

THE SEMANTIC EXTENSIONS OF INTERNAL BODY PART TERMS IN THAI IDIOMS

Abstract

This paper presents the linguistics evidence from Thai idioms in support of the claim that our bodily experience, especially the internal body parts, plays a prominent role in the meaning construction. The data was collected from 29 Thai idiom books. The analysis is primarily based on metaphor, metonymy and chained metonymies in cognitive semantic approach. The data show that metaphor and metonymy are the motivating forces behind the semantic extension in the internal body part terms in Thai. However, most of the meaning extension of body part terms is found via metonymy. This fact supports the claim that metonymy is a more fundamental cognitive phenomena than metaphor. The most extended meanings found in the data are person and action. The body part term that its meaning is extended most is heart.