

## A Cognitive Representation of Semantic Problems in Teaching English Vocabulary\*

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### Abstract

The present study aims at investigating English lexicon polysemy within cognitive approach to study the way based on which Persian language learners learn English lexicon with the concepts used in cognitive linguistics such as, prototype, polysemy, categorization, etc. The nature of the methodology used in this qualitative research for studying the meanings of English lexicon is descriptive-analytic method. After the semantic analysis of English lexicon based on the model of Dirven & Verspoor (2004), it was found that the meanings of lexicon are classifiable based on theoretical procedures on cognitive semantics. The authors are trying to show the cognitive concepts in cognitive linguistics can be used for teaching English lexicon. The findings, generally, showed that the unconscious knowledge of learners in learning the cognitive structure of the meanings of lexicon has a meaningful relationship with learning. The results also revealed that the lexicon has a semantic network semantically, in which the notion of core or prototype is located in the center of the semantic network and the rest of the meanings can be examined as the peripheral meanings of a lexicon.

**Key words:** *English lexicon, cognitive approach, Persian speakers, prototype, polysemy, categorization.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate and teach the difficulties of Polysemy of English lexicons within the proposed terminologies in cognitive approach. This approach symbolically takes an encyclopedic perspective to the meaning of lexicons. Thus, in the cognitive approach, there is no distinction between semantics and pragmatics. This is because this approach holds that there is no systematic distinction between nuclear meaning on the one hand and pragmatics, that is, cultural and social meaning on the other. Furthermore, in this approach, the issue of language independence from other cognitive abilities is not raised. In general, cognitive linguists do not consider an independent mental capacity that includes semantic knowledge separate from other types of knowledge (whether linguistic or non-linguistic). Consequently, there is no distinction between dictionary knowledge and encyclopedic knowledge, and it is only the encyclopedic knowledge that makes us think of a dictionary knowledge. Of course, the view that maintains there exists just encyclopedic knowledge, is because the knowledge we associate with each word is an unorganized set. It is worth mentioning that cognitive linguists take their attention towards encyclopedic knowledge as a structured system of knowledge organized as a network. In the present study, the authors try to show how cognitive linguistics can be used to teach English words based on cognitive concepts. Due to the fact that English words have different meanings in different contexts, for teaching English words to Persian language learners, concepts such as prototype, polysemy, homonymy, perspective, figure, and ground can be used in order to be able to learn and teach English words. Learning and teaching English words have always been one of the main concerns for both learners and linguists. In their special ways, linguists have also been involved in thinking of effective methods in teaching vocabulary in order to provide the optimal teaching methods for teachers and language learners. Gass and Slinker (1994:270) have also emphasized the importance of words in learning a second language as the most important part of learning a second language.

The present study consists of six sections. The second part deals with the literature review and related studies. The third section refers to the research methodology. In the fourth section, the theoretical framework related to the cognitive approach is introduced. The fifth section examines the difficulties of learning vocabulary as part of the language learning process from the perspective of cognitive linguists based on such principles and concepts involved in cognitive approach as categorization, prototype, conceptual-contextual meaning, polysemy, metaphor, and metonymy. Finally, the conclusion of the research is presented.

## **2. Literature review and related researches**

It should be acknowledged that valuable researches on English language teaching have been conducted for several years. Although, there are many studies done in teaching English language focusing on vocabulary with mutinously, and many of whom have been Iranian researchers, little has been done cognitively. Therefore, this research could be considered as an unprecedented one. Due to the paucity of studies published on the cognitive approach, the authors have referred to some of them related to the theoretical framework. Therefore, a few Iranian and then non-Iranian researches are presented.

Dehghan (2018) in his paper entitled "Polysomic Analysis of the Preposition /læ/, /wæ/, /wægærd / and /wæpi/ in Kurdish within Principled- Polysemy Approach" has tried to explore and determine the distinct meanings of the prepositions /læ/, /wæ/, /wægærd / and /wæpi/ in Kalhori Kurdish within principled-polysemy approach. Thus, the author has represented them in a semantic network separately. The results showed that the prototypical meaning of the preposition /læ/ coming to the speaker's mind immediately is "from" having eighteen distinct meanings and five semantic clusters, such as; "contrast cluster", "collocation cluster", "polysemy cluster", "time-space cluster", and "metaphoric cluster" in its own semantic network. In more careful studies, it was found that, in some cases, Kalhori speakers use the preposition /læ/ in the place of /wæ/ in those contexts with those meanings interchangeably, but in addition to these

meanings the preposition /wæ/ is used in two other different meanings, i.e; the meanings "by" and "to", in which the preposition /læ/ can't be used. So, /wæ/ has 21 distinct meanings. The prototypical meaning of the preposition /wægærd/ is "with" having eleven distinct meanings and three semantic clusters, such as; "collocation cluster", "contrast cluster" and "metaphoric cluster" in its own semantic network. The prototypical meaning of the preposition /wæpi/ is "to" having five distinct meanings and two semantic clusters, such as; "contrastive cluster" and the meaning "about" in its own semantic network.

Hassan Dokht (2009) in her unpublished MA thesis entitled "Study of metaphor from a cognitive perspective in Forough Farrokhzad's poems" has investigated Farrokhzad's poems in the framework of cognitive approach and contemporary metaphor theory. This study dealt with the differences between metaphor from a cognitive point of view and its traditional meaning. The types of metaphors in Forough Farrokhzad's poems have also been discussed from a cognitive point of view. In fact, this study has just focused on the study of the meanings of metaphors, which can help the authors of the present study to some extent in the semantic study of polysemous words.

Fayyazi et al. (2008a) in an article entitled "Metaphorical origin of polysemous sensory verbs in Persian from the perspective of cognitive semantics" sought to answer the question of whether cognitive theory and structuralism theory have the same origin or not. The results showed that these two theories have different interpretations of "prototype", "polysemy" and "concepts". In one part of the mentioned paper, the authors have thoughtfully referred to the concepts in cognitive approach, one of which concept of prototype, which the present study considers as one of the basic concepts in teaching vocabulary, even learning a first language.

Dehghan (2017) in in article entitled "Learning English Vocabulary and the Effect of Basic Level from a Cognitive Perspective" which had been done based on the concept of categorization in cognitive approach showed that Persian language learners of English when

faced with the task of naming a stimulus in the English language, tend to identify the given stimulus at the basic level of categorization.

Almalki (2017) in his study entitled "Conceptualizing Language Learning Metaphors in the Saudi EFL Context: Practicality, Applicability & Appropriacy" has attempted to survey the trends the use of three conceptual metaphors in the classrooms at the university level in Saudi Arabia. He indicated that the English teachers who were not fully at exposure of instructional metaphor had poor performance inside the Saudi EFL classrooms.

Evans (2011) in a study entitled "Language and Cognition: A Look at Cognitive Linguistics" examines the ambiguous nature of the meaning of "word", and refers to the principle of semantic compositionality, according to which words seem to have predetermined meanings that can be added together by appropriate compositionality mechanisms. In other words, the meaning of a phrase or a sentence is actually the result of all the parts making up that phrase or sentence. In his article, he points out that, as cognitive linguists believe, the meaning of a word is not fixed but variable, dynamic and flexible, in other words, it is indeterminate and ambiguous, and it depends on the context in which it is located. Since the present research also investigates the meanings of English words, semantic compositionality especially in expressions and the difficulties they pose for Persian learners, Evan's study was taken as the basis of the present study to easily examine, analyze and describe those difficulties.

Pavlovich (2010) in a study entitled "Cognitive Linguistics and English Language Teaching in English Language Departments" by referring to the basic hypotheses of the cognitive approach such as Goldberg's construction grammar which has developed as an important theory in the framework of cognitive approach, examines the methods by which different theoretical approaches to cognitive linguistics can be used effectively for teaching English language in different language groups, especially with a focus on lexical and syntactic levels. He has pointed out that one of the most important

principles in cognitive linguistics is that everything in language is affected by meaning. In this way, meaning is considered as a matter of conceptualization -the extent to which users of a particular language make the world humanistic, subjective, and influenced by the particular cultural environment in which they live.

Yan King (2009) in a study entitled "Cognitive language approach for teaching English vocabulary in the classroom to foreign language learners in China" has examined the effective vocabulary teaching methods used by English language teachers in China. To this end, it refers to the basic concepts in the field of cognitive linguistics that help language learners to learn vocabulary better in vocabulary teaching. Among the principles he has dealt with in his research are the prototype, categorization, metaphor, and implications of these principles in teaching of vocabulary in Chinese sentences in southwest China. This research is related to the subject of the present study, the only difference is to replicate the study in a new context with a completely different language system.

Dirven and Verspoor (2004) in a study entitled "Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics" discuss the issue of language and linguistics from a cognitive as well as a morphological perspective refer to a triangle called the "semiotic triangle" whose three vertices are form, meaning and reference. They believe that the cognitive approach can account for the multiple meanings of English words. The theoretical framework of the present study which will be examined in more detail in the theoretical framework and the data analysis sections is based on Driven and Verspoor (2004) views.

Olson and Land (2008) believe that a cognitive approach can be very effective and useful in teaching language learners to read and write. By teaching high school students in thirteen schools in an area of California for eight consecutive years from 1996 to 2004, they found that those students who learned the strategies of this approach outperformed their peers in writing. They used a mixed method quasi-experimental research design. What distinguishes this study from other studies in this field is the comprehensiveness of the use of

cognitive strategies over an eight-year period, as well as the number of teachers and students employed, and the intensity of the experiment.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The nature of this qualitative research is descriptive-analytic and the data has been randomly selected and collected among lexical items in the Oxford Dictionary based on cognitive approach. Thus, after studying on the background of cognitive linguistics, cognitive theory was considered as a general framework for this research based on which the difficulties of the meanings of English words were analyzed and evaluated. Of course, the meanings of the words in the context and the text were intended, because words out of contexts can have various meanings.

### **4. Cognitive Approach**

Introducing the origin of cognitive theory, it can be said that cognitive linguistics is a relatively new school in linguistics that studies language and thought and is an interdisciplinary field in cognitive sciences. Langaker (1987) and his famous book entitled *An Introduction to Cognitive Grammar*, and also Lakoff (1987) and his famous book entitled *Cognitive Semantics* are two main linguists who have turned their attention to this field of science. In addition to these two prominent linguists in the field of cognitive linguistics, the works of other linguists such as Evans and Green (2006), Dirven and Verspoor (2004), Craft, Foucault, Johnson, Talmy, and Turner have contributed to the growth and development of this school. Cognitive linguists believe that language is an integral part of human cognitive faculties, and any analysis of linguistic phenomena will require a study of human cognitive and mental faculties, and only in the shadow of the mind and issues such as developments and mental processes that we can study language (Taylor, 2002:4). Craft and Cruse (2004:1) believe that there are three basic premises in cognitive linguistics approach, each of which has been proposed in response to two common traditions in linguistics and semantics:

- a. Language is not an autonomous cognitive mental faculty. In other words, linguistic knowledge is not considered apart from other cognitive powers.
- b. Grammar is conceptualization.
- c. Language knowledge actually arises from the use of language.

The first premise is in fact a response to formal linguists. In other words, generativists have a modularity approach to the mind and language and speak of the independence of the language module from other mental faculties, while cognitive linguists do not believe in the independence of modules and consider the representation of linguistic knowledge as representations of conceptual structure and believe that the process in which linguistic knowledge is employed is not separate from other human mental and cognitive capabilities and in fact there is an interaction between thought, meaning and the structure of language (Lee,2001:1). It is worth noting that cognitive approach does not seek to disprove the innateness hypothesis, but rather emphasizes that it is these innate aspects of language that lead to linguistic capabilities. The second premise is in fact a response to logical semanticists. According to logical semantics, the structure of language is formally and mathematically explained independently of the outside world, while cognitive linguists consider the meaning as a reflection of an event in the outside world. The third premise considers the use of language as the source of the origin of linguistic knowledge. That is, concepts such as conceptualization, categorization, etc. in semantics, morphology, and syntax are formed through our cognition in a particular context and situation in the outside world. In addition to these three premises, the cognitive approach adheres to two important principles which are:

- a. GENERALIZATION principle
- b. COGNITIVE principle

The principle of GENERALIZATION is the belief that a series of general principles govern all aspects of human language, and the COGNITIVE principle means, believing in the presentation of general



principles governing language in accordance with what is said about mind and language through such other disciplines as psychology, artificial intelligence, philosophy, etc. (Evans and Green,2006:27). Meanwhile, the main focus of this study is on the views of Dirven and Verspoor (2004) in the field of cognitive linguistics, and in fact, the view put forward by these cognitive linguists regarding the meanings of words, forms the theoretical framework of the present study which will be explained.

### **5. Semantic analysis of words from Dirven and Verspoor perspective (2004)**

According to Dirven and Verspoor (2004), the meanings of words can be analyzed in two main approaches as the following:

- a. Semasiology
- b. Onomasiology

The first approach seeks to discover different meanings of words. In fact, it is an approach to words that shows the polysemy of the form of a word and the relationship between the different meanings or concepts of that word. In other words, semasiology is a branch of research on the meaning of words that examines the semantic changes of words and was apparently first used by Breal (1897). The second approach, on the other hand, seeks to examine words that express a particular concept. However, in the first approach, the relationship is from words to meaning and deals with the relationship between the concept's meanings of a word while in the second approach, this relationship occurs from concepts to words and deals with the relationship between concepts and words. The following examples confirm this claim.

The word FRUIT in English has different meanings in different contexts. Among these meanings the following meanings can be presented:

- A. Types of fruits that grow and develop on trees or plants.
  1. a. Fresh *fruit*
  - b. A bowl of *fruit*

B- A part of a plant or shrub or tree that contains seeds.

C- The results obtained after conducting research.

D- All materials and what the earth produces.

## 2. The *fruit* of the earth

The word SCHOOL in English can also be used as an example from which different meanings can be deduced:

- a. Institution building
- b. Lesson
- c. Pupils & teachers
- d. University faculty
- e. holiday course
- f. a group of people view
- g. a group of sea fishes

Among the above meanings used for the word SCHOOL in English, the first meaning (a) is in fact the core or prototypical meaning that immediately arises in the mind of the Persian language learner. In general, it can be said that the meanings (a), (b), (c) and (d) are literal meanings for the word SCHOOL, while the meaning of (e) is its metonymic meaning, and the last two meanings are its metaphorical meanings.

### 5.1 Prototype

Cognitive linguists consider prototype a typical example of something, a concept that exists in the mind and memory of individuals, and by hearing a particular word, it is the first concept that immediately coming to mind and is retrieved earlier than other members of that category. For example, when one hears the phrase BIRD, what usually comes to mind at first may be a sparrow rather than the name of another bird. Hence, the name "Sparrow" can be considered as an example of the category of BIRD. It is important to note that prototypes are not always fixed, but can vary in different contexts, situations, and cultures. What is considered as an example of the theoretical concept of prototype can be considered as follows (Geerearts, 1995):

1. The prototype categories are gradable. This means that some members of the category are superior and more prominent than other members of that category. One of the first works in this field was the achievement of Berlin and Kay (1969) on focal colors or primary colors. Berlin and Kay studies were comparable to Rosch's experiences, where he showed such colors seemed psychologically real even to the speakers of languages that did not use them.
2. Prototype categories are sometimes not very clear. This means that the membership status of members of a category is sometimes unknown.
3. Sometimes, prototype categories cannot be profiled using a single set of necessary and sufficient features. Wittgenstein (1953) and Quine (1960) in philosophy, and Rosch (1975) in psychology first proposed this issue. Wittgenstein showed that a concept such as GAME could not be defined based on the classical model, and instead members of such categories were associated with what he called family resemblance.
4. Prototype categories show family resemblance structure. Also, their semantic structure is in the form of cluster radial sets and overlapping readings.

## **5.2 Polysemy and homonym**

One of the most basic phenomena observed in language is semantic diversity in words. This means that words have different meanings in different contexts in which they appear. Of course, having a semantic connection between the meanings of a word is not a new discovery in linguistics, but it was first considered by linguists in ancient Greece (Nerlich and Clarke, 1998). The term polysemy was first introduced by Breal (1897) in his studies on meaning changes in the nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century, structuralists, although not extensively studying polysemy, considered the shift from synchronic semantics to diachronic semantics in terms of sociological and psychological fields. Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007:141-157) have

identified four salient features of the cognitive approach and its relation to polysemy:

1. Flexibility of meaning
2. Prototype theoretical model of semantic structure
3. Radial set model
4. Schematic network model

Although classical polysemy initially referred to words, cognitive linguistics have made it possible to observe the effects of polysemy in the fields of phonology, morphology, and syntax (Taylor, 1995). Polysemy should not be confused with homonymy. Polysemy is a kind of lexical ambiguity that is established between two or more different meanings of one word that are semantically related to each other, while homonymy is a kind of lexical ambiguity between two or more different meanings of one word whose meanings have no semantic connection with each other. The difference between these two concepts is shown in the following examples:

3. The feather is *light* (not heavy) but not *light* (dark).

In the above example, the word LIGHT is used in two completely unrelated meanings, so in this case, the word LIGHT are homonym because there is no semantic connection between them (Quine, 1960: 129).

### **6. Semantic representation of words**

Words have always been of special importance in teaching and learning English especially for Persian speakers in Iran. Wilkins (1972: 111) emphasized that without learning the grammar of a language, the contents of that language can rarely be transferred to language learner, but without the words this transfer would not take place at all. Therefore, words have a special place in language learning. It can be said that this view of Wilkins (1972) is an approved evidence of the claim that the words of the language are of special importance and most language learners are aware of its importance. In this research, the meanings of linguistic expressions and their relationship with each other have been systematically studied and an

examination of the difficulties of these meanings from cognitive approach perspective has taken place. This theory of linguistics is called semantics which is related to lexicography, morphology, and syntax. In the present study, the meanings and structures of words will be studied from the perspective of Dirven and Verspoor (2004) which is called terminology and morphology, that is, the systematic study of the meanings or concepts of words. In the following, the core meaning or prototypical meaning of a word that immediately comes to the minds of Persian language learners are examined. This core meaning is the same as the literal meaning of a word and then the connection between peripheral meanings that shows the metonymic and metaphorical meanings of words is surveyed. Furthermore, the way cognitive linguistics based on cognitive concepts can help English teachers teach English words to Persian language learners in Iran is represented.

### **6.1 Words, meanings and concepts**

From a cognitive point of view, language always allows us to categorize our experiences in the outside world. Accordingly, it may be said that what lies within a word are all the experiences we have of the outside world, and in simpler terms, the concept of a word encompasses the entire universe. One might think that there must necessarily be a linguistic category or word for every conceptual category, and vice versa for every linguistic word or category there must be a conceptual category; while such an idea is impossible. On average, there may be three to four meanings or even more concepts for each word. Words with related and different meanings are sequentially called polysemous and homonymous words. That is, in a dictionary a list of related meanings for a word from literal to the metonymic and metaphorical meaning can be seen in Persian for a word. To better understand this, the following example from the Oxford Dictionary of Vocabulary for polysemy is represented.

#### **6.1.2 The polysemy of the word "FRUIT"**

As it turns out, the English word FRUIT has different meanings in the following sentences, depending on the contexts the word is used.

**a.** sweet and soft edible part of a plant

*e.g.* He would climb to the top of plum trees to score the tastiest *fruit*.

**b.** rewards of all his / her hard work

*e.g.* It was a tragedy that he died before he could enjoy the *fruits*.

**c.** successful result

*e.g.* Their plans haven't borne *fruit*.

**d.** friend, fellow (old- fashionable) [ Fruit with this meaning usually used for addressing a male friend]

*e.g.* Hello, old *fruit*.

**e.** offspring, child, progeny

*e.g.* The *fruit* of his loins

In example "a" , it means fruit. "*miveh*" in "b", means reward, in the third example it means result, and in the fourth example which is used as a in slang, it means friend and comrade. As is seen these meanings are the literal meaning in the first, the metonymic meaning in the second, and the metaphorical meaning of the word in the third, and fourth, respectively. It can also be pointed out that among the meanings given to the English word FRUIT, from the cognitive point of view the first meaning coming to the minds of language learners immediately is called prototypical meaning which is in fact the core meaning or literal meaning of the word FRUIT, and the other meanings coming around this core meaning are actually called non-core meanings or peripheral meanings. Each of these different contexts shows a separate concept and meaning of the word FRUIT, and on the other hand, each of these concepts refers to a different set of referents in the outside world. For example, when we refer to the word FRUIT with its literal and core meaning, we are actually referring to a set of referents including such edible fruits as apples, oranges, watermelons, cantaloupes, lemons and many other fruits, as the above.

### **6.1.3 The polysemy of the word "ANGLE"**

In the following examples, the word ANGLE is used with different meanings.

- a. the space between two lines that meet each other  
e.g. He took photographs of the statue from several different *angles*.
- b. to represent (sth) from a particular point of view  
e.g. She *angles* her reports to suit the people she is speaking to.
- c. to try to catch fish with a hook and line, fishing  
e.g. He loves (to go) *angling* on a fine summer day.

In the first example, the core meaning that is literal or prototypical meaning of the word ANGLE is "*between two lines*", but in other examples, its metaphorical and metonymic meanings have been used respectively. Observed this way, in the second example it is used to mean "*the expression of the point of view*" and in the third it is used to mean "*fishing*". Thus, language learners can achieve the exact meaning of a word they follow, given the communicative strategy that creates coherence among the words in a sentence. Also, the concepts of prototype, polysemy, etc. are effective in empowering and enhancing the learning of English words for Persian language learners. Therefore, there is a direct relationship between learning English vocabulary and that communicative strategy and concepts in cognitive approach.

### 6.2.3 The polysemy of the word "Over"

In the following examples, different meanings for the word OVER, which is used in a particular sentence according to the different situational contexts have been represented. The following examples are some illustrations.

- a. across, above  
e.g. The child walks *over* the bridge.
- b. in every part or most parts of  
e.g. They travel all *over* Africa.
- c. more than  
e.g. They wait for *over* an hour.
- d. too much  
e.g. *overwork*, *overeat*

e. control and supervise

e.g. mind *over* madness

In the first example, the literal meaning of the word "OVER" can be clearly seen because the first meaning that comes to the learner's mind from this word is the prototypical meaning that is translated /ruje or balaje/ in Persian. The meaning of the word "OVER" in the examples "b, c and d" has come in its metaphorical meaning, but this word in the last example has the metonymic meaning that is used in the meaning of "superiority and control". Therefore, the last sentence in which the word "OVER" has been used means the "superiority of the mind over madness". As it is overt from the different meanings of the word, polysemy can be clearly seen among these different concepts. In general, it is the situational context that shows the polysemy of words in different contexts.

#### 6.2.4 The polysemy of the word "Footwear"

Regarding the different meanings of the word FOOTWEAR, a hierarchical taxonomy can be drawn based on which the relationship between different meanings and their application in different contexts can be observed. As mentioned in the theoretical framework section, in relation to the conceptual domain, we can refer to three generic, basic and specific levels, which have been discussed by Dirven and Verspoor (2004:38). In a conceptual domain, we not only examine the differences between the above levels, but these levels may also form a hierarchical taxonomy as in the figure below.

b. slippers

c. boots

d. trainers

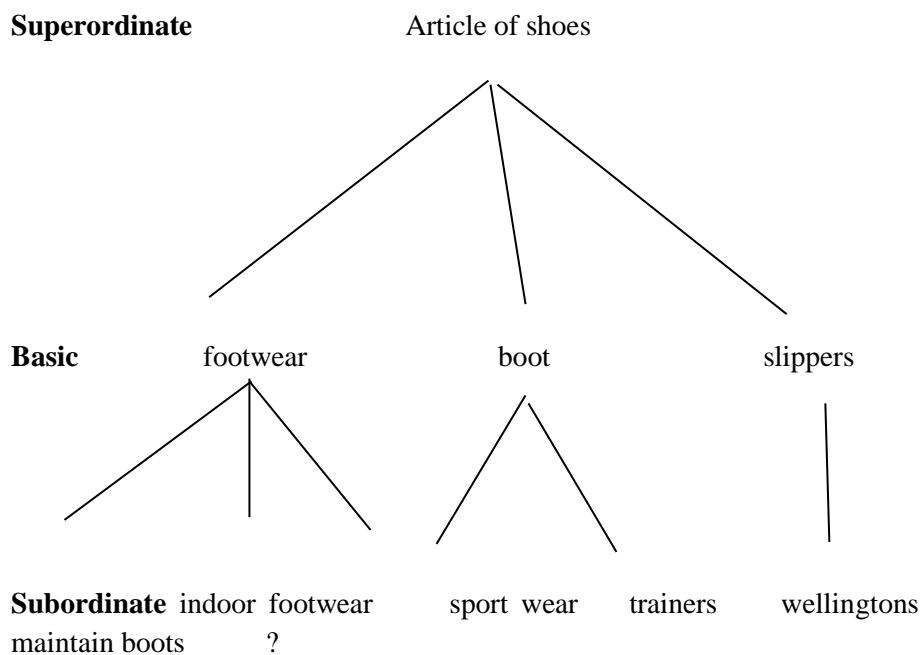
e. maintain boots

f. wellingtons

g. sport wear

h. indoor footwear





**Figure 1. Hierarchical taxonomy of the word "SHOE" concepts**

As can be seen in the above figure, the word which first comes to the learner's mind among the concepts related to the meaning of the word FOOTWEAR is the prototype word or the central member which is at the center of other related concepts (the word SHOES). The other concepts in the above figure are non-central or peripheral members. There is a lexical gap for the word "slipper" which is shown as a question mark in the above figure. In other words, there is no subordinate or hyponym word for the word "slipper". In general, the prominence of the two semantic analyses of semasiology and onomasiology always seeks to select a lexical unit as a name for a concept or referent of a word.

### 6.2.5 The polysemy of the word "RED"

Regarding the word RED from which different meanings can be deduced in different contexts, it can be said that we are dealing with metaphoric and metonymic meaning which is a linguistic meaning and not a conceptual meaning, as was the case for the word SCHOOL investigated above in different contexts. Among the concepts that can

be found for the word RED in the Oxford dictionary, only the first meaning, i.e. (a) comes immediately to the learner's mind, and the rest of the meanings can be searched and found in their own contexts. Thus, the first meaning and concept is the prototypical meaning, and the other meanings are metaphorical meanings (such as d and e) and metonymic meanings (such as b, c and f) showing the similarity and proximity to the RED color respectively.

- a. someone with red hair  
*e.g.* He has a **red**head
- b. something that is not important, but distracts one from things that are important  
*e.g.* **red** herring
- c. in the act of doing something wrong  
*e.g.* He was caught **red**-handed
- d. getting very angry  
*e.g.* He was beginning to see **red**
- e. very exciting  
*e.g.* This was a **red**-hot
- f. extremely left-wing, communist ideas  
*e.g.* The thought of this politicians is **red** politics

The semantic range processes of the word RED, both metaphoric and metonymic meanings, can be seen in the figure below.

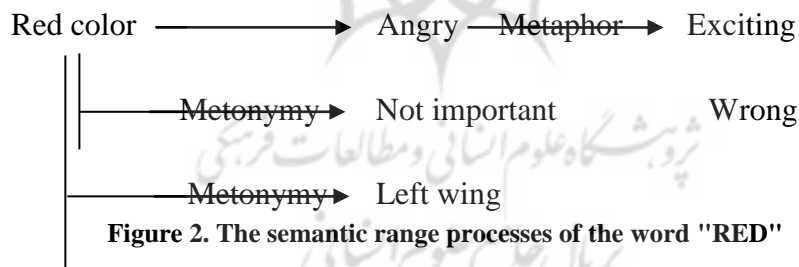


Figure 2. The semantic range processes of the word "RED"

## 7. Conclusion

Due to lack of awareness about the use of instruction metaphor and metonymy as two cognitive concepts, teachers and students have to devise lesson plans based on the suitable use of instruction metaphor

and metonymy to link teacher-student interactional patterns. The present study attempted to investigate the implementations of cognitive concepts such as, metaphor and metonymy in the EFL classrooms at the university level. Learning and teaching English words have always been the main concerns for language learners, teachers and linguists. This study aimed to link cognitive linguistics and language teaching in order to analyze the semantics of English words and describe them in different contexts from the perspective of the cognitive approach. The present study considers cognitive linguistics concepts effective for teaching English vocabulary therefore, because English words have different meanings in different contexts, the cognitive linguistic concepts such as prototype, polysemy, homonyms be used for teaching English words to Persian language learners. Furthermore, Due to the importance of vocabulary as the core of language and having a noticeable role in learning language, the present study investigated teaching vocabulary from the perspective of cognitive linguistics and its principles and concepts such as categorization, prototype, conceptual and contextual meaning, polysemy, metaphor, and metonymy were proposed here. In this way, it could also explain the difficulties of learning and teaching English words to language learners. Thus, the findings showed that if the English teachers would be fully exposed with conceptual metaphor and metonymy, they could be successful in their classrooms. Accordingly, those students learning the English language lexicons in this way are more successful than those who are not at exposure of this approach. To this end, this research can facilitate learning and teaching of vocabulary for those interested in this field.

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