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THE STUDY OF SYSTEMATIC POLYSEMY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF COGNITIVE SEMANTICS IN PERSIAN LANGUAGE.
ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTION VERB SHENIDAN 'HEAR'.

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ABSTRACT

In systematic polysemy, cognitive explorations are the basis for the existing of different senses for terms and therefore it is analyzed through interlanguage and historical evidences. Body part terms and perception verbs are among the most important word groups related to cognitive semantics in the field of systematic polysemy. In the present study, after introducing the systematic polysemy in cognitive approach in contrast with the polysemy in constructive approach, the related literature will be reviewed. Then, the polysemy of the perception verb (Shenidan) 'hear' in Persian language will be analyzed according to Antunano and Sweetner's model. Moreover, another goal of the present study is to find senses which are not included in the available dictionaries in order to list them as additional meanings to be added in dictionaries in future.

KEYWORDS: *cognitive semantics, systematic polysemy, perception verb, hearing.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Polysemy is a situation in which a word has different related meanings. This definition doesn't seem to be so complicated but there are no known boundaries for polysemy and it is always ambiguous (Antunano 1999:14). Among the various conceptual relationships, polysemy has a very special place in the field of semantics because meaning productivity and expansion of concepts to a considerable extent, takes place as a result of polysemy.

The Polysemy of lexical units is a universal phenomenon and exists in all languages and all language families in different historical courses (Vanhove 2008:3). for a word to have different meanings is not a new discovery but it is a matter that was common from old ages and maybe from the time that first dictionaries were written, the lexicographers were practically dealing with this semantic and lexical phenomenon. Moreover the fact that what should be written under each lexical entry in a dictionary has made the lexicographers baffled. The matter that is going to be discussed in the present study is that how the modern cognitive semantic approaches analyze the polysemy that exists in a language especially in the domain of perception verbs. The analysis of polysemy in the framework of a systematic schema, according to the examples that are provided in the present study, will produce interesting results and is considered as a new research area in cognitive semantics.

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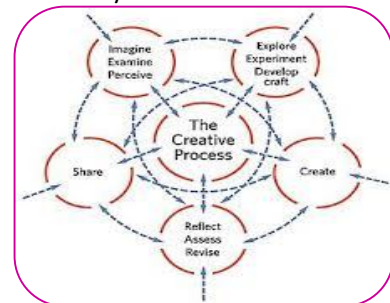
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Traugott's article 'Exploration in linguistics elaboration' is of higher priority in terms of exploring the relationship of polysemy and semantic change. Next is Sweetser's thesis with the title of 'semantic structure and semantic change' that has shed more light on the theoretical framework of studies on polysemy, meaning extension and semantic change. He in his book 'from etymology to pragmatics' (1990:23) with inspiration taken from Brogman (1988) and Lakoff (1987) studied the polysemy with this basic hypothesis that the meaning of a word is a consistent entity that has a unique structure and in order to understand the conceptual construction of a word, the related meanings that exist in the polysemy network of the word should be assessed.

Antunano (1999:33) introduces two cognitive approaches to the concept of polysemy. Though in both the approaches, polysemy is considered as a type of conceptual category, but they show a small difference: in the first approach, polysemy is described with respect to radial network (Lakoff 1987:84). Accordingly, in a case consisting of different meanings for a polysemous word, a circular structure can be imagined that the prototypical meaning is placed in its center and each of the meanings that have differences with this prototypical meaning for different reasons, are placed radially with certain distance from it. Family resemblance causes these meanings to stay in this category structure. This approach represents a model for the analysis of polysemy in which one or more than one meaning has more central position than others.

In another approach, Taylor (1995:108) introduces the structure of this category which is based on family resemblance as a dependant entity to meaning chains. for example; a word can have four meanings that the first meaning is the base for the construction of second meaning, the second one is the base for the third one and so on. The principle of family resemblance about such structure category works in a way that the similarity between some of the family members is more than others. Based on what has been said, the Taylor's model (1995) about polysemy is based on Witgenstein about family resemblance. The interesting thing here is that both of these schemas can explain the occurrence of Polysemy

Cooper (1974 a & b), Lehrer (1990) and Sweetser (1990) are considered the first linguists who did a detailed analysis on the subject of the polysemy that exists in perception verbs. Sweetser (1990: 20-32) through a diachronic analysis of primary and secondary meanings of perception verbs, introduced a meaning link-up-that he calls it MIND AS BODY metaphor-which explains an orientation in conceptualization among Indo-European languages based on which, abstract concepts such as emotions are perceived in the form of concepts established upon bodily and social experiences.

The etymological background in this field can be traced in the works of Brechtel (1879), Kurath (1921) and Buck (1949). Introducing the mind as body metaphors by Sweetser (1990:5) can be tantamount to conceptual metaphors from Lakoff and Johnson's (1999:37-38) point of view. Kurath (1921:10) uses the expression "motivated language" in the same concept which is known as "embodiment" in cognitive linguistics (Johnson 1987, Lakoff 1987, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999). The embodiment hypothesis explains that human's conceptual and lingual system depends on his physical, social and cognitive embodiment (Rohrer 2007:27). According to Johnson (1987), many of the aspects of language usage, are the reflections of our bodily experiences especially perceptual interactions, movement and collision with objects.

Of course Johnson explains the object-oriented basis of conceptualization referring to a type of conceptual categories that is known as image schema. In this stage, it is sufficient to explain the fact that according to a definition given by Johnson about image schemas, such conceptual structures are repetitious and dynamic patterns about perceptual and dynamic interactions that bring coherence and structure to experiences (1987).

Goldstein (2010:6) describes perception as a dynamic and changing process. Lexical domains related to perception verbs 'vision'. 'Hearing', 'touch', 'smell' and 'taste' are the most perception reflecting lexical domains of a language. But the fact that to what extend the meaning extensions of perception verbs

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preserve the original information after extending to the destination domain, is under the influence of culture-what Lakoff and Johnson (1980:52) mention as "the used part of metaphor".

Other important works that have contributed to the meaning extensions of perception verbs are Viberg (1984:123-162) and Evans and Wilkins (2000) along with other works that have been mentioned before. Viberg (1984) has done research related to this area in fifty three languages and delivered a classification of perception verbs.

Individuals such as Ackerman (1990), Classen (1997:104-412), Feld (1990) and Howes (1991, 2004) believe that perceptual experiences can be different in various cultures and environments. Evans and Wilkins (2000) in another classification based on Australian languages have followed Viberg's (1984) pattern with a small change according to which, the meanings in vision domain will not extend to smell and taste domains. These two linguists benchmarked Sweetser's (1990) hypothesis against data from Australian languages and came to the conclusion that in these languages, it is the hearing domain that extends to other perception domains and basically, in such languages, it is the hearing domain which is related to other cognitive domains and the vision domain has more limited metaphorical extensions. Therefore in the present study, the sense differentiations of the verb (*Shenidan*) 'hear' in the area of perception verbs are examined. Moreover, the lexical items such as combinations and expressions that show the meaning extensions of this verb are initially taken from Dehkhoda dictionary and Farhang-e-Sokhan. According to Madarshahian (2009:198), the highest number of metaphorical extension in perception verbs in Persian language belongs to the verb 'smell'. In the present study, the focus will be on the meaning extensions of the verb '(*Shenidan*) 'hear'.

3. METHODOLOGY

The meaning extensions of the perception verb (*Shenidan*) 'hear' in Persian language are collected from various dictionaries like Dehkhoda dictionary as well as Farhang-e-Sokhan which are the most prominent dictionaries in Persian language.

These extended senses are extracted in terms of prototype and metaphor. The list of the senses is given in the table 1 and the explanation and example for each sense is given in section 4. The meaning that was not included in the above dictionaries is marked as 'additional'.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Below are the different senses for the verb (*Shenidan*) 'hear' in Persian language, in the domain of perception verbs with reference to Dehkhoda dictionary (1946) and the great dictionary of Farhang-e Sokhan. The senses that are given in table 1 are in use for all the Indo-European languages for the verb 'hear'. Let's go through these various transferred meanings:

a) To perceive the sound by hearing (to hear intentionally or unintentionally)
g) To understand or comprehend
h) To come to know (news about someone or something)
b) To understand what is being said
f) To receive (additional)
e) To accept, to obey
c) To perceive the smell of something, to smell
d) To pay attention
i) To feel (something which is going to happen) / to guess

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meaning	Persian example	transcription	English translation	Literal meaning
To hear (unintentional act)	صدا را شنیدم	*Seda ra shenidam*	I heard the sound	I heard the sound
To listen (intentional act)	به رادیو گوش دادم	*Be radio goosh dadam*	I listened to radio	I gave (my) ears to Radio
To understand or comprehend	شنیدم چی گفتی	*shenidam chi gofti*	I understood what you said	(I) heard what (you) said
Come to know about something	شنیدم که قراره بری سفر	*shenidam ke gharare beri safar*	I came to know that you are planning to go on a trip	(I) heard that you are willing to go on a trip.
To understand the content of what is heard	پیام رییس جمهور در همه ی دنیا شنیده شد	*payam e rais jomhoor dar tamame donya shenide shod*	The message of the president was understood all over the world	The message of president was heard all over the world.
To receive (additional)	بسیار فحش شنیدم	*besiar fohsh shenidam*	I was insulted too much (hear)	Too much insults (I) heard
To obey, to accept, to agree	او از معلمش حرف شنوی دارد	*oo az moallem ash harf shenavi darad*	He/She accepts what the teacher says (obeys his/her teacher)	He/she has word listening from his/her teacher.
To feel the smell	بویی را در هوا می شنیدم که نا مطبوع بود	*booyi ra dar hava mishenidam ke na matboo bood*	I could smell something in the air which was unpleasant	I could hear an aroma in the air which was unpleasant.
To pay attention	هر چیز به جز حرف های من را می شنود	*har chiz be joz harf haye man ra mi shenavad*	(he/she) pays attention to everything except my words	(he/she) hears everything except my words.
To feel (to guess)	یک بویی می شنوم. خبری هست؟	*Yek booyi mishenavam. xabari hast?*	I can hear (feel) something. Is something going to happen?	I can smell something. Is something going to happen?

Table 1: the meaning extensions of the perception verb 'hear' in Persian language.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the data available in the great Farhang-e-Sokhan and Dehkhoda dictionary – two prominent Persian language dictionaries – there were five meanings found for the perception verb '(*Shenidan*)'- hear; these meanings were extended up to seven meanings through the contrastive analyses. There meanings are: To pay attention, to obey, agree and accept, to smell, to feel, to be aware of something and to understand. there was an additional meaning found by this study that shows the perception verb 'hear' in Persian language, conveys the meaning of 'to receive' in some cases which is not included in dictionaries.

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If all the senses are added to the dictionaries, it is not clear that how these meanings are related to each other. Therefore it was necessary to see among two patterns of Lakoff (1987:84) and Taylor (1995:108) which one will give more accurate explanation about the formation of various extended meanings of the perception verb 'hear' in Persian language and based on this meaning network, how the metaphorical extension of the verb 'hear' in Persian will be and how they are related.

Taylor believes that the structure of the semantic category is based on family resemblance and meaning chains. In this framework, a word can have different senses from one to four meanings that the first meaning is the base for the formation of the second meaning; the second meaning will be the base for the formation of the third and so on. The law of family resemblance works in such a way that the similarity between some members of the family is more than other members; like as it was mentioned above, the similarity between the third and fourth meaning is more than the similarity between the first and the third one. According to what was said earlier, the meanings 'to pay attention', 'to obey', 'to agree' or 'to accept' that have a unique explanation, are considered as a single meaning chain. Other meanings like 'to smell' and 'to feel' that have same cognitive explanations, are placed in another meaning chain. In other words, according to Taylor's pattern, they have more similarities in terms of meaning. Finally, the meanings 'to understand' and 'to come to know' will form another meaning chain due to similarities in meaning.

Figure 1 shows the meaning network of the verb 'hear' in Persian language. It has to be noted that Taylor's pattern to a high extend, was able to explain the polysemy that exists in the perception verb 'hear' in Persian language.
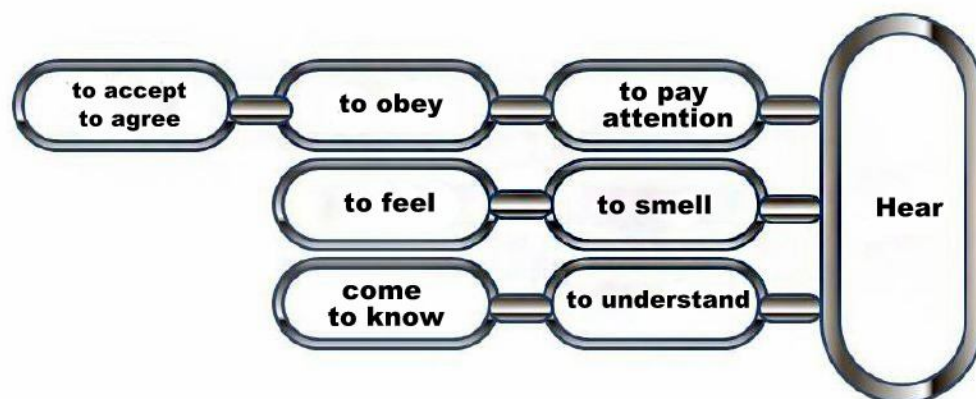

Figure 1: the meaning network of the verb 'hear' in Persian language based on Taylor's pattern

In the present study, the polysemy of the perception verb 'hear' among all the perception verbs was selected because according to Buck (1971) in all the Indo-European languages, the verbs that are used with the meaning of 'hearing' have the metaphorical extension of 'understanding' and ' knowing the content of something' as well. Knowing and perceiving the content, is a language-dependent process. In other words, among all the perception verbs, the verbs related to the hearing domain are considered the most important in terms of language usage.

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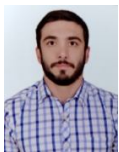
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