# Words Definition in the Vietnamese Dictionary from the Perspective of Troponymy

## Nguyen Bich Diep

Thang Long University, Vietnam
**Email:** diepnb@thanglong.edu.vn

**ABSTRACT**: *Each language, in the vocabulary system in general and the verb vocabulary system in particular, troponymy is one of the most important types of semantic relationships. The troponymy is one of the important semantic relations of the Vietnamese verb lexical system. The article is about some methods of defining words in Vietnamese dictionaries today. First of all, the article briefly summarizes definition methods in general and the using of the hypernym method in particular. Then, the article describes the word definition of the activity of going, seing... Thereby, the author wants to give an opinion on a way to define the meaning of words through từ bao (hypernym) và từ cách (troponym)*

**KEY WORDS**: troponymy, hyponym, troponym, semantic relationships…

## INTRODUCTION

Dictionary is a scientific work with great application value in society and the dictionary is truly a language guide for users. Dictionary is a useful tool, a great assistant for learning and expanding knowledge. Dictionaries help us understand our mother tongue thoroughly and look up foreign languages better. The dictionary contains a treasure of knowledge compiled from all branches of science, art, culture... Dictionary users often look up words through word definitions in the dictionary. Therefore, the easier to understand the definition, the more valuable it is. This article hopes to provide the simplest definition of the word from the perspective of troponymy.

### Definition methods used in Vietnamese dictionaries
Surveying definitions in a number of dictionaries, a group of authors on the topic "Some basic theoretical and methodological issues of the world and Vietnam on compiling

dictionaries" of the Dictionary Institute Studies and Vietnamese Encyclopedia" [9] has shown the definition methods used in Vietnamese dictionaries

**Method 1: Analytical definition (natural definition)**
"The basic characteristic of the explanation in the dictionary is the natural explanation - the type of explanation commonly found in our life. Natural explanation is the expressing word A with word B, in which B and A must have the same content, B must be synonymous with A. Natural explanation has two characteristics: this is a natural activity in social life when there is a need to make others understand you, by using the expanding and deploying capacity of language; Use the easy to explain the difficult, the known to explain the unknown. For example: *to **probe** is to go cautiously, step by step* [due to some disadvantage] [Hoang Phe ed, 2008]

**Method 2: Definition by using the hypernym**
"This is the definitional method of logic. Its content is to reduce things, phenomena, and concepts to broader concepts of the same type, and then outline the distinctive characteristics of the concepts being explained. This method of definition is a special form of the method of definition by analysis. For example: *walking [people, animals] **move** themselves from one place to another by consecutively lifting and placing their feet; [people] **move** to another place, regardless of how or what means. (move is the hypernym and written in bold letter)*

**Method 3: Definition by using synonyms**
This is the type of definition by giving synonyms for the word that needs to be defined. This is a common type of explanation in dictionaries and is also a common type of word explanation in communication. For example: ***run:** go to (have a particular form) "the boy runs to hís mom*". Definition with words that are close in meaning (or words that are close in meaning) is the definition of a word by the word that is close in meaning to it and adding other meanings and nuances of meaning. Sometimes, writers do not want to point out too many meanings, so they use near-synonyms to represent the majority of meanings plus additional meanings. For example*: **travel** means go, move, locomote (change location; move "How fast does your new car go?"; "We travelled from Rome to Naples by bus"; "The policemen went from door to door looking for the suspect"; "The soldiers moved towards the city in an attempt to take it before night fell"; "news travelled fast"... [5]*

**Method 4: Define by using antonyms**
A method of defining by negating the word (or words) that have the opposite meaning of the word being defined. For example*: **stop going**, break down (stop operating or functioning) The bus we travelled in broke down on the way to town."[5]*

**Method 5: Definition by instruction**
This is a method of definition by comparing the word being defined with an object in the world outside of language. The selected non-linguistic object must be the most typical, most popular, and have the attributes that most easily evoke associations with the meaning of the word. This method of explanation is often applied to words that express direct perception of reality such as perception of color, taste, sound. For example: **astringent**: *tastes like green bananas; **red**: the colour of blood*. [5]. This method does not be applied to defite verbs.

**Method 6: Define by giving the function of words**
A method of using descriptive meta-language to state the function of the defined word. This is the definition often applied to function words. For example: *and: words expressing relationships between many different possibilities, if not this possibility then that possibility, at least one possibility is realized.* [5]. This method also does not not be applied to defite verbs also.

Above methods that we have summarized and cited in the ministerial-level project for the period 2009-2010 "Some basic theoretical and methodological issues of the world and Vietnam on compiling various types of dictionaries". [9]

**1. To study methode of the definition by using the hypernym**
In our research, we choose to approach the issue by using the word bag definition method. Because that is the definition method closest to our research. Because the troponymy is the semantic relationship between **the hypernym** A and **the troponym** B. In which **the hypernym** A means the semantics of verb A and **the troponym** B is the semantics of the verb B.

For example, consider the relationship between the verb group (*swim and freestyle/ mixed swimming/ breaststroke/ butterfly swimming...*). **Swimming** and the verbs that follow it have a dative relationship with each other if considered in the relationship the the hypernym **swim** with the meaning "*a way of moving under water*" can be seen as the dative of dative words such as: *swim in stride/swim mixed swim/breaststroke/butterfly...*And then, we can define it simply and naturally. *Freestyle swimming/ mixed swimming/ breaststroke/ butterfly swimming... is a way of performing the act of **swimming**:* Or *people can swim to move underwate*r, and there are many different ways of **swimming**... And in this case, using **the hypernym** to define words is a quite natural and useful way.

**2. Finding some issues**
The way to define word meaning that our research aims at is "definition by the troponymy". The term "Definition only by the troponymy" that we use in this section to study the presence of the troponym in Vietnamese dictionary [Hoang Phe ed] is also somewhat similar to the term "Definition by meanings of words" like the name that author Hoang Thi

Tuyen Linh used in her work. In essence, these two terms refer to the semantic relationship of the Vietnamese verb system.

However, the two names are essentially different. Specifically, our research uses the name of the semantic relationship as the term " the Troponymy " to identify while author Nguyen Thi Tuyen Linh uses the term " the Hypernym " - one of the essential components of the troponymy in the system of identification. And our concept of the Hypernym in this study is the Hypernym used in the Troponymy *and used for verb lexical units.* But the **the inclusion word** (từ bao) by author Nguyen Thi Tuyen Linh [6] refers is ussed in general in the previous inclusion relationship, like the word including/inclusion... which is not identical or completely similar to the relationship that we are researching and using use. In previous studies on the word including, the word including in some concepts in the meaning relationships such as*: meronymy (quan hệ tổng phân); hyponymy (quan hệ bao nghĩa), troponymy (quan hệ cách),* hyponymy (quan hệ thuộc nghĩa); causonymy (quan hệ nhân quả)*;* entailment (quan hệ suy ra). As for the perspective of troponymy in particular and semantic relationships in general, the above semantic relationships will be clearly distinguished with different names and true to their nature.

The Hypernym is understood in such studies as the understanding of logic. Accordingly, the semantic relationships are classified as inclusion relationships such as the inclusion relationship according to the author such as:  For meaning relationships*:*
    *+ between **door and house**, house is the inclusion word => house is the superordinate => They are* in *in the meronymy (quan hệ tổng phân); the semantic relationship between the door and the house is the meronymy => infers that the door is a part of the house*
    *+ between **pigeons and birds**, what is the word bird => bird is the superordinat => They are* in *the hyponymy (quan hệ bao nghĩa); The semantic relationship between pigeon and bird is hyponymy => infer that pigeon has the word bird;*
    *+ between **scribbling and writing** => writing is the hypernym => They are in the troponymy (quan hệ cách). The semantic relationship between scribble and writing is that writing is the hypernym and scribble is the troponym. And the relationship between scribbling and writing is troponymy - a semantic relationship throughout our research.*

This is the semantic relationship of verb verbal units. The inclusion relationship is the semantic relationship of nominal vocabulary units.
    *+ between **carefully and writing** => writing is the superordinate => They are* in the hyponymy (quan hệ thuộc nghĩa) ...
    *+ between **threwing and broken** => threwing is the superordinate => They are* in the causonymy (quan hệ nhân quả)
    *+ between sleeping and dream => sleeping is the superordinate => They are in the entailment (quan hệ suy ra)*

The superordinate is a concept that the author applies to many cases that are classified as inclusion relationships. It is different from the troponymy in my study.

And finally, all the documents and illustrative examples to clarify the issues in the above content are largely collected and cited in the Vietnamese Dictionary to ensure objectivity and legitimacy. In the following content, we will use our research materials from the perspective of the tropnymy to in learn about the relationship and presence of the mentioned methods of using the tropnymy to definite verb.

As presented in the above content, studying language from the perspective of logic, the relationship between concepts is often given much attention and concern with the perspective of a broader or narrower relationship between concepts of concluding or concept of conclusion. Philosophy calls the general and the particular, Logic has the terms external and internal, Linguistics used to use the term including or inclusion, and from the 1970s onwards, the linguistics is interested in the concept of words including... No matter how it is called, it focuses on explaining more and more clearly the semantic relationship between superior words, which traditional linguists call Synthetic words/common words/toponyms... with groups of lower-level words belonging to those higher-level word groups are also respectively called words/proper words/lower-name words by linguist researchers... And later, when research on semantic relationships in word network systems around the world developed. Linguists have named them by the concepts of hypernym & hoponym (in the hoponymy) applied to the vocabulary of noun and hypernym & troponym (in the troponymy) applied to the vocabulary of verb. This is the semantic relationship that our research focuses on understanding and clarifying.

The dictionary also "borrowed" this definition from logic and considered this to be the most common definition method in explanatory dictionaries. With this method, the word being explained will be reduced to a word that represents a concept of the same type but broader, and then its distinct characteristics will be outlined. The word that has that broader concept (in logic, it is strain) is called the word bag. J. Rey Debove defined "In the definition, any word that goes into the minimal predicate segment, after the word system, we will call that word a covering word. It is the minimal natural answer to the question What is an X? The answer lies in the dictionary definition…" [10].

The definition using the word bao has also been given a certain amount of space by author Hoang Thi Tuyen Linh in her thesis. According to the author '"When an analytical definition begins with a word that has the same category but is broader than the defined word with an encompassing concept, the concept of the defined word, then it is a methodological definition. use the superordinate." Also according to Hoang Thi Tuyen Linh, from the perspective of logic, the most important and common relationship between

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concepts is the broader and narrower relationship. And as mentioned above, the common type of concept definition is "definition by species and differences in types".

The generalization model defined by the method of using the hypernym: B: (is) A $\Lambda$ n1, n2…, where A is the defined item, B is the subordinate that includes n1, n2… are the distinguishing features of A, distinguishing A from other word classes that are also included in B."

In our research, the definition using the word bao is simply the application of case relations research in explaining verb terms. Accordingly, if a verb A and a verb B have a relationship with each other, it can be understood that A is a way of expressing B in a certain context x, y, z. The example of sight words in the word definitions in the dictionary below is a demonstration. The presence of the word **going** and first-order words group such as: *walking, runnìng, going on foot, climbing, jumping, trekking…* and second-order groups of words (marathon, cross country, hurdles, long run and running…) are noted, expressed very clearly and unequivocally. In which, *marathon, cross country, hurdles, long run* is the diffirent way to impliment of the **running.** And **going** is the hypernym of the tropomyms such as: *walking, runnìng, going on foot, climbing, jumping, trekking …*

The examples of some verbs in Vietnamese Dictionary make it not difficult for us to notice the dense appearance of the hypernym. In the example above, it is the hypernym **going** in the explanations of the meaning of the group of verbs related to the **going** activity of the foot. The hypernym appears in most of the explanations of the meanings of the verb items listed above and 100% of level 1 words have the appearance of the hypernym in the definitions of glare, yelp, give eye, eye roll, look, listen, look... and appear in the remaining vocabulary such as in level 2 words such as: slyly, look at, look up, tilt, look, beam, admire...

A: *Going is hypernym*
B1: **travel** (v): **go,** move, locomote (change location; move, travel, or proceed, also metaphorically) "We travelled from Rome to Naples by bus"; [8]
B2: **go** (v): (change location; move, travel, or proceed, also metaphorically) "How fast does your new car go?"; "The policemen went from door to door looking for the suspect"; [8]
B3: **move** (v): **go** (change location; move, travel, or proceed, also metaphorically)"The soldiers moved towards the city in an attempt to take it before night fell"; [8]
B5: **depart** (v) **go**, go away, (move away from a place into another direction) "Go away before I start to cry"; "The train departs at noon"[8]
B6: **get** (v) **go** (enter or assume a certain state or condition) "Get going!" [8]
B7: **run** (v) **go**, pass, lead, extend (stretch out over a distance, space, time, or scope; run or extend between two points or beyond a certain point) "Service runs all the way to Cranbury"; [8]

We can see **the shema of the hypernym going and the troponyms** as following:
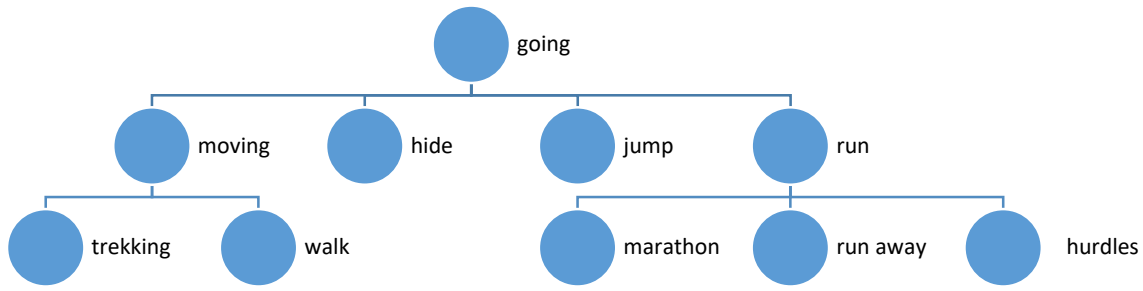


It's easy to recognize that, the hypernym will appear in all definitions of the troponym. About this content, we will analyze in depth in the next section because the definition with the hypernym - is the definition that we are especially interested in in this study.

**DISCUSSION**

During my research, I have two issue, which I would like to make clear:
+ How to give the definition of verb more and more clear to the beginner student;
+ How to make a simple vietnamese dictionary book to the beginner student;
+ How to link the Vietnamese verbs to the word net effectively.

**Implication to Research and Practice:**
As stated above, different dictionaries depending on the author's research direction all use up to 3, 5 or 7, 8 and even have the opinion of using up to 11 components to explain the word's meaning completely. "Method of establishing and structuring synonym chains in compiling Vietnamese thesaurus" is one of Nguyen Duc Ton's [7] works that has written quite clearly on this issue.

In this topic, we only focus on understanding the two components that explain word meaning: the entry and the definition of the word. In the process of giving examples of definitions, our examples are completely collected from Vietnamese Dictionary to initially learn and recognize the appearance of the troponymy in different definitions in the Vietnamese dictionary. At the same time, it is also a clear demonstration and helps to make the presence of the troponymy in word definitions consistent and consistent. Thereby, the relationship between the definitions of the lexical class of verbs indicating **going and seing** activities will be somewhat clarified from the perspective of the troponymy.

As stated above, defining word meanings by analysis is the main way of defining words in Vietnamese Dictionary. Because it is a definition based on the meaning structure of the word and on the results of analyzing meaning elements, the analytical definition will have the form:

**Model: B: A + x, y, z…**
*(In which, A is the hypernym, B is the troponym, x, y, z is the meaning feature)*

Analytical definitions will be widely applied to groups of verbs that have transitions, often with abstract and complex meanings such as: hesitant, leisurely, eloquent... or groups of psychological and emotional verbs such as: sadness, joy, anger, mourning... This is a definition that is difficult to use with current dictionary editing techniques because each word requires a separate analysis and description of the content.

+ *affectionate: express **love** and affection through posture, gestures, and voice. She is caressing (looking at) the baby*
*(**âu yếm:** (mắt) **biểu lộ** tình thương yêu, trìu mến bằng dáng điệu, cử chỉ, giọng nói. Cô ấy đang âu yếm (nhìn) đứa bé [5])*
+ ***disappointment***: *loss of mood and **spirit**, often due to fear or strong psychological shock.*
*(**thất thần**: mất hết cả khí sắc, tinh thần, thường do quá sợ hãi hoặc do có sự chấn động mạnh về mặt tâm lí.) [5]*
+ ***tinker:*** *search meticulously and diligently. I tried for a while and finally managed to do it.*
*(**mày mò**: **dò tìm** một cách tỉ mỉ, cần mẫn. Mày mò mãi rồi cũng làm được) [5]*

The hypernym is bolded in the definition of the troponym, and the troponym are are bolded and italicized in the examples of word definitions. The above examples demonstrate that using analytical definitions of words is not simply a matter of synthesizing meanings together for analysis, but importantly, they must be expressed clearly, easy to understand and natural…

Looking at the analytical definition from the perspective of roponymy, the verbs themselves in the next specific examples below are also evidence of traces of the hypernym in the definitions in dictionary.
+ *squawk: **widen eyes** and look with unusual eyes, expressing anger, dissatisfaction or threat.*
*(**quắc**: **giương to mắt** nhìn với ánh mắt khác thường, biểu thị thái độ giận dữ, bất bình hay đe dọa. [5])*
+ *Sleep: **close your eyes**, pause all physical and sensory activities, muscles relax, respiratory and circulatory activities slow down, the whole body rests.*

(**ngủ**: **nhắm mắt** lại*, tạm dừng mọi hoạt động chân tay và tri giác, bắp thịt dãn mềm, các hoạt động hô hấp, tuần hoàn chậm lại, toàn bộ cơ thể được nghỉ ngơi*) [5]

(***closed****: eyes close both eyelids, as if going to sleep. [5]*

(**nhắm**: mắt **khép kín** hai mi, như đi ngủ.) [5]

*chợp*: nhắm mắt **ngủ** trong thời gian rất ngắn, tựa như vừa mới ngủ đã thức giấc.

*nap: close your eyes to sleep for a very short time, as if you just woke up from sleep.*

        …

*All the complete analytical definitions of verbs in the* Vietnamese Dictionary *that we have collected will be fully cited in the appendix. The analytical definition can be said to a certain extent to use relationships to explain the meaning of words objectively and scientifically.*

**CONCLUSION**

Troponymy means indicating the actual way to impliment the verb, and that is a semantic relation. The Troponymy is not a direct relationship between words, but it is a semantic relationship between verbs, or a relationship of verbs through meaning or belong to the semantics.

In the above verbs, traces of the troponymy have been shown in the analytical definitions, the words that appear in the analytical definitions are capitalized, the the hypernym is written in bold and italics. for easy identification. And therefore, this is also one of the proofs that shows the existence of this relationships in a very natural way.

Defining words using troponym is really not a completely new and difficult task, but if linguists pay attention and do it effectively, this work really becomes meaningfull for language users. To give the simple, effective and explicit word definitions will have the following contributions:

+ Helps people use language more effectively;

+ Helps students understand words correctly, fully and clearly;

+ Helps foreigners easily look up Vietnamese dictionary;

+ Helps translators have the best and most perfect translations…

**Future Research**

I would like to study more about:

+ The other semantic relationship in Vietnamese lexical

+ How to give the simple verbsdefitition to readers…

+ How to make list of Vietnamese verbs based on the troponymy for the beginner students

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