

# The Linguistic Characteristics of Perception Verbs in Conveying Buddhist Teachings

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## **Abstract**

*This study aims to analyze the linguistic characteristics of perception verbs used in conveying Buddhist teachings by using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory and Fillmore's (1982) frame semantics as the theoretical foundation, this study examines the language properties of perception verbs employed in Buddhist teachings. Concrete, corporeal experiences conveyed metaphorically by perception verbs enable the understanding of abstract spiritual notions through conceptual metaphors. Frame semantics highlights how the cultural background and contextual backdrop surrounding Buddhist speech inform the rich semantic meaning of these verbs. Utilizing a qualitative methodology, the study applies content analysis and NVivo 14 software to examine a corpus of 15 Buddhist scriptures, sermons, and teachings. In order to shed light on how perception verb usage contributes to the understanding of complex Buddhist concepts, the goals are to reveal the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings connected to them. The research also examines how culture may have influenced the understanding of these verbs in this religious context. The research, through the integration of theoretical frameworks and meticulous qualitative techniques, provides valuable perspectives on the relationship between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual comprehension as expressed by perception verbs in Buddhist teachings.*

**Keywords:** *Perception Verbs, Buddhist Teachings, Frame Semantics, Qualitative Content Analysis*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Based on age-old wisdom traditions, Buddhist teachings aim to guide individuals towards enlightenment and offer them profound spiritual insights. But communicating these intangible ideas is difficult because they frequently lie outside the purview of everyday human experience. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) posit that the essence of metaphor is experiencing and understanding one kind of thing in terms of another. Buddhist texts and discourses have used a wide range of linguistic strategies, including perception verbs, which draw on our embodied experiences to help us understand esoteric ideas, to close this gap.

The purpose of this research is to clarify the semantic and metaphorical aspects of the perception verbs used in Buddhist teachings by dissecting their language properties. By examining how these verbs convey profound spiritual concepts, the research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual knowledge. Furthermore, Kövecses (2005) adds that metaphors in religious discourse are not just rhetorical devices but reflect deep-seated cognitive processes that shape our understanding of the spiritual realm. This information is important for language and cognition research, as well as for academics and practitioners trying to understand the subtleties of Buddhist teachings.

The application of language techniques and metaphors in religious and spiritual situations has been studied by a number of academics. Cienki (2005) investigated the function of metaphors in Zen Buddhist speech, while Jäkel (1995) studied the metaphorical conception of religious themes in Christian discourse. Discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, conceptual metaphor theory, and other techniques have all been used in these investigations. Yet, Fillmore (1982) says that the meanings of words are not given once and for all, but are continually negotiated in the context of the utterances in which they are used. Given the distinct cultural and contextual variations present in Buddhist speech, this emphasizes the necessity for a more concentrated examination of the precise language properties of perception verbs within Buddhist teachings.

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This work integrates Fillmore's (1982) frame semantics with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory to offer a fresh technique for filling up these gaps. The goal of this theoretical synthesis is to convey the rich cultural and contextual frameworks surrounding the use of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings, as well as the metaphorical mappings that accompany their use. Talmy (2000) points out that perception verbs can serve as linguistic windows into how different cultures conceptualize and represent sensory experiences. The study will use NVivo software and qualitative content analysis on a collection of Buddhist sermons, texts, and teachings to figure out the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings that are linked to these verbs. This will help us understand how they help people understand spiritual things better.

This study's careful use of qualitative methods in conjunction with theoretical frameworks should yield insightful insights into the way that perception verbs in Buddhist teachings relate to language, embodied cognition, and spiritual understanding. The study has the potential to further our understanding of how language shapes and conveys abstract spiritual concepts by revealing the cultural frames and metaphorical mappings surrounding these verbs. This will ultimately enhance our appreciation of the profound wisdom found in Buddhist teachings.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Approaches of Verb Studies**

Language, as a vital instrument for communication and transmission, is essential in transmitting Buddhism's deep teachings and abstract ideas. Perception verbs are one of the linguistic strategies commonly used by Buddhists, enabling them to translate tangible, lived experiences into more abstract spiritual concepts. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory provides a helpful theoretical framework for examining how Buddhists use these perception verbs as metaphors to communicate spiritual awareness.

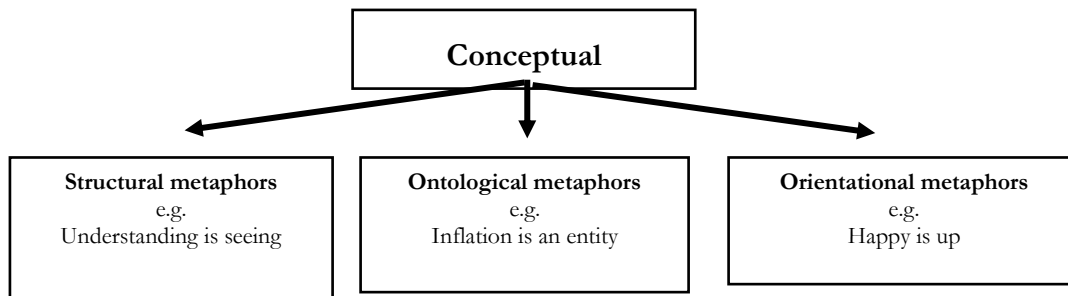
However, the use of perception verbs in Buddhism has a deeper meaning based on the cultural and contextual background of Buddhist discourse, and it goes beyond simple linguistic metaphors. Fillmore's (1982) theory of frame semantics highlights the significance of contextual information and prior knowledge in comprehending word meanings. The particular cultural frames and contextual situations significantly shape the extensive semantic networks surrounding the perception verbs used in Buddhism.

Thus, an integrated approach integrating conceptual metaphor theory and frame semantics is required to fully understand the role of perception verbs in communicating Buddhist teachings. This synthesis will clarify the metaphorical mappings and symbolic elements provided by perception verbs, as well as the impact of Buddhist context and culture on their use. Sharifian (2017: 109) emphasizes that one cannot fully understand the meaning of a word without considering its cultural frame. Furthermore, Yu (2003: 250) states that abstract concepts are often understood and expressed through the intricate interplay of body and culture.

This study will analyze a corpus of Buddhist texts, sermons, and teachings using NVivo software and qualitative research methods to identify the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings related to the use of perception verbs and clarify their function in communicating Buddhist spiritual concepts. The study's conclusions will shed important light on the complex interplay between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual awareness as it appears in Buddhist discourse through perception verbs. In the end, this will improve our understanding of the profound wisdom contained in Buddhist teachings.

### **Conceptual Metaphor Theory**

The conceptual metaphor theory provides a deep insight into the cognitive function of metaphors by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). They posit that metaphors are mental mappings that enable us to comprehend abstract, intangible domains of experience in terms of more concrete, embodied ones; they are not only rhetorical devices. This theory explains how metaphors use familiar bodily experiences and sensory realities to help us understand abstract concepts. The theory identifies three primary types of conceptual metaphors, which can be summarized in the following diagram:



**Figure 1.** Types of conceptual metaphor

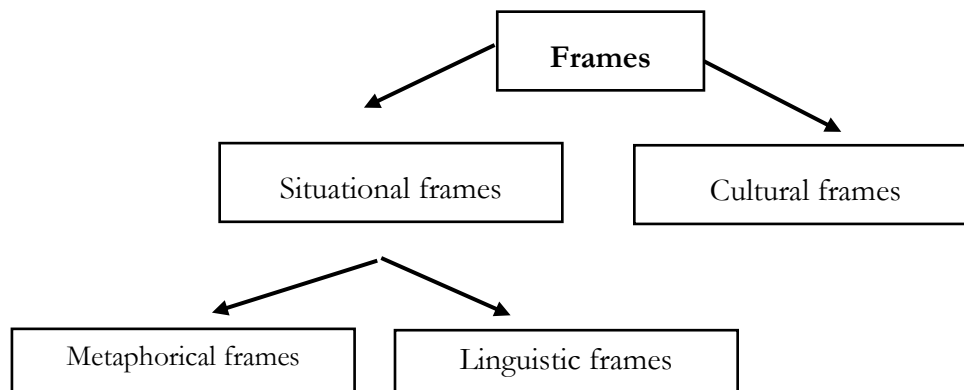
According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), structural metaphors transfer patterns from a more tangible and well-understood conceptual domain—like vision—to a more abstract target domain—like understanding. By considering abstract concepts, states, or experiences as things and substances, ontological metaphors provide a metaphysical foundation (Kövecses, 2010). Orientational metaphor's structure whole conceptual frameworks based on spatial orientations derived from our embodied world (Grady, 1997).

Conceptual metaphor theory provides a helpful framework for analyzing how Buddhist teachings make use of the metaphorical potential of perception verbs. In order to convey incomprehensible spiritual realms, these teachings provide systematic mappings between physical sensory experiences (such as seeing, hearing, and feeling) and abstract religious and philosophical worlds. Hearing the dharma is the way to enlightenment, and seeing the light entails seeing the truth (Mok, 1998). These metaphors let us grasp the incorporeal via embodied reasoning (Yu, 2003).

The inquiry could provide significant insights by elucidating the conceptual correspondences and metaphorical mappings inherent in the use of perception verbs in Buddhist literature. It may clarify how these linguistic parallels translate our tangible, perceptual realities into a way to comprehend Buddhism's transcendent wisdom (Núñez & Sweetser, 2006). The framework provided by conceptual metaphor theory enables us to make sense of the complex relationship that perceptual verbs reveal between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual experience.

### Frame Semantics

Fillmore (1982) created frame semantics, which provides a useful lens to study the complex semantic networks and cultural factors that impact how we interpret these language statements. Researchers can use this framework to figure out the cultural contexts that support the use of perception verbs in Buddhist discourse. This shows how deeply these verbs are rooted in Buddhism's larger cultural setting and ideology (Šarolić, 2022). Furthermore, frame semantics helps to clarify the metaphorical frames suggested by these sensory verbs, since Buddhist teachings frequently use metaphorical language to transform abstract spiritual notions into more concrete, embodied experiences (Sweetser, 1990). Within the realm of frame semantics, various types of frames are identified based on their complexity and the nature of the background knowledge they evoke.



**Figure 2.** Types of frame semantics

In addition, frame semantics makes it possible to examine the linguistic frames that regulate the use of perception verbs in Buddhist texts and sermons, as well as the grammatical constructions and collocations that make use of them. As perception verbs may have several meanings based on the particular context or scenario, such as a meditation session or a Buddhist discourse, it is equally important to examine how the situational frames surrounding their usage shape those meanings (Croft & Cruse, 2004). Researchers may learn more about the complex interrelationships between language, culture, and spiritual awareness by using frame semantics to evaluate perception verbs in Buddhist teachings. This can also shed light on the profound wisdom conveyed through these linguistic expressions.

The importance of frame semantics lies in its emphasis on the dynamic and constant contested nature of word meanings within the context of utterances, as opposed to their fixed nature (Fillmore, 1982). When studying perception verbs in Buddhist discourse, it is crucial to take into account the significant influence of situational and cultural circumstances on the understanding of these verbs. According to Evans (2009), frames are cohesive systems of conceptual knowledge that include both non-linguistic and language components. Therefore, frame semantics may reveal the intricate interweaving of cultural, philosophical, and experiential information in the use of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings.

By combining frame semantics with theoretical frameworks such as conceptual metaphor theory, researchers can decipher the intricate relationship between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual awareness as expressed via the use of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings. This synthesis may help us better understand how language creates and communicates complex philosophical and religious ideas, which will eventually help us appreciate the deep wisdom contained in Buddhist teachings.

## METHODOLOGY

### Data Source

The data source for this research is a wide range of 5 Buddhist texts (BT), 5 Buddhist sermons (BS), and 5 Buddhist Teachings (BTE), which allows for a thorough examination of the linguistic properties of perception verbs in Buddhist teaching communication.

The Buddhist texts (BT1–BT5) include the fundamental Buddhist scriptures and sutras, such as the Dhammapada, Lotus Sutra, Heart Sutra, Diamond Sutra, and Vimalakirti Sutra, which include essential Buddhist teachings and philosophical ideas.

The Buddhist sermons (BS1–BS5) provide modern interpretations of Buddhist teachings and include recorded dharma speeches by well-known Buddhist monks and teachers, such as Tara Brach, Pema Chödrön, Ajahn Chah, Thich Nhat Hanh, and the Dalai Lama.

The Buddhist teachings (BTE1–BTE5) are written works or transcripts from different Buddhist traditions that provide explanations and commentary on Buddhist practices and principles. Examples of these texts are *The Mind Illuminated* by Culadasa, *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching* by Thich Nhat Hanh, and *The Book of Joy* by Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama.

The careful selection of these sources from reputable Buddhist libraries and organizations ensured the validity and dependability of the information in presenting mainstream Buddhist teachings, which are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Data source**

Source type	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3	Source 4	Source 5
Buddhist texts	Dhammapada (BT1)	Lotus Sutra (BT2)	Heart Sutra (BT3)	Diamond Sutra (BT4)	Vimalakirti Sutra (BT5)
Buddhist sermons	Thich Nhat Hanh (BS1)	Dalai Lama (BS2)	Ajahn Chah (BS3)	Pema Chödrön (BS4)	Tara Brach (BS5)
Buddhist teachings	<i>The Mind Illuminated</i> by Culadasa (BTE1)	<i>The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching</i> by Thich Nhat Hanh (BTE2)	<i>The Book of Joy</i> by Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu (BTE3)	<i>The Dhammapada: A New Translation</i> by Gil Fronsdal (BTE4)	<i>The Zen Teaching of Huang Po</i> by John Blofeld (BTE5)

## Research Methods

The study employs two main research methods: qualitative content analysis and the integration of conceptual metaphor theory with frame semantics.

**Qualitative Content Analysis:** This method involves analyzing the corpus of 15 Buddhist texts, sermons, and teachings using NVivo 14 software. The process involves:

**Open Coding:** Finding and classifying every occurrence of the perception verbs touch, smell, taste, hearing, and sight in the text corpus.

**Constructing Semantic Frames:** The construction of the semantic frames around the application of these perceptual verbs is based on Fillmore's frame semantics. This entails examining the grammatical constructs, situational circumstances, cultural frameworks, and collocations connected to these verbs.

**Integrating Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Frame Semantics:** This research integrates Fillmore's frame semantics with Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory to provide a thorough grasp of how perception verbs function in the transmission of Buddhist teachings.

**Identifying Conceptual Metaphor Mappings:** The analysis, based on conceptual metaphor theory, identifies the systematic metaphorical mappings between the embodied sensory domains (source) and the abstract Buddhist spiritual concepts (target) enabled by the perception verbs.

**Analyzing Semantic Frames:** We use frame semantics to analyze the cultural frames and contextual factors that form the vast semantic networks around the Buddhist perception verbs.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Linguistic Frames of Perception Verbs

This section seeks to clarify the grammatical structures, argument structures, and collocations related to the use of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings by analyzing the linguistic frameworks surrounding their use. Moreover, this section is to provide a thorough grasp of the language traits and patterns that influence the meanings and applications of perception verbs in the particular context of communicating spiritual experiences and Buddhist notions. The perception verbs in Vietnamese are categorized into six groups in the following table.

Table 2. Perception verbs in Vietnamese

Senses	Perception verbs in Vietnamese	Perception verbs in English
Sight	Nhìn, Thấy, Ngắm, Quan sát, Dòm	Look, See, Watch, Observe, Peek
Hearing	Nghe, Nghe thấy, Lắng nghe, Nghe ngóng	Hear, Listen, Eavesdrop, Overhear
Smell	Ngửi, Hít, Ngửi thấy	Smell, Sniff, Scent
Taste	Nếm, Thử (ăn thử), Nếm thử	Taste, Try, Sample
Touch	Chạm, Sờ, Xoa, Cảm nhận (bằng tay)	Touch, Feel, Rub, Handle
Internal sensations	Cảm nhận, Cảm thấy, Cảm giác	Sense, Feel, Perceive

Grammatical structures of perception verbs

In Buddhist teachings, perception verb grammatical forms follow specific patterns that help explain deep spiritual ideas. The analysis uncovers three main grammatical structures.

Table 3. Grammatical structures of perception verbs

Structure Type	Example	Function
Simple Clause	Tôi <b>Nghe thấy</b> tiếng chuông. (BTE1) <i>I hear the sound of the bell.</i>	Direct perception of sensory input
Complex Clause	Chúng con <b>nhìn thấy</b> chân lý vượt khỏi màn vô minh. (BT3) <i>We see the truth that lies beyond the veil of illusion.</i>	Metaphorical perception of abstract spiritual insights
Imperative Form	Hãy <b>lắng nghe</b> chánh pháp với tâm thức rộng mở. (BS2) <i>Listen to the dharma with an open heart.</i>	Exhortation to engage in spiritual perception and awareness

### Simple clause structure

#### [Subject] [Perception Verb] [Direct Object]

This structure directly expresses sensory perception, reflecting the embodied nature of human experience. Its simplicity allows for a straightforward representation of physical phenomena, grounding Buddhist teachings in tangible reality. Consider the following example:

(1) Nhà sư nhìn thấy bình minh. (BT4)

*The monk sees the sunrise.*

### Complex Clause Structure

#### [Subject] [Perception Verb] [Abstract Concept] [Relative Clause/Prepositional Phrase]

This structure allows the metaphorical expansion of sensory experiences to include deep spiritual truths by fusing perceptual verbs with abstract notions. The prepositional phrases and relative clauses give more context and improve the metaphorical mapping.

Hành giả nhìn thấy vô thường chi phối muôn loài. (BTE5)

*The practitioner sees the impermanence that pervades all existence.*

### Imperative Form

#### [Imperative Verb] [Perception Verb] [Object]

The urgent form emphasizes the value of careful observation and attention in Buddhist teachings by urging the listener to actively participate in perceptual practices. It promotes conscious awareness of spiritual concepts through embodied experience.

Quan sát tâm thức của bạn với lòng vô phân biệt. (BS4)

*Observe your thoughts with non-judgmental awareness.*

Buddhist speech uses perception verbs in a variety of contexts, ranging from literal sensory descriptions to metaphorical statements of abstract ideas, as demonstrated by these grammatical constructions. The complex sentence makes it easier to metaphorically map spiritual discoveries onto well-known sensory areas, while the simple clause emphasizes the fundamental importance of embodied experience. The imperative form draws the listener in and emphasizes how crucial focused observation is to spiritual growth.

Interestingly, these structures follow the rules of frame semantics because they elicit certain situational and cultural frames that influence how Buddhist settings understand perception verbs. The complex sentence activates frames of spiritual metaphor and symbolic understanding, whereas the simple clause evokes frames of daily sensory experience. The imperative form draws on bodily awareness and meditation practice frameworks.

Through an examination of these grammatical patterns, the study sheds light on the complex relationship that perception verbs in Buddhist teachings promote between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual insight. The structures serve as language bridges between the material and immaterial worlds, facilitating the communication of deep knowledge through the lens of everyday sensory experiences.

### Argument Structures of Perception Verbs

Buddhist teachings use perception verbs in their argument structures to express varying degrees of sensory experience and metaphorical abstraction. These language frameworks provide a concrete, lived reality for abstract spiritual conceptions. An argument structure is the syntactic arrangement of a verb and its arguments, including subjects, objects, and oblique arguments. These structures govern the expression of sensory experiences and their associated elements within the context of perception verbs. They can be as basic as structures signifying direct perception or as intricate as

metaphorical mappings that project corporeal experiences onto abstract spiritual worlds. By using the cognitive link between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual knowledge, these argument structures aim to make Buddhist teachings easier to grasp. They facilitate the lessons' resonance with the audience's life experiences by providing recognizable sensory frameworks that make abstract ideas more approachable. By methodically examining these argument structures, the research intends to disentangle the complex ways perception verbs contribute to the transmission of Buddhist wisdom. This will provide insights into how language molds and transmits important philosophical and religious concepts.

The study identifies three main argument structures for perception verbs in Buddhist teachings, each serving a unique function in communication. These systems highlight the metaphorical and embodied aspects of perception, enabling the expression of spiritual ideas through tangible sensory experiences.

**Table 4. Argument structures of perception verbs**

Argument structures	Examples	Functions
V[Subject]	Đệ tử thiền quán <b>nghe</b> pháp âm vọng. (BS3) <i>The meditating disciple hears the dharma resounding.</i>	Direct sensory experience without an expressed object
V[Subject, Object]	Đức Phật <b>nhìn thấy</b> khổ đau của chúng sinh. (BT1) <i>The Buddha sees the suffering of sentient beings.</i>	Perception of a concrete object or phenomenon
V[Subject, Concept]	Tu sĩ <b>nếm</b> tràm tịnh lạc của giác ngộ. (BTE2) <i>The practitioner tastes the blissful peace of enlightenment</i>	Metaphorical mapping of perception onto abstract concepts

### V[Subject]

Without specifying an object, the intransitive form conveys a direct sensory experience. This structure illustrates the sheer act of seeing without identifying the seen thing, therefore grounding the teachings in embodied awareness. For example:

Thiền giả **lắng nghe**.

(BT5)

The meditator listens.

The removal of the object, a key component of Buddhist practice, directs the audience's attention to the subjective experience of perception itself, encouraging them to connect with their own sensory awareness and live in the present.

### V[Subject, Object]

The transitive structure grounds the lessons in actual reality by requiring the observation of a concrete item or experience. By establishing a connection between spiritual notions and everyday sensory experiences, this structure makes them easier to understand. Take a look at this example:

Đạo sư **ngửi** hương thiền của hoa sen.

(BS1)

*The teacher smells the meditative fragrance of the lotus flower.*

In this example, the tangible sensory experience of inhaling a flower's aroma can help understand the more abstract concept of meditation. Deep spiritual lessons become more approachable with this format because it connects abstract concepts to lived sensations.

### V[Subject, Concept]

In Buddhist teachings, the metaphorical structure represents the highest form of perceiving verb usage. Through the process of mapping sensory experiences onto abstract spiritual conceptions, embodied cognition makes it possible to comprehend ethereal truths. This structure figuratively conveys the depths of Buddhist insight by drawing on our bodily experiences. As an illustration:

Thiền sinh **nhìn thấy** vô ngã trong ánh trăng lặn.

(BTE4)

*The meditator sees the truth of non-self in the stillness of the moon.*

This structure figuratively expands perception to encompass the understanding of the profound Buddhist concept of non-self, or anatta. These metaphorical constructions aid in a greater comprehension of intricate spiritual teachings by equating abstract concepts with relatable sensory experiences.

Buddhism's argument structures for perception verbs show a development from direct sensory experience to metaphorical abstraction, which is consistent with the teachings' goal of assisting people in moving from grounded embodiment to transcendent awareness. These structures use conceptual metaphor and embodied cognition from cognitive linguistics to make it easier to communicate abstract ideas through sensory frameworks that people can relate to. Perception verbs, which methodically project the material onto the immaterial, become potent means of communicating the depth of Buddhist knowledge.

### Perception Verb Collocations

Within the context of Buddhist teachings, collocations play a crucial role in shaping the meanings and subtleties of perception verbs. Collocations refer to the frequent co-occurrence of words with other words, forming semi-fixed combinations that carry specific semantic and pragmatic functions. Perception verb collocations not only provide linguistic richness in Buddhist discourse, but also valuable insights into the cultural and spiritual frameworks underlying these teachings.

The study identifies three main types of perception verb collocations in Buddhist teachings, each serving a distinct purpose and contributing to the overall understanding of these abstract concepts. The following table summarizes these collocations.

**Table 5. Types of perception verb collocations in buddhist teachings**

Collocation type	Examples	Function
Verb + Noun	<b>Nhìn thấy</b> chân lý (BT2) <i>To see the truth</i>	Metaphorical mapping of perceptual experience onto spiritual concepts
Verb + Adverb	<b>Lắng nghe</b> kỹ lưỡng (BS4) <i>To listen carefully</i>	Emphasizing the quality or manner of perception
Verb + Prepositional Phrase	<b>Ngửi</b> hương đạo (BTE3) <i>To smell the fragrance of the Way</i>	Providing contextual and cultural frames for perception

### Verb + Noun collocations

This type of collocation combines a verb of perception with a noun, often indicating an impersonal spiritual idea. The word combination helps us understand difficult Buddhist teachings better by connecting our sense experiences to these ideas in a symbolic way. As an illustration:

Chúng con **nhìn thấy** ánh đạo soi tỏ con đường giải thoát. (BT1) *We see the light of the Way illuminating the path to liberation.*

In this example, the phrase *nhìn thấy ánh đạo* (to see the light of the way) figuratively links sight to understanding spiritual enlightenment, making the abstract concept more approachable via the comfortable visual experience.

### Verb + Adverb Collocations

These collocations, which combine an adverb with a perception verb, often describe the attribute or mode of the perceptual experience. These collocations, which are consistent with the concepts of present-moment awareness and non-judgmental observation, highlight the significance of attentive and mindful perception in Buddhist teachings. As an illustration:

Hãy **nghe** chánh niệm tiếng gió thoảng qua. (BS2)

*Listen mindfully to the passing breeze.*

The phrase *nghe chánh niệm* (to listen attentively) emphasizes the importance of listening with attention, which is a fundamental practice in Buddhist teachings on cultivating inner calm and present-moment awareness.



## Verb + Prepositional Phrase Collocations

These collocations, which combine a perception verb with a prepositional word, often provide cultural and contextual frameworks for the perceptual experience. According to Buddhist teachings, these collocations place the act of perception within the rich symbolic and metaphorical landscape of Buddhist practice and philosophy. As an illustration:

Thiền sinh **ngửi** hương của tự tánh thanh tịnh. (BTE5)

*The meditator smells the fragrance of the pure, inherent nature.*

Within the Buddhist concept of inherent purity or Buddha-nature, the collocation *ngửi hương của tự tánh thanh tịnh* (to smell the fragrance of the pure, inherent nature) places the act of smelling, evoking a rich cultural and symbolic framework for understanding this perceptual experience.

Buddhist teachings use these perception verb collocations for a variety of purposes, such as metaphorical mapping, highlighting the aspect of perception, and offering cultural and contextual frameworks. By equating abstract spiritual notions with recognizable sensory experiences and referencing the embodied aspect of human cognition, they advance our understanding of these concepts in their entirety. Furthermore, these collocations adhere to the principles of frame semantics, as they suggest specific situational, cultural, and metaphorical frameworks that shape the interpretation and comprehension of perception verbs within the framework of Buddhist teachings. By illuminating the complex interactions among language, embodied cognition, and spiritual consciousness, the research contributes to our understanding of the deep wisdom encapsulated in Buddhist teachings through the analysis of these collocations.

## Metaphorical Frames of Perceptions Verbs

This section aims to shed light on the systematic metaphorical mappings between concrete sensory experiences and abstract spiritual notions by analyzing the metaphorical frames that perception verbs elicit within Buddhist teachings. In addition, this section looks at the ontological, structural, and orientational metaphors related to perception verbs in order to explain how conceptual metaphor theory and embodied cognition work together to make deep Buddhist insight easier to understand.

Table 6. Metaphorical frames of perception verbs

Metaphorical frames	Buddhist texts	Buddhist sermons	Buddhist teachings
Structural metaphors	see, look, observe, watch, gaze	listen, hear, heed, attend	see, observe, contemplate, behold
Ontological metaphors	hear, listen, eavesdrop, overhear	smell, sniff, scent, inhale	taste, sample, savor, relish
Oriental metaphors	view, witness, perceive, discern	see, observe, notice, glimpse	listen, hear, hearken, lend an ear

## Structural Metaphors of Perception Verbs

One of the main metaphorical frames that result from the use of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings is the structural metaphor. By systematically mapping tangible sensory experiences to abstract spiritual conceptions, these metaphors help us make sense of complicated religious concepts by putting them through the lens of embodied cognition. Buddhist teachings frequently use structural metaphors and perception verbs to relate the process of gaining enlightenment and spiritual understanding to our physical senses. They create correspondences between realms such as perception and cognition, perception and knowledge, or taste and truth-experience. By using these metaphorical mappings, deep Buddhist ideas may be expressed through everyday sensory experiences. Some examples of structural metaphors involving perception verbs in Buddhist teachings include:

Đức Phật đã **nhìn thấy** bốn sự thật cao quý. (BT1)

*The Buddha saw the four noble truths.*

The process of discovering the four noble truths—basic Buddhist teachings regarding the nature of suffering and the way to liberation—is figuratively mapped onto the verb *nhìn thấy* in this example.

Hãy **lắng nghe** tiếng pháp từ ân sư. (BS4)

*Listen to the voice of the dharma from your teacher.*

In this instance, the process of receiving and understanding the Buddhist teachings, or dharma, from a spiritual guide is structurally mapped onto the act of *lắng nghe* (listening).

Thiền giả **nếm** trạch an lạc của niết bàn.

(BTE2)

*The meditator tastes the peace of nirvana.*

In this instance, the highest spiritual goal in Buddhism, nirvana, is figuratively mapped onto the experience of realizing or acquiring the word *nếm* (to taste).

Buddhist teachings use these structural analogies for a variety of important purposes. First of all, by connecting abstract spiritual ideas to concrete, tangible sensory experiences, they help people grasp and relate to them better. Secondly, they highlight the embodied nature of spiritual experience, emphasizing that enlightenment necessitates a substantial change in perspective and lifestyle, not merely an academic endeavor. Moreover, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory is consistent with these structural metaphors. They illustrate how humans make sense of abstract domains via bodily experiences and how our conceptual framework is intrinsically metaphorical. These analogies show how our comprehension of Buddhist teachings is shaped by underlying cognitive processes, as they project sensory experiences onto spiritual realms.

Buddhism's use of perception verbs in structural metaphors demonstrates a high level of coherence and systematicity. They are part of a larger metaphorical framework that continuously presents enlightenment and spiritual development as a voyage of sensory exploration and metamorphosis. This metaphorical consistency reinforces the lessons' meaning, enhancing their rhetorical impact and memorability.

In conclusion, examining the structural metaphors in Buddhist teachings that include perceptual verbs offers important new perspectives on the intricate relationship that exists between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual awareness. These metaphors emphasize the embodied character of spiritual awareness while also making deep Buddhist truths more approachable and understandable by methodically projecting sensory experiences onto abstract abstractions. By examining these metaphors, we may gain a deeper understanding of the profound wisdom inherent in Buddhist teachings, as well as the cognitive mechanisms that influence how we understand philosophical and religious ideas.

### **Ontological Metaphors of Perception Verbs**

Another important metaphorical framework in Buddhist teachings is that of ontological metaphors utilizing perception verbs. By enabling the understanding of abstract spiritual concepts as material objects or things, these metaphors anchor ethereal ideas in the domain of embodied experience. Using ontological metaphors, which map our sensory experiences of the material world onto the realm of spiritual knowledge, makes difficult Buddhist concepts easier to grasp.

Ontological comparisons with regard to perception verbs frequently interpret abstract spiritual ideas as concrete things that are visible to the senses. For example:

Thiền giả **ngửi** hương an tịnh của vô ngã.

(BTE5)

*The meditator smells the fragrance of the peaceful non-self.*

This example figuratively interprets the fundamental Buddhist idea of non-self (anatta) as a scent that is detectable with the sense of smell. A familiar sensory experience serves as the metaphor's foundation, making the abstract idea easier to comprehend and making the lesson more approachable.

Hãy **nếm** trạch tịnh lạc của giác ngộ.

(BS1)

*Taste the blissful peace of enlightenment.*

The depiction of enlightenment, the pinnacle of Buddhist spirituality, as a consumable substance provides viewers with a tangible method to comprehend this lofty concept through taste.

In Buddhist teachings, these ontological metaphors fulfill a number of significant purposes. First of all, they ground abstract spiritual ideas in the domain of actual, embodied experience, which helps people relate to and understand them better. Second, they emphasize that spiritual development is not only an academic endeavor but rather a lived,

experienced process that radically alters one's perspective and interaction with the outside world. Furthermore, these metaphors support the conceptual metaphor theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). This theory suggests that we often comprehend abstract ideas through metaphorical mappings from tangible, embodied realms. Ontological metaphors employing perception verbs, which conceptualize spiritual concepts as material objects that the senses may experience, expose the cognitive processes that underlie our comprehension of Buddhist teachings.

Furthermore, these metaphors adhere to the principles of frame semantics by evoking specific cultural and experiential frameworks that shape the understanding of perception verbs in Buddhist contexts. For example, the phrase "smell the fragrance of mindfulness conjures up images associated with practicing mindfulness and meditation, which are fundamental to Buddhist teachings.

In conclusion, the examination of ontological metaphors utilizing perception verbs in Buddhist teachings can provide insight into the complex relationships between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual awareness. These metaphors emphasize the embodied character of spiritual development and the cognitive processes that underpin our grasp of Buddhist wisdom, in addition to making abstract ideas easier to comprehend by tying them to sensory experience.

### **Oriental Metaphors of Perception Verbs**

Another important metaphorical framework found in Buddhist teachings are orientational metaphors, which use perception verbs. These metaphors help us understand abstract spiritual notions by drawing on the bodily sense of geographical orientation and direction. These metaphors help us make sense of complicated Buddhist concepts by projecting the goal realm of spiritual awareness onto the source domain of physical orientation using our natural capacity for spatial reasoning. In Buddhist teachings, one prominent orientational metaphor is the UP-DOWN metaphor, which equates spiritual enlightenment and understanding with an upward orientation. For instance:

Hãy **nhìn lên** con đường giải thoát.

**(BT2)**

*Look up towards the path of liberation.*

This illustration symbolically translates the idea of achieving enlightenment or emancipation on a spiritual level into the physical orientation of facing upward. The upward direction is a primary objective of Buddhist thinking, representing the elevation of awareness and the transcending of earthly attachments.

Another common orientational metaphor involves the FRONT-BACK orientation, where spiritual progress and understanding are associated with a forward movement or direction. Consider the following example:

Đức Phật **nhìn thấy** trước con đường dẫn đến giác ngộ.

**(BTE3)**

*The Buddha saw ahead the path leading to enlightenment.*

In this case, the ability to see into the future is figuratively associated with the Buddha's perception and understanding of the path leading to enlightenment. Through our embodied experience of vision and spatial awareness, the perception verb *nhìn thấy* helps us understand this abstract concept. The forward orientation symbolizes movement and advancement on the Buddhist path.

Buddhist teachings employ these orientational metaphors for a variety of very important purposes. First of all, they provide abstract spiritual ideas with a grounded, bodily experience, which helps practitioners and listeners understand and relate to them better. Second, they show spiritual development as a process or journey rather than a static condition, emphasizing its dynamic and transformational nature. Furthermore, these metaphors fit with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which says that metaphorical mappings from real, embodied realms have a big effect on how we understand abstract ideas.

In addition, these orientational metaphors follow the rules of frame semantics because they use specific cultural and experiential frames that shape how Buddhists understand perception verbs. For example, the upward orientation of the "look up" metaphor evokes a rich cultural framework surrounding the concept of enlightenment and is consistent with the Buddhist idea of spiritual ascension and transcendence.

To sum up, looking at orientational metaphors that use perception verbs in Buddhist teachings can help us understand how language, embodied cognition, and spiritual consciousness all work together in complex ways. These analogies

emphasize the changing and dynamic aspect of spiritual development, while also making use of our natural capacity for spatial reasoning to understand abstract spiritual topics. Through an analysis of these metaphors, we are able to understand both the cognitive processes that underpin our knowledge of philosophical and religious concepts, as well as the profound wisdom contained in Buddhist teachings.

### **Cultural Frames of Perception Verbs**

This section looks at how Buddhist teachings' cultural contexts and worldviews affect how people comprehend and use perception verbs. In order to shed light on how the Buddhist worldview, meditation techniques, and ideas like karma and rebirth affect the semantic interpretations of perceptual verbs within this religious tradition, this section will examine the complex cultural frameworks around these verbs.

### **Buddhist Worldview of Perception Verbs**

A study of these verbs reveals that the Buddhist worldview influences the use and interpretation of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings. The Buddhist worldview includes a distinctive viewpoint on the nature of sensory experiences, emphasizing their connection to spiritual consciousness and the path to enlightenment. This section aims to elucidate the fundamental principles of the Buddhist worldview that shape our understanding of perception verbs within this specific religious context. The study identifies three main Buddhist perspectives that inform the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings surrounding perception verbs.

### **Interdependence of Phenomena**

Buddhism challenges the idea of an eternal, independent self by emphasizing the interdependence of all occurrences. This viewpoint emphasizes the relationship between perception verbs and awareness, outside stimuli, and other elements that influence our comprehension of them. Take a look at this example:

**Mắt và sắc pháp nảy sinh và đoạn diệt cùng nhau; tai và thanh pháp nảy sinh và đoạn diệt cùng nhau.** (BT3)

*The eye and forms arise and cease together; the ear and sounds arise and cease together.*

The perception verbs arise and cease in this passage refute the notion of a permanent, separate person or entity experiencing these sensations, illustrating the interconnected nature of sensory experiences (eye and forms, ear and sounds).

### **Mindfulness and Present-Moment Awareness**

Buddhism strongly emphasizes the development of present-moment awareness and mindfulness, considering these skills essential for enlightenment and spiritual growth. This perspective shapes our understanding of perception verbs by linking them to the practices of nonjudgmental awareness and mindful observation. For example:

**Quan sát hơi thở một cách chánh niệm, không phán xét.** (BS5)

*Observe the breath mindfully, without judgement.*

This instance of mindfulness practice uses the perception verb observe to encourage the practitioner to be mindful of the present moment and to observe their body sensations without passing judgement.

### **Impermanence and Non-Attachment**

Understanding impermanence (anicca) and the importance of developing non-attachment are critical to Buddhist philosophy. This perspective underscores the transient nature of sensory encounters and encourages disconnection from them, thereby shaping our understanding of perception verbs. Consider the following example:

**Như một ảo ảnh trong sa mạc, tất cả những trải nghiệm giác quan đều là phù du.** (BT1)

*Like a mirage in the desert, all sensory experiences are transient.*

In order to emphasize the transient and deceptive character of sensory perceptions, the quote uses the idea of a mirage as a metaphor. This encourages the practitioner to develop serenity instead of holding onto these feelings.

The Buddhist worldview significantly shapes the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings. Rich cultural and philosophical backgrounds that emphasize the interconnection of occurrences, the value of mindfulness and present-moment awareness, and the transience of sensory impressions inform the meaning and interpretation of these verbs. Furthermore, this analysis aligns with the principles of frame semantics, demonstrating how the unique cultural and experiential frameworks of Buddhist philosophy shape the usage and comprehension of perception verbs within this specific context. For example, the mindfulness viewpoint generates frames of present-moment awareness and non-judgmental observation, whereas the interdependence perspective invokes frames of interconnection and non-self.

This study clarifies the intricate relationship between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual consciousness in Buddhist teachings by looking at how the Buddhist worldview affects perception verbs. It illustrates how language is firmly anchored in philosophical and cultural frameworks, and how these frameworks influence how we interpret spiritual ideas that are abstracted and seen through the prism of sensory perception and perceptual verbs.

### **Meditative Practices of Perception Verbs**

This section looks at how Buddhist meditation practices influence how people comprehend and use perception verbs. Buddhist meditation practices strongly emphasize the development of an attentive awareness of one's sensory experiences, which significantly influences the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings associated with these verbs. According to the research, three primary facets of meditation practice inform the language framing of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings.

#### **Mindfulness of Sensory Perception**

A fundamental principle of Buddhist meditation is cultivating an attentive awareness of all senses—sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. This technique helps to alter the understanding of perception verbs by grounding them in the immediate, present-tense experience of the senses. As an illustration:

Thiền giả **quan sát** hơi thở ra vào một cách chánh niệm. **(BT4)**

*The meditator mindfully observes the in-and-out breath.*

In this illustration, the perception verb *quan sát* (to observe) is used to help the practitioner focus on the embodied experience of breathing, which is an important part of developing a non-judgmental awareness that is necessary for meditation.

#### **Non-duality of Subject and Object**

A further focus of Buddhist meditation is realizing the interconnectedness of the perceiving subject and the observed object, and moving beyond the strict dualism between them. This point of view blurs the lines between the internal and external worlds, thereby shaping the semantic frame of perception verbs. Consider this scenario:

Trong thiền, không còn ranh giới giữa **nghe** và âm thanh. **(BS3)**

*In meditation, there is no separation between hearing and sound.*

In this sentence, the verb *nghe* (to hear) not only as a sensory receptor but also as an integrated experience where the perceived and the perceiver merge into a single field of consciousness.

#### **Sensory Deprivation and Concentration**

In order to reach higher levels of consciousness, certain Buddhist meditation techniques call for brief periods of sensory deprivation or intense focus on a single perception. This method has a significant influence on the semantic frames and metaphorical mapping of perceptual verbs because it enables the verbs to function as portals to experiences beyond the ordinary. For example:

Thiền giả **thấy** ánh sáng tịnh giác trong tâm thức. **(BTE2)**

*The meditator sees the light of pure awareness in their consciousness.*

In this instance, the word *thấy* (to see) is used in a metaphorical sense to describe the meditator's experience of a higher state of consciousness in which awareness goes beyond the senses and transforms into an intuitive understanding of the essence of reality.

These features of Buddhist meditation practice shape the cultural and experiential frameworks that govern the understanding of perception verbs within this religious tradition. Concepts of transcendence, non-duality, and awareness inform the extensive semantic networks and metaphorical mappings around these verbs, aligning with the principles of framework semantics.

For example, the idea of non-duality invokes frames of interconnection and the collapse of subject-object barriers, whereas the practice of mindfulness provides frames of present-moment awareness and non-judgmental observation. Furthermore, the disciplines of focus and sensory deprivation provide frameworks for transcendental experience and elevated spiritual vision.

This study sheds light on the complex relationship that exists in Buddhist theory between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual consciousness by investigating the ways in which meditation practices impact the linguistic construction of observation verbs. The study demonstrates the intricate intertwining of language with cultural and experiential settings, and how these settings shape the articulation and comprehension of abstract spiritual ideas through the use of perceptual verbs and sensory perception.

### **Karma and Rebirth of Perception Verbs**

Within the context of Buddhist teachings, the ideas of karma and rebirth play a major role in shaping the cultural frameworks and semantic interpretations of perceptual verbs. These core Buddhist concepts influence the grammatical framing and metaphorical mappings of sense verbs, providing a unique perspective on the nature of sensory experiences and their role in the life cycle. The study identifies three main facets of the Buddhist conception of karma and rebirth that influence the semantic and metaphorical structure of perception verbs.

### **The Cyclical Nature of Sensory Experience**

The Buddhist teachings hold that our attachment to sensory experiences and the karmic repercussions they cause are what keep us stuck in the cycle of birth, death, and reincarnation, or *samsara*. According to this perspective, perception is a cyclical process that shapes the verbs used to describe it linguistically to represent how fleeting and transient sensory experiences are. As an illustration:

Tham đắm **nghe** tiếng vọng hư ảo sẽ dẫn đến khổ đau trong vòng luân hồi. (BT5)

*Craving to hear the illusive echoes will lead to suffering in the cycle of rebirth.*

This example highlights the karmic implications of attachment to auditory stimuli and the consequent continuation of the cycle of rebirth (*luân hồi*) by placing the verb *nghe* (to hear) within the context of the cyclical nature of life.

### **The Purification of Sensory Perception**

Buddhist teachings place a strong emphasis on the necessity of cleansing one's sensory impressions in order to break free from the cycle of reincarnation. This perspective shapes perception verbs, presenting them as doors leading to a more elevated consciousness and a condition of nonattachment. For example:

Thiền giả **thấy** vạn pháp trong ánh sáng thanh tịnh. (BTE1)

*The meditator sees all phenomena in the light of pure awareness.*

To symbolize the meditator's achievement of a pure state of vision, in which all things are experienced through the lens of pure awareness, free from the distortions of attachment and illusion, the word *thấy* (to see) is employed figuratively in this example.

### **The Karmic Implications of Sensory Perception**

Buddhism places a strong emphasis on the idea that our mental responses to our sense experiences have deep karmic ramifications that affect our future experiences and the nature of our rebirth. This viewpoint shapes the metaphorical mappings and semantic frames of perception verbs, portraying them as agents of spiritual advancement or regression. As an illustration:

Khi **nếm** vị đắng của sân hận, chúng sinh sẽ bị tái sinh trong cảnh khổ. (BS4)

*When tasting the bitterness of hatred, sentient beings will be reborn in realms of suffering.*

In this instance, the verb *nếm* (to taste) is used metaphorically to represent the experience of hatred, which, according to Buddhist teachings, has negative karmic consequences and can lead to rebirth in unfavorable realms of existence.

In Buddhist teachings, the cultural frames surrounding karma and rebirth significantly influence the semantic and metaphorical construction of perception verbs. These principles provide a unique perspective on the nature of sensory experiences, presenting them as cyclical processes with profound implications for spiritual progress and the cycle of existence. In addition, these cultural frames are in line with frame semantics because they bring up specific experiential and conceptual frameworks that help Buddhists understand and interpret perception verbs. For example, the cyclical nature of sensory experience invokes frames of impermanence and the perpetuation of suffering, while the purification of perception evokes frames of liberation and transcendence.

By investigating the influence of karma and rebirth on the linguistic framing of perception verbs, this study sheds light on the intricate relationship between language, embodied cognition, and spiritual awareness in Buddhist teachings. Through the lens of sensory perception and perceptual verbs, it reveals how cultural and philosophical frameworks profoundly shape the way language expresses and comprehends abstract spiritual concepts.

## CONCLUSION

The study analyzed the linguistic characteristics of perception verbs used in conveying Buddhist teachings using Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory and Fillmore's frame semantics. It examined a corpus of 20 Buddhist scriptures, sermons, and teachings to uncover the semantic frames and metaphorical mappings associated with these verbs. The findings revealed that perception verbs in Buddhist teachings exhibit distinct linguistic patterns and frames that contribute to understanding complex spiritual concepts. The study identified three main grammatical structures (simple clause, complex clause, and imperative form) that facilitate the metaphorical mapping of sensory experiences onto abstract notions. It also looked at the types of argument structures (intransitive, transitive, and metaphorical) that support spiritual ideas in embodied cognition, as well as the collocations (verb + noun, verb + adverb, verb + prepositional phrase) that give meaning a cultural and contextual background.

The research also explored the metaphorical frames associated with perception verbs, including structural metaphors that map sensory experiences onto spiritual realms, ontological metaphors that conceptualize abstract concepts as tangible objects, and orientational metaphors that draw on spatial orientations to represent spiritual progress. The study also explored the cultural frames that shape the understanding of perception verbs in Buddhist teachings, such as the Buddhist worldview emphasizing interconnectedness, mindfulness, impermanence, meditative practices of sensory awareness and non-duality, and the concepts of karma and rebirth.

However, the study has limitations, as it focused solely on a specific corpus of Buddhist texts, sermons, and teachings. Future research could expand the scope by examining perception verbs in other religious or spiritual traditions, incorporating experimental or neurocognitive methods, and integrating other theoretical frameworks like cognitive linguistics or embodied cognition theories.

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