



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Perspective of Thais on Environment through Figurative Language

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**ABSTRACT**

Figurative language can provide insight into the worldview of the Thai people. This article aims to explore how Thais use earth-related vocabulary as metaphors in their everyday speech. This linguistic research is qualitative genre, and the data were collected from the Thai National Corpus, which contains a large database of the Thai language. By conducting keyword searches on the first 1,000 sentences in the 'Fiction' category, we found that 516 sentences (51.6%) were used for comparisons. The analysis revealed a total of 44 words related to the earth, such as sand, mud, mountain, island, cliff, volcano, cave, chasm, plain, field, farm, garden, rock, stone, pebble, rapids, lava, ore, diamond, forest, grove, shore, beach, seashore, border, boundary, sediment, hill, ridge, hump, basin, and desert. These words were used to draw comparisons with both living and non-living entities. The living entities were further categorized into 7 groups; personality, human characteristics, feelings, behavior, speech, animals, and disease, respectively. The non-living entities were categorized into 13 groups; characteristics, places, obstacles, objects, supernatural things, quantity, power, journey, situation, food, nature, fire, and time. The findings suggest that Thai people share common experiences and perceptions regarding the characteristics of the earth. Consequently, these words are utilized to convey various meanings, particularly when referring to non-living things. Furthermore, this research sheds light on the Thai people's worldview through the use of ground-based environmental vocabulary in figurative language.

**INTRODUCTION**

Figurative language, often referred to as "metaphor," descriptively pertains to forms of language that relate to the thinking process and rationale. It serves to compare one thing to another, highlighting similarities or distinctions within different semantic fields. Essentially, it allows us to understand one concept through the lens of another that shares either similar qualities or notable differences (Saralamba, 2005; Panpothong, 2013).

The traditional study of metaphor focused on the structural forms of language that compare one thing to another, primarily analyzing metaphor in literature, often referred to as "figure of speech." In the late nineteenth century, the study of metaphor expanded significantly with new perspectives. Cognitive linguists, such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980), proposed a transformative approach known as "cognitive linguistics." This approach not only examines language in literary contexts and rhetorical utterances but also explores the metaphorical use of language in everyday life (Razaq et al, 2021; Zhu, 2024). These metaphorical expressions can reveal the thought systems within a society, reflecting shared perceptions and experiences within the same community (Omenukwa & Kanu, 2024).

The concept of “domain” is applied diversely as a metaphor (Nida, 1979). This article will focus on metaphors related to the environment from the Thai perspective, building on Tawichai’s (2018) compilation of research on Thai metaphor. Most studies have primarily explored the approaches of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Kövecses (2010). However, metaphors associated with the environment, particularly those related to earth, such as soil, sand, mountain, rock, forest, cave, valley, hill, and cliff, have also been explored in everyday Thai spoken language.

The environment is crucial for Thai people, as their occupations are largely tied to agriculture. Additionally, Thailand’s diverse geography influences the perspectives of its people. For instance, the southern region is characterized by sea coasts and mountains, while the north features rivers and mountains. The northeastern region is known for its mounds and plateaus, and the central region consists of flat areas with rivers (Faculty of Geography, 2000). These varying geographical features shape the experiences and perceptions of Thai people in their daily lives (Jarusiri, 2024).

As a result, figurative language in Thai society incorporates these environmental words, enriching everyday communication. Examples drawn from the Thai National Corpus illustrate this use of earth-related vocabulary below;

These things are not the simple job, they all are entirely *rocks*.

A mass of all *soil* is Thai children during their own learning ages.

Person who comes from the *plateau*, isn’t anyone else?

Graduates walk to a *high mountain*.

Life is as strong as a *rock cliff*.

The application of words reveals that Thai geography—encompassing forests, mountains, and the varying high and low areas of flatland—closely relates to the lives of Thai people. Therefore, vocabularies associated with the earth-related domain were used to draw comparisons and connect with the distinctive characteristics of each environmental category, such as heavy and solid rock, or high, steep, and massive mountains.

It has been noted that metaphorical expressions related to the environment and the earth-related domain reflect a connection between language and the thought systems of Thai people. These expressions reveal interpretations that connect definitions, qualities, and outstanding characteristics of the environment within the Thai social context, applying metaphorical meanings (Duong Duc Hung et al, 2024) that are shaped by the unique culture and language of Thais. This shared social and cultural context allows individuals to understand the meanings conveyed in these metaphorical expressions.

Moreover, metaphors are dynamically influenced by social and temporal contexts. Therefore, this article will present the results of an investigation into environmental vocabularies within the earth-related domain, focusing on comparative meanings. This will illustrate how these meanings connect to and reflect the worldviews of Thai people.

### **Research Objectives**

The goal is to explore environmental vocabularies within the earth-related domain and analyze their comparative applications, examining the relationship between these vocabularies in the Thai social context through semantic field grouping.

### **LITERATURE REVIEWS**

Linguistic research focusing on comparative environments in Thai has been relatively scarce. One notable study is Chanthao’s (2010) examination of “Water,” which explored metaphors associated with water resources among the people of Khon Kaen. This research identified classifications of water-related metaphors within four categories: WATER RESOURCE IS PLACE, WATER RESOURCE IS HUMAN, WATER RESOURCE IS ABSTRACT, and WATER RESOURCE IS OBJECT. The metaphorical expressions related to water were compared to sacred concepts and

parental figures, reflecting a conceptual understanding of water resources in urban society. Similarly, Phumsorn's (2011) study investigated water metaphors in Thai idioms, revealing that "water" primarily signifies spoken words, but also represents various concepts such as circumstance, emotion, individuality, action, goals, place, stories, property, themes, abundance, friendship, obstacles, opportunities, poverty, fading, profit, speed, mentality, experience, traits, self-evaluation, cleansing, merit, favor, activity, and environment.

In addition, several studies have focused on water disasters. Waranaruechit (2014) conducted research analyzing metaphors in news reports about flooding as presented on television. Klinnamhom and Supasetsiri (2017) examined the metaphor flood is war and population is victim in headline news from Thai newspapers. Warinudomsuk and Saralamba (2019) studied conceptual metaphors in flooding news across Thai and French newspapers. The results of these studies indicate that language users share similarities in their thoughts about floods, particularly the metaphor FLOOD IS WAR. However, they also highlight differences, including metaphors such as FLOOD IS LIVING THINGS, FLOOD IS OBJECTS, FLOOD IS SUPERNATURAL THINGS, and FLOOD IS JOURNEY. These conceptual metaphors are influenced by the faith, culture, and traditions of language users within their respective societies.

Similarly, a study on "Plant" was conducted by Panich (2014), which focused on the conceptual metaphor associated with "Rice" found in idioms and proverbs within Thai society. This research identified ten categories of metaphorical meanings: consumer goods, human, time, merit, occupation, profit, money, qualification and quality, sexual intercourse, and object. The study showed how these metaphorical meanings are transferred from the source domain to the target domain, resulting in expressions such as RICE IS CONSUMER GOODS, RICE IS HUMAN, RICE IS TIME, RICE IS MERIT, RICE IS OCCUPATION, RICE IS PROFIT, RICE IS MONEY, RICE IS QUALIFICATION OR QUALITY, RICE IS SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, and RICE IS OBJECT.

Similarly, there is a study on "Weather" by Jumpa (2013), which examined the names of tropical cyclones from a semantic perspective. The titles of these cyclones were grouped into eight domains: animal, plant, place, supernatural entity, human, symptom, nature, and object. Four metaphorical qualities were identified through six of these domains, including TROPICAL CYCLONE IS LIVING THINGS, TROPICAL CYCLONE IS AESTHETIC, TROPICAL CYCLONE IS MEMORY, and TROPICAL CYCLONE IS POWERFUL THING. Additionally, Ampala (2017) researched natural metaphors related to time in the Northern Thai dialect. This study revealed comparative meanings that transition from abstract to concrete domains, making them visible, adjacent, and appealing in relation to natural resources, specifically the sun and the moon. However, the study found that, apart from the movements of the sun and moon, no other natural phenomena were metaphorically associated with time in this context.

Previous research has revealed that Thai thought systems are closely related to the surrounding environment. This connection allows for the conveyance of background information regarding location, society, country, culture, values, faith, and worldviews through the various environmental contexts.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is a qualitative study in Linguistics that adopts a semantic approach. It aims to examine figurative language within both traditional and transformative metaphor frameworks, focusing on how Thais perceive and interpret figurative language. The study will involve a comparison between the vehicle and tenor, facilitating both comparison and contrast.

Data were collected from the Thai National Corpus at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Chulalongkorn University. The sampling was both random and purposive, focusing exclusively on the Fiction category, as this is the most representative of spoken language in the everyday life of Thais. Consequently, environmental vocabularies related to the earth domain were specifically selected from the Geographical Terms Dictionary (Royal Institute, 2020) which includes forty-four words: sand, mud, mountain, island, cliff, volcano, cave, chasm, plain, field, farm, garden, rock, stone,

pebble, rapids, lava, ore, diamond, forest, grove, shore, beach, seashore, border, boundary, sediment, hill, ridge, hump, basin, and desert. The selected data included words, sentences, and discourse that specifically signify metaphorical comparisons in standard Thai.

The relationship between environmental vocabularies in the earth-related domain and their comparative uses will be analyzed. The meanings of the metaphors will be grouped according to the elements being compared. The frequency and percentage of the vocabularies will be tallied and calculated accordingly. The results will be presented through descriptive analysis, accompanied by relevant examples.

The framework to analyze the data shows in the figure below;

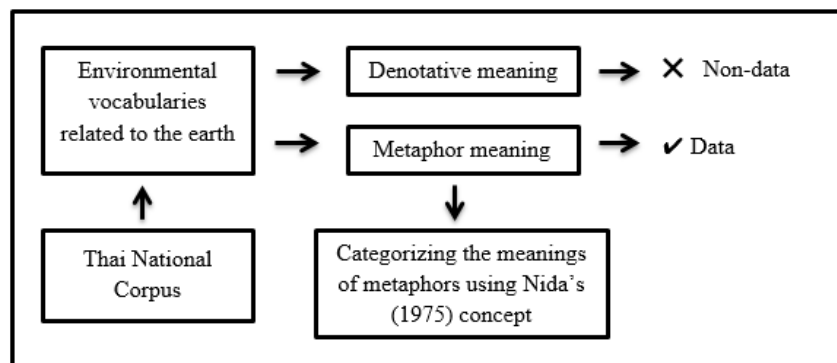


Figure 1 Research framework

## RESULTS

This research is a comparative analysis of environmental vocabularies within the earth-related domain. The term “earth-related” is used to explore environmental utterances, aiming to reveal the connections in meaning between the elements being compared. The analysis identified a total of 516 sentences containing metaphorical environmental words related to soil, which are divided into two main categories: living entities and non-living entities, as shown below.

### 1. Living thing meaning

A comparison of living things involves using words related to living entities to draw parallels with earth-related vocabularies. The analysis found a total of 238 sentences that made these comparisons, which can be categorized into seven groups of sub-meanings.

**1) Personality** refers to the use of words related to qualities, characteristics, character traits, and social status. These qualities are compared with terms from the earth-related domain. The analysis identified 116 sentences that illustrate this comparison; for example:

(1) *She is the only woman he loves though she is just **a rock**. I understand his feeling. (PRSH023)*

In this context, the word “rock” is used comparatively to signify personality within the earth-related domain. The defining features of rock—its solid, unmovable nature—are used to draw a parallel with individuals whose traits are calm or reserved. By using the term “rock,” we see how earth-related vocabulary can effectively represent the personality of individuals.

**2) Human** refers to the use of words related to human beings, including individuals, groups of people, kinship, nationality, organisms, and occupations. These qualities are compared to earth-related terms. The analysis identified 46 sentences that illustrate this comparison; for example:

(2) *Waeiwan embarrasses **her heel where is cracked, dehydrated, and black** like **soil in a dry season**. (PRNV002)*

When “soil in a dry season” is compared to “heel where is cracked, dehydrated, and black heel” using “like” as a conjunction, it signifies that the heel shares similar qualities with the dry and

cracked soil. This comparison reveals a connection between the characteristics of the natural environment and the physical conditions experienced by Thais.

**3) Feeling** refers to words that semantically express emotions, mental states, or perceptions that occur physically and mentally in humans. These feelings are compared to earth-related terms. The analysis identified 42 sentences that illustrate this comparison; for example:

(3) *She hesitates a little bit feeling like it is not different from falling into a deserted and gloomy valley. (PRNV003)*

In this context, the word “valley” is used to communicate negative emotions, drawing a comparison with the distinctive qualities of a cliff. A valley is characterized by its deep, narrow, steep, and very quiet space, which parallels feelings of silence, loneliness, grief, and suffering. Being in a valley can evoke uncomfortable, unclear, and distressing emotions, reflecting the experience of being confined in a narrow space.

**4) Behavior** refers to the use of words that describe various gestures or actions of human beings. These qualities are compared with earth-related terms, with a total of 25 sentences illustrating this comparison; for example:

(4) *A gigantic mountain stands up straightly forward, on the left side where is farther is the griffon reserved and on the right is a plant sanctuary. (PRNV022)*

The phrase “gigantic mountain” co-occurs with “stands up straightly forward,” indicating a mountain that is firmly and steadily positioned. The verb phrase “stands up straightly forward” reflects the Thai perspective through the earth-related domain, suggesting a behavioral and imaginative representation of soil's new qualities. This implies that soil can be built up structurally in flat and low areas, allowing it to stand upright, much like the standing pose of living beings.

**5) Speech** refers to the use of words that encompass the meanings of spoken language, including statements, tones of voice, and various qualities involved in communication. These elements are compared with earth-related terms, with a total of 25 sentences illustrating this comparison; for example:

(5) *Your savage speech is nonsense. (PRNV035)*

The word “savage” refers to a personal speaking style and is illustrated through its co-occurrence with “speech.” In this context, it describes the quality of a forest situated far from civilization, where people often lack educational opportunities and access to current events. As a result, they may fall behind in knowledge. Therefore, the term “savage speech” is defined as a way of speaking that lacks knowledge and factual information. This reveals the Thai perspective through the earth-related term, highlighting how environment influences communication.

**6) Animal** refers to the use of words related to animals, including their titles, characteristics, and organs. These qualities are used for comparison, with a total of four sentences illustrating this concept; for example:

(6) *A white faded egret is as white as dust widely fluttering into the rice fields. (POET022)*

The word “dust” is metaphorically likened to “a white faded egret,” referring to a type of bird with white feathers. The conjunction “like” facilitates this comparison, highlighting the bird's characteristic of entirely white feathers alongside the crumbled, white powdery nature of dust. This connection shapes Thais' cognition, allowing for a clear comparison between animals and the earth-related domain.

**7) Disease** refers to the use of words related to illness or symptoms of pain. These terms are compared with earth-related vocabularies, as exemplified below:

(7) *Mountain gets fever until it is skinny and dehydrated. (PRSH005)*

In this context, the word “mountain” conveys a comparative meaning related to disease. This is evident in its co-occurrence with the phrase “gets fever,” which signifies sickness or discomfort due to an infection. Furthermore, illness can be viewed as a type of living entity, as it can grow, reproduce, and spread. Additionally, the symptom described as “skinny and dehydrated water” is compared to an unhealthy condition, highlighting the deficiencies associated with illness.

Living entities are compared with earth-related terms, suggesting that these vocabularies can convey characteristics akin to those of living entities, such as feelings, behaviors, speech, and physical and mental responses to stimuli. This connection between environmental vocabularies and living entities reveals Thais’ worldview, highlighting how earth-related elements are intimately connected to an essential for human existence. This relationship leads to diverse comparisons in their everyday lives.

## 2. Non-Living thing meaning

A comparison of non-living entities involves using vocabularies that relate to non-living things in relation to earth-related terms. The analysis identified a total of 278 sentences through these comparisons, which can be categorized into 13 sub-meaning groups;

**1) Characteristics** refer to the use of words that describe the shape, size, area, and color of non-living things. These qualities are compared with earth-related terms. The analysis identified 83 sentences illustrating this comparison. For example:

(8) *Pakorn whose job is to drive take his hands off the steering wheel and points toward **a brown mountain** where rarely has any tree on the right side. (PRNV025)*

In this context, the word “mountain” co-occurs with “brown,” signifying drought and infertility. This is evident from the phrase “where rarely has any tree,” indicating that the mountain is dry and lacks abundance due to the absence of green vegetation. The color “brown” implies qualities of the mountain, revealing the Thai perspective that interprets this color as indicative of drought and a lack of fertility.

**2) Place** refers to the use of words related to locations, residences, addresses, cities, provinces, countries, and constructions. These definitions are compared with earth-related terms, with a total of 66 sentences illustrating this comparison; for example:

(9) *When it is necessary to live in **the concrete forest** by many different reasons. (ACHM029)*

The term “concrete forest” metaphorically implies a bustling city filled with constructions. Here, “concrete” refers to a town characterized by numerous buildings and commercial structures, which is descriptively compared to a forest, where many trees grow densely. This comparison highlights the idea of a vast city teeming with constructions, much like a dense forest.

**3) Obstacle** refers to words that convey meanings related to trouble and obstruction, such as interruption, difficulty, failure, and inconvenience. These meanings are compared with earth-related vocabularies, resulting in a total of 35 sentences illustrating this comparison; for example:

(10) *I will try my luck and see. But, if I see the **mountain of problems** piled up ahead, I will slow myself down. (POET023)* In this context, the word “mountain” co-occurs with “problems,” symbolizing troubles and obstacles. The prominent qualities of a mountain, which conveys a rough and uneven terrain, are connected to the characteristics of problems or obstacles that lead to disruption and interruption. This comparison suggests that earth-related terms, like a mountain, can represent obstacles that cause difficulty and challenge.

**4) Object** refers to words that describe concrete things, which have shape, weight, and can be touched. These terms are compared with earth-related vocabularies, with a total of 22 sentences illustrating this comparison; for example:

(11) *The **clay** under her feet is as sticky as a **rubber glue**. Both of her legs are firmly stick in place. (PRNV062)*

In this context, the word “clay” is comparable to “rubber glue,” an item used to bond various materials together. Clay's distinctive features—its fine texture, ability to cling together in sticky lumps, and moldability into various shapes—parallel the characteristics of rubber glue, which is also a sticky substance used for adhesion and connection.

**5) Supernatural thing** refers to words that describe elements related to the supernatural, such as beliefs, mysteries, sacred items, religion, heaven, hell, and fate. These concepts are compared with earth-related vocabularies, resulting in a total of 20 sentences illustrating this comparison; for example:

(12) *He protected us from cold and sickness and also prevented us from **jungle ghosts, forest ghosts, and mountain ghosts**. (PRNV019)*

The words “jungle,” “forest,” and “mountain” co-occur with the term “ghost,” resulting in phrases like “jungle ghost,” “forest ghost,” and “mountain ghost.” These expressions refer to guardian spirits that protect sacred places. In this earth-related context, the word “ghost” symbolizes a supernatural being that safeguards the soil from intruders in the forest and mountains. This reflects the Thai belief in supernatural entities, where invisible forces are metaphorically linked to the soil.

**6) Quantity** refers to words that describe numbers, amounts, or capacity in relation to earth-related terms. A total of 17 sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(13) *We waste a lot on our shoes. The cellar is **overflowing** with **mountains** of shoes. (PRNV160)*

In this context, the word “mountain” co-occurs with “overflowing,” conveying the idea of a large amount. The phrase “is” expresses a comparison between the quantity of shoes and the qualities of the mountain—high, steep, and wide. Using “overflowing” to refer to soil reflects the Thai perspective on soil, indicating how much or how little something is.

**7) Power** refers to words that convey meanings related to power, influence, greatness, violence, physical abuse, oppression, or obligation, used in comparison with soil. A total of 9 sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(14) *Grandma hangs around with the group of powerful women, whose capability can reduce **mountains** to the size of **pebbles**. (POET018)*

In this example, the word “mountain” signifies greater power, while “pebble” represents less power. The distinctive characteristics of mountains and pebbles are used for comparison: mountains are large and steep, symbolizing greatness and strength. In contrast, pebbles are small stones, regarded as inferior and powerless.

**8) Journey** refers to words that describe travel, including roads, routes, and movement from one place to another, compared to soil. A total of six sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(15) *The **high mountains** are like a long **path**. It is very far away. (PRSH017)*

In this context, the term “high mountain” refers to the destination of a long-distance journey. This is evident from the accompanying words “path,” “long distance,” and “very far,” all of which relate to travel. The word “path” compares mountains to a journey, using the mountain's characteristics—large and steep—to illustrate the lengthy and challenging nature of the journey to reach the destination.

**9) Situation** refers to words that describe circumstances, events, stories, or changes, used to compare with soil. A total of five sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(16) *For **suitability to the situation**, whether it is **black soil** or **red soil** is not a problem according to the intent of the election. (PRSH001)*

In this context, the terms “black soil” and “red soil” are used in conjunction with “suitability to the situation,” conveying the idea of adaptability to different circumstances or environments, both positive and negative. This comparison reflects the Thai worldview that soil can change according to various situations as needed.

**10) Food** refers to words that describe what is eaten, contributing to growth and sustenance, and is used to compare with soil. A total of four sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(17) *Are you going to wear a plain, **tasteless dirt** dress to the party? Dress like this, Would you better go to bed?* (PRNV082)

The use of the word “dirt” alongside “tasteless” in this context signifies a plain, ordinary taste that is less special. While taste is typically associated with food, here it is compared to a woman's simple attire, which lacks anything noteworthy or interesting. This reference to the taste of soil reflects the Thai worldview, suggesting that soil can be linked to food flavors; however, in this case, it conveys an undesirable taste, akin to food that is bland or not enjoyable.

**11) Nature** refers to words that describe elements of the natural environment or inanimate surroundings used to compare with soil. A total of four sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(18) *Happiness to creates or dreams with words, **mountains** are **watersheds** and **streams**.* (PRNV006)

In this context, the word “mountain” signifies an abundance of water resources, as mountains are the source of various watersheds. This comparison links soil to its natural state concerning water, using “is” to clearly establish the connection between soil (represented by “mountains”) and nature (represented by “watersheds” and “streams”).

**12) Fire** refers to words that describe elements related to fire, used metaphorically to represent soil. A total of four sentences illustrate this comparison; for example:

(19) *There he found her secret is the **bonfire** of a **volcano**.* (PRSH010)

When the word “volcano” co-occurs with “bonfire,” it signifies a large gathering of flames. This comparison suggests that the soil has fiery characteristics, capable of burning or erupting like fire. The distinctive features of a bonfire—intense flames that burn brightly—are metaphorically linked to the characteristics of volcanoes, which are large and extremely hot due to the smoldering magma within.

**13) Time** refers to words that describe aspects of time, seasons, or indicators of duration. These meanings are used to compare with soil, resulting in three illustrative sentences; for example:

(20) *If the trees were gone, the forest would still have sugar seeing the **soil** of farewell **time** and causing drought for the earth.* (POET006)

When the word “soil” co-occurs with “time,” it conveys meanings associated with loneliness, farewells, or neglect over extended periods. This is illustrated by the use of “farewell,” which signifies departure, loneliness, and distance. In this context, the word “time” reflects the Thai people's perspective on soil as a marker of duration and the emotional weight of abandonment.

A comparison between earth-related terms and non-living entities reveals that soil can be related to various inanimate objects, encompassing both concrete characteristics—such as shape, type, and location—as well as abstract concepts like obstacles, supernatural elements, power, and situations. The use of environmental vocabulary related to the earth reflects the worldview of the Thai people, highlighting their perception of soil as an essential aspect of their environment and daily life. This connection underscores the importance of soil in the ways Thais understand and engage with their surroundings.



## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of environmental vocabularies related to the earth domain yielded a total of 516 sentences. These sentences were categorized into two main groups: living and non-living entities. Within these categories, twenty sub-meaning groups were identified. The seven sub-meaning groups related to living beings included: personality, human, feelings, behaviors, speech, animal, and disease. In contrast, the thirteen sub-meaning groups associated with non-living entities encompassed: characteristics, places, obstacles, objects, supernatural things, quantity, power, journey, situation, food, nature, fire, and time as shown in the table 1

**Table 1 Comparative meaning of environmental vocabularies in “Earth-related domain”**

Main meaning	Sub-meaning	Frequency	Percentage
1. Living things	1) Personality	116	49.0
	2) Organs	46	19.3
	3) Feelings	42	17.6
	4) Behaviors	25	10.5
	5) Speech	4	1.6
	6) Animal	4	1.6
	7) Disease	1	0.4
		238	100
2. Non-living things	1) Characteristics	83	29.8
	2) Place	66	23.7
	3) Obstacle	35	12.6
	4) Object	22	7.9
	5) Supernatural elements	20	7.5
	6) Quantity	17	6.2
	7) Power	9	3.2
	8) Journey	6	2.1
	9) Situation	5	1.7
	10) Food	4	1.4
	11) Nature	4	1.4
	12) Fire	4	1.4
	13) Time	3	1.0
		278	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above illustrates that environmental vocabularies within the earth-related domain, when compared to living things, yielded a total of two hundred thirty-eight sentences. Among these, personality traits were the most frequently utilized, accounting for one hundred sixteen sentences, which is approximately 49.0%. Feelings followed with forty-two sentences, representing about 17.6%. In contrast, comparisons related to disease were the least represented, comprising only 0.4% of the total.

In terms of environmental vocabularies within the earth-related domain that are compared to non-living things, there are a total of two hundred seventy-eight sentences. The characteristics domain is employed most frequently, with eighty-three sentences, accounting for approximately 29.8%. Following this, the place domain is figuratively used in sixty-six sentences, representing about 23.7%. The obstacle domain includes thirty-five sentences, making up 12.6%. Lastly, the time domain has the fewest comparisons, with only three sentences, which accounts for 1.0%.

A comparison of environmental terms associated with the earth-related domain revealed that the characteristics, qualities, and shapes of living and non-living entities were the most frequently compared aspects. This is because the ways of life of Thai people are closely tied to their environment. Therefore, the characteristics of the environment involved in the earth-related domain, including color, size, and texture, were compared with various meanings. Positive

meanings include sufficiency, economy, strength, greatness, beauty, and fertility. In contrast, negative meanings encompass low social class, poverty, drought, darkness, solidity, and roughness.

In contrast, the least frequent comparisons are related to disease terms, as Thais perceive that all things found in soil can lead to waste and illness. Therefore, the earth-related domain is comparatively associated with disease terms. This connection reflects the belief that illness creates irregular conditions in health, making it an undesirable aspect for Thais. Although references to time are infrequent, there is still a clear connection between the surrounding environment and the duration of various phenomena.

The use of figurative language regarding the environment in the Thai social context reflects shared perceptions among Thai people, even if they do not live in the same surroundings. There is a common acquisition of knowledge, data collection, and memory-building related to similar environments across Thailand. As a result, the distinctive characteristics of the environment in each domain of earth-related vocabularies are compared in everyday life, reflecting Thais' perspectives on the environment within both social and cultural contexts, encompassing both positive and negative meanings.

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