A corpus analysis of Mouse-Cat conceptual metaphors in the Persian books of "Mouse and Cat"

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Abstract

Metaphorical language has been a significant component of human language, including language, idea, and performance (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1998) [1]. This study looks for responses related to the diffusion of mouse-cat terms in Persian books of "Mouse and Cat" by Obaid Zakani and Sheikh Bahai and their metaphoric reaction in peoples' opinions, thoughts, or values. By investigating the pertinent books, a corpus of 239 mouse-cat terms in content were considered for the analysis. Five assessors who studied literature of Persian analyzed carefully the books for the assessment of the mouse-cat metaphoric conceptualizations. To validate the raters' propositions, a focus group of twenty interpreted the counselled connotations. Findings showed that mouse and cat are not analogously distributed in the aforementioned Persian books, are used with diverse conceptions and stood for both positive and negative connotations. Since conceptual metaphors are essential feature of the authors' and speakers' ordinary lives to represent information, language users are proposed to obtain needed awareness of these expressions in diverse spheres.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphor; mouse-cat terms; users' thoughts

1. Introduction

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) were the pioneers of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). They extended a theoretical frame that recognized how the source and target domains have been connected to the metaphors. Hence, their results made a diversity in the comprehension of how to function on the process of specifying linguistic expressions. According to Goalty (1997), metaphoricity has been the basic attribute of all human languages [2]. In real, a language or any form of language, without metaphorical features is extinct. It is not limited to language. It includes all manners of human's daily life including language, idea and action. On the Basis of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, metaphor is perceived as a conceptual mapping of concrete knowledge onto abstract knowledge (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999) [3]. Therefore, the metaphor system is focal to one's understanding of experience and to the path s/he works on that realization. Cognitive linguistics has assumed language as a suitable conductor to figure out the meaning and form of our conceptual system (see, e.g., Langacker, 1987; Lakoff, 1987, as cited in Koveceses, 2015) [4, 5, 6]. In cognitive linguistics, metaphoric expression alludes to the comprehension of an abstract concept, called the target domain, in terms of a concrete concept of which one can have real intuitive experience, namely the source domain. This underlying dependency between the two domains is sustained to be systematic in both language and idea (Babarczy, Bencze, Fekete, & Simon 2010) [7, 8]. As stated by Lakoff (1993), metaphoric expression is held forth as a unidirectional scheme across cognitive spheres (Lakoff, 1993) [9]. Also, "the way of scheming from the source to the target domain in metaphors derives from the conceptual relationships between its members"(Porat & Shen, 2017) [10]. Animal metaphors is one of the remarkable issues inquires by many researchers with concern in the field of cognitive semantics. To illustrate, Talebinejad and Dastjerdi (2005) have examined animal metaphors in English and Persian [11]. They investigated the meanings of 44 animal metaphors in these two