

## A Review of Studies in Heart or *Jai* Metaphor in Thai Language

### การปริทัศน์การศึกษาอุปลักษณคำว่า “ใจ” ในภาษาไทย

Wichaya Bovonwivat

Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University

Received: 31 July 2023

Revised: 31 October 2023

Accepted: 11 November 2023

#### Abstract

This paper primarily aims to gather and review the conceptual metaphor studies of the term “heart” or “jai” (ใจ) in Thai. Also, some other semantic studies of the word “heart” or “jai” in Thai are included in this review article. Although the metaphor research of “jai” or “ใจ” in Thai is not much found, the results of those heart metaphor studies yield significant results of how Thai natives view and understand the word “heart” or “jai.” The metaphors of the word “jai” can be categorized into four major groups: (1) HEART AS PERSON/HUMAN; (2) HEART AS OBJECT; (3) HEART AS SPACE; (4) HEART AS CONTAINER. To conclude, this organ term “jai” attached to an abundant number of phrases spoken daily plays an important role in communication in Thai, which reflects the native speakers’ perspectives on the heart.

**Keywords:** Conceptual metaphor, Heart, Thai

#### บทคัดย่อ

บทความฉบับนี้รวบรวมและทบทวนวรรณกรรมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการศึกษาอุปลักษณมโนทัศน์ และความหมายหรืออรรถศาสตร์ของคำว่า “ใจ” ในภาษาไทย ถึงแม้ว่าการศึกษาความหมายของคำว่า “ใจ” โดยใช้ทฤษฎีอุปลักษณมโนทัศน์นั้นยังมีไม่มาก บทความนี้พบว่า คนไทยมองและเข้าใจคำว่า “ใจ” โดยผ่านมโนทัศน์อุปลักษณของคำว่า “ใจ” ใน 4 ลักษณะหลัก ดังนี้ (1) ใจเป็นคน (2) ใจเป็นวัตถุ (3) ใจเป็นพื้นที่ และ (4) ใจเป็นภาชนะ โดยสรุป พบว่าคำเรียกอวัยวะ “ใจ” นี้ปรากฏร่วมกับคำอื่น ๆ ในวลีที่คนไทยพูดกันในชีวิตประจำวันในความถี่สูง ซึ่งสะท้อนให้เห็นถึงความสำคัญของคำดังกล่าวในการสื่อสารภาษาไทยที่เป็นภาษาพูดในชีวิตประจำวันและมุมมองของคนไทยที่มีต่อคำ “ใจ”

**คำสำคัญ:** อุปลักษณมโนทัศน์, ใจ, ภาษาไทย

## Introduction

The body parts in many languages are used as a metaphoric word referring to a number of both living and non-living entities as well as both tangible and intangible objects. In Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and Johnson (2007), the body part terms can be used as a framework for conceptualizing world events. It can be seen that there are a certain number of semantic studies of organ terms in various languages applying the conceptual metaphor framework, such as the conceptual metaphor studies of body parts in Chinese (Yu, 2003, 2007, 2009), in Thai (Ukosakul, 1999), in Georgian (Daraselia, 2017), in Burmese (Phonthad & Intajamornrak, 2020), and so forth.

Heart not only is an organ but also a word that is used extensively to refer to other things in several languages. In Thai, the word “heart”, “jai” or “ใจ” is generally compared to love, thoughts, and feelings; however, it is also a metaphoric word that can represent the Thai natives’ perceptions of this lexical. The word “jai” prevails in a great number of word collocations in Thai which contain a variety of grammatical functions and meanings.

The word “jai” in Thai can be compared to “heart” and “mind” in English. Saralamba (2008) explains that the word “jai” in Thai can be translated into the words “heart” and “mind” in English depending on the context and collocation. In other words, the English word “mind” is used separately from the word “heart,” while “jai” in Thai can mean both “heart” and “mind.”

Based on conceptual metaphor, the organ term “heart” frequently becomes a vehicle for a wide array of metaphors, as discussed by Kövecses (2000), Yu (1998, 2003a), Stefanowitsch (2006), and others. The word “jai” or “heart” in Thai has been mentioned in some semantic and grammatical studies (e.g., Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom, 2005; Lertkultanon, 2012; Matisoff, 1986; Moore, 2006). However, conceptual metaphor studies related to the term “jai” in Thai can be found in a few studies (e.g., Berendt & Tanita, 2011; Park, 2015; Rungchaeng, 2005; Yao, 2018). Rungchaeng (2005)’s work is the only metaphorical research of “jai” while the rest are the metaphorical studies of “jai” in comparison to the term “heart” in other languages.

This paper reviewed principles and concepts of cognitive linguistics and conceptual metaphor, followed by the review of methodological aspects of general semantic studies of “jai” and conceptual metaphor studies of “jai”.

## **Principles and Concepts: Cognitive Linguistics and Conceptual Metaphor**

Before considering the concept of conceptual metaphor, it could be better to acknowledge the general principles of cognitive linguistics and its relation to conceptual metaphor. The conceptual metaphor is recognized as a part of cognitive linguistics theory which was developed in the 1970s.

### **Cognitive Linguistics**

According to Fillmore (1982), Lakoff (1987), and Talmy (2006), this linguistics theory believes that language and mind are related, and linguistic patterns are developed from conceptual structures. This is a commonly shared notion of the major cognitive linguists that meaning plays a fundamental role in language and should be a primary area of investigation. They contend that linguistic structures serve the purpose of conveying meanings, making the mappings between meaning and form a central subject of linguistic analysis. According to this perspective, linguistic forms are intricately connected to the semantic structures they are intended to convey. As a result, the semantic structures of all meaningful linguistic units are open to examination and should be explored in-depth.

Moreover, cognitive linguistics focuses on investigating the connection between language structure and elements beyond language itself. This includes exploring cognitive principles and mechanisms that are not exclusive to language, encompassing aspects like human categorization, pragmatic, and interactional principles, as well as general functional principles, such as iconicity and economy.

According to Lakoff (1987), Langacker (1987, 1991), and Talmy (2000) as cited in Croft (2001), cognitive linguistics constitutes a comprehensive branch of linguistic theory commonly referred to as functionalism. This field centers around cognitive, specifically semantic, interpretations of grammatical structure. Its influence extends beyond its core principles, as it has introduced valuable concepts to other functionalist approaches, thereby enhancing the evaluation of functional methodologies.

To be more specific, Talmy (2006) states that cognitive linguistics delves into the organization of fundamental conceptual categories, encompassing aspects like space and time, scenes and events, entities and processes, motion, and location, as well as force and causation.

In addition, it incorporates essential cognitive categories such as attention and perspective, volition and intention, and expectation and affect. Furthermore, cognitive linguistics explores the connections between conceptual structures, including metaphoric mapping, semantic framing, the relationship between text and context, and the grouping of conceptual categories into more comprehensive organizational systems.

### Conceptual Metaphor

The conceptual metaphor has been widely applied to several semantic studies since it can convey elaborately human thoughts and perspectives on meanings and linguistic forms. Among the well-known cognitive linguistics scholars in the 70s, Lakoff studied extensively in metaphor and metonymy.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) elaborate on the concept of conceptual metaphor in their book, *Metaphors We Live By*, that the process of mapping the meaning relationships across different cognitive domains, between the source domain and the target domain, by relying on the similarities between entities within these domains, serves as a tool or mechanism for thinking, awareness, and reasoning that reflects the cognitive system of language users. In simpler terms, when we understand or express concepts or ideas in one domain (target domain), we can use similar concepts or ideas from another domain (source domain) to help us comprehend or reason about the original concept. This mapping of meaning helps us make sense of things, think critically, and use reasoning based on our cognitive understanding of language.

Let's consider the two following classic metaphor examples in Lakoff and Johnson (1980) below:

(1)

ARGUMENT IS WAR

Your claims are indefensible.

He attacked every weak point in my argument.

I demolished his argument.

I've never won an argument with him.

You disagree? Okay, shoot!

If you use that strategy, he'll wipe you out.

He shot down all of my arguments.

(p. 4)

(2)

TIME IS MONEY

You're wasting my time.

This gadget will save you hours.

I don't have the time to give you.

How do you spend your time these days.

That flat tire cost me an hour.

I've invested a lot of time in her.

I don't have enough time to spare for that.

You're running out of time.

You need to budget your time.

Put aside some time for ping pong.

Is that worth your while?

Do you have much time left?

He's living on borrowed time.

You don't use your time profitably.

I lost a lot of time when I got sick.

Thank you for your time.

(p.7-8)

In (1) and (2), it can be seen that the words that are related to arguments and time can illustrate the English speakers' conceptualization of arguments and time. Many words of arguments and times refer to war and money-related vocabulary.

In (1), it is apparent that words typically associated with arguments can also be applied in a war-fighting context. The terms such as "indefensible," "attacked," "demolished," "shoot," "strategy," "wipe out," and "shot down" are often found in contexts related to war. Interestingly, these same words can also be used metaphorically in argument-related discussions. This suggests

that in the English language, the act of arguing with words is metaphorically akin to engaging in armed conflict. English speakers seem to perceive that words can be just as destructive as weapons, and the process of arguing shares a conceptual similarity with fighting in a war.

Similarly, the metaphor "TIME IS MONEY" illustrates that English speakers equate the value of time with that of money. This is evident from the overlapping set of words used in both time and money contexts. Time, same as money, is seen as a valuable commodity, as indicated by words such as "spend," "waste," "save," and others, which can be applied to both time and money. Therefore, many words associated with money can also be used in discussions related to time.

However, it is important to note that these metaphors, such as "ARGUMENT IS WAR" and "TIME IS MONEY," cannot be reversed to "WAR IS ARGUMENT" or "MONEY IS TIME." The words that are typically used to represent argument or time are not commonly found in war or money-related contexts. For instance, terms such as "say," "speak," and "argue" are not typically used in discussions related to war, and terms such as "minute," "hour," and "clock" are not commonly found in discussions about money. As a result, the conceptualization of argument and time in English is not directly transferable to "WAR IS ARGUMENT" or "MONEY IS TIME." The specific words used to represent argument or time do not carry the same connotations in these reversed metaphors.

It can be assumed that the way English speakers use metaphors like "ARGUMENT IS WAR" and "TIME IS MONEY" provides insight into how Thai speakers may also use the term "jai" or "heart" in Thai in a metaphorical sense. The fact that the term "jai" in Thai is widely combined with other words, creating a variety of metaphorical meanings, suggests a significant semantic expansion of "jai" in the human mind, expressed through language. The examples in (3), (4), and (5) provided below illustrate the comparison of "jai" to feelings, comprehension, and personality.

- (3)    khaw   mii   jai   hai   chan  
         he/she have heart give I  
         “He/She has a feeling for me.”
- (4)    chan   mai   khaw jai   prayook   nii  
         I       NEG   enter heart   sentence   DET  
         “I don’t understand this sentence.”

- (5) Mae jai dii kab thuk khon  
Mother heart good with every person  
“Mother is kind to everyone.”

These examples represent just a small sampling of the many metaphors to which "jai" in Thai can be compared, revealing its considerable semantic extension and shedding light on the perceptions of native speakers towards the term associated with the heart organ. Consequently, studies exploring the conceptual metaphors involving "jai" can provide valuable insights into what Thai speakers truly think about the heart and underscore the profound significance of the heart within Thai culture.

### **Methodological Aspects: General Semantic Studies of “jai” and Conceptual Metaphor Studies of “jai”**

The review comprises two types of studies on "jai." Firstly, non-metaphorical studies of "jai" were gathered to illustrate a general semantic understanding of it. These general semantic studies of "jai" can indicate the basic perceptions and usage of "jai" that will eventually lead to metaphorical expansion in meaning. Then, conceptual metaphor studies of "jai" were collected to explain how Thais perceive and use this organ term metaphorically in greater detail.

However, most of the conceptual metaphor studies of "jai" compare the term "heart" in Thai with its equivalents in other languages, while one research study focuses solely on "jai." These comparative studies of the "heart" shed light on the universality of semantic and metaphorical conceptualization across languages from different language families.

### **General Semantic Studies of “jai”**

Matisoff (1968) treats the term “jai” or heart in Thai as a morpheme that is commonly attached to other words and used in contexts related to emotions, thoughts, and actions influenced by feelings. On the contrary, in English, similar to other languages in the European region, there are specific words for emotions and thoughts, such as "emotion" and "thought," which may replace the word “jai” in certain contexts. Some motion verb phrases attached with “jai” such as “jab jai” (catch heart) means to impress; “klab jai” (return heart) means to change

one's mind to do the right things; "jai loy" (heart float) means to be absent-minded, also presents metaphors.

Iwasaki and Ingkaphirom (2005) explain the structure of the word "jai" in Thai and that the change of "jai" position results in both grammatical and semantic changes. For example, "jai dee" (heart good) refers to a person's character and serves as both an adjective and a verb; "dee jai" (good heart) refers to a mood or emotion and serves as a verb. Moreover, some verb phrases with "jai" give a metaphorical meaning such as "khaw jai" (enter heart) means to understand; "sai jai" (put heart) means to pay close attention to; "hen jai" (see heart) means to be sympathetic.

Moore (2006) compiles 743 Thai phrases containing the word "jai" in his book, *Heart Talk*. He divides the collocation of the word "jai" into 12 semantic groups along with two more chapters about heart proverbs and hand gestures related to heart expressions. This book gives insightful meanings and uses of each heart expression daily spoken in Thai so that people who are interested in learning Thai and the term "jai" can quickly understand the heart's meaning in Thai and know how to use each Thai heart expression appropriately.

Lertkultanon (2012) states that the word "jai" in Thai and the word "heart" in other languages in Southeast Asia such as Tedim Chin and Mandarin can refer to feelings/moods and traits/characters, while the English and French words or phrases semantically related to emotions and characters do not contain the word "heart." She also mentions the conceptual metaphor studies of the word "heart" in Tedim Chin (Khoi Lam Thang, 2002) and in Mandarin (Yu, 2002) that show "HEART IS THE CONTAINER OF EMOTION."

It can be seen that the articles discuss the multifaceted nature of the Thai word "jai" (heart) and its rich metaphoric and semantic implications, particularly in contrast to English and other Southeast Asian languages. The key points encompass the following:

- "Jai" as a versatile morpheme in Thai is often used to convey emotions, thoughts, and actions influenced by feelings, in contrast to more specific terms in English and European languages.
- The structural flexibility of "jai" within Thai words results in both grammatical and semantic variations, with examples like "jai dee" (character) and "dee jai" (mood).



- The extensive cataloging of "jai"-related phrases in Moore's "Heart Talk" offers a valuable resource for learners to understand and use these expressions effectively.
- The cross-linguistic comparison of "jai" to the word "heart" in Southeast Asian languages like Tedim Chin and Mandarin reveals common conceptual metaphors related to emotion containment.

Overall, those general semantic studies underscore how "jai" in Thai embodies a wide range of meanings and metaphors, shedding light on cultural nuances and linguistic distinctions in expressing emotions and thoughts compared to other languages.

Although Matisoff (1986), Iwasaki and Ingkaphirom (2005), and Lertkultanon (2012) all touch upon the metaphorical meanings of the term "jai" in Thai, their explanations of these metaphorical meanings are rather limited. Consequently, a comprehensive understanding of the conceptual metaphors involving "jai" remains elusive due to the distinct focuses of these studies.

Matisoff's work (1986) primarily explores how the term "jai" in Thai can be compared and translated to words in English and other European languages, such as "feeling," "thought," "mind," and "emotion," instead of just "heart."

The second literature by Iwasaki and Ingkaphirom (2005) places greater emphasis on the structural aspects, position, and co-occurrence of "jai," resulting in a more confined discussion of its meanings.

Lastly, Lertkultanon (2012) primarily describes the meanings of "jai" in terms of personality, emotion, and feeling, and she compares these meanings with those in a few other Southeast Asian languages. These studies predominantly focus on the connection between "jai" and emotions, thoughts, and personality traits.

In summary, these studies collectively present the various dimensions of "jai" but tend to concentrate on its associations with feelings, thoughts, and personality traits, leaving the full extent of its conceptual metaphors relatively unexplored.

### Conceptual Metaphor Studies of “jai”

Rungchaeng (2005) is the first conceptual metaphor study of “heart” or “jai” in Thai, analyzing the metaphorical usage and cognitive implications of the term “jai”. The findings

revealed that the metaphorical usage of "jai" among Thai speakers reflects four main types of human characteristics, which are:

- Human qualities or states.
- Human actions or behaviors.
- Human emotions or feelings.
- Human personality or traits.

In other words, Thai speakers associate “jai” with human attributes because the word carries various meanings related to people. According to the result of the study, it seems that the word “jai” is only a metaphor of human or HEART AS HUMAN which refers exclusively to human’s states, actions, emotions, and personality. In fact, it can be interpreted that the heart, as one organ in a human body, is the metonymy of humans. That is, one smaller part is used to refer to the whole part.

This research would probably yield more metaphor results if the data collection was not limited to two-word phrases mostly retrieved from the dictionary. The data with some contexts could help to uncover more meanings and metaphors of the term “jai.” Thus, the research on “jai” metaphor should be carried further with more various data in different contexts from other sources.

Berendt and Tanita (2011) comparative study delves into the conceptual metaphorical use of the term "heart" and related organ terminology in Thai, Japanese, and English. Notably, they discovered that in Thai and Japanese, "heart" can encompass both rational thinking and emotions, a contrast to English where "mind" and "head" are associated with rational thinking while "heart" pertains to emotions, reflecting Western cultural differences.

What makes their study unique is its amalgamation of conceptual metaphor research and its application in communication behavior analysis. It explores how the choice of words like "heart" and related terms shapes communication styles across these languages.

Their analysis of the conceptual metaphor in Thai categorizes "jai" into various roles:

#### HEART AS PERSON

HEART AS THE LOCUS OF EMOTIONS  
HEART AS THE LOCUS OF ATTITUDES  
HEART AS THE LOCUS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION  
HEART AS THE LOCUS OF THINKING/DECISION MAKING  
HEART AS THE LOCUS OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS  
HEART AS THE LOCUS OF APPROVED/DISAPPROVED RELATIONS  
HEART AS ENTITY/CONTAINER  
HEART'S CONTENT AS WATER

(Berendt & Tanita, 2011, p. 71)

This research offers profound insights into the multifaceted nature of the "heart" concept in language and communication, revealing how culture and language intertwine to shape our understanding of emotions, thoughts, and interpersonal relationships.

Like the metaphor analysis in Rungchaeng (2005), "jai" is a metaphor of human's characters, emotion, attitudes, actions, and communication. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that "jai" can also symbolize a place, a container, and water. The use of the word "locus" in this study is akin to its use in other conceptual metaphor studies, such as Park (2015) and Yao (2018), where "space" is used instead.

In the analysis of the Thai term for "heart," it is emphasized as the locus of six abstractions. Two of these abstractions, "HEART IS THE LOCUS OF EMOTIONS" and "HEART IS THE LOCUS OF ATTITUDES," can also be viewed as "HEART IS THE CONTAINER OF EMOTIONS" and "HEART IS THE CONTAINER OF ATTITUDES."

Another shared aspect with Rungchaeng (2005) is the source of data, which was primarily retrieved from dictionaries. The data mostly consists of two-word compounds without contextual information, limiting the ability to elaborate on the meanings of these "jai" compounds and how they are used in different contexts. Furthermore, the conceptual metaphor explanation in this study is not detailed, as the primary purpose is to use the conceptual metaphor theory as a tool to explain communication behavior in each language.

Park (2015) compares the term "jai" in Thai to the term "mind" in Korean language. This study is restricted to "jai" expressions that can be translated to the word "maeum" which means

“mind” in Korean. Despite the scope of the research, it can provide a comprehensive picture of the conceptual metaphor of “jai” in Thai. The result shows that “jai” in Thai is used metaphorically similar to “maeum” in Korean. The metaphors of “jai” which are equivalent to “mind” in English can be illustrated below:

MIND IS A BODY  
MIND IS A CONTAINER  
MIND IS A SPACE  
MIND IS AN OBJECT  
MIND IS A BRITTLE OBJECT  
MIND IS A MOVING OBJECT  
MIND IS EDIBLE  
MIND IS A RESOURCE  
MIND IS A BOOK  
MIND IS A FLOWER  
MIND IS A MULTIPLE OBJECT

Different from the two previous studies, this paper elaborates more on the OBJECT metaphor by classifying it into several OBJECT categories. Another metaphor, SPACE, is introduced and discussed, but it is not categorized into subcategories as extensively as in the work by Berendt and Tanita (2011). However, there are two notable limitations to this study, despite the more explicit explanation of the metaphorical conceptualization of the word “maeum” in comparison to the word “jai” in Thai, along with the provision of more vivid examples.

Firstly, this study is confined to exploring the meaning of “maeum” in Korean, which can be translated to represent only a subset of the various meanings associated with the word “jai” in Thai. The latter word, “jai,” encompasses a broader range of meanings compared to “maeum.”

Secondly, all the research data used in this study was collected from dictionaries. This reliance on dictionary definitions may limit the depth of the conceptual metaphor analysis, much like the two previous studies. Context plays a crucial role in understanding the nuances and

variations in the usage of words, and without it, the analysis may not capture the full extent of how these words are used in real-life situations.

Yao (2018) is the most recent study of heart metaphors in Thai. The research uncovered that the Thai term “jai” possesses metaphorical meanings that can be grouped into three primary concepts: (1) pertaining to human characteristics, (2) related to spatial and positional aspects, and (3) associated with specific temporal meanings. Through an in-depth examination of the cognitive data, four cognitive models for the word “jai” were discerned within Thai:

HEART IS LIVING ENTITY: “jai” can feel, think, act, behave, and have human traits and personalities. This metaphor is similar to the results shown in Rungchaeng (2005).

HEART IS NON-LIVING ENTITY: This category can be divided into two sub-categories: HEART IS OBJECT and HEART IS VALUABLE THING. In the first sub-category, “jai” has weight, form, texture, and size; plus, it has tastes like food and many colors. Moreover, “jai” is seen to be flexible, fragile, and floatable. In the latter sub-category, “jai” is considered valuable. That is, it can be traded, used, spent, consumed, and possessed. Also, it can disappear and can be used up.

HEART IS SPACE or LOCATION: “jai” can move from place to place with different directions such as up-down, front-back, and return. It can be a location, center, and position. It is also found that “jai” is like a space or room that can be empty-full and large-small.

HEART IS CONTAINER: “jai” can be seen as a container of thoughts and feelings. It can be close and open and has capacity. In addition, “jai” can be liquid in a container that can change its temperature which affects emotions and feelings.

In Thai, the term “jai” could evoke mental representations resembling living beings, non-living objects, and various items with unique identities. Moreover, it can be linked to spaces or locations, serving as a container for abstract concepts like emotions or precious possessions such as money and gold. These four metaphors in “jai” are also found in the word “xin” which means “heart” or “mind” in Chinese. However, there are two major differences between “jai” and “xin”: first, the same metaphor but different meanings; second, the same meaning but different metaphors. This could stem from the differences in history, culture, and beliefs, including geography and weather.

This research stands out as the only study on the conceptual metaphor of “jai” that utilized data from the Thai National Corpus at Chulalongkorn University. Unlike previous research, this

study incorporates contextual information with the "jai" data, which provides a more comprehensive understanding of its meaning and usage. This approach enables the identification of a wider range of metaphors associated with "jai" and allows for a deeper exploration of how humans perceive and interpret "jai."

In summary, the latter two studies, namely Park (2015) and Yao (2018), provide more detailed metaphoric insights and explanations regarding the term "jai" than the initial two studies, Rungchaeng (2005), and Brent and Tanita (2011). While Park (2015) draws a comparison between "jai" and "maeum" in Korean, and Yao (2018) does so with "jai" and "xin" in Mandarin, both of these studies offer in-depth descriptions of the metaphorical meanings associated with "jai," accompanied by clearer explanations when compared to the earlier research. Despite the relatively limited number of studies on the conceptual metaphor of the term "jai," it is evident that the four distinct types of "jai" metaphors can be identified, as elaborated below:

HEART AS PERSON/HUMAN

HEART AS OBJECT

HEART AS SPACE

HEART AS CONTAINER

It is also worth noting that three out of the four studies focus on examining "jai" in Thai in comparison to equivalent terms in other languages, including Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and English. Despite being comparative in nature, these studies reveal that the conceptual metaphors associated with the word "heart" in these languages share notable similarities, with some subtle differences. However, it is important to highlight that the word "heart" in English differs from its counterparts in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Thai due to the distinction between "heart" and "mind" in English, which is not consistently present in the other languages. Based on the findings presented in Yao (2018), Chinese and Thai appear to be closer in terms of their conceptualizations of the word "heart."

The conceptual metaphors for "jai" from the collected literature can be summarized into Table 1:

Study	HEART AS PERSON/HUMAN	HEART AS OBJECT	HEART AS SPACE	HEART AS CONTAINER	Data Source
Rungchaeng (2005)	X				Dictionary-based data
Berendt and Tanita (2011)	X		X	X	Dictionary-based data
Park (2015)	X	X	X	X	Dictionary-based data
Yao (2018)	X	X	X	X	Corpus-based data

**Table 1: Summary of “jai” metaphors**

These studies provide insights into how the Thai term "jai" is metaphorically used in various contexts and its cognitive implications. They also highlight the need for more extensive data collection beyond dictionaries to understand the full scope of its metaphoric meanings.

## Conclusions

Based on the conceptual metaphor analysis, the term "jai" in Thai can be likened to the conceptual metaphors of PERSON, OBJECT, SPACE, and CONTAINER. These metaphors are shared by some Asian languages, including Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. However, when compared to English, "jai" encompasses the meanings of both "heart" and "mind," which are distinct in English. As noted in Matisoff (1986), the differentiation between "heart" and "mind" is not commonly found in Southeast Asian languages like Thai, and this pattern is also observed in other non-Southeast Asian languages such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.

Lastly, the conceptual metaphor of “jai” in Thai language is relatively limited and further studies of “jai” metaphors especially in comparison to the term “heart” in other languages should be conducted to reveal more metaphorical uses of “jai” and the common heart metaphors shared by other languages.

Additionally, there are a few more recommendations that can be considered. The review of the four studies on "jai" suggests that more corpus-based studies focusing on the conceptual metaphor of "jai" should be conducted. These studies would provide a deeper understanding of the various aspects of metaphorical meanings associated with "jai" and shed light on how humans

conceptualize this word. By examining contexts, these studies can reveal the subtle nuances of meaning and the diverse usage of "jai" metaphors.

Another valuable recommendation for advancing the conceptualization of "jai" is to conduct further research through psycholinguistic or neurolinguistic experiments. These experiments can yield insights into the cognitive processes involved in the formation and understanding of "jai" metaphors. By analyzing the results of such experiments, we can gain a better understanding of how individuals perceive and use "jai" in their thinking and communication.

#### About the Author

**Wichaya Bovonwivat:** Full-time lecturer, Center for International Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University

#### References

- Croft, W. A. (2001). Functional approaches to grammar. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioral sciences* (pp. 6323–6330). Elsevier Sciences.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/02946-6>
- Daraselia, N. (2017). Metaphorical conceptualization of face in the Georgian language and culture [Abstract]. *Book of abstracts – Metaphor festival 2017* (p.13). Retrieved July 27, 2023, from  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325486380\\_Metaphorical\\_Conceptualization\\_of\\_Face\\_in\\_the\\_Georgian\\_Language\\_and\\_Culture\\_p13](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325486380_Metaphorical_Conceptualization_of_Face_in_the_Georgian_Language_and_Culture_p13)
- Fillmore, C. (1982). Frame semantics. In the linguistics society of Korea (Ed.), *Linguistics in the morning calm: Selected papers from SICOL-1981* (pp. 111-137). Hanshin Pub. Co.  
[http://brenocon.com/Fillmore%201982\\_2up.pdf](http://brenocon.com/Fillmore%201982_2up.pdf)
- Iwasaki, S., & Ingkaphirom, P. (2005). *A reference grammar of Thai*. Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, M. (2007). *The meaning of the body: Aesthetics of human understanding*. University of Chicago Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2000). *Metaphor and emotion: Language, culture and body in human feeling*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. Oxford University Press.



- Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, fire and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago University Press.
- Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of cognitive grammar: Theoretical prerequisites* (Vol. 1). Stanford University Press.
- Langacker, R. W. (1991). *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Descriptive application* (Vol. 2). Stanford University Press.
- Lertkultanon, S. (2012). “cai”: traits, moods, feelings. *Thammasart Journal*, 31(2), 87-94.  
<http://tujournals.tu.ac.th/thammasatjournal/detailart.aspx?ArticleID=59>
- Matisoff, J. A. (1986). Hearts and minds in South-East Asian languages and English: An essay in the comparative lexical semantics of psycho-collocations. *Cahiers de Linguistique Asie Orientale*, 15(1), 5-57.  
<https://doi.org/10.3406/clao.1986.1191>
- Park, K. E. (2015). Conceptualization of /chai/ in Thai in comparison with Korean counterpart. *Journal of Liberal Arts*, 15(2), 199-212.  
<https://so03.tcithaijo.org/index.php/liberalarts/article/download/46207/38231/106947>
- Phonthad, P., & Intajamornrak, C. (2020). Metaphors of body parts words in Burmese. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 15(2), 27–47. <https://so03.tcithaijo.org/index.php/eJHUSO/article/view/248326>
- Rungchaeng, S. (2005). *Conceptual metaphors using /cay/ (heart/mind) in Thai* [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Thammasat University.
- Saralamba, C. (2008, May 30). *Heart metaphors in Thai language* [Abstract]. RaAM.  
<https://raam.org.uk/archive/raam7/Papers.pdf>
- Stefanowitsch, A. (2006). Words and their metaphors: A corpus-based approach. In A. Stefanowitsch and S.T. Gries (Eds.), *Corpus-based approaches to metaphor and metonymy* (pp. 36-62). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Talmy, L. (2000). *Toward a cognitive semantics: Concept structuring systems* (Vol. 1). MIT Press.
- Talmy, L. (2006). Cognitive linguistics. In K. Brown, *Encyclopedia of language & linguistics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 542-546). Elsevier Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-044854-2/00351-5>.
- Ukosakul, M. (1999). *Conceptual metaphors motivating the use of Thai ‘face’* [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Payap University.

- Yao, S. (2018). *Conceptual system of “HEART” in Thai in comparison to Chinese: A cognitive linguistics approach* [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Thammasat University.
- Yu, N. (2003). Metaphor, body, and culture: The Chinese understanding of gallbladder and courage, *Metaphor and Symbol*, 18(1), 13-31. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/S15327868MS1801\\_2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/S15327868MS1801_2)
- Yu, N. (2007). Heart and cognition in ancient Chinese philosophy. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 7, 27-47. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/156853707X171801>
- Yu, N. (2009). *The Chinese HEART in a cognitive perspective: Culture, body, and language*. Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110213348>