

## SYMPTOMS OF TRANSLITERATION OF WORDS INDICATING PARTS OF THE HANDS IN VIETNAMESE

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### ABSTRACT

In many languages, lexical transliteration has always been considered as a common way of identifying. Different languages still have certain characteristics in common when assigning new meanings to words. However, even in that similarity, we always see ethnic differences. The article, through the study of the phenomenon of lexical translation of words indicating the part of the hand in Vietnamese, in order to point out the characteristics as well as partly clarify the cultural and ethnic characteristics of the Vietnamese people.

**Keywords:** Lexical transliteration, words indicating parts of the hand, Vietnamese

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of a word having multiple meanings is the result of the transformation of the meaning of the word. It is the process of changing the meaning of a word from an old (already existing) meaning to a new (not yet available) meaning. The change in meaning of words is influenced by many psychological and social factors. Words can change meaning due to taboo reasons to ensure polite motto. For example: go, hide away from the mountains, etc. means "dead".

Lexical translation is a secondary way of identifying in a language with two main methods: metaphor and metonymy. This is a phenomenon that is both human and national. Group of words indicating parts of the human body are very important vocabulary in any languages. In which, "hand" is one of the parts that people learn and recognize the earliest and the word "hand" is belong an important lexical group of words indicating human body parts. Until now, world linguistics as well as Vietnamese linguistics has had many researches (in the form of monographs, dissertations, articles...) on this group of words with different depth and depth. Among them is the study "Understanding the national cultural characteristics of the Vietnamese language and thinking (In comparison with other ethnic groups)" by Nguyen Duc Ton. In this work, the author has studied the characteristics of the translation process of words indicating animals, plants, and human body parts (comparison between Russian and Vietnamese). The author has made statistics of the number of synonyms, the methods of synonymy and came to the conclusion: the dominant trend of translation in both Russian and Vietnamese languages is metaphor. Continuing with this research direction, the authors Chan Phommavong, Cam Tu Tai, and Do Thi Thanh Huyen have conducted studies on words indicating human body parts, monosyllable verbs expressing hand activities on the basis of comparison. comparison between Vietnamese - Laos, Chinese - Vietnamese.

These researches have only identified characteristics, cultural connotations, semantic structures and grammatical functions of names of human body parts without going into deep understanding of the meaning of the words in Vietnamese. For the reasons mentioned above, we chose the research topic "Symptoms of Transliteration of words indicating parts of the hands in Vietnamese" with the desire to bring a multi-dimensional view of the semantic development path of this group of words.

## 2. Research content

### 2.1. An overview of words indicating parts of the hand in Vietnamese

In Vietnam, Hoang Phe's Vietnamese Dictionary was first published by Social Science Publishing House in 1988. This can be considered as a high quality and the best dictionary of Vietnamese language in Vietnam. In fact, this dictionary has been a very reliable source and reference for papers, monographs and especially a useful document for courses, graduation thesis, master's thesis or doctoral thesis when the research content is related to analyzing the meaning of Vietnamese word units. Because the vocabulary of palm words in Vietnamese are quite rich, to determine the lexical unit of words indicating the part of the hand in the study, we conducted a survey through the dictionary "Vietnamese dictionary" of Hoang Phe (2015). The survey results showed that the number of words describing the parts of the hand in Vietnamese has 25 words with 35 meanings, specifically in the following table:

**Table 2.1. Statistical table of the number of meanings words for parts of hands in Vietnamese**

Number of words	Number of meanings	Words indicating parts of the hand	English translation	Percentage
17	1	Cánh tay; cẳng tay; cõ tay; bấp tay; cùi chỏ <sup>1</sup> ; cùi tay; tay mặt; ngón cái; ngón trỏ; ngón giữa; ngón út; kẽ tay; ngón áp út; hoa tay; khớp cổ tay; mu tay; lòng bàn tay.	Arm; forearm; wrist; biceps; elbow; elbow; right hand; thumb; index finger; middle finger; little finger; interstitial; ring finger; upper hand; wrist joint; back of hand; palm.	68%
6	2	Tay trái; bàn tay; khuỷu tay <sup>2</sup> ; móng tay; tay phải; vân tay.	Left hand; hand; elbow; nail; right hand; fingerprint.	24%
2	3	Ngón tay; đốt (ngón tay).	Fingers; phalanges.	8%
<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>			<b>100%</b>

Through statistics table 2.1, it can be seen that, out of 25 words indicating the part of the hand in Vietnamese, 8 words are polysemous words, accounting for 32%. There are 6 words with 2 meanings, accounting for 24%, and 2 words with 3 meanings, accounting for 8%. Considering the meanings of the group of multi-meaning words, we found that most of the words tend to have metaphorical meanings, with the rate of 87.5%, specifically as follows: formal metaphor 37.5% (3/8), hidden positional metaphor 25% (2/8), functional metaphor 35% (2/8).

### 2.2. The phenomenon of transliteration of a group of polysemous words indicating parts of the hand in Vietnamese

<sup>1</sup>In Vietnamese, "cùi chỏ", "cùi tay" both mean the point at the elbow when the hand is bent, the English equivalent is "elbow".

<sup>2</sup>"Khuỷu tay" in Vietnamese means the protrusion of the joint between the arm and forearm, in English it is called "elbow".

From the above statistical results, it can be seen that multi-meaning words indicating the part of the hand in Vietnamese are often translated by metaphorical and metonymy methods, in which the number of words translated by metaphorical method is 7/8 words, accounting for 87.5%, the number of words translated by metonymy has 1/8 words, accounting for 12.5%, specifically as follows:

### 2.2.1. Translating meaning according to the method of formal metaphor

There are 03 words indicating the part of the hand that are translated according to the formal metaphor, including: elbow, fingernail and fingerprint.

#### *Elbow*

With the original meaning of a part of the human body, “elbow” is defined as follows: Elbow (n) 1. The protrusion of the joint between the arm and the forearm. 2. The bend, almost folded [5, pp.812].

In Vietnamese, elbow has 2 meanings, of which there is an original meaning (meaning 1) indicating a part of the human body and a derivative meaning (meaning 2). From the original meaning, based on the similarity in form, metaphorically, the word "elbow" gives rise to a derivative meaning (meaning 2), denoting a bend, such as: "Once in a while there is a The sound of the slap, echoing the echoes up and down the old reeds growing at the elbow of the river." [citation 35, pp.812]. On the basis of similarity in shape, the word elbow appears in the river elbow – transitioning to a field that denotes part of the river.

#### *Nail*

Nails (n). 1. Hard like horns at the tips of toes, fingers. 2. An arc-shaped piece of iron attached to the bottom of the hoof of some domesticated animal for traction (such as a horse) [5, pp.1002]. From the original meaning, the word foundation has one more derivative meaning. The line of metaphorical synonyms derived from the appearance-like attribute of the hoof "hard like horns at the tips of the toes, fingers" gives the meaning (2)– the figurative meaning of the word hoof in the phrase: horseshoe. When appearing in the phrase horseshoe, the word hooves changes to the semantic lexical field of objects. From the original meaning, when participating in the word combination "thick tangerine peel with sharp nails" from the nail has created a new meaning, no longer denotes a part of the upper limb but used to refer to someone with deep intentions, demons sly again meet someone with a higher plan to rule.

#### *Fingerprint*

With the original meaning of a part of the human body, "*fingerprints*" are defined as follows: 1. naturally occurring parallel curves on wood, stone or finger tips. 2. silk textiles with vein-like lines [5, pp.1725]. In Vietnamese, the word fingerprint has 02 meanings, 01 original meaning (meaning 1) and 01 derivative meaning. Based on the similarity in form, according to the metaphorical method, the word vein gives rise to a derivative meaning (meaning 2) denoting silk textiles on the surface with lines resembling veins. On the basis of similarity in shape attributes, the word vein appears in the word combination "*silk with pink veins*" - transferred to the lexical field of textiles. Not only moving to the vocabulary field for textiles, with the similarity of shape attribute, the word vein is transferred to the semantic vocabulary field indicating the characteristics of wood when present in the combination: wood grain and semantic vocabulary field only characteristics of rocks when appearing in the phrase: stone veins.

### 2.2.2. Transliteration by the method of location metaphor

There are 02 words indicating the part of the hand that are translated according to the method of position metaphor, including: left hand and right hand.

#### *Left hand*

With the original meaning of a part of the human body, "left hand" is defined as follows: 1. The hand is on the same side as the heart, opposite to the right hand. 2. (kng) the left side, opposite to the right hand [5, pp.1398].

From the original meaning, the left hand word has one more derivative meaning. The metaphorical synonymy line originates from the similarity of the word position of the hand that creates the meaning (2) – the symbolic meaning of the word left hand in phrases such as: on the left -hand side, turn to the left hand.

#### *Right hand*

According to Hoang Phe's Vietnamese Dictionary (2015), "left hand" is defined as follows: 1. The hand is usually used to hold a pen, hold a working tool, as opposed to the left hand. 2. The right side, opposite to the left hand. [5, pp.1398].

The word right hand has 02 meanings, including 01 original meaning and 01 derivative meaning. From the original meaning, derived from the similarity of position, following the metaphorical translation line from the right hand gives rise to a derivative meaning (meaning 2), indicating direction, position, such as: on the right-hand side, turn to the right hand.

### 2.2.3. Transliteration in a functional metaphor

There are 03 words/phrases indicating the part of the hand that are translated according to the formal metaphor, including: hand, knuckle, palm.

#### *Hand*

Hand (n). 1. The end of the hand, with fingers, for grasping, touching, and working, is often considered a symbol of creative manual labor. 2. The hand, considered a symbol of human action (usually implies criticism) [5, pp.49]. The word "*hand*" in Vietnamese has two meanings, one of which is an original meaning and a derivative meaning. From the original meaning of a part of the upper limb, constitutive meanings may include: [End of hand, with fingers] [grasping, touching, working] [considered as a symbol of creative manual labor of man]. Thus, the meaning structure of the word "hand" includes 03 meanings: there are 02 meanings for things (the end of the hand, with fingers) and (the symbol of creative manual labor of human), 01 meaning of function (to grasp, touch, work).

Based on the similarity of functions between things, according to the method of metaphorical translation, "*hand*" gives rise to a derivative meaning (meaning 2) which is a symbol of human action but often with a disparaging connotation, such as: the hand of death, the hand of the bad guy, the hand of the landlord, ... .

From the original meaning, the word hand joins the word "*golden hand*" to create a new meaning denoting a person who is talented and proficient in performing a certain labor or technical operation.

#### *Phalanges*

Phalanges (n). 1. Similar segments on the body of some animals and plants. 2. Similar parts of several body parts. 3. Words used to count the number of people in the family, such as children and brothers [5, pp.557].

From the original meaning, the word "Phalanges" gives rise to two more derivative meanings. The line of metaphorical translation originates from the similarity in function between the things that create meaning (2) has the ability to distinguish and narrow the scope of the representation (only showing the similarity of some parts of the body, such as vertebrae, cervical vertebrae, etc.). Continuing with this line of translation, the word phalanges gives rise to a derivative meaning (meaning 3) that is used to count the number of people in the family, such as: Then he is Leg, he is Foot. That is to remove the next two knuckles, otherwise there are more liters of it [linked to 5, pp.557].

#### 2.2.4. Metaphorization by metonymy

Eight polysemous words denoting the part of the hand in Vietnamese, only one word "*finger*" is transliterated by metonymy.

With the original meaning of a part of the human body, "finger" is defined as follows: (n). 1. The movable part of the hand and foot of humans and some animals. 2. Talent, own forte. 3. Trick, own tricks [5, pp.1080].

The word "*finger*" in Vietnamese has 03 meanings, of which the original meaning (meaning 1) refers to a part of the upper limb of the human body. From the meaning (1), it can be seen that the structure of the symbolic meaning of the word "*finger*" can be represented by the meaning strokes separated in square brackets as follows: [Moveable part] [at the top of the hand, leg of humans and some animals]. Thus, the structure of the meaning of "*finger*" includes 02 basic meanings, of which there is 01 meaning of function (movable part) and 01 meaning of things (heads of hands, feet of humans and animals).

Based on the relationship between authorities and functions, according to metonymy, the word "*finger*" gives rise to a derivative meaning (meaning 2), often appearing in combinations such as: *dangerous finger*, *professional martial finger*. , ... Going one step further in this method of translation, the word "finger" appears in the phrases: *trick-finger*, *play-finger*, *flip-finger*, etc., giving rise to a derivative meaning (3) denoting indecent things, using their own tricks.

From the original meaning, the word "*finger*" in Vietnamese when appearing in the phrases "two-finger job, five-finger job" has created a new meaning, used to refer to people who specialize in pickpockets, slitting bags to steal property, switch to vocational job.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Based on the theoretical basis of semantics from the traditional point of view, on hermeneutical dictionary documents combined with new interpretations at the necessary level, the article has focused on investigating the phenomenon of translation of the words indicating parts of the hand, the result is as follows:

In 25 words that represent the part of the hand in Vietnamese, only 8 words are polysemous, accounting for 32%, of which 6 words have 2 meanings, accounting for 24%, and 2 words have 3 meanings. accounted for 8%. Most hand part words have the same class word (noun) and have the same basic function as identifying. However, the diversity of origins and

functional activities of identifying expression classes also shows the cultural imprints kept in these lexical classes. Applying the method of semantic element analysis to resolve dictionary definitions of expressions indicating parts of the hand in Vietnamese, we found that the semantic structure of this lexical field appears 4 meanings, including: 1. Type designation, 2. Location, 3. Body part function, 4. Shape. In the structure of the meaning content of this semantic lexical field, each meaning stroke has a different role and position. Through the survey, we found that, after participating in word combinations, there are many words indicating the part of the hand that have created new meanings and transferred to new semantic lexical fields such as: indicating the part of the river (river's elbow), object (horseshoe), direction, position (turn left, turn right, left, right), textile (silk pattern), wood feature (wood grain), characteristics of the stone (stone veins), occupation (5-finger occupation), ... .

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