and V138, the two warriors – Nivea cream and Enervon C pills – are attempting to *push back* and *dispel* the enemies of aging and tiredness; In V86, with its special features, the toothpaste helps to prevent and guard against the

attacks of pains and diseases to customers and bring them a healthy life. To people of Vietnam, the country that has gone through many wars in its formation and development history, what duties warriors take in the fights and what they have done to the country is highly familiar. The use of this metaphor therefore not only urges customers to associate this image with what products can bring to them but also makes the advertising discourses more impressive and meaningful, thereby creating better communication effects for the advertisements. From linguistic perspectives, a large number of words used to refer to one concept partly results from the feminist culture of Vietnam, where people tend to use descriptive language to discuss one matter.

In order to win a fight, warriors need to possess strengths and power; this attribute of warriors is utilized to create the metaphor IMPACTS OF PRODUCTS ON USERS ARE STRENGTHS AND POWER OF WARRIORS, which is identified in 9 advertisements (representing 4.5%). This is the second most popular sub-metaphor related to this source domain in the researched advertisements. It is constructed via 6 metaphorical units appearing 24 times in the surveyed corpus. Some typical illustrations are:

- (5) *Sức mạnh siêu nhân* ZEO tiêu diệt các loại vi khuẩn, đánh bay các vết bẩn cứng đầu. Hương táo đỏ Anh Quốc sẽ lưu lại trên quần áo và bùng tỏa hương thơm theo từng cử động của bạn. [Extra-ordinary strength of ZEO kills all kinds of bacteria, defeat all kinds of dirt. The fragrance of British red apples stays on your clothes and flies with every of your actions] (V91).
- (6) Giới thiệu Omo mới với *sức mạnh* từ các hạt năng lượng xoay giúp thấm sâu và đánh bật các loại vết bẩn khó cứng chỉ trong một lần giặt [Introducing new Omo with the strength from rotating power particles that penetrate and defeat all types of long-lasting dirt in just one turn of wash] (V90)
- (7) Ai cũng có thể tỏa sáng... nếu bạn dám vượt qua mọi giới hạn..., sáng tạo để khác biệt..., phá vỡ mọi quy tắc... *Uy lực* như mãnh hổ. Đó là cách tôi đưa điện ảnh Việt Nam ra thế giới. Tiger - Đánh thức bản lĩnh. [Everyone can shine. If you dare to cross all limits... innovate to differentiate..., break all rules. Powerful like a tiger. This is how I bring Vietnamese movies to the world. Tiger – Wake up your will] (V20).

In these advertisements, products are depicted as very powerful warriors who can tackle various problems via their incredible strength: a kind of washing powder that can defeat all dirt (V90, V91) or a type of beer that can bring powerful feeling to users (V20). In the mind of Vietnamese people, warriors are associated with power and strength that have helped them to combat and win the wars to gain national independence and protect territorial integrity. By mapping the typical attributes of the source domain (power and strength of warriors) to those of the target domain (the strong impacts that products have to help customers solve their problems), the advertisements help customers understand the values that products bring to them more clearly. Viewing the use of words from cultural approach, the use of a great variety of words (six ones) to refer to a sole concept (power and strength) partly illustrates the features of a feminist culture, in which people opt for detailed expressions of the concept rather than choosing just one accurate term.

Another metaphor identified in the sample is HOW PRODUCTS WORK IS TACTICS OF WARRIORS. In the battle, tactics are “the art of moving soldiers and military equipment around during a battle or war in order to use them in the most effective way” (Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary). In order to win the battle, warriors need to deploy some tactics, generally classified into two groups of attacking and defending. A wise tactic contributes to greater chances of victory. In the 200 Vietnamese advertisements, we find 4 metaphorical lexical units used 13 times in 9 advertisements, making up 6.5%. Of the 4 lexical units, two refer to general tactics (attacking and defending), 1 refers to a more specific one (joining forces) while another covers the use of tactics in the fight (strategies). Some examples are follows:

- (8) Khi bị đau lưng, đau cơ, đã có Alaxan. Với tác động *hợp lực* của Ibuprofen và Paracetamol – giảm nhanh cơn đau hiệu quả. Alaxan – Tác động *hợp lực* giảm đau nhanh [When you have pains in your back or muscle, use Alaxan. With the effects of joint forces from Ibuprofen and Paracetamol, your pain declines quickly. Alaxan – joint force effects to reduce pains quickly] (V137)
- (9) Khi mối tấn công, gỗ sẽ yếu đi. Ngôi nhà của bạn sẽ lung lay. Cuộc sống sẽ bất ổn. Starclean – *chủ động tấn công*, phòng ngừa mối mọt, cho ngôi nhà của bạn thêm vững chắc! [When termites attack, wood worsens. Your house will be shaky. Your life will be unstable. Starclean – actively attacks, prevents termites, making your house stay firm] (V170)

In V137, with its joint-force effect, Alaxan – a pain reliever – helps to reduce the pains that customers are suffering very rapidly while in V170, Starclean – an insect-killing chemical – uses the tactic of attacking enemies directly to win instant victory. Via the use of these metaphorical words, advertisers promote readers to link the chances of gaining successes via smart tactics with the chances of getting benefits if they choose to buy the advertised products.

Another metaphor found in Vietnamese advertisements is SUPERIOR VALUES OF PRODUCTS ARE VICTORY THAT WARRIORS GAIN IN THE FIGHT, which appears in 7 advertisements (accounting for 3.5%) through 5 metaphorical lexical units which depict the glories that warriors achieve in the battles by *killing off* and *knocking out* all enemies to *win* or gain *victory*. These 5 units are used 11 times in the researched advertisements. Here are the examples:

- (10) Nước rửa chén Sunlight - *Khử sạch* mùi tanh khó chịu. *Đánh bay* dầu mỡ với tinh chất từ thiên nhiên [Sunlight dish washing liquid – Killing off all disgusting smell. Defeating fat and oil by natural essence] (V81)

- (11) B ình xịt côn trùng Mostfly AIK XP, hương cam ngọt ng ù. *Hạ gục* nhanh muỗi, kiến, gián. Dũng sĩ diệt muỗi v à c ãn trùng. [Mostfly AIK XP mosquito spray with sweet orange aroma. *Knocking out* mosquitoes, ants and cockroaches immediately. Warriors in the fight against mosquitoes and insects. (V78)

As shown in Table 2, when referring to victory, Vietnamese advertisers tend to use words that describe actions which lead to victory (*kill off, knock out, defeat*) rather than the direct word referring to the victory itself (*win* and *victory* appear only two times in the sample). The less specific expressions of Vietnamese people partly root from its feminist and collectivist culture where people are more likely to choose less certain ways to express their opinions.

In a fight, warriors need to make use of their weapon to increase their chances of getting victory. Various weapons can be used, ranging from the traditional like bows and arrows, shields, spears, words, etc. to more advanced technology-based ones like guns, rockets, planes, radar, etc. but in the sampled advertisements, not all of them are activated. Only one metaphorical lexical unit – the *shield* – is used 3 times and a more general word referring to weapons – the *weapon* – is used 2 times in 3 Vietnamese advertisements, creating the metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WEAPONS OF WARRIORS, which is found in 4 advertisements, accounting for 2%. Here are some examples:

- (12) Dulux Weathershield – chống b ản b ản v à bụi trong mọi loại thời tiết. *Lá chắn* vững chắc cho ng ữ nh à của bạn! [Dulux Weathershield – fighting against dirt and dust in all kinds of weather. *A firm shield* for your house] (V168)
- (13) Kem ãm Max Cream - *Vũ khí* của bạn trong trận chiến với nếp nh ản, bọng mắt v à ãnh ch ản chim [Max Night Cream - Your *weapon* in the battle against wrinkles, eye bags and fine lines] – (V86)

Shield used to be the most widespread weapon to protect a warrior from enemies' blows, arrows in the traditional fights. In V168, Dulux paint becomes a warrior with a shield with which customers can protect themselves from the "attack" from bad weather while in V86, Max Cream is a weapon that customers can use to prevent wrinkles, eye bags and fine lines, which any woman considers as the biggest enemies in their aging process. The correspondences between the two domains lay the foundations for the use of this metaphor in the advertisements. It should be noted that only traditional weapon (shields) is used in the advertisements, partly stemming from the fact that the war started in Vietnam very long time ago in its long-lasting history, so the image of the traditional weapon goes deep in people's minds.

Battlefield refers to "the piece of ground on which a battle is or was fought" (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary). It is an integral attribute of the wars and fights. We have found a metaphor based on this attribute, which is THE AREAS PRODUCTS FUNCTION ON ARE THE BATTLEFIELDS WARRIORS FIGHT ON, in 3 advertisements (1.5%) with 3 metaphorical units appearing 3 times in the sample. Here are its examples:

- (14) Máy hút bụi cầm tay thế hệ mới – tất cả những g ì bạn cần trong *trận chiến* với bụi bông ãn từ vải sợi v à quần áo, giữ cho gia ãnh bạn lu ản khỏe mạnh [A new-generation handheld vacuum cleaner – all you need in the *battle* against dusts from fibers and clothes, keeping your family healthy] (V27)
- (15) Khẩu trang 5 lớp AirMax – vũ khí của c ảc b ảc sỹ tr ản *tuyến ãu* chống ãch. AirMax – b ảc sỹ khuy ản ãng [AirMax – 5-layer facial masks – doctors' *weapon* in the *battlefront* against the pandemic. Airmax – doctors' advice] (V83)

As a military sector in which actual combat takes place, battlefield is the most vigorous area of the fight where warriors show their strength, power, bravery and courage. In V27, the vacuum cleaner becomes the warrior fighting aggressively in the battlefield against dusts while in V83, the warrior (facial masks) even goes to the extreme forward area of the battlefield, where troops are in direct fight against the enemy (the deadly pandemic). The strong image of the warriors in the battlefields is mapped onto the functions and benefits that the advertised products bring to customers, making the advertisements both memorable and comprehensible to customers.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As released in the research findings, the metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS is used popularly in Vietnamese advertising discourses (20.5% of the researched advertisements show this metaphor). This illustrates that the concept of war and fight is a familiar one in the mind of Vietnamese people.

Six aspects of the source domain WARRIORS are mapped onto the corresponding six ones in the target domain PRODUCTS, which reveals the partial mapping mechanism between the two domains when only the most distinctive attributes of the WARRIORS are highlighted while other less typical ones are hidden. The source domain aspects that are activated in this metaphor include *missions of warriors, strength and power of warriors, weapons used in the fight, tactics used in the battle, victory gained by warriors* and *battlefields* while the corresponding target domain aspects are *functions, impacts on users, nature, operations, superior values of products* and *areas that products function on* respectively.

The reasons why the metaphor PRODUCTS ARE WARRIORS is used extensively in Vietnamese advertisements may be attributed to the historical features of the country: Vietnam has experienced lots of different wars in its formation and development process. Therefore, the war and its related concepts have become so familiar in the mind of every Vietnamese citizen, using this concept as the source domain is a convenient way to help customers perceive the characteristics and features of the advertised products.

A closer look into the metaphorical lexical units that are used to form the metaphorical expressions also reveals some subtle cultural values of Vietnam. The use of less direct words to refer to some concepts like weapons or victories of the

warriors in the fight is the evidence of a highly hierarchical, collectivist and feminist culture with low uncertainty avoidance where people tend to opt for indirect ways of expressing their opinions. These findings solidify the earlier view that many researchers have agreed on, i.e. metaphors reflect the distinctive cultural values of the society where they are formed.

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