Tarbiat Modares University

Teaching concrete and abstract concepts of prepositions "in" to Persian speakers and "dar" to non-Persian speakers: A Study in the Framework of Cognitive Semantics

Zahra Badamdari [1]* ID *& Mahmood Elyasi* [2]

Abstract

The main purpose of the present study was investigating concrete, temporal and abstract meanings of prepositions "in" for Persian speakers and "dar" for non-Persian speakers. This study attempted to examine the impact of traditional approach compared to cognitive approach in learning different concepts of the prepositions. For this purpose, first the spatial and prototype meanings of preposition "in" were studied from Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary (2016) and then the spatial and prototype meanings of preposition "dar" were extracted according to Farhang Sokkan (Anvari, 2002), respectively. Finally, sentences and phrases including these prepositions were chosen according to Vision 1 (2016) and Farsi *Biamoozim* (2009) in the intermediate level. Data collection, took place among 30 students of Noor high school and 30 non-Persian learners at Jame-e-Almostafa of Mashhad. Sample groups were selected randomly, then they were divided into control and experimental groups. Data analysis in Independent T-Test (comparison of pre-tests in control and experimental groups) displayed there isn't significantly improvement between prior knowledge of learners before teaching (control pre-tests 12.57, experimental pre-tests 12.43), whereas comparison of post-tests showed there is significantly more improvement between in experimental groups compared to control groups (control post-tests 12.33, experimental post-tests 25.73). The results indicated that compared to traditional approach, applying cognitive method had significantly improvement in teaching different concepts of the prepositions. The results of this paper suggests effective strategies in teaching prepositions for language teachers.

*Keywords***:** Cognitive Semantics approach, Teaching, Prepositions, spatial meaning, prototype meaning

1. Corresponding Author, Linguistics, M. A, Teaching Persian to non-Persian speakers, Ferdowsi university of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran; *Email: zahra.badamdari@gmail.com,* ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1719-7802
2. Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Hakim Sabzevari University, Iran

1. Introduction

Persian Language learning is one of the most complex issues in teaching foreign languages. One of the most important issues in language is teaching and learning prepositions. Rote learning lacks comprehensive analysis of the different senses of prepositions. Compared to other approaches, cognitive linguistics offers the aspects of meaningful learning (Song, 2013: 1). Cognitive approach to language and grammar is shown a systematic form. Accordingly, in this paper, we are going to examine the impact of traditional approach compared to cognitive approach in learning different concepts of the prepositions "in" for Persian speakers and "dar" for non-Persian speakers based on Langacker "Domain theories" (1987).

2. Literature Review

The present study is concerned with a Cognitive Linguistics meaningful approach to teaching prepositions. This study attempted to examine the impact of cognitive approach compared to traditional approach in learning different concepts of the prepositions. In the interaction between human beings and their environment, human experience is imposed on a structure in terms of natural dimensions of the kind. In some studies (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Tyler & Evans, 2003; Lakoff & Johnson, 1987; Langacker, 1987) there are theoretical definitions to explain Cognitive Linguistics and its impacts in teaching language and prepositions. Other researches (Song, 2013; Tyler, Mueller & Ho, 2011; Rasekh Mahand & Ranjbar Zarabi, 2013; Golfam & Yoosefi Rad, 2006; Badamdari, Alizadeh, Eghbali & Vahidi, 2017) investigated experimental method to teaching different prepositions by Cognitive Linguistics approach. Their findings shows applying cognitive method had significantly improvement in teaching different concepts of the prepositions.

3. Methodology

In this paper, first of all, based on Tyler and Evans' prototype criteria (2003), we have determined the prototype and different meanings of the spatial and prototype meanings of preposition "in" from Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary (2016) and then the spatial and prototype meanings of preposition "dar" according to Farhang Sokkan (Anvari, 2002), respectively. Finally, sentences and phrases including these prepositions were chosen according to Vision 1 (2016) and Farsi *Biamoozim* (2009) in the intermediate level. Data collection, took place among 30 students of Noor high school and 30 non-Persian learners at Jame-e-Almostafa of Mashhad. Sample groups were selected randomly, then they were divided into control and experimental groups. Data analysis were estimated by spss (Independent T-Test) in control and experimental groups.

4. Conclusion

The present study was concerned with a cognitive approach to provide an instructional methods for Persian and Non-Persian speakers to learn prepositions "*in*" and "dar". The results of the study will enrich our understanding of reconceptualization and learning by a Cognitive approach. In this study, we taught the spatial as well as other senses of these prepositions. Data analysis in Independent T-Test (comparison of pre-tests in control and experimental groups) displayed there isn't significantly improvement between prior knowledge of learners before teaching (control pre-tests 12.57, experimental pre-tests 12.43), whereas comparison of post-tests showed there is significantly more improvement between in experimental groups compared to control groups (control post-tests 12.33, experimental post-tests 25.73). The results indicated that compared to traditional approach, applying cognitive method had significantly improvement in teaching different concepts of the prepositions. The findings open up an effective perspective strategies in teaching prepositions for language teachers.