Prototypical English every days' Phrases Utilized via College

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العبارات الأنكليزية اليومية النموذجية المستخدمة من قبل طلاب الكلية

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Abstract

The researcher , in the current study , studies one of the human categorization theories which is known as ' prototype theory' . He sets a questionnaire to fourth class students at Kirkuk university by using the prototype theory . A good number of every days' expressions is used as data . The students are required to choose one of the tabulated expressions and give the reason of choosing that expression as well . The reasons (factors) are the taxonomy of the used model . Two analysis methods namely qualitative and quantitative are followed to arrive at the desired results . The aims of the study are (1) showing what can influence the typical member . (2) Showing how people are distinct in creating the prototype. Its hypotheses are (1) each individual has his / her own prototype . (2) The social factors like (age , religion , one's background knowledge , etc …) have roles in the formation of the prototype . The study is concluded with points like the context has a well-built relation with the process of creating the prototypical category member .
Key words
Prototype theory, co-relational structure, Cognitive economy, age, religion, living environment and experience, Scientific and technological developments.

المستخلص

في الدراسة الحالية , يناقش الباحث نظرية التقسيم الأنساني المعروفة بنظرية النموذج البدئي . أعد أستبيانا لطلبة المرحلة الرابعة في جامعة كركوك من خلال أستخدام نظرية النموذج البدئي . مجموعة جيدة من العبارات اليومية أستخدمت كعينه للدراسة . على الطلاب أختيار أحد العبارات المجدولة و أعطاء سبابا لأختيار تلك العبارة . الأسباب (العوامل) هي تقسيم المودل المستخدم . طريقتان للتحليل أستخدمت تحديدا الكمي والنوعي للوصول للنتائج المرغوبة . أهداف الدراسة (١) هي تبين ما يؤثر على العنصر المثالي . (٢) تبين كيف يختلف الناس في تكوين النموذج البدئي. فرضيات الدراسة (١) كل شخص لديه نموذج بدئي . (٢) هنالك عوامل أجتماعية مثل (العمر , الدين , الخلفية المعرفية للشخص ... الخ) لديها أدوار في تكوين النموذج البدئي . ختمت الدراسة بنقاط سليمة مثل السياق لديه علاقة متينة في عملية تكوين النموذج البدئي .

الكلمات الدالة :

نظرية النموذج البدئي ,هيكل العلائقية المشتركة ,الاقتصاد المعرفي , العمر , الدين , البيئة والخبرة , التطورات التقنية و العلمية .

1.1   Introduction

Ideal language users use different expressions or phrases to express what they carry in their minds . This use is not alike because of the distinct scientific levels (individual differences). It is an actual fact , that there are beginners , intermediate and advanced levels that distinguish the language users . Cited in (Abdullah and Hussein , 2015) language is a communication tool that people use to deliver their messages .

The term of prototype is referred to as the representative example that is good enough to represent a specific concept .i.e it is the most typical instance of something (Akmajian et al , 2001) .

To give sense to our universe , people are not disable to create what is named mental models . They can , for instance , decide which kind of bird is the most representative kind of birds .   The concept of 'mental models' has come into being via psychologists , but the concept of ' representation' has been presented as an alternative by those who are interested in cultural studies (Aitchison , 2003).

Yule (2014) says that the concept of prototype has a vital role in helping language users to understand the meanings of words . As a wooden object and a piece of furniture , the object ' chair' is recognized swiftly and simply via people more than any other piece .

Psychologically , it is indicated that the most remarkable aspect of prototype model is that the category member is the prototypical member if it carries the essential features of that category . Moreover , gradation is a significant feature of a category prototype . So , any entity that exhibits, relying on the

shared features , the defining features of a certain category is a member of that category (Naess and Ashild , 2007).

According to Geeraerts (2006) there are two directions in the prototype theory . On the one hand , the theory follows Rosch's research findings that are adopted in psycholexicology . The explanation of the conceptual memory of human beings and its working systems are found in Rosch's research . On the other hand , the second direction appears in 1980s and developed in linguistics .   Cited in (Ismael , 2022) that the mental construction of meaning and how it is used or employed via people is found in the field of cognitive semantics .

In the journey of studying the history of categorization , we find three theories which are (Aristotelian , prototype , and exemplar) . Those theories come one after another and each of them is a reaction to the preceding theory (Basil , 2007) .

Finch (2005) says that prototype theory is a two- kind- features theory . Defining and characteristic . The former are those a category instance has to show (compulsory features) . Conceder this instance , birds have to have feathers , lay eggs , two legs and wings . The latter features are not as compulsory as the defining features , but optional which a category instance has to have . Take the same instance of birds , fly in groups or lonely , small in size , and having short legs . In case of verifying this statement ' A chicken is a bird' , a comparison is needed to compare the chicken with the typical member of the birds category . The features that the chicken shares with the prototypical bird is seen as an appropriate solution .

There are two essential principles in the human categorization theory of prototype . The first one is ' A cognitive economy' which tells that people do not overuse their cognitive efforts to process or acquire information . The second principle is referred

to a ' perceived word structure' and it asserts that the world possesses a co-relational structure . Wings and feathers , for instance , are collocations (occur frequently together) . Humans , to form categories and organize them , depend on co-relation structure (Finch ,2005) .

Malt and Okami (2019) say that in defining a certain concept the number of attributes or features is necessary . The shape of 'triangle' is an architecture one and has three corners . Concepts like triangle , water , and oxygen are of so clear boundaries . However , there are concepts having unclear (fuzzy) boundaries . This leads to say that not all the concepts are of obvious boundaries . To determine how or where a certain concept begins and /or ends is not easy . In Europe , piano and trumpet , are typical instances of the category of musical instruments . Briefly speaking , concepts may have clear or fuzzy boundaries . The difficulty of deciding where a specific concept begins or ends brings fuzzy boundaries into appearance .

The problem of the study at hands is in the process of forming prototypes , as the prototypical instance differs from one person to another due to some reasons that the researchers attempt to discover in this study . In this study , it is aimed to exhibit what effects the prototypical instance and exhibiting how prototypes differ from one language user or cultural setting to another. This paper hypothesizes that each ideal language user possesses his/ her own typical example (prototype) , the social or environmental factors such as (religion , age , one's background knowledge) are important in the formation of prototypes .

1.2   Research Methodology

In this study , there are ten sets of phrases that are used in everyday conversations .The phrases are taken from this site (www.esperssoenglish. net /English-speaking –courses) . Each set consists of five phrases , forms a category and the phrase that scores more points than the others is considered as the category typical member . A questionnaire has been made to achieve the aimed results. The researchers apply the questionnaire to the fourth class students of English Department at University of Kirkuk . The participants are fifty students only . In the questionnaire , each participant has to say which phrase is the category typical instance and the reason(s) of giving it the features of typicality. Two analysis methods are followed namely qualitative and quantitative to meet the suggested aims . Each category and its members are tabulated , under the table a textual analysis is given   . The question is the category and the phrases are the members of the category . According to their centrality(scored points) , the category members are sequenced .

Chiren's research (2013) whose title ' Studies in Sociology of Science' is adopted as a model for analyzing the data . In this model , there are eleven factors regarded as reasons of forming prototypical instances . The factors are Background knowledge of the participants , culture and custom , participant's age , religion , commonality of the instance , familiarity of the instance , scientific and technological developments of the participant(s) , experience and living environment of the participants . The prototypical instance is formed due to one or more of those factors . The category typical instance is placed above the other instances . Three-point scale is utilized to tell if there are fuzzy boundaries among the category instances .

1.3 Data Analysis and Results

In this point , the researchers analyze the chosen data to arrive at the desired results .

Q. No 1 .How to tell someone to wait .

Phrase. No	Phrase	Score
1	Could you give me a minute ?	21
2	Just a minute	16
3	Hang on a second	9
4	Hold on	2
5	Hold your horses	2

Discussion

The table shows that each sentence has certain scored points and this make it easy to decide which category member is the most representative one . The sentence **' Could you give me a minute ?'** is the prototypical member and the others are considered as marginal category members . The formation of the central member(prototype) is attributed to the factors of familiarity , culture and custom . The sentences No. 4 and No. 5 have fuzzy boundaries and they are regarded as poor members due to their little points .

Q. No 2 . How to say someone is talented .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	She/ He is very gifted	31
2	She / He is a natural	9
3	She / He could do it in her/his sleep	6
4	She/ He is born to….	4
5	She / He knows it inside out	0

Discussion

It is very apparent that the sentence **'S/he is very gifted'** is the prototypical member in the category in question . It scored thirty - one points as shown in the table. The factor of background knowledge ,on the basis of the questionnaire , is responsible in the creation of the typical member .The other members are marginal due to their points. The table also shows that the sentences No. 2 , No. 3 and No 4 are fuzzy as they exhibit closeness degrees . The poorest member , as tabulated above , is the last one and this is because it has no point .

Q. No 3. How to say someone is correct .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	That is right	25
2	I'm afraid you're right	11
3	You've nailed it	9
4	That is spot	3
5	You've nailed it on the head	2

Discussion

The sentence **'That is right'** is the prototypical member in the given category as it has twenty –five points which are more than the points of the other sentences. Commonality is the reason behind creating the central member .The other members are not as central as the one that is placed on the top instead they are marginal ones . The sentences No.2 and No. 3 are fuzzy. The last two sentences are fuzzy as well . The last sentence , due to its points in comparison with the other sentences , is the poorest sentence .

Q. NO 4. How to say someone is wrong.

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	No, you have got it wrong	25
2	I'm afraid you are mistaken	11
3	I'm afraid that you are not quite right	9
4	No, that is all wrong	4
5	Bullshit	3

Discussion

The sentence **'No , you have got it wrong'** that is placed above all and scores more points than the others is the central member in the category . Due to the twenty- five points and the factors of living experience and background knowledge , the first sentence is the prototype . The other sentences are not as central as the first . So they are marginal ones. The sentences No. 2 and No. 3 are fuzzy . The last two sentences are fuzzy as well . The poorest sentence in the table is the last one as it has only three points .

Q. NO 5. How to say someone is smart .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	She is genius	23
2	He is brilliant	15
3	He is a smart cookie	6
4	He is very bright	4
5	He is really sharp	2

Discussion

'She is genius' is the prototype of the category in question as it is placed in the top and takes twenty-three points . It is the central member . Background knowledge of the questionnaire takers is the factor of creating the prototypical sentence .The other four members are marginal due to their scored points . The sentences No. 3 and No.4 have fuzzy boundaries . The last two sentences are fuzzy too . The last sentence which has two points only is considered as the poorest category member .

Q. No 6. How to say someone is stupid.

Phrase .No	Phrase	Score
1	He is really dump	20
2	He is a bit slow	14
3	She is a complete idiot	6
4	She is not the sharpest tool in the shed	5
5	She is a few cards short of a deck	5

Discussion

The sentence , **'He is really dumb'** , as shown in the table , is the prototypical member in the category . It scores twenty points and this allows it to be more central than the others . The factor of the subjects' background knowledge is the main reason of creating the prototype . The sentences No.3 ,No. 4 and No . 5 are fuzzy in the category . The last two sentences have scored five points only and they are the poor members in the category .

Q. No 7. How to talk about future .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	Time will tell	19
2	It'll will happen in the near future	14
3	Sooner or later	8
4	It's right around the corner	5
5	It'll happen any day now	4

Discussion

The sentence **'Time will tell'** which is located above the other sentences and scores nineteen points is the prototype of the given category . It is the central member . Familiarity of the sentence and the subjects' religion , based on the questionnaire , are the factors of forming the prototype . The other sentences are not as central as the first one that is why they are marginal . Sentence No. 3 and No.4 are fuzzy due to their closeness and the last two sentences are fuzzy for the same reason (closeness) .

Q. No 8. How to say tired .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	I'm exhausted	30
2	I'm dead tired	15
3	I'm spent	3
4	I'm pooped	1
5	I'm beat	1

Discussion

The sentence **' I'm exhausted'** is the prototype of the category given above due to its scored points . The prototype , depending on the questionnaire , is more familiar than the other members .Therefore, Familiarity of the sentence is the responsible factor in the formation of the central category member . The other members are not as central as the first one and they are regarded marginal. The last three sentences , because of their close degrees , have fuzzy boundaries . Sentences No. 4 and No . 5 are the poorest members of the category .

Q. No 9 . How to encourage someone .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	Keep up the good work	16
2	That was a nice try	11
3	That is a real improvement	9
4	You have almost got it	9
5	You are on the right track	5

Discussion

'Keep up the good work' is the prototype of the category tabulated above. Its points are sixteen which gives it allowance to be placed above all the other members .The commonality and the questionnaire takers' technological (knowledge) development are the factors of forming the typical member . Moreover**, Keep up the good work** is one of the sentences that Facebook app suggests to its users in case of liking to drop a comment to encourage someone . The other sentences are not as central as the first one and they are marginal .There are fuzzy boundaries among the sentences numbered 2 , 3 and 4 . The poor sentence in the table is the last one due to its little points .

Q. No 10. How to ask someone to do something .

Phrase . No	Phrase	Score
1	Could you please…?	23
2	I'd appreciate if you could …..	11
3	Please ,….	7
4	Would you mind …. ?	5
5	Can you … ?	4

Discussion

As shown in the table above , the sentence **'Could you please … ?'** is the prototype of the category . Its twenty-three points allow it to be the central sentence. The others are not as central as the typical sentence that is why they are considered as marginal ones . The factors of familiarity of the sentence and the questionnaire takers' background knowledge are the reasons of creating the representative member . Besides , **could you please** is used to sound more polite . There are fuzzy boundaries in this category particularly among the last three members . The last sentence , due to its four points , is the poor category member .

Frequency of the Factors of forming the Prototypical Category Member.

No	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
1	Background Knowledge	5	33 %
2	Culture and custom	1	6 %
3	Age	-	-
4	Religion	1	6 %
5	Commonality	2	13 %
6	Familiarity	4	26 %
7	Scientific and technological developments	1	6 %
8	Experience and living environment	1	6%
.	.	15	%

The table shows that the questionnaire takers do not use all the factors of the adopted model . Background knowledge of the subjects is repeated five times and its rate is (33%   ) whereas familiarity of the sentences is repeated four times only and its rate is (26%) . The other factors , as shown in the table , are repeated only once or twice . Therefore , the factors like background knowledge and familiarity which are used more than the others are major ones in creating the prototypes in this study .

1.4 Conclusion

Based on what is mentioned above , the researchers have come with the points given below :

1.Each single person does have his/ her prototype relying on certain social and personal factors .

2.The suggested social factors particularly (one's background knowledge and familiarity) have significant roles in forming the prototypes .

3.The context has a well-built relation with the process of creating the prototypical category member .

4.Each group of people (discourse community) has its prototypes .

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