



The application of MIPVU procedure for identifying metaphors in Persian: teacher-student discourse in 1st and 2nd grade of primary schools

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article is an attempt to apply MIPVU (Steen et al., 2010) for identifying and extracting metaphors used in the educational discourse of teaching the Persian language to first and second grades of elementary schools in Naghdeh. The main objective is to investigate the challenges of applying MIPVU to Persian and present a template for tagging metaphor-related words according to morphological, syntactic, and semantic features of Persian. The second objective is to analyze the conceptual metaphors underlying educational discourse in the first and second grades of elementary schools in Naghadeh.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this article, the MIPVU framework and its theoretical basis have been applied. MIPVU is based on a combination of cognitive linguistics approach to metaphor with a broad view of discourse analysis.

For metaphor analysis, the CMT model(Lakoff & Johnson,1980) is applied to extract the conceptual metaphors underlying the linguistic metaphors attested in the first phase by using MIPVU.

The overall procedure formulated for metaphor identification in MIPVU looks like this:

1. Find metaphor-related words (MRWs) by examining the text on a word-by-word basis.
2. When a word is used indirectly and that use may potentially be explained by some form of cross-domain mapping from a more basic meaning of that word, mark the word as metaphorically used (MRW)
3. When a word is used directly and that use may potentially be explained by some

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form of cross-domain mapping to a more basic referent or topic in the text, mark the word as direct metaphor (MRW, direct)

4. When words are used for lexico-grammatical substitution, such as third-person personal pronouns, or when ellipsis occurs where words may be seen as missing, as in some forms of coordination, and when a direct or indirect meaning is conveyed by those substitutions or ellipses that may potentially be explained by some form of cross-domain mapping from a more basic meaning, referent, or topic, insert a code for implicit metaphor (MRW, implicit)

5. When a word functions as a signal that a cross-domain mapping may be at play, mark it as a metaphor flag (Mflag).

6. When a word is a new-formation coined, examine the distinct words that are its independent parts according to steps 2 through 5. (Steen et al, 2010: 26)

The classroom interaction between teachers and students of first and second grades of 3 elementary schools in Naghadeh (West Azerbaijan Province) was recorded, and then the sentences used by the teacher were transcribed; Finally two sets of data were prepared: First-grade elementary school (5886 words) and second-grade elementary school (4630 words). These data sets consist of transcriptions of spoken sentences used by teachers in teaching Persian to first and second grades students in elementary schools of West Azerbaijan Province, Iran. To these data, POS (Part Of Speech) tags were assigned using Stanford NLP processor, then each lexical unit received their metaphor-related tags in Excel format by the researcher. The online Abadis dictionary was used as a reliable source for identifying the basic and contextual senses of each lexical unit. And at last, a format was presented for Persian metaphor analysis applying MIPVU.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This article discusses some challenges in applying the MIPVU protocol to Persian in annotating words as metaphorical. Problematic issues include demarcation of lexical units such as compound verbs and compound nouns, clitics, and also lack of suitable and corpus-based dictionaries of Persian. Based on these issues, and the overall process in MIPVU, this article can be used as a detailed framework to apply MIPVU for identifying metaphors in Persian both in individual researches and in corpus projects.

The educational discourse of teaching Persian to the first and second grades of elementary schools was analyzed according to their use of metaphor-related words. The results showed that only a very small percentage (1.2%) of the whole data was used metaphorically, and the frequency of metaphors in the second class was higher than their use in the discourse of the first class. Most of the metaphors were indirect metaphors and just a few direct metaphors were used by one of the three teachers. Based on conceptual metaphor theory, 4 conceptual metaphors were extracted from linguistic metaphors attested in the first phase (applying MIPVU for identifying metaphor-related words).

PERSIAN ALPHABETS ARE GEOMETRIC SHAPES/OBJECTS

CHILDREN ARE NON-HUMAN

BOOKS/SENTENCES/WORDS ARE CONTAINERS

IMAGES ARE HUMANS

4. CONCLUSION

As its first objective, this article tried to tackle some of the main challenges in

applying MIPVU procedure for identifying and annotating metaphors in Persian and presented a useful and detailed framework. It offers solutions for successfully applying the main procedure for Persian according to its morphology, syntax and the rules of its writing system, so it can be readily used as a basis for further studies in the field of cognitive linguistics and also in computational and corpus linguistics.

As its second objective, based on the analysis of the metaphors used by teachers in teaching Persian to non-native students, this article proves that teachers are not aware of the effects of metaphors in teaching and conveying educational content more effectively to young learners. This means that the teachers had no idea what a metaphor is and how it can be used directly and willingly to stimulate learners' unconscious knowledge. This highlights the need to inform and educate these teachers to understand the importance and necessity of using appropriate metaphors in classroom and in the interaction with students.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphor theory; Educational discourse; Metaphor identification procedure; MIPVU; Tagging metaphor-related words