Extended Abstract

An Analysis of Two Stories by Susan Taqdis, "At the Deep Bottom of the Well" and "The Shadow which Had No Head, No Tail, And Even No Body" from the Perspective of Directional Conceptual Metaphor

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Introduction

Writing and telling stories can be used best to help raise and educate children. When we are concerned with human's quest for the meaning of life, stories may give us the answer. Through various narratives, humans are exposed to other people's experiences which might be experienced by themselves in different situations. By reading fiction and watching movies and theaters, one becomes more familiar with moral issues (Sheikh Rezaei, 2009: 154–159).

Hence, taking into account the importance of fiction, writers use binary oppositions as one educational method among others to create didactic works. One of its main types, namely, the directional opposition, sometimes comes to the writers' aid.

Piaget believes that a child reflects what he/she has learned from the environment imitatively in the form of a game, through the imitation the environment, personalization, and abstract concepts (Aminpour, 2016: 28). Conceptual metaphor is one linguistic manifestation of this action, which Susan

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Taqdis has well exploited in her works "The Shadow which Had No Head, No Tail, And Even No Body" and "At the Deep Bottom of the Well".

Methodology, Literature Review and Purpose

Following a descriptive-analytical method, this article aims specifically to examine the directional metaphors in two works of fiction by Susan Taqdis. Thus, the conceptual metaphors containing directions are first highlighted and then analyzed.

In various studies, children's literature is investigated in terms of their conceptual metaphors. Some examples are Salahi and Nabizadeh Ardabili (2019) who after investigating conceptual metaphors about the sense of taste in children's poetry, found out that the metaphors have been conceptualized through the most tangible perceptions of children, and it corresponds the children's view of the world. Sojoudi and Ghanbari (2012) analyzed the concept of time based on the conceptual metaphor of time and understanding it in the child's mind, and concluded that Persian-speaking children at age groups A, B and C understand the concept of time as they perceive movement in place. Zahiri Abdo-Vand (2021) focuses on personification, an ontological type of these metaphors. By analyzing the feelings of fear and joy in eight Iranian and Spanish novels, Karbalai Sadiq and Rabipour (2022) have concluded that there are more conceptual metaphors related to happiness in the works of female authors than male authors; and female authors are more willing to substitute the target domain of colors for the source domain of fear, which shows the importance of the authors' gender in this case. Oskuyi, Dadashi and Sahabi (2019) analyzed Samad Behrangi's way of expressing his justice-seeking thoughts by drawing on a fantasy world for children and teenagers. The aim of the current research is to analyze the effect of conceptual metaphors by binary oppositions and to show concepts are conveyed in this way in these two works.

Discussion

The basis of our research in this article is the stories "At the Deep Bottom of the Well" and "The Shadow which Had No Head, No Tail, And Even No Body". In the first story, we are dealing with two opposite elements, top and bottom. As we move towards the end of the story, this contrast becomes stronger. The two metaphorical concepts that are in conflict with each other in this story are "salvation is high" and "captivity is low". According to these two opposite metaphorical concepts, we are looking for mappings that follow the two concepts facing each other; The mappings of these concepts are analyzed based on the theory of directional conceptual metaphor and then according to directional contrast.

In this story, by using conceptual metaphor and opposite concepts, and by setting up a situation that is created by the actions of animals, the author tries to teach this point indirectly: in order to get out of prison and to achieve victory, you have to try.

In the second story, two directions up and down are expressed in the form of directional conceptual metaphors "trouble is low" and "salvation is high", with opposite concepts. The shadow of a

cloud fell from the sky on the earth and the result is his wandering and getting caught in the bondage of earthly ties and trying to find his origin.

"Returning to the origin" which is the central theme of this story has many manifestations in Iranian culture and mysticism. "Finding the origin" is also mentioned in mythology. In this regard, Mircea Eliade says that every new state in this world is the result of a previous state, and man is constantly renovating his surroundings to remind him of it. (cf. Eliade, 1984: 43-46). In this story, there are linguistic metaphors that are in opposition to the two conceptual metaphors presented and reveal the author's line of thought. In this story, Taqdis has addressed the basic theme of mysticism, i.e. separation from one's origin and the desire to regain it, and she has reflected these two conceptual metaphors according to Iranian culture and mysticism.

Conclusion

In the two stories under study, we are faced with four directional metaphors along with their opposite elements. Therefore, according to these stories, we can say that Susan Taqdis has used directional metaphors to express the concept of liberation and overcoming inferiority. Taqdis indirectly instills this method in her stories for children and teenagers. She presents a confrontation of good and evil and tries to show the importance and the superiority of good to the audience. Based on this method, Susan Taqdis has used the method of polarizing conceptual metaphors in her stories, which can be called "binary conceptual metaphors". In addition, considering the opposite themes of these two stories, which are always seen in world and Iranian mythology as well as Iranian-Islamic mysticism, it seems that Susan Taqdis has made this contrast in her stories and paid attention to mythological beliefs and mystical-Islamic didactic topics based on the themes in ancient cultural traditions; therefore, she is influenced by the ancient culture and literature of Iran in the creation and construction of her works.

Keywords: directional conceptual metaphor, binary opposition, Susan Taqdis

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