

Anuchida Renton 2010: The Study of The Interpretation of Thai Word “Khamoi” :  
Prototype Theory. Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics), Major Field: Applied  
Linguistics, Department of Linguistics. Thesis Advisor:  
Assistant Professor Mom Luang Jaralvilai Charunrochana, Ph.D. 98 pages.

The purpose of this research is to study the ideal meaning of Thai word 'Khamoi' in prototype theory, to prove if the interpretation of the word 'Khamoi' of Thai people is different, if the features are all the same weight and to see which semantic feature of this word is most important for each group. The samples of this study are Thai people and Buddhism and divide into 3 groups: the general people, the related to law people, and the high religious devout people. There are 30 people in each group. The data come from the questionnaire that consists of 16 situations that have the various numbers of semantic features of the word 'Khamoi'.

The result supports partially with the hypothesis. The various degrees of the strictness to law and devoutness to Buddhism are not the cause to lead people interpreting differently. The general people most emphasize the semantic features of 'having the malefic intention to the possessor', the related to law people most emphasize the semantic feature of 'knowing that stuff is belonging to its possessor', and the high religious devout people most emphasize the semantic feature of 'having the malefic intention to the possessor'. Those three groups rank all semantic features differently. The general people and the high religious devout people rank semantic features similarly, but semantic features ranked by the related to law people are different to other two groups.

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