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Conceptual Metaphors of Fear and Sadness in Covid-19 Plague

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Abstract

The study aims to analyze the conceptual metaphor of fear and sadness of utterances towards the Covid-19 plague. Furthermore, the study also the conceptual system of Thai language users derived from conceptual metaphor based on cognitive semantics using the information from Thai contexts, including 40 online news and 30 online articles. Such information was published between December 2019 to May 2020. The researchers selected utterances expressing the emotion of fear and sadness as the model and analyzed conceptual metaphor using Lakoff, G. & Kövecses, Z. (1987) and Kövecses, Z. (2002, 2005, 2006) as the conceptual framework of analysis. The findings revealed nine features of the conceptual metaphor of utterances expressing fear and sadness in the Thai language found during the Covid-19 plague. These nine features of conceptual metaphor were DOMINANCE, PLANT, SUPERNATURAL, FOOD, PRECIOUS MATERIAL, WAR, MATERIAL, ANIMAL, and HUMAN, especially PARTS OF BODY. Such conceptual metaphor reflected the two concepts of fear and sadness in the Thai language found during the Covid-19 plague. The two concepts were the conceptual system of ontological correspondences and the conceptual system of epistemic correspondences.

Keywords: Conceptual Metaphor; The conceptual systems of Fear and Sadness; COVID-19

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the tremendous numbers of people worldwide have been all inflected during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreaks; otherwise, only about 2 percent of inflected victims' death and no medications mainly were found. Accordingly, their suffering was induced by their unlucky, epidemic outbreaks, no socializing interaction, no braves on life existence management, bullies, and now rests. All the people's

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self-protection during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreaks advised by public health's recommendations should be more implemented for their no somber with news occurrences (Phra Phaisan Wiso, 2020).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) stated that one concept could be identified for a metaphorical term by connecting mappings from the source domain to the target domain; moreover, the definition of the source domain is generally substantial. Meanwhile, the definition of the target domain is likely to be abstract (Kövecses, 2000).

According to the literature reviews and other related researches on the cognitive theory of metaphor in the Thai language, previous studies related to the study of Sininat Watthanasuk (2006) on "Metaphors expressing the love of international music for Thai teenagers," the study of Pattra Ngamjitwongsakul (2003) on "Love metaphors in Thai international songs by Pattra Ngamjit Wongsakul," the study of Narong Kannarotsaap (2018) on "Conceptual metaphor showing emotions of hopes, ambition, and imagination in the Thai language," the study of Supachai Tawichai (2006) on "Conceptual metaphors expressing anger in Thai," the comparative study of Nannapat Yooprayong (2010) on "Conceptual metaphors of happiness, anger and suffering in Thai and English," Narong Kannarotsap's research (2014) on "Metaphors about the boredom in the Thai language," and the study of Narong Kannarotsap (2018) on "Metaphors showing sadness in Thai novels" were all explored. Also, a research conducted by Ratchanaya Klinhom and Prue Suphasetsiri (2017) on "Conceptual metaphors showing important Thai social phenomena (floods, wars, and victims) excerpted from Thai newspapers headlines," as well as the study of Sutthipip Aramsak (2017) on "Metaphors in the news of violence in the southern border provinces," and research conducted by Worawanna Petchakit and Suthasini Piyapasthara (2017) entitled "His Majesty the Great King: a study of conceptual metaphysics and perceives of King Rama IX" were all scrutinized.

Thus, metaphors related to fear and sadness in Covid-19 epidemic outbreaks in a Thai society can be a robust conceptual framework indicating the Thais' paradigm shifts. In order to identify the Thais' two major pessimistic perspectives towards the human beings' significant excruciating phenomena, a study of conceptual metaphors showing fear and sadness of the Thai language during the Covid-19 epidemic outbreaks should be first explored.

1.1. Literature review

Cognitive semantics conceptualized by Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980), and Kövecses, Z. (1986, 2000, 2002, 2005) was carried out for analyzing the following conceptual metaphors.

Theoretical Concepts on Image

Supachai Tawichai (2013) summarized differences between image and image-schemas, which could be perceived from senses such as visual images, hearing, auditory images, olfactory images, etc. (Lakoff 1987: 444). In addition to this concept, detailed real-world images appeared. Meanwhile, the sketched images, which were not mentioned, appeared to be abstract based on their visual perception and the creation of different physical experiences. For example, the sketch concerning schematic (containers), paths, links, forces, and balances could be implicated in this study. According to the study of Kövecses (2000), he conducted a comparative study of conceptual metaphors showing angry in different languages such as English, Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, etc. The research findings revealed that anger concepts primarily found in every language were all mentioned as the pressure in the container (THE ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURISED CONTAINER), which illustrated the universal image of anger about containers and packaging.

Embodiment

Supachai Tawichai (2013) stated that the embodiment referred to a concept of cognitive science linked into verbal explanations. Furthermore, Kövecses (2006: 368) explained the definition of a study that was involved in the relationships of language, meaning, and thought so that the results obtained from physical experiences directly led to its relationship of image-schema, as well as essential and experiential classifications. In other words, the coordination of images is the abstraction of things or materialization. For example, a language user initiated a concept of desire for hunger (DESIRE IS

HUNGER) (Lekov and Johnson Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1987). It was so-called “conceptual metaphors”, which referred to the metaphorical forms of language that reflected on the thought systems of language users obtained from the human beings’ other different learning experiences.

1.2. Research Objective

The primary purposes of this study aimed to analyze conceptual metaphors related to fear and sadness in the Thai language during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreaks excerpted from current news and online articles, as well as the Thais’ conceptual metaphor system expressed from fear and sadness in the Thai language during covid-19 pandemic outbreaks.

2. Article structure

2.1. Subdivision - numbered sections

Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 2.1 (then 2.1.1, 2.1.2, ...), 2.2, etc. (the abstract is not included in section numbering). Use this numbering also for internal cross-referencing: do not just refer to ‘the text’. Any subsection may be given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line.

3. Method

Qualitative method was employed to conduct the research. 40 online news and 30 online articles, published between December 2019 to May 2020, were reviewed and grouped according to

4. Results

Thai expressions of fear and sadness during the Covid-19 plague and the types of conceptual metaphors can be categorized into ten features as follows:

1. Conceptual metaphors of JOURNEY

The correspondences of metaphors of fear are a journey that can be classified into two types: ontological correspondences and epistemic correspondences. They are explained below.

- (1) Social distancing for a while to reduce the risk of infecting Covid-19

(news from Thammasart University, March 29, 2020)

- (2) Stay at home and stop the spread of the virus for the sake of the nation

(<https://www.hfocus.org/content/2020/03/18834>, March 30, 2020)

From the two examples above, it can be illustrated the ontological correspondences of conceptual metaphors of fear as follows:

Source domain

stop



Target domain

causing fear of Covid-19, so stay at home only

In addition, there is an occurrence of epistemic correspondences, which were the subcategory of the source domain. There were more than one set of meanings that were connected before correspondences, for example:

- (3) It is closed to us, so I want you to realize that all I said did not make you feel fear
(Flight Covid-19 Phitsanulok, April 6, 2020)

From the example, the author used the word “close” and “oneself” to express fear as follow:

Source domain			Target domain
Close (short journey)	Short Journey oneself (body)	⇒	Fear feeling of anxiety (fear of the pandemic of Covid-19)

2. Conceptual metaphors of LIQUID

It is an ontological correspondence of metaphor showing the emotion of fear which is found to be the liquid in Thai language as indicated below:

(4) Itaewon cluster, **the second wave** of Covid-19 crashed in Seoul, **the horror** of the wave. From the above example, it can be said that it was the epidemic correspondences, as indicated below.

Source domain		Target domain
Second wave	⇒	the horror of the co-occurrence of Covid-19

In addition, the ontological correspondences of metaphors expressing the emotion of sadness that was found to be the liquid in Thai were:

(5) The day ago, I saw VDO clip of vendors at the market that the mart closed. They did not have a place to sell their products, and they did not have money. They just **cried** and did not know what to do.

(<https://www.blockdit.com/posts/5e893ce65a2b0e0cc265e042>, April 5, 2020)

According to the above example, the language user used the term “run” and “tear” to express the emotion of sadness, as indicated below.

Source domain		Target domain
Pour the liquid run tear (pour liquid) (body)	⇒	sadness sadness (sadness)

3. Conceptual metaphor of FOODS

It is the method of epistemic correspondences of metaphors expressing the sadness of foods as indicated below.

(6) “**Infected with the virus** is better than **starving to death**,” a homeless woman said to PPTV news reporter with a desperate tone of voice.

(PPTV Online, April 3, 2020)

From the above example, the language user used the terms “starving” and “death” to show sadness, which can be demonstrated below.

Source domain		Target domain
Starving to death starving death (do not eat) (symptom)	⇒	sadness sadness (very sadness)

4. Conceptual metaphors of SUPERIOR

The method of metaphorical correspondences expressing the emotion of fear is to show the superior, as indicated below.

(7) Public areas are at risk of being **infected with the virus** to **cover** all risk areas in Phitsanulok.

(Vinyl sign at the southern market in Phitsanulok, March 30, 2020)

(8) I **swear** by the Emerald Buddha Pra Siam Devadhiraj.....and holy thing that I will inform the history honestly and will not conceal any risk of **Covid-19**.

(Poster at patient screen point Srisangworn Sukhothai Hospital, April 1, 2020)

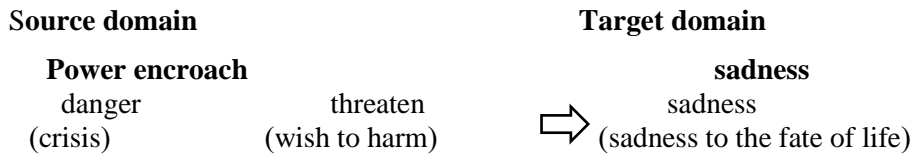
Example 8 is ontological correspondences. It can be illustrated below.

Source domain		Target domain
Swear	⇒	lead to the fear of concealing the risk of Covid-19

In addition, the epistemic correspondence is illustrated below.

- (9) During the social distancing policy to prevent the threat from Covid-19, there is still a group of people who do have access to a mask and personal protective equipment. These groups of people earn a small amount of daily income to exchange for sustenance.
(<https://www.pptvhd36.com/news/>, April 3, 2020)

From the above example, the language user used the term “danger” and “threaten” to express sadness, which can be seen below.

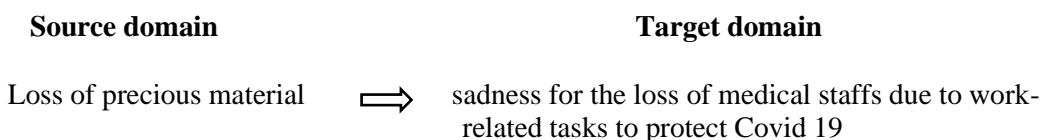


5. Conceptual metaphors of PRECIOUS MATERIALS

The method of metaphoric correspondences expressing sadness can be divided into two correspondences:

- (10) This afternoon, April 5, 2020, in Thailand, we lost a heroine who sacrificed his/her life to treat patients until there was no time to rest and died suddenly.
(<https://www.thairath.co.th/news/society/1813263>, April 6, 2020)

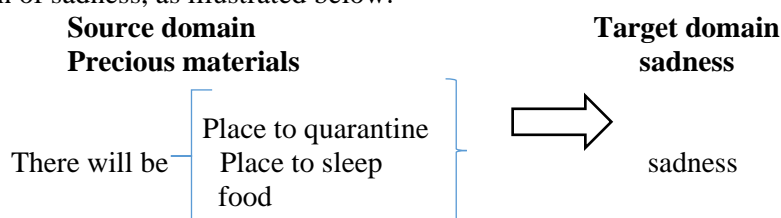
The example above showed ontological correspondences. This can be seen in the following diagram.



The following is an example of epistemic correspondences.

- (11) It was a tragedy when she said that “it may be better to infect Covid-19 because it is at least there will be a place to quarantine, sleep, and has food. The doctors will not let her die.”
(<https://www.komchadluek.net/news/economic/426322>, April 5, 2020)

The term “there will be” and “place to quarantine/ place to sleep/food” were used to show the emotion of sadness, as illustrated below.



(precious materials) (save place/precious materials) (sadness so looking for save place)

6. Conceptual metaphors of WAR

The method of ontological correspondences of metaphors showing the emotion of fear was a war, which was illustrated below.

- (12) Flight together with medical staff. Buy a defensive covering: N95
(Naresuan University hospital, March 28, 2020)

The above example can be classified as an ontological correspondence, as indicated in the following diagram.

Source domain**Target domain**

Hang out outside \Rightarrow I feel sad with behavior of the people who do not stay at home to prevent Covid 19

In addition, the epistemic correspondence of metaphor of fear that was an animal in the Thai language can be demonstrated below.

- (17) We are just ordinary people. We are not brave, but we feel extremely fear-like brain break. If we have choices, we will not work here and have to bring PPE.
(<http://oknation.nationtv.tv/blog/print.php?id=1079796>, April 5, 2020)

The above example was an epistemic correspondence, and the source domain and the target domain shared similar meaning, that is, the malfunction of the body of shrimp, which can be explained below,

**Source domain:
Shrimp's organ****Target domain
sadness**

shit in brain \Rightarrow sadness

(outcome (symptom) (body) from body's organ) (extremely fear)

9. Conceptual metaphors of HUMAN

Four features of this type were identified: the human body, the outcome from the human body, disease, and human manner. They were explained below.

1) Human body

It was the method that uses the term of human to compare with the negative emotion as indicated below.

- (18) Eyes are unexceptional. Life is *fear* of this virus. When going outside, we have to be careful. Do not be careless.

Example 18 was an ontological correspondence of metaphor of the body and can be explained below.

Source domain**Target domain**

Eyes / life \Rightarrow The fear with the epidemic of Covid 19 through the eyes of people

2) The outcome of the human body

The metaphor of the outcome of the human body that was found in example 19 is illustrated below.

- (19) Concerning the people who infected the Covid-19, they have to stay separately from their family and self-quarantine for many days. Covid-19 comes with the tear. They were treated, and many families cried about this.

(<http://www.thaiticketmajor.com/variety/ent/12901/>, March 25, 2020)

It was an epistemic correspondence showing sadness which was the outcome of the human body. It can be explained below.

Source domain:**Target domain****Symptom of body****sadness**

Tear pour \Rightarrow sadness

(outcome of the body) (liquid) (sadness from staying away from family)

3) Disease

The example of metaphors of disease is illustrated below.

- (20) Relatives, brother, sister, son, daughter, nephew, wife, and husband cannot say goodbye. It was a lonely death and suffering. We cannot think about how these patients would be fear and lonely.

(https://www.matichon.co.th/news-monitor/news_2124168, April 5, 2020)

The above example is an ontological correspondence of the metaphor of disease and as explained below.

Source domain	⇒	Target domain
Suffering		extremely fearful and sad

- (21) A long queue “Seriphisut” carried in arms with cash to distribute to the people to release the suffering from Covid-19.

(<https://www.thaipost.net/main/detail/65477>, May 9, 2020)

The example shows the epistemic correspondence of metaphor of disease, which is illustrated in the following diagram.

Source domain:	⇒	Target domain
Curing the disease		sadness
Release suffering		sadness
(cure the disease) (negative emotion)		(sorrowful from the pandemic of Covid-19)

4) Human manner

The example of the metaphor of human manner is illustrated below.

- (22) Now a day, I only went to 7-11. I wear mask-like in China....I do not care who will look at me. I just cared about myself and my family.

(Thairat online, April 3, 2020)

Example 22 was an ontological correspondence of metaphor of human manner, which was described below.

Source domain	⇒	Target domain
Completely covered		extremely fear

- (23) Look at the mother and father’s face, son and daughter, and husband admonished that they may infect the Covid-19 and may not be able to go home, so they did a bear hug like they will not have a chance to meet each other again.

(<https://www.thaipost.net/main/detail/62139>, April 5, 2563)

Example 23 was the ontological correspondence of metaphor of human manner. This is explained below.

Source domain	⇒	Target domain
Admonished / bear hug		extremely fear

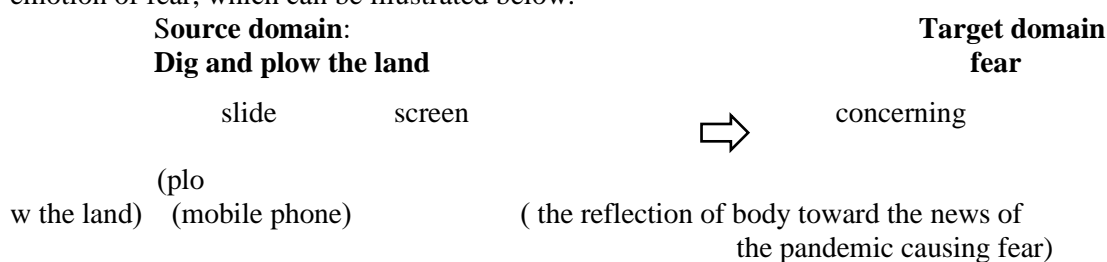
10. Conceptual metaphors of Agriculture

It was an epistemic correspondence of the language used that the emotion of fear was agriculture. This was described below.

- (24) OMG! The infected victim was increased. We will be the next one. Slide the screen and fund only Covid-19 news.

(ARTIPANIA.COM, March 30, 2020)

From the above example, the language user used the term “slide” and “screen” to show the emotion of fear, which can be illustrated below.



5. Discussion

The results of this research showed that conceptual metaphors resulted from human experiences, environmental experiences, physical experiences, haptic experiences, social experiences, and cultural experiences. In this regard, human metaphors were primarily used in this study.

With references to the metaphor of love (Sininat Watthanasuk, 2006), the metaphor of anger (Supachai Tawichai, 2006), the metaphor in love songs (Auntika Ditkit, 2012), the metaphor of love (Kornkanokramatart, 2013), the metaphor of happiness (Nannapat Yooprayong, 2010), the metaphor of boredom (Narong Kannarot SAP, 2014), the metaphor of hope (Narong Karnasodsap, 2018), conceptual metaphors showing important social phenomena or floods (Ratchanaya, Klinnamhom, and Parith Suphasethasiri, 2017), violence in the southern border provinces (Sutthip Aramsak, 2017), as well as the Thai citizens’ perspectives with the King 9th Rama V (Wanna Wannaphetkij and Suthasini Piyapasthara, 2017), it was insisted that language users often associated with the relationships of various abstract creatures, which were difficult to be understood by physical experiences related to body organs, postures, ailments, and body-made products.

However, the humans’ connection taken from socio-cultural experiences and circumstances were all attempted to be expressed for their conceptualized metaphors, and conceptual metaphors were a means of language interpretation, and the language users’ thought system reflected on conceptual metaphors.

6. Conclusions

In order to provide an insightful handbook on disaster-related suffering therapy, however, human metaphors were primarily found in the use of language related to the fear and sadness of the Thai language during Covid-19 epidemic outbreaks.

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