

# A Cognitive Semantics Approach to the Polysemy of the English Preposition “On” and Its Vietnamese Equivalents

Phat Dinh Dac, Han Nguyen Minh\*

Department of Foreign Languages, Saigon University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

\*Corresponding author

doi: <https://doi.org/10.21467/proceedings.132.21>

## ABSTRACT

Exploring the shift in meanings of translating the preposition “on” from English to Vietnamese, the study, besides analyzing the cases of the changes in meanings of the preposition, aims at explaining the cases where the preposition “on” is not translated as “trên” and its Vietnamese equivalents under the cognitive semantics approach. The methods of analysis and synthesis of theories from the available data on the preposition “on” as well as the methods of classifying and systematizing prepositions are applied to English-Vietnamese translation. From the collected data, this study reveals the cases of the shift in meanings of “on” and the characteristics of multiple meanings of the preposition under the cognitive semantics approach. In the course of translation, contextual meanings are used in order to convey the meanings appropriately in the Vietnamese style. The research paper can make some contribution to the teaching of translation and make it a reference material for English learners.

**Keywords:** cognitive semantics, polysemy, prepositions, translation, English, Vietnamese, the shift in meanings, multi-meaning, on

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

Learners rely on a plethora of linguistic materials whose writers have gone to great lengths to characterize this word type based on the roles and placements rather than semantic reasons influencing their usage decisions. Prepositions are often difficult for learners who are learning English as a second language, according to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999). According to Boers and Demecheleer (1998), learners struggle with prepositions because they have literal and figurative meanings. For instance, we say, *my friend is at the hospital*; or *I went to see my girlfriend who was in the hospital*, or *she is in bed but on the couch*.

In recent decades, a great deal of effort has gone into establishing a link between the many senses of English prepositions. Polysemy, particularly the meaning of prepositions, has drawn a great deal of attention among cognitive linguists such as Schmid & Handl (2010) Ungerer & Schmid (2013), and Dirk (2006). When describing polysemy in terms of radial categories, cognitive semanticists have made a significant contribution. In particular, Lakoff (1987) and Koffi (2010) stated that polysemous nature – a semantic characteristic of words that have multiple meanings. As a result, the meaning of a polysemous word can be viewed as a large semantic network of connected senses. According to Tyler & Evans (2003), it appears that all linked senses of a preposition share a highly schematic common core, all stemming from a single spatial schema or proto-scene and being transferred to other non-spatial, abstract senses via generalisation or specialisation of meaning or metonymic or metaphoric transfer (Cuyckens & Zawada, 1977).

It's also worth emphasising that cognitive semantics is concerned with figuring out how experience, the conceptual system, and the semantic structure transmitted by language interact (Lakoff, 1987). Cross-linguistic research in cognitive semantics has found that, while spatial cognition occurs in all languages, people speaking each language use different spatial conceptualization processes. However, according to



Choi & Bowerman (1991) and Levinson (2001), the linguistic encoding of spatial concepts varies by language.

In English, the preposition "**on**" is among the most commonly used spatial prepositions (Leech, Rayson, & Wilson, 2001). In general, Vietnamese students are unsure when the word "**on**" is appropriate (Tran, 2010) and it can be seen that they just translate directly the preposition "**on**" in correspondence between prepositions in their native language, such as: "**on the sky, on the chair, ...**". According to Lam (2009), learners do make "assumptions of semantic equivalence between the first and second languages", which often results in prepositional errors due to the differences in semantic cognition between the two languages. As a result, recognizing the related meanings of the English preposition "**on**" within the framework of cognitive semantics is necessary in order to explain why the preposition "**on**" is not translated as "**trên**" and its Vietnamese equivalents when using the cognitive semantics approach. The goal of this study was to use a cognitive semantics approach to investigate the polysemy of the English preposition "on" and its Vietnamese equivalents.

## **1.2 Aims of the study**

The research aims at explaining the cases where the preposition "**on**" is not translated as "**trên**" and its Vietnamese equivalents under the cognitive semantics approach.

## **1.3 Scopes of the study**

This study is based on *on*-examples in form of (NP) + *on* + NP and NP + V + *on* + NP, where *on* functions as a preposition, to the exclusion of others where "**on**" plays the role of an adverb or an affix. The data and samples were extracted from five different sources, including *Barron's ESL Proficiency Series: Prepositions* by Jean Yates (2020), *Cách dùng giới từ Anh ngữ* by Tran Van Dien (1997), *English Prepositions Explained* by Seth Lindstromberg (2010), *The Key to English Prepositions 1* by Collier-Macmillan International (1964) and *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* by Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green (2007). All documents are original and the author would select a few examples that use prepositions used in everyday language to show the difference in meaning in each language when translated.

## **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study contributes to the growing body of evidence from cognitive semantics showing the commonly used English preposition "**on**" has several but related meanings, implying that "**on**" can be translated into other Vietnamese words besides "**trên**" in different contexts.

## **1.5 Research questions**

The following question is posed in the current study:

- Why are there cases that the English preposition "**on**" is not translated to "**trên**" in Vietnamese regarding the cognitive semantics approach?

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 A Brief Overview of Cognitive Linguistics**

Cognitive linguistics, a modern school of linguistic study and practice, has attracted interest since its inception in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its main purpose is to better understand the relationship between human language, the mind, and socio-physical experience (Croft & Cruse, 2004; Evans & Green, 2006; Langacker, 1987). To put it another way, this paradigm views linguistic knowledge as a component of general cognition and reasoning; linguistic behaviour is not considered as separate from

other general cognitive abilities like reasoning, memory, attention, or learning, but as an inherent element of them (Johnson, 1987).

Cognitive linguistics is based on two major principles: (i) Language is an integral part of cognition (Fodor, 1983); (ii) Language is symbolic in nature (Langacker, 1987). The former ensures that language is comprehended as a result of a person's overall cognitive capacity. As a result, a cognitive linguist must accept what Lakoff (1987) refers to as the "cognitive commitment," or Because linguistic theory and methodology must be consistent with what is actually known about cognition, the brain, and language, the willingness to recognise the link between language and other cognitive capacities is required. As Saeed (1997) argues, this viewpoint indicates that, on the surface, principles of language use encapsulate more general cognitive principles, and that, on the inside, explanation must bridge levels of analysis. To put it another way, there is a difference in degree rather than kind between language and other mental processes. As for the latter, Langacker (1987) claims that language is symbolic since it is based on a relationship between semantic and phonological representation, and the Saussurian (1916) idea of the linguistic sign is referred to by this combination of two separate poles. Language, on the other hand, is not arbitrarily structured for cognitive linguists. It is more or less immediately inspired and founded in experience, in our biological, physical, social, and cultural experiences because after all, "we are beings of the flesh" (Johnson 1987, p.347). This notion of a "grounding" is known in Cognitive Linguistics as "embodiment" (Johnson, 1987; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Its core concept is that mental and linguistic categories are not abstract, disembodied, or human-independent constructs; rather, we construct them based on our real experiences and under the restrictions imposed by our bodies. As a result, this new paradigm could be seen as a reaction against the dominant generative paradigm, which argues for a self-contained and arbitrary language perspective.

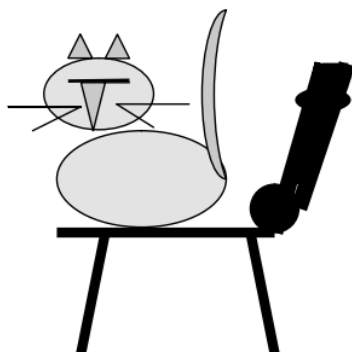
## 2.2 A Brief Overview of Cognitive Semantics

The study of the relationship between experience, the conceptual system, and the semantic structure represented by language is the focus of cognitive semantics, which is part of the cognitive linguistics movement (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987; Johnson, 1987; Langacker, 1987, 1990, 1999). Scholars specialising in cognitive semantics study knowledge representation (*conceptual structure*) and meaning formation in particular (*conceptualization*). According to Talmy (2000), cognitive semantics sees language meaning as an expression of conceptual structure – the nature and organisation of mental representation in all of its richness and diversity, which sets it apart from other approaches to linguistic meaning. To put it another way, cognitive semanticists have examined certain cognitive events through the lens of language.

Cognitive linguistics, according to Langacker (1999), can evaluate the adequacy of their models by considering *converging evidence*. This means a model must not just explain linguistic knowledge, but also be consistent with what cognitive scientists know about other aspects of cognition, reflecting the view that linguistic structure and organisation are a rough but indicative mirror of cognitive structure and organisation. Consider the setting depicted in Figure 1 as an example (Evans, 2007):

Most English speakers will agree that (a) is an appropriate description but that (b) is odd:

- (a) The cat is on the chair.
- (b) The chair is under the cat.



**Figure 1:** *The cat is on the chair.* (Evans, 2007)

We focus on the cat rather than the chair in Figure 1 because our understanding of the world tells us that the cat is more likely to move, make a noise, or do something else than the chair. This conspicuous thing is referred to as *the figure*, and the rest of the scene is referred to as *the ground*, which is another way of saying 'background.'

Cognitive semantics, according to Talmy (2000), Lakoff & Johnson (1980), and Geerearts (1999), follows four distinct guiding principles: i) Conceptual structure is embodied; ii) Semantic structure is conceptual structure; iii) Meaning representation is encyclopaedic; iv) Meaning construction is conceptualization.

The first principle of conceptual structure is that we have a species-specific vision of the universe due to the nature of our bodies, particularly our neuro-anatomical design (Geerearts, 1993; Talmy, 1985, 2000; Taylor, 1989). We can only discuss what we can perceive and conceive, and what we can perceive and conceive comes from embodied experience. The human mind, in this perspective, must bear the stamp of embodied experience. This viewpoint states that concept is embodied as a result of the nature of our embodiment.

The second guiding principle, that semantic structure is conceptual structure, is that language refers to concepts in the speaker's mind rather than entities that exist in an objectively real external reality. To put it another way, semantic structure (the meanings traditionally associated with words and other language units) and conceptual structure (i.e., concepts) can be compared (Rosch, 1973). However, just because the semantic structure and conceptual structure can be equated does not mean they are the same thing. Instead, cognitive semanticists argue that the meanings associated with language units like words, for example, represent only a subset of possible concepts in the minds of speakers and listeners. After all, we have a lot more thoughts, ideas, and feelings than we can express in words (Evans, 2006; Evans & Green, 2006).

The third guiding concept asserts that semantic structure is encyclopaedic. This indicates that lexical notions are not neatly constructed meaning bundles. Rather, they act as "points of access" to massive knowledge libraries linked to a specific notion or conceptual domain (Langacker, 1987). The argument that lexical concepts are "points of access" to encyclopaedic meaning does not negate the fact that words have conventional meanings. Nonetheless, cognitive semanticists believe that the conventional meaning associated with a given language unit is merely a 'prompt' for the process of meaning construction: the 'choice of an appropriate interpretation in light of the utterance's context.

The fourth guiding concept is that language does not encode meaning on its own. Words (and other linguistic components) are merely cues for meaning formation (Geerearts, 1999). As a result, meaning is built at the conceptual level. The process of conceptualization, in which language units act as prompts for a variety of conceptual processes and the recruitment of previous information, is equated with meaning construction. Since language is a process rather than a discrete item, it is unable to capture meaning.

## 2.3 Spatial Prepositions in Cognitive Semantics

Most prepositions have a prototypical meaning of spatial relation (Tyler & Evans, 2003; Cienki, 1989; Herskovits, 1986; Vandeloise, 1991), from which alternative meanings might be deduced. Langacker (1987) used the words *trajector* (TR) and *landmark* (LM) to describe a relational expression of a spatial preposition. The TR is the figure in which the location is indicated, whereas the LM is the reference point that specifies the place, as Taylor (1989) clearly follows him, whereas Talmy (2000) likes to speak about *primary* and *secondary* objects. Langacker's binomial *trajector vs. landmark* will be used in this research investigation. In this way, *the book* in the sentence "*The book is on the table.*" is the TR, while *the table* is the LM, and *on* is the preposition which describes the spatial relationship between the two. Other meanings are derived from this basic or prototype meaning. Tyler and Evans (2003) discuss a basic sense from which a semantic network might be constructed. The literal, primary and basic meanings all appear to pertain to the same thing: a spatial meaning that connects the trajector and the landmark. Metaphorical and metonymic expansions can explain the secondary literal meaning. Taylor and Evans (2003) further demonstrate that the use of prepositions' spatial meaning to indicate non-spatial relations is highly motivated.

According to cognitive semantics, prepositions have the following characteristics:

- Prepositional meaning is defined as a core sense. Prepositions are reduced to their most basic sense (Leech, 1969, Bennett, 1975). This fundamental feeling can be found in a wide range of situations.
- Prepositions are polysemous, meaning they have a prototype and non-prototypical sense. The prototype, which is always a spatial relation, is determined using a preference rule system (Cienki, 1989). Family resemblances and image schema transformations can be used to infer the various meanings of a preposition from a basic image schema (Brugman, 1980; Linder, 1983, Lakoff, 1987; Cuyken, 1988, 1993).

## 2.4 Analytical framework

The analytical framework used in this study includes image schemas, prototype theory and metaphorical meaning extension.

### 2.4.1 Image schemas

#### ***Definition of image schemas:***

Image schemas are presented and discussed by Lakoff (1987), Johnson (1987), and Lakoff & Turner (1989). Image schemas, like other cognitive linguistic theoretical constructs, are considered to be more than linguistics theory: they have psychological actuality, as evidenced by experimental studies in psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and developmental psychology (Gibbs & Colston, 1995). Images are visual representations of embodied experiences. Image schemas, on the other hand, are not distinct images but are abstract in another sense: they are schematic. They are schematic patterns derived from imagistic domains such as containers, paths, links, forces, and balance that appear in a number of embodied domains and structure our bodily experience (Lakoff, 1987; Johnson, 1987). According to Lakoff (1987) and Johnson (1987), Image schemas are also not specific to a particular sensory modality. Image schemas structure our bodily experience as well as our nonphysical experience through metaphor. Image schemas are not limited to specific modes of perception. An image schema, according to Johnson (1987), is a mental pattern that recurrently gives organised comprehension of numerous events and can be used metaphorically as a source of a domain to provide an understanding of yet other experiences.

#### ***Image schemas of the preposition "on"***

The spatial senses of *on* usually denote a two-dimensional surface and are divided into three image schemas: CONTACT, SUPPORT, AND PATH (Linstromberg, 1998).

When the TR comes into contact with an LM that acts as a support as a surface, but the TR is not a component of the LM, the preposition *on* is most commonly used. The CONTACT schema can be transformed into a rotation or attachment schema, both of which are prone to change as a result of perceptual shifts in perspectives or profile modifications (Ming,2011)

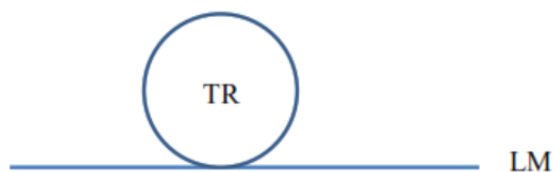


Figure 2: General image schema of *on* (Ming, 2011)

Second, with overlapping spatial meaning with the contact and confinement image schemas, the SUPPORT image schema of *on* expresses the functional relationship between the LM and the TR, with the entity (the TR) generally being on the upper surface of another (the LM). In contrast, if the TR contacts the LM, the latter will give the former with background information or support. On the other hand, according to Yang (2008), the image schema of *on* can also be understood as CONTAINMENT in some findings referring to vehicles, such as “*on the train*”. In many cases, however, the image schema of SUPPORT is more significant than confinement. Ming (2011) identified that the term *on* is used to describe a type of support from a vehicle, such as a ship, plane, or train, in which the supporting surface (the floor or seats) is the more prominent feature of the picture rather than just a physical container (Herskovits, 1986). As a result, vehicle-related phrases are classified as SUPPORT image schema.

According to Herskovits (1986, p.8), “prepositions fall into two categories: some are primarily static (e.g., *at, in, under*); others primarily dynamic (*to, from, via*)”. Yang's corpus-based study of static prepositions from 1980 to 1993 demonstrates that static prepositions can be used in dynamic situations on occasion (e.g. *I ran to the bedroom and heaved myself under the bed.* BNC, HA0 1211), and dynamic ones can be used in static contexts (e.g. *It should be alongside the wall, or about one foot away from the wall to allow space for the carer.* BNC, AS0 67). Similarly, the preposition *on* is largely static (98.84% of the cases, according to Yang (2008)), but it can also be employed in a dynamic setting. Besides that, there is a type of dynamic schema known as the PATH image schema (see Figure 3). Take an instance, in the sentence ‘*Al Capone has got his finger on the trigger at long last.*’ (BNC, HWA 2083) the preposition *on* in this situation denotes a kind of dynamic relationship between the TR (finger) and the LM (trigger).

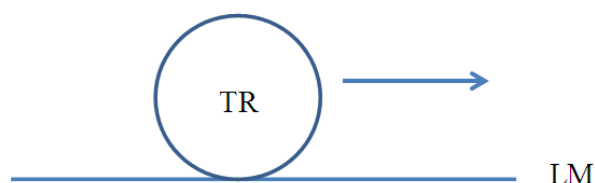
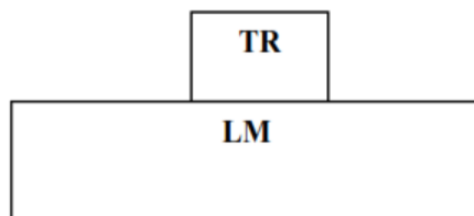


Figure 3: General image schema of *on* (Ming, 2011)

While the many image schemas of *on* can be referred to as static schema contacts, they actually reflect separate aspects of one basic schema. Furthermore, these image schemas are systematically linked to one another that reflects the sensory-motor organisation of speakers. This study investigates the entire image schema of *on* as contact in the static process in order to propose a simplified teaching strategy for English beginners. Its design can be seen below:



**Figure 4:** *The CONTACT image schema of on*

The TR is shaped like a square on top, and the LM is positioned beneath it to provide closed contact support (see Figure 4).

#### 2.4.2. Prototype theory

##### *Prototypical meaning*

The prototype approach is widely used in research on the acquisition of English prepositions. It starts from Bennett (1975). The meanings of prepositions in localistic theory are divided into three categories: spatial, temporal, and abstract. He stated that the spatial meaning was at the centre of the meaning, with the other two meanings deriving from it. Many researchers have theorised that temporal and abstract relations are extensional uses of spatial relations since then. In other words, the prototypical meaning of our target prepositions is spatial usage, which is the simplest way to illustrate the relationship between the TR and the LM.

According to Lindstromberg (1998), prototypical meaning is conceptually basic compared to other meanings, which are considered to be secondary or extended meanings/senses. He stated that the meaning of CONTACT and SUPPORT accounts for the most familiar spatial usage of the preposition *on*. In this circumstance, the subject is in contact with an LM that serves as a supporting surface. Given the presence of gravity, the subject would fall if the surface was not present, as in the case of *the book on the table*. Due to the fact that it meets a number of criteria, this meaning is considered prototypical. These criteria arose from a stream of cognitive linguistics studies that sought to determine whether each polysemous preposition could be assigned a prototype meaning, as follows:

- i. The meaning is recorded earliest in history.
- ii. The first meaning is acquired by native-speaking children.
- iii. The meaning which seems most grounded in physical experience.
- iv. The meaning which appears to be the one that (most of) the other senses evolved from.
- v. The meaning that is most readily elicited from native speakers when they are asked to give an example of a particular preposition.
- vi. The meaning that the preposition has in compound expressions.
- vii. The semantic relations between the target preposition and one or more other prepositions.
- viii. The degree to which a candidate's prototypical meaning explains particular abstract usages of the preposition.

*Lindstromberg (1998, p.20)*

##### **\*) Meaning of CONTACT:**

**a. Contact:** The interface between the TR and the LM's outer bounds or boundaries is characterized hereafter after partial approval of the conceptual schema.

(1) *The newspaper is on the table.* (Yates, 2020, 149)

**b. TR is a part of an LM:** A TR is a part of something's exterior side (*nose on face, expression on face, ears on head, mountain peaks*) or a part attached to the whole, forming part of it (*heels on shoes*).

(2) *The hair on your head looks messy.*

**c. Definite Contact:** An LM designates an entity's outward definite zone or territory. In terms of spatial precision, contact is more accurate. After that, words like *side, flank, right, left, part, hand, edge, and the point of compass* appear frequently.

(3) *The porch is on the side of the house.* (Yates, 2020, 150)

(4) *The bike is on the right/left of the church.* (Evans, 2007, 71)

**d. Contact with limit:** The LM is conceived as an area, with its boundaries clearly defined against the background, and *on* denotes *contact with the LM's external side*. The LMs *street, square, park, lake, road, river, sea, bay, way, track, coast, shore, beach, bank...* all have this sense (as areas with outer limit)

(5) *She rides her bike on the sidewalk.* (Yates, 2020, 149)

### **\*) Meaning of SUPPORT:**

Through the resting side of the LM makes touch with the external portion of the LM, the TR gains or retains control over the LM or itself. This is referred to as SUPPORT. The overall conceptual schema may be shifted or profiled differently. The TR is a burden from the LM's perspective, while LM is a supportive entity from the TR's perspective.

Certain adjustments in perspective or profile may occur in the overall mental schema. As a result, there are three more interpretations of conceptual schema:

- **Rotated schema:** The LM's supporting side is a non-horizontal surface as in:

*There are beautiful pictures on the wall.*

*Có những bức tranh đẹp trên tường.*

- **Axial support:** An axis sustains the TR as in:

*The popsicle is on a stick.* (Yates, 2020, 152)

*Kem nằm trên que.*

- **Part of a TR is LM:** The LM of the conception is a section of the TR that is in contact with the real supporting site as in:

*The children sat on small chairs.* (Yates, 2020, 152)

*Những đứa trẻ ngồi trên những chiếc ghế nhỏ.*

### **Non-prototypical meaning of “on”**

When the force dynamic configuration of the participants is evaluated, the interaction axis is highlighted as the central component of the relationship. As a result, it is consistent with language units that express motion. The following patterns have been identified:

#### **a. Spatial meaning: Path schema**

- **Movement ending in support:** verbs like *lounge, deposit, set up, lean, recline, put down, land, put, hang, settle, etc* may be followed by the lexical unit *on* in prepositional verb constructions. For example:

(6) *The child leaned on his father.* (Yates, 2020, 152)

- **Movement attempting contact and control of the LM:** The unit introduces the contact and control image schemas to itself using verbs like *attack, be, march, advance, turn, etc.* following the semantic patterns:

(7) *The troops marched on the city at dawn* (Yates, 2020, 157)

According to Lindstromberg (1998), *on* is used when the unit of time (the LM) is of medium size – e.g. *on Friday, on the day that, on this occasion.*

(8) *Come and see me on Mondays.* (Tran, 1997, 10)



### 2.4.3. Metaphorical extension

Other meanings of *on* were formed from spatial meaning as metaphorical extensions by altering the referents of the LM and TR, according to Levinson (2001). In other words, through people's imaginative capacities, meaning in the spatial domain gives rise to a number of metaphorical extensions into domains other than spatial.

#### *Spatial of metaphors*

##### a. Metaphors of support

According to Ignasi (1999), “in those domains of thought and knowledge which are conceptualised by speakers in terms of the SUPPORT conceptual schema, English may adopt two perspectives, either that of the trajector, where other entities are conceived of as support or that of the landmark, where an entity is conceptualised as a burden.”

There are 21 types of metaphors in which entities are seen as support, according to the author, including: (1) causes; (2) help; (3) resources; (4) argumentation is a building; (5) topics are pieces of ground; (6) media metaphor; (7) the air is a supporting medium; (7) reasons; (8) processes are path; (10) scale metaphor; (11) a state of affairs is support; (12) law is support; (13) knowledge is a building; (14) theories are building; (15) beliefs ; (16) positive feelings (17) institutions are support for an action; (18) main component is the support of the whole; (19) physical phenomena are support for measurement values; (20) mechanical principles are support for machine working; (21) a channel is a path. Nevertheless, within the scope of this study, the author only focuses on some types of support metaphors that are used in this research:

**RESOURCES are SUPPORT:** Resources used to carry on some action or process are conceived of as a support. Prepositional verbs used according to this metaphor are *draw on, live on, feed on, leech on, bet on, trade on, sustain somebody on, nourish on, capitalise on, profit on, dine on, fatten on, gorge on, etc.*

(9) He came over **on** his bike. (Yates, 2020, 151)

(10) That car runs **on** diesel fuel. (Yates, 2020, 153)

(11) He wrote his paper **on** the computer. (Yates, 2020, 154)

**TOPICS are PIECES OF GROUND:** The mapping of topics onto pieces of ground corresponds to the general metaphor THOUGHT is SPACE. Many prepositional verbs respond to this pattern, like *speculate on, deliberate on, speak on, comment on, agree on, etc.* as well as the corresponding nouns, plus others like *ignorance on, research on, book on, etc.* In turn, the topic is expressed with words like *topic, matter, subject, theme, issue, etc.*

(12) They agree **on** the important issues. (Yates, 2020, 160)

(13) He gave me a lecture **on** science. (Tran, 1997, 15)

(14) We have a good book **on** gardening. (Yates, 2020, 155)

##### b. Metaphors of contact

According to Igsani (1999), the contact images provide the source domain for the following metaphors:

**A GROUP is a WHOLE:** Certain collective nouns like *team, staff, committee, board, commission, etc.* where a member is conceived of as a small part attached to the whole and forms a part of it. This metaphor is mapped onto the *trajector-is-part-of-landmark image*.

(15) She is **on** the basketball team ... (Yates, 2020, 156)

#### *Temporal metaphors*

Time can be thought of as a journey in space, according to Clark (1973) and Lakoff & Johnson (1980). On the path, people might choose to stand motionless or move forward. Both choices provide two more

options: People can stand facing other objects coming or with their backs to them for the first one, while moving forward or with their back to the sense of movement for the second (Ignasi, 1999). As a result, if we stay on the timeline, we will see the future approaching us. Furthermore, we look ahead to the future meeting.

Both the stative and dynamic senses are denoted by the lexical unit *on*. In temporal use of *on*, the relationship between the TR and the period of time is one contact in the sense that it occurs for the duration of that period. In other words, *on* is used to pinpoint the event at any moment during the specified time range, as in these instances:

(16) *She fainted **on** hearing the news.* (Yates, 2020, 159)

(17) ***On** hearing the victory, people were transported with joy.*

(Tran, 1997, 180)

## 2.5. Revision of prior studies

As for domestic research, Nguyen (2009) used cognitive semantics and the container schema to determine the meaning of the English preposition *in* and its Vietnamese equivalents. Tran (2010) showed the differences in using prepositions between English and Vietnamese in their cognition and correlation between time and space, particularly in the choice of trajectory (TM) and landmark (LM). Ha (2010, 42) stated that "cognitive semantic notions as image schemas, prototype theory and radial category, and metaphorical meaning extension have been exploited to immensely account for not only prototypical meaning of the preposition but also its variations by means of image schema transformations and metaphorical extensions. The research also revealed that the way prepositions apply depends on: (1) native speaker embodied experience (the way people interact with the world and perceive the spatial relation between two people or between people and objects) (2) different vantages on the scene of different linguistics (the privileged points native speakers choose to perceive) (3) different notion of reference frames of the point of viewing that native speakers use. Finally, Mai (2020) has presented the six clusters of senses of the preposition *in* based on Tyler and Evans' research, thereby, via the contrastive analysis approach, indicating the similarities and differences in the way speakers of the two languages conceptualize the world via their spatial configuration.

In short, for decades, several researchers have expressed their concerns about prepositions. However, they are all interested in distinct aspects of prepositions, and there has not been any research done on the preposition *on*, which is one of the most commonly used in English, and its Vietnamese equivalents regarding the cognitive semantics approach. As a result, this research will be conducted in order to fill the gap in the research field.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Research method

The study used the following methods. Firstly, the writer uses the comparative and contrastive method to research the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese prepositions. Secondly, the writer uses the analyzing and synthesizing theory method to study documents about prepositions in English and look for examples of sentences using prepositions in texts to serve as illustrative examples. Finally, the writer uses the classification and systematization of theory method to distinguish each phenomenon of prepositional meaning transition when translating from English to Vietnamese.

This study would examine and analyze each phenomenon of prepositional meaning change when translating from English to Vietnamese. In translated sentences, the author will try to convey the exact meaning of the sentences in certain contexts.

### 3.2 Data collection and analysis

This study is based on *on*-examples in form of (NP) + *on* + NP and NP + V + *on* + NP, where *on* functions as a preposition, to the exclusion of others where *on* plays the role of an adverb or an affix. Data and examples were taken from four sources, including *Barron's ESL Proficiency Series: Prepositions* by Jean Yates (2020), *Cách dùng giới từ Anh ngữ* by Tran Van Dien (1997), *English Prepositions Explained* by Seth Lindstromberg (2010), *The Key to English Prepositions 1* by Collier-Macmillan International (1964) and *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* by Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green (2007). All documents are original and the author would select a few examples that use prepositions used in everyday language to show the difference in meaning in each language when translated. After that, based on the above criterion, all *on*-occurrences were listed and carefully filtered. It was estimated that 24 of *on*-samples were manually compiled from five sources, including *Barron's ESL Proficiency Series: Prepositions* by Jean Yates (2020), *Cách dùng giới từ Anh ngữ* by Tran Van Dien (1997) and *English Prepositions Explained* by Seth Lindstromberg (2010), *The Key to English Prepositions 1* by Collier-Macmillan International (1964) and *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* by Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green (2007). These samples were numbered

Secondly, the data were classified into sub-groups based on the research question:

- Why are there cases that the English preposition “*on*” is not translated to “*trên*” in Vietnamese regarding the cognitive semantics approach?

To answer the question, based on the theories of image schemas and metaphorical extension, the data were divided into three groups. As a result, phrases demonstrating the relationship of contact (the TR has contact with an LM that serves as a support as a surface but the TR is not a part of the LM) or support (the TR's entity) is on the upper surface of the LM that has overlapping spatial meaning with the contact and containment image schemas) were classified as prototypical meaning. On the other hand, path schema was given to *on*-instances that represented movement in the process. The remaining data was classified as metaphorical.

According to Vietnamese grammatical rules, the Vietnamese equivalents were separated into two groups: prepositional and non-prepositional phrases. Accordingly, there were four sub-groups, corresponding to five Vietnamese prepositions, namely “*trên, vào, bằng, bên*” and a non-prepositional one. The analysis process was based on the analytical framework of prototypical meaning, picture schema, and metaphorical extensions. Moreover, the prepositional phrases of *on* were compared and contrasted with their Vietnamese equivalents in terms of use from cognitive semantic perspective. The findings revealed the differences and similarities in spatial cognition between English and Vietnamese people. Simultaneously, the author integrated the current findings with those from prior studies to explain these characteristics.

## 4 Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Prepositional equivalents

Although both English and Vietnamese use prepositions to communicate spatial and temporal relationships, there are substantial differences in the way the two languages use spatial marking and meaning extensions.

#### 4.1.1 “on” in English corresponds to “trên” in Vietnamese

“trên” is used in Vietnamese when TR comes into contact with an LM that serves as a support or a surface, but the TR is not a part of the LM. As a result, the majority of words denoting touch sensations in Vietnamese is classified as “trên”. Consider the examples below:

(1) *The newspaper is **on** the table.* (Yates, 2020, 149)

(1) *Tờ báo ở **trên** bàn.*

In the above examples, “on” in English is used with the LM *book*. The LM is assumed to possess two-dimensional surface in Vietnamese and evoke the usage of “trên”. The limits of contact are various, depending on different situations. It ranges from one point (e.g. *on top of the mountain*) to a part of the surface.

(5) *She rides her bike **on** the sidewalk.* (Yates, 2020, 149)

(5) *Cô ấy đạp xe **trên** vỉa hè.*

(11)

#### 4.1.2 “on” in English corresponds to “bên” in Vietnamese to denote topics

Vietnamese language users use the conventionalized lateral frame of reference in spatial placement, according to Ly (1994, 2005). The combination of the users’ subjective viewpoint and left-right binary relationship is considered as the foundation to conceive of the entities in the real world.

(3) *The porch is **on the side** of the house.* (Yates, 2020, 150)

(3) *Mái hiên **bên hông** nhà.*

(4) *The bike is **on the right/left** of the church.* (Evans, 2007, 71)

(4) *Chiếc xe đạp **bên tay trái/phải** của nhà thờ.*

(18) *Did you notice the twin oak trees **on the left hand side** of the path?*

(Lindstromberg, 2010: 58)

(18) *Bạn có để ý thấy đôi cây sồi **bên tay trái** của lối đi không?*

(19) *The mosaic is **on the (right/left-hand) side** of the church.* (Evans, 2007, 71)

(19) *Bức tranh khảm **(bên phải/bên trái)** của nhà thờ.*

(20) *The bike is **on one side of/beside** the church.* (Evans, 2007, 71)

(20) *Chiếc xe đạp **bên/bên cạnh** nhà thờ.*

Based on the above examples, The English concept of “on” and the Vietnamese concept of “bên” are similar. In English, the preposition “on” is used in a limited area and it specifically refers to interaction with the external side of the LM. Similar, in Vietnamese, “the house”, “the church” and “the path” are viewed as cognitive areas with two-dimensional horizontal surfaces of which the TRs, “the porch”, “the bike”, “the twin oak trees” and “the mosaic” are perceived as appearing on the left or the right side of the LMs. Additionally, Nguyen (1998) states that Vietnamese speakers tend to use their own location to compare with that of other entities in conceptualizing space. Therefore, “bên” is employed to indicate “a separation between the speaker’s ego space and another space of the TR” (Nguyen (2009), p.35).

## 4.2. Non-prepositional equivalents

### 4.2.1 “on” in English corresponds to “vào” in Vietnamese

#### + Movement ending in support or contact

Verbs like *lounge, deposit, set up, lean, recline, put down, land, put, hang, settle, etc* may be followed by the lexical unit *on* in prepositional verb constructions.

(6) *The child leaned **on** his father.* (Yates, 2020, 152)

(6) *Đứa trẻ dựa **vào** bố mình.*

### + Movement attempting contact and control of the LM

The unit introduces the contact and control image schemas to itself using verbs like *attack, be, march, advance, turn, etc.* following the semantic patterns:

(7) *The troops marched **on** the city at dawn.* (Yates, 2020, 157)

(7) *Đoàn quân hành quân **vào** thành phố lúc rạng đông.*

### + Temporal expressions

The preposition “*vào*” is employed in temporal expressions. “*on*” is used with temporal complements in English to refer to days, dates, or specific times with detailed descriptions, but “*vào*” is used in Vietnamese temporal expressions to refer to a specific section of a day, a specific month, a specific season of the year, or a specific occasion.

(8) *Come and see me **on** Mondays.* (Tran, 1997, 10)

(8) *Hãy đến gặp tôi **vào** các ngày thứ hai.*

#### 4.2.2 “on” in English corresponds to “bằng” in Vietnamese

The preposition “*on*” is used in English to denote a resource that is employed to carry out specific acts or processes and is considered as a support. Prepositional verbs used according to this metaphor are *draw on, live on, feed on, leech on, bet on, trade on, sustain somebody on, nourish on, capitalise on, profit on, dine on, fatten on, gorge on, etc.* When used to express medium, material, or resources in Vietnamese, the preposition “*bằng*” has the same characteristics as “*on*”.

(9) *He came over **on** his bike.* (Yates, 2020, 151)

(9) *Anh ta ghé chơi **bằng** xe đạp.*

(10) *That care run **on** diesel fuel.* (Yates, 2020, 153)

(10) *Chiếc xe hơi đó chạy **bằng** dầu đi-e-zen.*

(11) *He wrote his paper **on** the computer.* (Yates, 2020, 154)

(11) *Anh ta viết bài **bằng** máy tính.*

#### 4.2.3 “on” in English corresponds to “về” in Vietnamese to denote topics

The preposition “*on*” is used in English to denote a topic that is employed to express the content of a research or a subject and is considered as a support. Prepositional verbs used according to this metaphor are *speculate on, deliberate on, speak on, comment on, agree on, etc.* as well as the corresponding nouns, plus others like *ignorance on, research on, book on, etc.* When used to express a research or a subject in Vietnamese, the preposition “*về*” share the same features as “*on*”:

(12) *They agree **on** the important issues.* (Yates, 2020, 160)

(12) *Họ đồng ý **về** các vấn đề quan trọng.*

(13) *He gave me a lecture **on** science.* (Tran, 1997, 15)

(13) *Anh ấy giảng cho tôi **về** khoa học.*

(14) *We have a good book **on** gardening.* (Yates, 2020, 155)

(14) *Chúng tôi có một cuốn sách **về** làm vườn.*

#### 4.2.4 “on” in English corresponds to “trong” in Vietnamese to a TR is a part of an LM

The preposition “*on*” is used in English to signify a member that is thought of as a minor part that is attached to the entire and serves as a support as in certain collective nouns like *team, staff, committee, board, etc.* When used to express a TM is a part of an LM, the preposition “*trong*” share the same features as “*on*”:

(15) *She is **on** the basketball team ...* (Yates, 2020, 156)

(15) *Cô ta **trong** đội bóng rổ ...*

#### 4.2.5 “on” in English corresponds to “khi” in Vietnamese

Time can be viewed as a journey in physical space, as discussed in Chapter 2. It is true that the lexical unit *on* denotes both the stative and dynamic senses. The relationship of the TR with the period of time in temporal use of *on* is one contact in the sense that it occurs as long as that period lasts. In other words, *on* is used to locate an event at any moment throughout the specified time period.

(16) *She fainted **on** hearing the news.* (Yates, 2020, 159)

(16) *Cô ấy ngất **khi** nghe thông tin.*

(17) ***On** hearing the victory, people were transported with joy.* (Tran, 1997, 180)

(17) ***Khi** nghe tin chiến thắng, dân chúng xiết nỗi vui mừng.*

#### 4.2.6 Other expressions

In addition to the above cases, the preposition *on* has other meanings in English expressions but does not carry the prepositional meaning when translated into Vietnamese. In this case, the translator will use Vietnamese expressions with similar meanings to express the meaning of *on* in the sentence. For example:

(21) *They were **on the road** for two days during their trip.* (Macmillan, 1964, 3)

(21) *Họ đã **đi đượ**c 2 ngày trong suốt chuyến đi.*

(22) *The light's **on**.* (Lindstromberg, 2010, 65)

(22) *Đèn **đang bật**.*

(23) *The meeting's **on**.* (vs off) (Lindstromberg, 2010, 65)

(23) *Cuộc họp **đang diễn ra**.*

(23) *He is always **on hand** to help us.* (Yates, 2020, 158)

(23) *Anh ta luôn **có mặt** để giúp chúng tôi.*

(24) *She is **on a diet**.* (Yates, 2020, 158)

(24) *Cô ta **đang ăn kiêng**.*

In conclusion, the above section shows the potential Vietnamese equivalents of the preposition *on* regarding cognitive semantics approach. This can be illustrated in the following table 1:

**Table 1: The Vietnamese equivalents of the preposition *on***

No.	Meaning of <i>on</i> in English	Vietnamese equivalents with <i>on</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Prototypical meaning</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Contact image schema</b>	
	Contact	<i>trên</i>
	TR is a part of LM	<i>trên</i>
	Definite Contact	<i>bên</i>
	Contact with limit	<i>trên</i>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Support image schema</b>	<i>trên</i>
<b>2</b>	<b>Non-prototypical meaning</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Movement ending in support</b>	<i>vào</i>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Movement ending in contact</b>	<i>vào</i>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Movement attempting contact and control of the LM</b>	<i>vào</i>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Temporal expression</b>	<i>vào</i>
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Metaphors</b>	
	<b>Metaphors expression of support</b>	
	Resources are support	<i>bằng</i>
	Topics are pieces of ground	<i>về</i>
	<b>Metaphors expression of support</b>	
	A group is a whole	<i>trong</i>
	<b>Temporal Metaphors</b>	<i>khi</i>
<b>3</b>	<b>Other expressions</b>	<i>đi được</i> <i>đang bắt</i> <i>đang diễn ra</i> <i>có mặt</i> <i>đang ăn kiêng</i>

## 5 Conclusions

The current thesis aims at explaining the cases where the preposition *on* is not translated as *trên* and its Vietnamese equivalents under the cognitive semantics approach. From the cognitive perspective, the notions such as image schemas, prototypical meaning and metaphorical structures are used to determine the literal meaning as well as metaphorical extensions of preposition *on* in this work. After the data were collected and analyzed, the major findings are outlined as follows:

- **The meanings of the English preposition "on" from a cognitive semantic perspective**

From a cognitive semantic perspective, the English preposition *on* has variety of meaning such as contact, support, path images. Besides that, a wide range of metaphors have been understood. Based on the literal meaning of *on*, these occurrences are also glossed into two groups, namely metaphors of support and metaphors of contact.

- **Vietnamese equivalents of on-occurrences**

It can be seen from the data analysis that the English and Vietnamese have similar cognition when employing *on* and *trên* to signify the TR and the LM's contact in both versions. The other on-occurrences that do not refer to the literal meaning of *on* are categorized into metaphorical extensions: a topic, a part of, the direction of movement, the time and other expressions. Through analyzing the preposition *on* in the above contexts, the author has pointed out seven different meanings of the preposition *on* when placed in different contexts, including *trên, bên, vào, bằng, về, trong, khi* and the exception when it is a fixed phrase or a metaphorical expression, resulting in similar meanings to Vietnamese when translated.

The findings in this paper provide the basis for people to see that prepositions are one of the important aspects of English. Understanding and using correct prepositions will help us express our ideas through language and express it naturally. According to Tran (1997), "learning the form and meaning of prepositions is not enough. What matters is learning how to use prepositions in different situations." The study also shows that the proficient use of English prepositions does not have a uniform rule, but it takes practice and habits to become proficient. Prepositions are diverse and always change meaning when placed in different contexts. Therefore, there is no method of using prepositions.

Although prepositions are frequently used in English textbooks, students frequently fail to acquire them by accident and frequently demonstrate poor performance in using prepositions correctly (Trinh, 2014). Such a situation is due to direct translation from their mother tongue, which often causes inaccuracies as the cognitive thinking of Vietnamese and English speakers is different in some distinct contexts, according to Nguyen (2001) and Trinh (2014).

In addition, the study suggests that in teaching translation, especially prepositions, teachers should pay attention to making learners understand that preposition translation should not be translated directly into their language. They must rely on context and semantics in linguistics. Teachers also need to help learners limit the habit of translating everything into their native language, especially prepositions because the case of a preposition with multiple meanings does occur. Furthermore, based on cultural differences and habits of using prepositions in different languages, teachers should also understand clearly so that they can help learners reduce mistakes when using prepositions. During the teaching process, the teacher should:

- Analyzing the phenomenon of meaning change of prepositions when translating from English to Vietnamese in translation so that learners can accurately translate the meaning of sentences.
- Analyzing the case of multiple meanings of prepositions in translation that, in addition to common meanings, can have other meanings in different contexts.
- Analyzing other roles of prepositions in sentences, which can be verbs or conjunctions.



In conclusion, the study hopes to have partly contributed to the identification of the meaning of English prepositions in learning and translation. Therefore, the research paper hopes to be useful to English learners and individuals who are passionate about teaching aspects of the language, especially prepositions.

## 6 Study Limitations

The study is only a small contribution to the study of English prepositions by analyzing some transitional phenomena and briefly mentioning that a preposition can have many meanings and play different roles in the English language. In other words, there will be many phenomena that change the meaning of prepositions and the phenomenon of multiple meanings of each preposition that within the scope of this research paper will not be able to cover all of them.

According to Nguyen (2001), from the analysis of the prepositional systems of English and Vietnamese, we can see that the prepositional systems in both languages have diversity and rich activities. The English preposition system is considered difficult to use for Vietnamese learners because of the habit of translating the language directly from the mother tongue, and the meaning and usage of the preposition system are sometimes different from that of Vietnamese. Moreover, the differences in respective structures and spatial and temporal perceptions of the British and Vietnamese are often not the same.

The author also agrees with the point of view of Nguyen (2001), that teaching and learning English prepositions should not be separated from each other but should be taught and integrated into the process of grammar teaching and communication knowledge. In addition to the theory in class, learners need to practice in class to be able to remember the taught prepositions and use them correctly. First, they need to understand the nature of prepositions between English and Vietnamese, then gradually apply them through small exercises, then progress to the exercises of compounding sentences and completing sentences. In addition, the role of the mother tongue needs to go hand in hand with learning English. Secba (1979) in the book "*On foreign language teaching methods*" said: "Experience has shown that it is impossible to give up the mother tongue in the process of learning a foreign language, but it is impossible to remove the mother tongue from the students' minds obtainable" (213).

## References

- Achard, M. (2007). *The Oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics*: OUP USA.
- Bennett, D. C. (1975). *Spatial and temporal uses of English prepositions: An essay in stratificational semantics*, London: Longman.
- Bui, D. T. (2003), *Ngữ pháp Việt Nam giản dị và thực dụng*, Nhà Xuất bản Văn hoá Thông tin, Hà Nội.
- Bui, P. H., Vien, T., & Vu, N. (2018). Applying Cognitive Linguistics to Teaching English Prepositions: A Quasi-Experimental Study. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11, 327-346. doi:10.12973/iji.2018.11323a
- Brugman, C. M. (1988). *The story of over: Polysemy, semantics, and the structure of the lexicon*: Taylor & Francis.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Larsen-Freeman, D., & Williams, H. A. (1983). *The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course*: Newbury House Rowley, MA.
- Clark, H. H. (1973). "Space, time, semantics and the child". *Cognitive Development and the Acquisition of Language*. Ed.T.E. Moore. London: Academic Press. 27-64.
- Collins, C. (Nguyễn Thành Yên dịch và chú giải) (2004), *Giới từ tiếng Anh*, Nhà Xuất bản Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- De Saussure, F. (2011). *Course in general linguistics*: Columbia University Press.
- Evans, V., Bergen, B., & Zinken, J. (2007). *The cognitive linguistics reader*. Equinox Publishing Ltd.
- Evans, V., & Melanie, G. (2007), *Cognitive Linguistics, An Introduction*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Fodor, J. A. (1983). *The modularity of mind*: MIT press.
- Ha, T. T. (2017). *Prepositions "in, on, at" in English and Vietnamese from a cognitive semantic perspective*. Master Thesis in Linguistics: 602202.
- Herskovits, A. (1986). *Language and spatial cognition – an interdisciplinary study for the prepositions in English*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Ignasi, N.F. (1999). *Metaphorical use of on*. Journal of English Studies
- Geeraerts, D. (2006). *Cognitive linguistics: Basic readings* (Vol. 34): Walter de Gruyter.
- Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, fire, and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind*
- Lakoff, G., Espenson, J., & Schwartz, A. (1991). *Master metaphor list*. Second draft copy. University of California, Berkeley.

- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2008). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of cognitive grammar: Theoretical prerequisites* (Vol. 1): Stanford University Press.
- Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: descriptive application. Volume 2* (Vol. 2). Stanford university press.
- Langacker, R. W. (1999). *Assessing the cognitive linguistic enterprise*. *Cognitive linguistics: Foundations, scope, and methodology*, 13-59.
- Leech, G., & Rayson, P. (2001). *Word frequencies in written and spoken English: Based on the British National Corpus*: Routledge.
- Levinson, S. (1996). *Frames of reference and Molyneux's question: Cross-linguistic evidence*.
- Levinson, S (2001). *Space in language and cognition: Explorations in cognitive diversity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lindstromberg, S. (2010). *English Prepositions Explained*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Ly, T. T (1994). *Ngôn ngữ và sự tri nhận không gian*. *Ngôn ngữ* (4).
- Ly, T. T (2005). *Ngôn ngữ học tri nhận, từ lý thuyết đại cương đến thực tiễn tiếng Việt*, Nhà Xuất bản Khoa học Xã hội, Hà Nội.
- Ming, H. (2011). *A cognitive semantic study of preposition on-Based on a comparison with Chinese prepositional phrase Zai Shang*. Doctoral Dissertation, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, China.
- Nghi, T. T., Thang, N. T., & Phuc, T. H. (2021). *An Investigation into Factors Affecting the Use of English Prepositions by Vietnamese Learners of English*. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 10(1), 24-40.
- Nguyen, C. H. (2001). *Nghiên cứu ngữ pháp và ngữ nghĩa của giới từ tiếng Anh đối chiếu với tiếng Việt*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Social Sciences and Humanities – Ho Chi Minh City National University.
- Nguyen, D. D. (1988). *Lôgic của từ nối trong tiếng Việt và các ngôn ngữ Đông Nam Á*, Nhà Xuất bản Khoa học Xã hội, Hà Nội.
- Nguyen, H. P. (2010). *Chức năng của giới từ tiếng Việt xét trên bình diện ngữ pháp và ngữ nghĩa*, Tạp chí Đại học Sư phạm Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- Nguyen, K. T. (1963). *Nghiên cứu về ngữ pháp tiếng Việt*, Nhà Xuất bản Khoa học Xã hội, Hà Nội.
- Nguyen, T. T. H. (2020). *Giới từ định vị tiếng Anh (at, in, on) và các đơn vị tương đương trong tiếng Việt*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Social Sciences and Humanities – Ho Chi Minh City National University.
- Nguyen, T. V. K. (2001). *Nghiên cứu các nghĩa của giới từ “in” trong tiếng Anh và các nghĩa tương đương trong tiếng việt dưới góc độ ngôn ngữ học tri nhận*. Mater thesis, University of Foreign Languages - Hanoi National University.
- Phan, K. (1955). *Việt ngữ nghiên cứu*, Nhà Xuất bản Đà Nẵng, Đà Nẵng.
- Rosch, E. (1975). *Cognitive representations of semantic categories*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 104, 192–233.
- Saeed, J. (1997). *Cognitive Semantics*. In: Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schmid, H.-J., & Handl, S. (2010). *Cognitive foundations of linguistic usage patterns*: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Secba (1979), *On foreign language teaching methods*.
- Song, X., Schnotz, W., & Juchem-Grundmann, C. (2015). *A cognitive linguistic approach to teaching English prepositions*. *Multidisciplinary Research on teaching and Learning*. Springer.
- The Macmillan Company (1964), *The Key to English Prepositions 1, Fourth Printing 1968*, Collier-Macmillan International, Collier-Macmillan Limited, London, v.
- Tran, Q. H. (2001). *Nghiên cứu giới từ định vị theo hướng ngữ dụng trên cứ liệu tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt*, Master Thesis, University of Social Sciences and Humanities – Ho Chi Minh City National University.
- Tran, Q. H. (2010). *Major differences in the use of English and Vietnamese locative prepositions describing spatial relations*, *Magazine of Science and Technology, Da Nang University*, 5(40), 71-78.
- Tran, T. K. (1940), *Việt Nam văn phạm*, Sài Gòn.
- Tran, V. D. (1997). *Cách dùng giới từ Anh ngữ*, Nhà Xuất bản Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- Trinh. C. M. (2014). *Lỗi sử dụng giới từ tiếng Anh của người Việt*, Master Thesis, University of Social Sciences and Humanities – Ha Noi National University.
- Tyler, A. (2012). *Spatial Language, Polysemy, and Cross-Linguistic Semantic Mismatches: Cognitive Linguistics Insights into Challenges for Second Language Learners*. *Spatial Cognition & Computation*, 12(4), 305-335.
- Ungerer, F., & Schmid, H.-J. (2013). *An introduction to cognitive linguistics*: Routledge.
- Wijaya, D., & Ong, G. (2018). *Applying Cognitive Linguistics to teaching English prepositions in the EFL classroom*. 2018, 8(1), 10. doi:10.17509/ijal.v8i1.11456
- Yang, Q. H. (2008). *The corpus-based esm analysis of the “at-on-in” microsystem*, Master Thesis, Sichuan International Studies University, Chongqing, China.
- Yates, J. (2020). *Barron’s ESL Proficiency Series: Prepositions*, Kaplan, Inc., Barron’s Educational Series, 2020 Edition, 750 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017.