

# Polysemy of Words Expressing Human Body Parts in Thai Language in Vietnam (With Reference to Vietnamese)

**Ha Thi Mai Thanh**

Tay Bac University, Son La, Vietnam  
hathimaitanh@gmail.com

---

**Abstract:** *The paper uses theories on word meaning in the system, the transformation of word meaning, and polysemy. To aid analysis, this paper applies methods of field research methods of linguistics and description so as to construct significative meaning structures of words expressing human body parts (HBPs) in the Thai language, thus identifying the semantemes chosen to be the basis for the transformation. As sources of data, this study surveys Thai rhymes, fairy tales, riddles, and riddle songs. As for linguistic data of daily speeches, the data used in the paper is limited within the Thai Den language in the city of Son La, Son La province. Basing on the survey, in the paper, the researcher focuses on studying the polysemy of words expressing HBPs in the upper part, the middle part, and the four limbs. The meaning transference of words expressing HBPs in the Thai language is deep and contains multilayers. In the Thai language, there are 21 scopes of semantic transformation. The polysemy of words expressing HBPs in the four limbs is not as abundant in semantic change as in the upper part. However, words expressing HBPs in the middle part are deeper and more multifaceted than the ones in the upper part.*

**Keywords:** *Body parts, polysemy, Thai language, semantic transformation*

---

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the book “Theories on lexical semantics”, Geeraerts (2009:91) stated that “The vocabulary of the language is not just an unstructured bag of words, but a network of expressions that are mutually related by all kinds of semantic links.” Hence, Not only can words be treated as containers of meaning, or as fulfilling roles in events, they can also have “relationships” with each other. When existing in the system, we often explain the meanings of words in terms of their relationship such as metonymy, hyponymy, polysemy, and synonymy.

The research in the world on semantics and words expressing HBPs have shown in many aspects, with the authors such as Best – Taylor (1948), Baldinger - Kurt (1980), Cruse (1986), Johnson (1987), Wierzbicka (1992), Butterworth (1992), Clayman (1995), Iordanskajav (1996), Tortora (1997), Kearns - Kate (2000), Bouilon - Pierretten - Federica Busa (2001), Allan - Keith (2001), Ylva (2008), Larissa (2014), Geeraerts (2009),...

Some studies by Vietnamese linguists such as Chau (2009), Giap (2008). They have been deployed in the direction of using the Vietnamese language as the scope of research or comparing the polysemy phenomenon of Vietnamese with English, Russian. The number of research on the polysemy phenomenon of languages of ethnic minorities in Vietnam is rather

limited, including the Thai language in Vietnam. Since language differences are commonly considered major barriers in this research, the author focuses on words expressing HBPs to reflect polysemy in the Thai language.

Words expressing HBPs belong to the basic layer of lexis - the one expressing things and phenomena around and close to humans which can reflect the old age of each language. In medicine, HBPs, when being looked at from the outside (external factors), are divided into the upper part, the middle part, the lower part, and the four limbs. Basing on the survey, in the paper, the researcher focuses on studying the polysemy of words expressing HBPs in the upper part (*mɛ* - head); *vũ* - face; the middle part (*xɔ̌* - back, *mɛ* *hũ* - heart; the four limbs (*uuu* - arm; *hũ* - hand; *u1* - thigh; *mũ* - leg, foot).

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### 2.1 Word Meaning in the System

The meaning of the word is the relationship between the sound complex (the sound shell of the word) and the object, the phenomenon of reality, established by our consciousness, thinking. Hence, it is difficult to grasp word meaning precisely. Thanks to this basic principle, a great number of researchers also had acquired the meaning of the word in the system, such as Giap (2008), Chau (2009) Thiem (2013). According to Giap (2008), like other linguistic units, the meaning of a word exists objectively in words, but it is only a certain reflection in our mind of objects. Besides, Chau (2009) stated that the “meaning of the word is a complex set with many components”. Furthermore, Thiem (2013) has defined the meaning of the word more specifically as it belongs to the world’s linguistic in which ethnic-related attributes deeply rooted in language, but things and phenomena have Global attributes (Sinaga et al, 2020).

Pakpahan et al (2020:37) defined that the material studied in semantics is the meaning of a word. Understanding a language, such as English, Thai, Vietnamese, etc. rely heavily on semantics (Sitanggang et al, 2019; Thao et al, 2021). Word meaning is the expressed aspect of the linguistic sign including human awareness of objective things and their emotion and attitude. When existing in the system, words have two main meanings of lexical meaning and grammatical meaning (structural meaning). Basically, scientists agree that word lexical meaning consists of the following components: (1) Denotative meaning, (2) Significative meaning, and (3) Connotative meaning.

Significative meaning is one component of word meaning in the system which is closely connected to the denotative meaning and plays the role of a device in organizing speech. The establishment of the significative meaning of words expressing HBPs helps to identify the meanings selected to be the basis for semantic transformation.

### 2.2 Polysemy

Some studies on polysemy in Vietnam should be mentioned such as Chau (2008), Thiem (2013), Hung (2014),.... We identify the meaning of a word by its semantic features. Moreover, Chau (2013) asserted “the semantic feature which makes up either the semantic homogeneity or the semantic opposition between words can become the semantic feature of significative

semantic”. According to Thiem (2013), “As far as the linguistic concern, the individual semantic feature is the smallest units of meaning in a word which can not be divided anymore”.

Polysemy is a phenomenon in which a word has several meanings that have some recognizable relationship with each other. In the semantic structure of polysemy, the identification of the original and the derived meanings must be based on two fundamental rules: rule of human perception, and rule of word meaning transformation. Besides, another basis is the development history of mankind's civilization.

A word (either single or complex), at its appearance, has only one denotation. After a while in use, it may have new denotations. The more they appear, the more possible it is for the word's connotation to change. The transformation of word meaning is closely related to the semantic structure with semantemes separated during the identification of word meanings. This paper applies the method of analyzing meaning components to set up the significative meaning structure of words expressing HBPs in the Thai language, thus identifying the semantemes chosen to be the basis for the transformation.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Data Collection**

As sources of data, this study surveys Thai rhymes, fairy tales, riddles, and riddle songs. As for linguistic data of daily speeches, the data used in the paper is limited within the Thai Den language in the city of Son La, Son La province.

#### **3.2 Linguistic Methods and Tactics**

##### **3.2.1. Field research methods of linguistics**

- A. Techniques of recording, note-taking, photo-taking: These techniques are used to collect the data correctly and sufficiently
- B. Analyze the statistics: Count, classify, and systematize words expressing HBPs in the Thai language in polysemy.

##### **3.2.2. Method of Description**

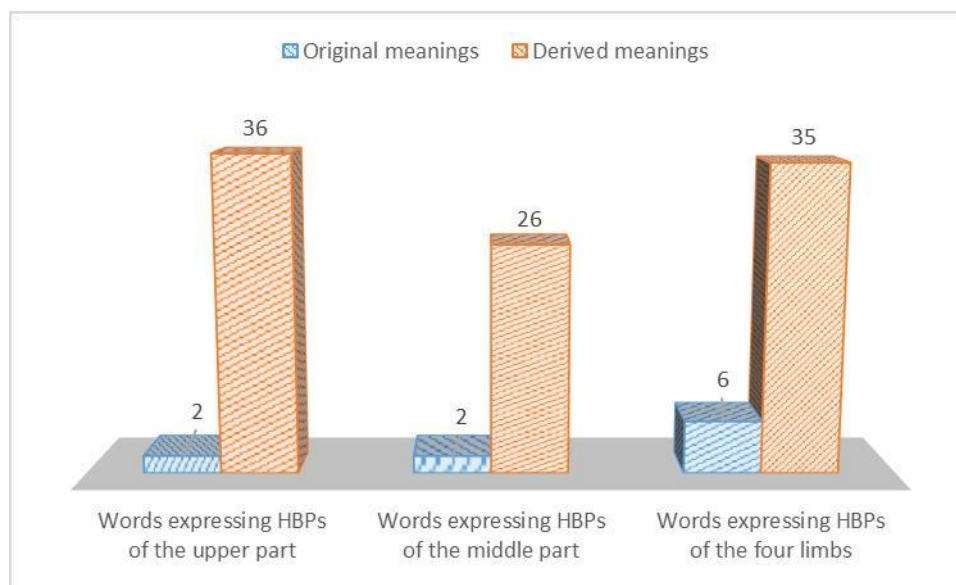
The method was applied after linguistic data has been studied with three tactics:

- A. Analyze the context: This tactic was used to study linguistic data beyond the sentence level in the Thai language containing words expressing HBPs.
- B. Analyze the components: This tactic was used to analyze the meanings of words expressing HBPs in the system. From there, the paper separates the central meaning from the peripheral one.
- C. Analyze case study: A case study was used to concentrate on analyzing several typical cases or cases with problems to make general comments or explain the characteristics or differences from specific aspects.

The research also applied the tactics of statistics and classification.

## IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Research Findings



**Diagram 1. Bar chart presenting the number of HBPs with the original and derived meanings in the Thai language**

In total, there are 107 words expressing HBPs in Thai with original and derived meanings (10 words with original meanings and 97 words with derived meanings). As for words with original meanings, words expressing HBPs of the four limbs still rank first with 6 over 10 (60%). Next are words expressing HBPs of the upper part and the middle part (2 over 10, equivalent to 20%). As for words with derived meanings, words expressing HBPs of the upper part account for the largest (36 over 97, or 37,1%); words expressing HBPs of the four limbs comes second (35 over 97, equivalent to 36,1%); next are words expressing HBPs of the middle part (26 over 97, equivalent to 26.8%). According to the survey results, the polysemy of words expressing HBPs in the Thai language was considered in three aspects: (1) Polysemy of words expressing HBPs of the upper part, (2) Polysemy of words expressing HBPs of the middle part, and (3) Polysemy of words expressing HBPs of the four limbs.

### 4.2. Discussion

#### 1. Polysemy of words expressing HBPs of the upper part in the Thai language in Vietnam

##### a. Polysemy of the word expressing *mɯ̌* - head

A word expressing *mɯ̌* - head appears 48 times with its original meaning, so the word *mɯ̌* in the Thai language can be defined as: “The core and sacred body part of human or animal which is upper or ahead with the round shape, containing the brain”. From there, the structure of the connotations of the word *mɯ̌* are identified as follows:

*mɯ̌*: [body part of human or animal] [core] [sacred] [upper and ahead] [round shape] [contain brain].

The meaning transformation of the word *mɛ* is based on four semantemes: [core] [sacred] [upper and ahead] [round shape]. On that basis, this word has its meaning transformation in five following aspects:

(i) Based on the semanteme [core], the word expressing HBPs *mɛ* transfers to express “The first and foremost position of a man”: *ả̃ mɛ ảu* - *the landlord or the host*.

(ii) Based on the semanteme [sacred], *mɛ* transfer to express the two aspects: -  
 Expressing “the family relation of Thai people”: *ử̃ mɛ ử̃u* - *People who are in mourning*.  
 - Expressing “human life value”: *m mɛ* - *human life value*

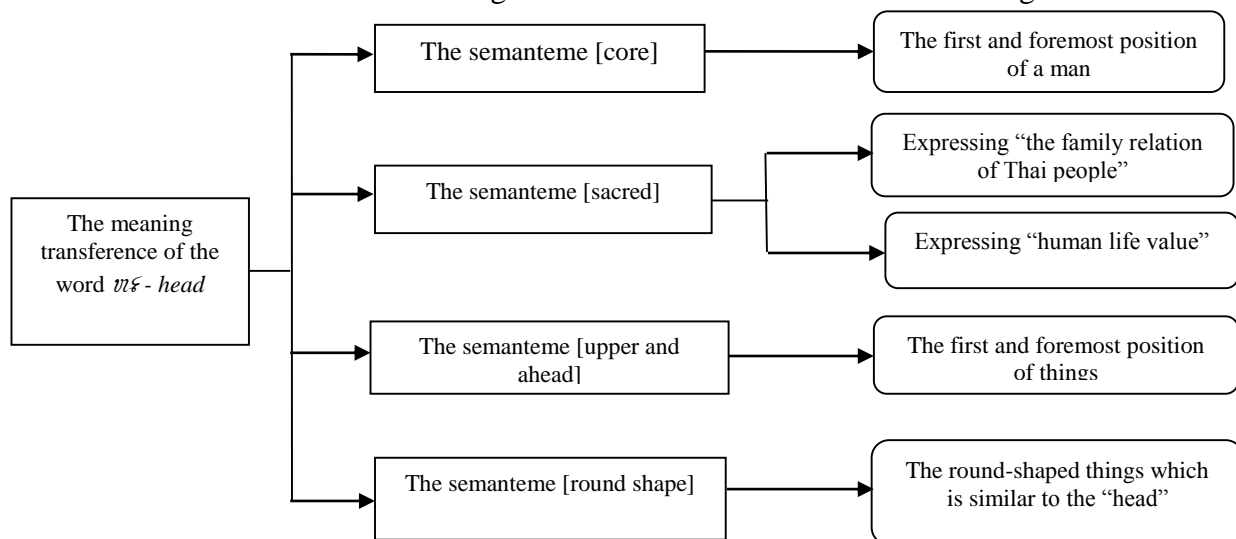
(iii) Based on the semanteme [upper and ahead], word *mɛ* - *head* transfers to express “the first and foremost position of things”: *mɛ ử̃* - *water source*, *mɛ x̃ố* - *Waist Band*, *ả̃ mɛ* - *first water-alcohol (ruợu đầul)*, *mɛ ảố* - *patriarch*, *mɛ ảm* - *fishing-nets*, *mɛ ả* - *the bow of theboat*,...

(iv) Based on the semanteme [round shape], *mɛ* - *head* transfers to express “the round-shaped things which are similar to the “head”: *mɛ mɔm* – *head the sprouted bulb*, *mɛ mɔm ử̃* - *head of garlic*, *mɛ mɔm ử̃* - *head of onion*.

Basing on some contexts in which the word *mɛ* appears, it can be seen that the new expression scope of *mɛ* in the Thai language is “expressing the family relation, human life value, the first and foremost position of a man, round-shaped things like head, The first and foremost position of things”

With reference to the meaning transformation of *mɛ* - *head* in Vietnamese, that of the word *mɛ* in the Thai language is similar in terms of three transformation scopes (expressing “The first and foremost position things”, “round-shaped things like head”, “the first and foremost position of a man”) but there are differences in the two expression aspects: “the family relation”, “human life value”.

The transference in the meaning of *mɛ* - *head* can be seen in the following illustration.



**Diagram 2. The meaning transference of the word *mɛ* - *head* in the Thai language**

*b. Polysemy of words expressing หน้า - face*

The word expressing human body part หน้า - face appears 68 times with its original meaning, so the word หน้า in the Thai language can be defined as "Body parts protruding in the front part of the human head from the forehead to the chin". From there, the structure of the connotations of the word หน้า are identified as follows:

หน้า: [body part] [protrude in the front part] [belongs to human head][ from the forehead to the chin]

The meaning transformation of the word หน้า is based on the semanteme [protrude in the front part]. On that basis, หน้า in the Thai language has its meaning transformation in 6 following aspects:

(i) Expressing "surface of things": หน้าโต๊ะ - table surface; หน้า giấy - paper surface; หน้าผ้า - blanket surface; หน้า cửa - glass surface, mirror surface; หน้า đệm - Mattress; หน้า gối - pillow; หน้า ghế - seat; หน้า sông - river surface.

(ii) Expressing "front parts of things": หน้า cửa - front panels, หน้า cửa - front side window.

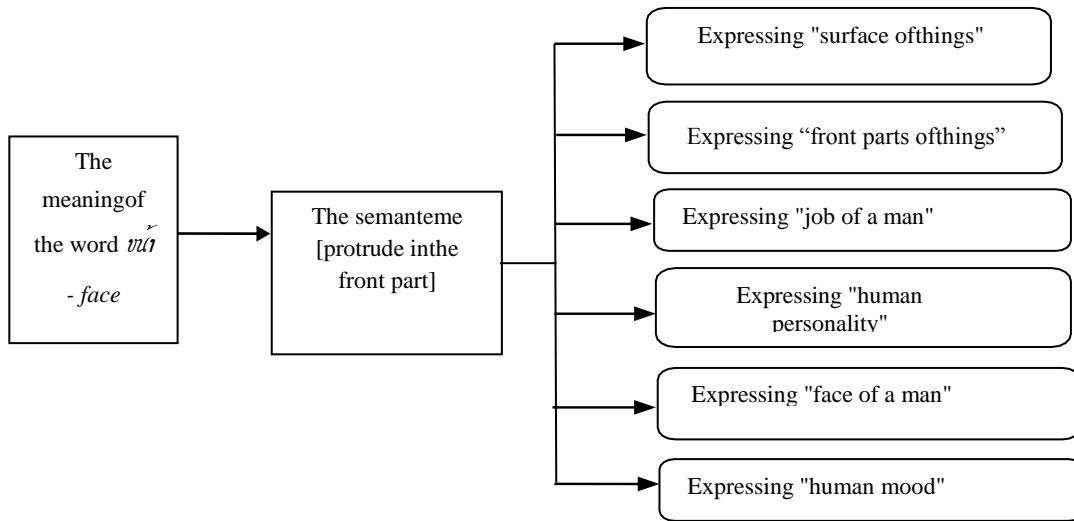
(iii) Expressing "job of a man": หน้า việc - job.

(iv) Expressing "human personality": หน้า xấu - shameless, ใจหน้า - incompatible..

(v) Expressing "face of a man": ใจหน้า - honourable, ใจหน้า - satisfied, ใจหน้า - happy, ใจหน้า - proud, ใจหน้า - present.

(vi) Expressing "human mood": ใจหน้า - forgivable, หน้าเขิน - shameful, หน้าเขิน - reserved, หน้าใจ - out of breath, ใจหน้า - happy,...

The transference in the meaning of หน้า - face can be seen in the following illustration.



**Diagram 3. The meaning transference of the word หน้า - face in the Thai language**

**2. Polysemy of words expressing HBPs of the middle part in the Thai language in Vietnam**

*a. Polysemy of word expressing ขยี้ - back*







hand 78 times. Accordingly, the meanings of these words are identified as follow:

(1) The word *๑๑๑* – *arm* has two meanings including “Each of the two upper limbs of the human body from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger used to work” and “The human body part from the shoulder to the wrist”.

(2) The word *๑๑* – *hand* has two meanings including “The human body part from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger used to work” and “The end part of a person’s arm beyond the wrist from the wrist to the tip of the longest finger including the cylinder and slender fingers used to hold”.

Basing on the meanings of *๑๑๑* - *arm*, the denotation structure of *๑๑๑* – *hand* is identified as follow: *๑๑๑* – *arm 1*: [Each of the two upper limbs of the human body] [from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger] [using to work]; *๑๑๑* - *arm 2*: [the human body part] [from the shoulder to the wrist]

Basing on the meanings of *๑๑* - *hand*, the denotation structure of *๑๑* - *hand* is identified as follow: *๑๑* - *hand 1*: [The human body part] [from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger] [using to work]; *๑๑* - *hand 2*: [The end part of a person’s arm beyond the wrist] [from the wrist to the tip of the longest finger] [including the cylinder and slender fingers] [using to hold]

Looking at the 3 semantemes: [from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger], [from the wrist to the tip of the longest finger], and [using to work], *๑๑๑* and *๑๑* in the Thai language has the meaning transference into the following areas:

a<sub>1</sub>. Based on the semanteme [from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger] and [from the wrist to the tip of the longest finger], *๑๑๑* and *๑๑* have meaning transference to mean “Thai people’s unit of measurement by hand”. So far, in measuring the length of weave tools, pillars, fields, etc., Thai people have used units of measurement by hand, specifically:

**Table 1. The number of words expressing Thai people’s units of measurements by hand**

No	Word	No	Word	No	Word
1	<i>๑๑ ๑๑๑ - an approximate handful</i>	6	<i>๑๑๑</i> - a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the length from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger.	11	<i>๑๑ ๑๑๑ - morethan an arm span</i>
2	<i>๑๑ - a handful</i>	7	<i>๑๑, ๑๑๑ - arm span</i>	12	<i>๑๑ ๑๑๑ - less than an arm span</i>
3	<i>๑๑ ๑๑๑ - a handful anda half</i>	8	<i>๑๑ ๑๑๑</i> - a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the total length of an arm span and from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.	13	<i>๑๑๑ - a fistful</i>
	<i>๑๑๑ - span</i>		<i>๑๑ ๑๑๑</i> - a unit of measurement that is		<i>๑๑๑๑ - a double handful (two</i>

No	Word	No	Word	No	Word
4		9	equivalent to the total length of an arm span and from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger	14	<i>hands</i> )
5	<i>๑๒๓</i> - a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the length from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.	10	<i>๑๓๔</i> - an arm span and a half	15	<i>๑๕๖</i> - a double handful (one hand)

As surveyed, there are 15 words expressing inaccurate units of measurement by hand estimates (without using accurate tools) in the Thai language. In the meantime, there is only one unit of measurement by foot estimate that is *bad – step*. In Vietnamese there are 12 words of hand estimates *an arm, phalanx, span, arm span, a bunch of, a pinch of, a piece of* and 1 foot estimate that is *step*. In the Thai language, units of measurement by hand estimate are divided into 2 groups:

Group 1: Words to measure size and distance include *๑๒๓* - an approximate handful; *๑๒๔* - a handful; *๑๒๕* - a handful and a half; *๑๒๖* – span; *๑๒๗* - a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the length from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger; *๑๒๘* - a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the length from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger; *๑๒๙* - arm span; *๑๓๐* - a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the total length of an arm span and from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger; *๑๓๑* - a unit of distance measurement that is equivalent to the total length of an arm span and from the shoulder to the tip of the longest finger; *๑๓๒* - an arm span and a half or a unit of measurement that is equivalent to the total length of an arm span and from the middle of the chest to the tip of the longest finger; *๑๓๓* - more than an arm span; *๑๓๔* - less than an arm span. In the Thai language, the measurements by these units are not accurate as each person’s handful, span, arm span, and “length from elbow to the tip of the longest finger” are different. In Vietnamese, there are only 4 words used to measure distance including *an arm, a phalanx, a span,* and an arm span while the Thai language has 12 words to measure distance and size by hand estimate. This shows the difference in partitioning the objective reality by Viet and Thai peoples. It is the difference in the languages in categorizing the objective reality that caused the peoples’ different linguistic world pictures. In their daily life and production activities, Thai people’s measurement is mainly made by hand which reflects their economic life. Thai people rely on traditional handicrafts like weaving, plaiting, pottery, or carpentry, etc. Besides, their life also depends on natural resources (forest, river, etc.) for growing, hunting, gathering, and fishing.

Group 2: In the Thai language, there are 3 words to express number and volume including *๑๓๕* - a handful; *๑๓๖* - a double handful (two hands); *๑๓๗* - a double handful (one hand). For example:

(Eg.6) *๑๓๘ ๑๓๙ ๑๔๐ ๑๔๑ ๑๔๒ ๑๔๓ ๑๔๔ ๑๔๕ ๑๔๖ ๑๔๗ ๑๔๘ ๑๔๙ ๑๕๐ ๑๕๑ ๑๕๒ ๑๕๓ ๑๕๔ ๑๕๕ ๑๕๖ ๑๕๗ ๑๕๘ ๑๕๙ ๑๖๐ ๑๖๑ ๑๖๒ ๑๖๓ ๑๖๔ ๑๖๕ ๑๖๖ ๑๖๗ ๑๖๘ ๑๖๙ ๑๗๐ ๑๗๑ ๑๗๒ ๑๗๓ ๑๗๔ ๑๗๕ ๑๗๖ ๑๗๗ ๑๗๘ ๑๗๙ ๑๘๐ ๑๘๑ ๑๘๒ ๑๘๓ ๑๘๔ ๑๘๕ ๑๘๖ ๑๘๗ ๑๘๘ ๑๘๙ ๑๙๐ ๑๙๑ ๑๙๒ ๑๙๓ ๑๙๔ ๑๙๕ ๑๙๖ ๑๙๗ ๑๙๘ ๑๙๙ ๒๐๐ ๒๐๑ ๒๐๒ ๒๐๓ ๒๐๔ ๒๐๕ ๒๐๖ ๒๐๗ ๒๐๘ ๒๐๙ ๒๑๐ ๒๑๑ ๒๑๒ ๒๑๓ ๒๑๔ ๒๑๕ ๒๑๖ ๒๑๗ ๒๑๘ ๒๑๙ ๒๒๐ ๒๒๑ ๒๒๒ ๒๒๓ ๒๒๔ ๒๒๕ ๒๒๖ ๒๒๗ ๒๒๘ ๒๒๙ ๒๓๐ ๒๓๑ ๒๓๒ ๒๓๓ ๒๓๔ ๒๓๕ ๒๓๖ ๒๓๗ ๒๓๘ ๒๓๙ ๒๔๐ ๒๔๑ ๒๔๒ ๒๔๓ ๒๔๔ ๒๔๕ ๒๔๖ ๒๔๗ ๒๔๘ ๒๔๙ ๒๕๐ ๒๕๑ ๒๕๒ ๒๕๓ ๒๕๔ ๒๕๕ ๒๕๖ ๒๕๗ ๒๕๘ ๒๕๙ ๒๖๐ ๒๖๑ ๒๖๒ ๒๖๓ ๒๖๔ ๒๖๕ ๒๖๖ ๒๖๗ ๒๖๘ ๒๖๙ ๒๗๐ ๒๗๑ ๒๗๒ ๒๗๓ ๒๗๔ ๒๗๕ ๒๗๖ ๒๗๗ ๒๗๘ ๒๗๙ ๒๘๐ ๒๘๑ ๒๘๒ ๒๘๓ ๒๘๔ ๒๘๕ ๒๘๖ ๒๘๗ ๒๘๘ ๒๘๙ ๒๙๐ ๒๙๑ ๒๙๒ ๒๙๓ ๒๙๔ ๒๙๕ ๒๙๖ ๒๙๗ ๒๙๘ ๒๙๙ ๓๐๐ ๓๐๑ ๓๐๒ ๓๐๓ ๓๐๔ ๓๐๕ ๓๐๖ ๓๐๗ ๓๐๘ ๓๐๙ ๓๑๐ ๓๑๑ ๓๑๒ ๓๑๓ ๓๑๔ ๓๑๕ ๓๑๖ ๓๑๗ ๓๑๘ ๓๑๙ ๓๒๐ ๓๒๑ ๓๒๒ ๓๒๓ ๓๒๔ ๓๒๕ ๓๒๖ ๓๒๗ ๓๒๘ ๓๒๙ ๓๓๐ ๓๓๑ ๓๓๒ ๓๓๓ ๓๓๔ ๓๓๕ ๓๓๖ ๓๓๗ ๓๓๘ ๓๓๙ ๓๔๐ ๓๔๑ ๓๔๒ ๓๔๓ ๓๔๔ ๓๔๕ ๓๔๖ ๓๔๗ ๓๔๘ ๓๔๙ ๓๕๐ ๓๕๑ ๓๕๒ ๓๕๓ ๓๕๔ ๓๕๕ ๓๕๖ ๓๕๗ ๓๕๘ ๓๕๙ ๓๖๐ ๓๖๑ ๓๖๒ ๓๖๓ ๓๖๔ ๓๖๕ ๓๖๖ ๓๖๗ ๓๖๘ ๓๖๙ ๓๗๐ ๓๗๑ ๓๗๒ ๓๗๓ ๓๗๔ ๓๗๕ ๓๗๖ ๓๗๗ ๓๗๘ ๓๗๙ ๓๘๐ ๓๘๑ ๓๘๒ ๓๘๓ ๓๘๔ ๓๘๕ ๓๘๖ ๓๘๗ ๓๘๘ ๓๘๙ ๓๙๐ ๓๙๑ ๓๙๒ ๓๙๓ ๓๙๔ ๓๙๕ ๓๙๖ ๓๙๗ ๓๙๘ ๓๙๙ ๔๐๐ ๔๐๑ ๔๐๒ ๔๐๓ ๔๐๔ ๔๐๕ ๔๐๖ ๔๐๗ ๔๐๘ ๔๐๙ ๔๑๐ ๔๑๑ ๔๑๒ ๔๑๓ ๔๑๔ ๔๑๕ ๔๑๖ ๔๑๗ ๔๑๘ ๔๑๙ ๔๒๐ ๔๒๑ ๔๒๒ ๔๒๓ ๔๒๔ ๔๒๕ ๔๒๖ ๔๒๗ ๔๒๘ ๔๒๙ ๔๓๐ ๔๓๑ ๔๓๒ ๔๓๓ ๔๓๔ ๔๓๕ ๔๓๖ ๔๓๗ ๔๓๘ ๔๓๙ ๔๔๐ ๔๔๑ ๔๔๒ ๔๔๓ ๔๔๔ ๔๔๕ ๔๔๖ ๔๔๗ ๔๔๘ ๔๔๙ ๔๕๐ ๔๕๑ ๔๕๒ ๔๕๓ ๔๕๔ ๔๕๕ ๔๕๖ ๔๕๗ ๔๕๘ ๔๕๙ ๔๖๐ ๔๖๑ ๔๖๒ ๔๖๓ ๔๖๔ ๔๖๕ ๔๖๖ ๔๖๗ ๔๖๘ ๔๖๙ ๔๗๐ ๔๗๑ ๔๗๒ ๔๗๓ ๔๗๔ ๔๗๕ ๔๗๖ ๔๗๗ ๔๗๘ ๔๗๙ ๔๘๐ ๔๘๑ ๔๘๒ ๔๘๓ ๔๘๔ ๔๘๕ ๔๘๖ ๔๘๗ ๔๘๘ ๔๘๙ ๔๙๐ ๔๙๑ ๔๙๒ ๔๙๓ ๔๙๔ ๔๙๕ ๔๙๖ ๔๙๗ ๔๙๘ ๔๙๙ ๕๐๐ ๕๐๑ ๕๐๒ ๕๐๓ ๕๐๔ ๕๐๕ ๕๐๖ ๕๐๗ ๕๐๘ ๕๐๙ ๕๑๐ ๕๑๑ ๕๑๒ ๕๑๓ ๕๑๔ ๕๑๕ ๕๑๖ ๕๑๗ ๕๑๘ ๕๑๙ ๕๒๐ ๕๒๑ ๕๒๒ ๕๒๓ ๕๒๔ ๕๒๕ ๕๒๖ ๕๒๗ ๕๒๘ ๕๒๙ ๕๓๐ ๕๓๑ ๕๓๒ ๕๓๓ ๕๓๔ ๕๓๕ ๕๓๖ ๕๓๗ ๕๓๘ ๕๓๙ ๕๔๐ ๕๔๑ ๕๔๒ ๕๔๓ ๕๔๔ ๕๔๕ ๕๔๖ ๕๔๗ ๕๔๘ ๕๔๙ ๕๕๐ ๕๕๑ ๕๕๒ ๕๕๓ ๕๕๔ ๕๕๕ ๕๕๖ ๕๕๗ ๕๕๘ ๕๕๙ ๕๖๐ ๕๖๑ ๕๖๒ ๕๖๓ ๕๖๔ ๕๖๕ ๕๖๖ ๕๖๗ ๕๖๘ ๕๖๙ ๕๗๐ ๕๗๑ ๕๗๒ ๕๗๓ ๕๗๔ ๕๗๕ ๕๗๖ ๕๗๗ ๕๗๘ ๕๗๙ ๕๘๐ ๕๘๑ ๕๘๒ ๕๘๓ ๕๘๔ ๕๘๕ ๕๘๖ ๕๘๗ ๕๘๘ ๕๘๙ ๕๙๐ ๕๙๑ ๕๙๒ ๕๙๓ ๕๙๔ ๕๙๕ ๕๙๖ ๕๙๗ ๕๙๘ ๕๙๙ ๖๐๐ ๖๐๑ ๖๐๒ ๖๐๓ ๖๐๔ ๖๐๕ ๖๐๖ ๖๐๗ ๖๐๘ ๖๐๙ ๖๑๐ ๖๑๑ ๖๑๒ ๖๑๓ ๖๑๔ ๖๑๕ ๖๑๖ ๖๑๗ ๖๑๘ ๖๑๙ ๖๒๐ ๖๒๑ ๖๒๒ ๖๒๓ ๖๒๔ ๖๒๕ ๖๒๖ ๖๒๗ ๖๒๘ ๖๒๙ ๖๓๐ ๖๓๑ ๖๓๒ ๖๓๓ ๖๓๔ ๖๓๕ ๖๓๖ ๖๓๗ ๖๓๘ ๖๓๙ ๖๔๐ ๖๔๑ ๖๔๒ ๖๔๓ ๖๔๔ ๖๔๕ ๖๔๖ ๖๔๗ ๖๔๘ ๖๔๙ ๖๕๐ ๖๕๑ ๖๕๒ ๖๕๓ ๖๕๔ ๖๕๕ ๖๕๖ ๖๕๗ ๖๕๘ ๖๕๙ ๖๖๐ ๖๖๑ ๖๖๒ ๖๖๓ ๖๖๔ ๖๖๕ ๖๖๖ ๖๖๗ ๖๖๘ ๖๖๙ ๖๗๐ ๖๗๑ ๖๗๒ ๖๗๓ ๖๗๔ ๖๗๕ ๖๗๖ ๖๗๗ ๖๗๘ ๖๗๙ ๖๘๐ ๖๘๑ ๖๘๒ ๖๘๓ ๖๘๔ ๖๘๕ ๖๘๖ ๖๘๗ ๖๘๘ ๖๘๙ ๖๙๐ ๖๙๑ ๖๙๒ ๖๙๓ ๖๙๔ ๖๙๕ ๖๙๖ ๖๙๗ ๖๙๘ ๖๙๙ ๗๐๐ ๗๐๑ ๗๐๒ ๗๐๓ ๗๐๔ ๗๐๕ ๗๐๖ ๗๐๗ ๗๐๘ ๗๐๙ ๗๑๐ ๗๑๑ ๗๑๒ ๗๑๓ ๗๑๔ ๗๑๕ ๗๑๖ ๗๑๗ ๗๑๘ ๗๑๙ ๗๒๐ ๗๒๑ ๗๒๒ ๗๒๓ ๗๒๔ ๗๒๕ ๗๒๖ ๗๒๗ ๗๒๘ ๗๒๙ ๗๓๐ ๗๓๑ ๗๓๒ ๗๓๓ ๗๓๔ ๗๓๕ ๗๓๖ ๗๓๗ ๗๓๘ ๗๓๙ ๗๔๐ ๗๔๑ ๗๔๒ ๗๔๓ ๗๔๔ ๗๔๕ ๗๔๖ ๗๔๗ ๗๔๘ ๗๔๙ ๗๕๐ ๗๕๑ ๗๕๒ ๗๕๓ ๗๕๔ ๗๕๕ ๗๕๖ ๗๕๗ ๗๕๘ ๗๕๙ ๗๖๐ ๗๖๑ ๗๖๒ ๗๖๓ ๗๖๔ ๗๖๕ ๗๖๖ ๗๖๗ ๗๖๘ ๗๖๙ ๗๗๐ ๗๗๑ ๗๗๒ ๗๗๓ ๗๗๔ ๗๗๕ ๗๗๖ ๗๗๗ ๗๗๘ ๗๗๙ ๗๘๐ ๗๘๑ ๗๘๒ ๗๘๓ ๗๘๔ ๗๘๕ ๗๘๖ ๗๘๗ ๗๘๘ ๗๘๙ ๗๙๐ ๗๙๑ ๗๙๒ ๗๙๓ ๗๙๔ ๗๙๕ ๗๙๖ ๗๙๗ ๗๙๘ ๗๙๙ ๘๐๐ ๘๐๑ ๘๐๒ ๘๐๓ ๘๐๔ ๘๐๕ ๘๐๖ ๘๐๗ ๘๐๘ ๘๐๙ ๘๑๐ ๘๑๑ ๘๑๒ ๘๑๓ ๘๑๔ ๘๑๕ ๘๑๖ ๘๑๗ ๘๑๘ ๘๑๙ ๘๒๐ ๘๒๑ ๘๒๒ ๘๒๓ ๘๒๔ ๘๒๕ ๘๒๖ ๘๒๗ ๘๒๘ ๘๒๙ ๘๓๐ ๘๓๑ ๘๓๒ ๘๓๓ ๘๓๔ ๘๓๕ ๘๓๖ ๘๓๗ ๘๓๘ ๘๓๙ ๘๔๐ ๘๔๑ ๘๔๒ ๘๔๓ ๘๔๔ ๘๔๕ ๘๔๖ ๘๔๗ ๘๔๘ ๘๔๙ ๘๕๐ ๘๕๑ ๘๕๒ ๘๕๓ ๘๕๔ ๘๕๕ ๘๕๖ ๘๕๗ ๘๕๘ ๘๕๙ ๘๖๐ ๘๖๑ ๘๖๒ ๘๖๓ ๘๖๔ ๘๖๕ ๘๖๖ ๘๖๗ ๘๖๘ ๘๖๙ ๘๗๐ ๘๗๑ ๘๗๒ ๘๗๓ ๘๗๔ ๘๗๕ ๘๗๖ ๘๗๗ ๘๗๘ ๘๗๙ ๘๘๐ ๘๘๑ ๘๘๒ ๘๘๓ ๘๘๔ ๘๘๕ ๘๘๖ ๘๘๗ ๘๘๘ ๘๘๙ ๘๙๐ ๘๙๑ ๘๙๒ ๘๙๓ ๘๙๔ ๘๙๕ ๘๙๖ ๘๙๗ ๘๙๘ ๘๙๙ ๙๐๐ ๙๐๑ ๙๐๒ ๙๐๓ ๙๐๔ ๙๐๕ ๙๐๖ ๙๐๗ ๙๐๘ ๙๐๙ ๙๑๐ ๙๑๑ ๙๑๒ ๙๑๓ ๙๑๔ ๙๑๕ ๙๑๖ ๙๑๗ ๙๑๘ ๙๑๙ ๙๒๐ ๙๒๑ ๙๒๒ ๙๒๓ ๙๒๔ ๙๒๕ ๙๒๖ ๙๒๗ ๙๒๘ ๙๒๙ ๙๓๐ ๙๓๑ ๙๓๒ ๙๓๓ ๙๓๔ ๙๓๕ ๙๓๖ ๙๓๗ ๙๓๘ ๙๓๙ ๙๔๐ ๙๔๑ ๙๔๒ ๙๔๓ ๙๔๔ ๙๔๕ ๙๔๖ ๙๔๗ ๙๔๘ ๙๔๙ ๙๕๐ ๙๕๑ ๙๕๒ ๙๕๓ ๙๕๔ ๙๕๕ ๙๕๖ ๙๕๗ ๙๕๘ ๙๕๙ ๙๖๐ ๙๖๑ ๙๖๒ ๙๖๓ ๙๖๔ ๙๖๕ ๙๖๖ ๙๖๗ ๙๖๘ ๙๖๙ ๙๗๐ ๙๗๑ ๙๗๒ ๙๗๓ ๙๗๔ ๙๗๕ ๙๗๖ ๙๗๗ ๙๗๘ ๙๗๙ ๙๘๐ ๙๘๑ ๙๘๒ ๙๘๓ ๙๘๔ ๙๘๕ ๙๘๖ ๙๘๗ ๙๘๘ ๙๘๙ ๙๙๐ ๙๙๑ ๙๙๒ ๙๙๓ ๙๙๔ ๙๙๕ ๙๙๖ ๙๙๗ ๙๙๘ ๙๙๙ ๑๐๐๐* – *The daughter gave 3 double handfuls (two hands) and one double handful (one hand) of food.* (Daily speech)

In the Thai language, words of group 2 do not quantify correctly, but they are effective when Thai people need to estimate something. The only tool that they use to quantify is the hand, especially the palm of the hand. Moreover, the meaning [from the wrist to the tip of the longest finger] in the denotation of *ขี้*- *hand* helps the listener to perceive rather clearly not only the quantity but the shape of the measured object as well. In Vietnamese, words expressing units of measurements in group 2 include *a double handful (one hand), a pinch of, a bunch of, an approximate handful, a bunches of, a piece of*. For instance, *She carried a bunch of straw to the kitchen; My grandma put a pinch of salt in the pot; He gave me 3 bunches of longan and left in a hurry*, etc. As can be seen, the number of words in group 2 in Vietnamese is more than the ones in the Thai language.

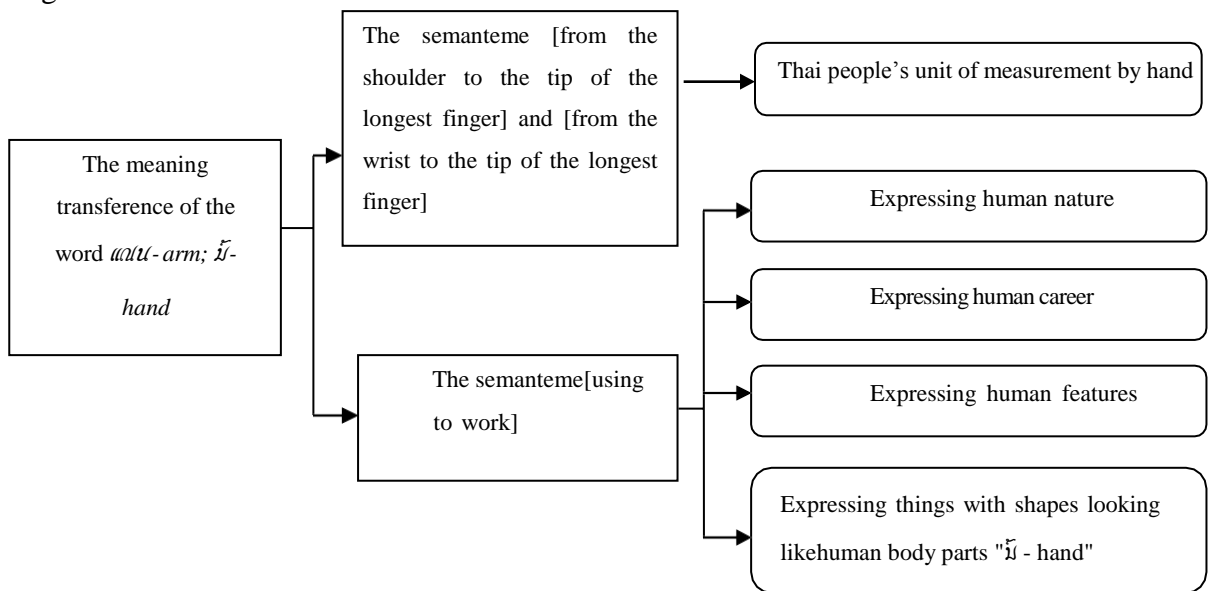
In terms of collocation, in Vietnamese, a word expressing units of measurement by hand is normally used in combination with a number in front of it (three arm spans, five phalanxes, six pinches, etc.) while in the Thai language they may combine with words of quantity either in front or and behind them (*สาม นิ้ว - three double handfuls (two hands); นิ้ว ด้ - a double handful (one hand)*).

a2. The meaning transference of *ekN* and *ขี้* is also based on the semanteme [using to work] to:

- Expressing human nature: *ขโมย ขี้ - steal*.
- Expressing human career: *ให้ ขี้ - give a hand to somebody, help*.
- Expressing human features: *伶俐 ขี้ - be skillful with one's hands, ว่าง ขี้ - have free time*
- Expressing things with shapes looking like human body parts "ขี้ - hand": *นิ้ว ขี้ กล้วย - Lady Finger Banana*.

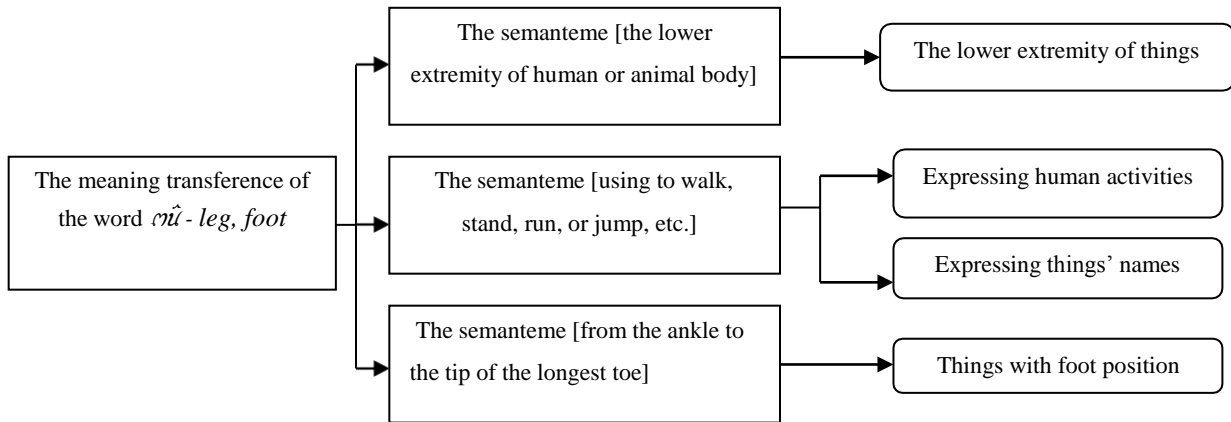
(Eg. 7) *ฮานห์ พ่อ ขโมย นิ้ว ด้ ให้ ขี้ หนี่ ไร่ ไม้ ด้ - Hanh's father is the chairman's helper* (Daily speech). In example (7), *ให้ ขี้ - help* has meaning transference to express human career (helper).

The transference in the meaning of *ขโมย - arm* and *ขี้ - hand* can be seen in the following illustration.





The following illustration shows the meaning transference of *mũ* – leg, foot in the Thai language.



**Diagram 7. The meaning transference of the word *mũ* - leg, foot in the Thai language**

The meaning transference of *mũ* – leg, foot in the Thai language is similar to that of the words *mũ* - leg or *mũ* - foot in Vietnamese in three aspects ("the lower extremity of things", "human activities" and "things with foot position"); however they are different in two aspects ("things' names" and "things with leg position"). As such, the new denotation of *mũ* – leg, foot in the Thai language is expressing the lower extremity of things, human activities, and things with leg position, and expressing things' names.

Directions of semantic transformation of words expressing HBPs in the Thai language are as diversified and of multi-levels as Vietnamese. In the Thai language, there are 21 scopes of semantic transformation including “the first and foremost position of a man”, “the family relation of Thai people”, “human life value”, “the first and foremost position of things”, “the round-shaped things which are similar to the “head”, “surface of things”, “front parts of things”, “job of a man”, “human personality”, “face of a man”, “human mood”, “human body part which is similar to the “back”, “human characteristics”, “human intellect”, “human affection”, “Thai people’s unit of measurement by hand”, “parts of things looking like *thigh*”, “the lower extremity of things”, “human activities”, “things’ names”, “things with foot position”.

## V. CONCLUSION

In polysemy, words expressing HBPs are studied in 3 aspects: polysemy of words expressing HBPs in the upper part, the middle part, and the four limbs. The semantic change of words expressing HBPs in the upper part is divided into 2 categories: things and time. We can see that the semantic change of these words is from the specific fields (job, artificial things,

natural things, things which look like human body parts) to the abstract one (family relationship, the face, the description of human, etc.); from the tangible categories (things) to intangible categories (time). The semantic change in words expressing HBPs in the middle part is only into the human field in the aspects of emotion, characteristics, and intelligence of the human. In which, the word *ม่ง ใจ* - heart has more abundant semantic change and more level of semantic change than the word *ขย้ง* - back. In comparison with words expressing HBPs in the upper part, words in the middle part in Thai has narrower. The polysemy aspects of words expressing HBPs *อตุ* - arm; *ข* - hand and *อ* - thigh, *อ* - leg, foot are studied in the polysemy of word expressing HBPs in the four limbs. The semantic change of these words is in deep and multi- levels. They change into 2 categories: human, thing, and measurement unit categories. In the human category, the semantic change is expressed in the aspects of nature, occupation, human characteristics, and activities. In the thing category, the semantic change is expressed in the nomination of things that have the same appearance or position as human body parts.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Allan - Keith (2001), *Natural Language Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- [2] Baldinger - Kurt (1980), *Semantic Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- [3] Best C.H - Taylor N.B (1948), *The human body and its functions an elementary text book of physiology*, Toronto.
- [4] Bouillon - Pierretten - Federica Busa (2001), *The Language of Word Meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Butterworth B.B (1992), *Laboratory anatomy of the human body*, Boston: McGraw - Hill.
- [6] Trong. C (2005), *Understanding of Thai people in Vietnam*, National politics Publishing House
- [7] Chau. D.H. (2009), *Vietnamese Lexical Semantics*, National University Press, Hanoi.
- [8] Clayman (1995), *The human body*, New York: John Wiley & sons, Inc.
- [9] Cruse, D. Alan (1986), *Lexical Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [10] Geeraerts, D. (2009), *Theories of Lexical Semantics*, Oxford University Press.
- [11] Giap. N.T (2008). *Linguistic Introduction*, Educational Press, Hanoi
- [12] Iordanskajav L. (1996), *The human body and linguistics*, <http://russian.cornell.edu>.
- [13] Johnson M. (1987), *The body in the mind*. Chicago: Univ.of Chicago Press.
- [14] Kearns - Kate (2000), *Semantics*, Basingstoke: MacMillan.
- [15] Larissa M. (2014), *From human body parts to the embodiment of spatial conceptualization in English idioms*, <http://uk-cla.org.uk/proceedings>, pages 195 - 213.
- [16] Sinaga, D. A., Herman., Hutahaeon, D. T. and Niswa, K. (2020). Semantic Analysis on Idiomatic Expression in the "Central Intelligence" Movie. *European Exploratory Scientific Journal*, ISSN 2616-5740, Vol 4 No 3 (2020), PP. 10-19.
- [17] Sitanggang, V., Hutahaeon, D. T., and Herman. (2019). An Analysis of the Contents of Proclamation of Indonesian Independence in Semantic Role. *Multidisciplinary European Academic Journal*, Issue Vol 1 No 1.

- [18] Thao, N.V., Sinaga, M. R., and Herman. (2021). Semantic Analysis of Contextual Meaning in Dialogue of “The Ugly Duckling” Short Story. *Walailak Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 14 No. 2 (2021): March – April, E-ISSN: 2697-6390.
- [19] Thiem. L. Q (2013), *Semantics*, Educational Press, Hanoi.
- [20] Tortora G.J (1997), *Introduction to the human body: The essentials of anatomy and physiology*, New York: John Wiley & sons, Inc.
- [21] Wierzbicka A. (1992), *Semantics, culture and cognition: Universal human concepts in culture - specific configurations*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.
- [22] Ylva O. (2008), *The Head as an element in Swedish Compound words*, [www.linguistics-journal.com](http://www.linguistics-journal.com).