Categorization in Selected Daily Questions: A Linguistic Perspective

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Abstract

In this paper , the researcher deals with the categorization phenomenon and how it develops throughout its history. As a matter of fact , the categorization process throughout its history , has witnessed three theories . Each theory has its own standard features which make it unlike the other theories . The researcher has taken the latest theory to analyze his data . The data have been gathered from an online site. They are a set of every day questions and each question has its responses . There are , frankly speaking , six questions which are completely adequate to arrive at the desired points or results. The data are analyzed in terms of qualitative analysis method which focuses heavily on textual , descriptive analysis. The researcher has used Chiren's paper entitled " Studies in Sociology of Science" (2013) as a framework or model to answer the suggested questions of the paper . The researcher has raised the following questions (i) How does a social group and its members have their own typical category member? Which social factors are responsible in the process of forming the typical member? At the end of the current paper , the researcher has drawn a conclusion for his this study. we can say that each social group has its own prototype(s) due to the differences that each society has . The factors of commonality and familiarity of a certain idea , concept , object etc., have a very good role in the formation process of what is at the discussion carpet .

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التصنيف في أسئلة يومية مختارة : منظور لغوي

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كلية التربية المفتوحة

الـمستخلـص

في هذه الورقة البحثية , يتعامل الباحث مع ظاهرة التصنيف وكيف تطورت على مدى تاريخها .
في الحقيقة , عملية التصنيف على مر تاريخها شهدت ثلاثة نظريات . كل نظرية لها خصائصها
التي تجعلها مختلفة عن البقية . أتخذ الباحث النظرية الثالثة لتحليل عيناته . جمعت العينات من
موقع على الانترنيت . وهي مجموعة من الأسئلة ولكل سؤال أجوبته . هنالك , بصراحة , ستة أسئلة
يومية وهي كافية تماما للوصول للنقاط المنشودة . حللت العينات بتعابير الطريقة النوعية للتحليل
التي تركز على التحليل النصي و الوصفي . أستخدم الباحث الورقة البحثية ذات العنوان " دراسات
في علم اجتماع العلوم " (2013) كإطار او نموذج للإجابة على أسئلة الورقة البحثية . رفع ال
هذه الأسئلة   (1) كيف كل مجموعة اجتماعية واعضائها لديهم مثال نموذجي . (2) أي العوامل
الاجتماعية لديها دور مهم في تشكيل المثال النموذجي؟ . في نهاية الورقة البحثية الحالية , أعطى
الباحث خاتمه , نستطيع القول أن لكل مجموعة اجتماعية مثالها النموذجي بسب الاختلافات التي
تملكها المجتمعات .العوامل معرفية وعمومية الفكرة , المفهوم , المجسم لديها دور جيد في عملية
تشكيل ما مطروح على سجادة النقاش .
الكلمات المفتاحية: التصنيف، الخصائص، التمثيل العقلي، نظرية المثال، افتراضات أرسطو

1. INTRODUCTION

Linguistically**, it** has been stated that the concept of category might be used at distinct levels and senses . At its popular level , the notion of categorization is referred to as a process in which our knowledge and experience are organized into concepts (Crystal : 2008) . Categorization is a strategy that provides assistance in organizing , selecting information . So due to categorization , the process of carrying out representations and sub-sequent constructions becomes too easy . In the categorization process , entities are recognized and identified via our cognitive abilities as social group members .

Categorizing things , concepts , objects , and even individuals is a significant process in our daily situations and/or contexts (Di Carol:2017) .

Identifying and understanding information is basically achieved via the categorization process as it assists us to draw distinctions among objects , structures , representations and events . That is why it is a remarkable process (Corrigon et al : 1989) .

Wherever we go , we definitely deal and face distinct representations , objects , items etc , in our world . In this sense , categorization is an important cognitive strategy . This strategy has a vital role in helping us to draw distinctions between events , understand information and identify general information . We do not store the objects or events in our minds , but their representations (Roberta et al : 2009). The current study aims
1. To examine the categorization process in our daily life via question-answer strategy.
2. To determine the categorization theories and their historical development.
3. To see how social groups have their distinct category members.
4. To investigate the factors used in creating the category member.
The suggested questions are:

1. What are the most commonly used factors in creating the category member(s)?

2. How is the categorization process is achieved ?

3. Are the factors , from one social group to another , of creating the category member different or alike ?

2. MODEL OF ANALYSIS

In this paper , the researcher uses a qualitative research approach to analyze the gathered data . The qualitative method is concerned with descriptive , textual and non-statistical analysis . Apparently , the researcher analyzes the data in terms of the prototype categorization theory . The data include a good number of questions and their multiple responses . The responses are listed according to their typicality degree , the first response is the richest one whereas the last one is the poorest response . The gathered date are a game that is played among colleagues , families or classmates at spare time .The typical response shows or scores more points than the others which are seen as marginal responses . The typicality of the response allows it to be the first one or on the top of the other responses. The researcher follows a single-faced model to analyze his data namely (Chiren : 2013) . In her research , Chiren used some factors that have an ultimate role in forming the prototype(s) . The factors are the entity commonality , the entity familiarity , the subject's religion , the subject's background knowledge , culture and custom , technological and scientific developments , the subject's age , the subject's daily experience, the subject's environment . The data are taken from a site which is accessible online and is listed with the references at the end of the paper at hands.

2. 1 The Concept of Categorization and its History

The process of categorization has been through three developmental stages or theories namely the classical , prototype and exemplar. Each of these theories views the concept of concept in its way . In terms of the first theory , the concept is defined as a set of features that are important in applying or using that concept . In the second theory , the concept is seen as prototype that represents the typical features of the member of a certain category . In sense of exemplar theory , the concept is defined as set of examples which are stored in people's minds (Serra and Cucchiara: 2009). The researcher , in the coming lines , sheds light on the above-mentioned theories. The first theory in categorization is the classical or sometimes is called Aristotelian which has its essential assumptions and they are :

1.Features are bilateral , which indicates an entity is a member of a certain category or it does not belong to the category) .

2. Categories are of obvious limits , which means it is not tough to distinguish the categories .
3. The category members are similar in their status , that means the members are   equally seen or graded .
4. The member of a category has to have the essential and sufficient properties to be considered as a member (Taylor : 1995) .

   "All black look alike" is an assumption that means not all black are alike but are dissimilar from other social groups . Categorization is used due to the large amount of information . The following two points show why categorization is necessary in our life :

1.People's daily adjustments are led via categorization that forms clusters and classes of objects . Human's life experiences are necessary to place the objects in their proper category .

2. The combination of categories and perception is automatically done . People , doubtlessly , have ability for objects identification (Mcgarty : 1999).Categories are acquired in five steps which are :

1. The structural description of a category helps in acquiring that category . People perceive the most important aspects of a category member . Take the example of " chair" , the surfaces of the chair like the seat , back and arms are instantly perceived.

2. People search for the category representations which resemble the structural description of the entity . This means , we look for the representations that share different degrees of similarity with the description of the entity we try to reach . The description of chair shares similarity degrees not only with its representation but with other representations of table , sofa and stool .

3. The similar representations of a category are picked up . We need to choose the mentally stored representation that matches the description of the category in hands.

4. People try variously to infer the entity . By depending on our knowledge , we draw an inference that is associated with the category. If an entity is categorized as a bed , we are of aware its functions like we lie down in it, etc .

5. Our mental abilities in categorizing things are remarkably amazing . At different points of time , we store a new item via categorizing and comparing it with what is earlier stored   (kovecses:2006) .

Historically, Studies in representing categories are led via two categorization models namely prototype and exemplar . In terms of the former , categories are represented by means of set of features . Fruit , for instance , is a concept that possesses adequate information to represent fruit . In terms of the later , the exemplar does not go hand in hand with the prototype model. Due to its assumption which states the examples faced in the people's environment are used in the representation of a category . In this model , distinct types of fruits that we know represent the category of fruit (Voorspoels : 2008) .

Concepts , in the exemplar model , do not have definitional cores . But this model uses similarity as it is being used in the prototype model . Take the example of bird , if it is showing similarity with the examples which are mentally stored , then it is a bird (Doris : 2010) . One's memory , in the exemplar categorization model , places properly entities , objects , concepts , ideas in various categories . Once a new thing is encountered , the minds automatically put it in its category . Table , as an example , is a solid structure and so are all the tables . It is of four legs and flat surface. That means , it is not difficult for us to locate any sort of table in the exemplar category of tables. In such technique , objects are categorized appropriately in their categories and people do not need to name or analyze the new object (https://www.alleydog.com/glossery/definition.php).

Bybee and Hopper (2001   ) say that exemplar has been presented in psychology. Tokens of a certain category represent that category in our memories and these memories are arranged in the form of a cognitive map . Thus , memories of dissimilar examples are not close from each other and vice versa .

Prinz (2002)   has explained that people , in their categorization strategy , compare the new concept and/or object with the old examples (sored in their minds). The clarification of typicality impacts has been rivalled via the exemplar theory .   The exemplar theory is more reliable and workable than the prototype theory when it is relevant to superordinate categories like furniture ,clothing and vehicles . Superordinate category members are not alike and it is a tough task to think how a prototype representation shorten such different objects . Cognitive semantics or more accurately prototype semantics has rejected the traditional view of categorizing daily concepts .   A specific question might be raised " why some ducks which are unable to quack and wingless are categorized as ducks ?" . Factually , they show the features that are not different from the features of the typical duck , that is why they are located within the ducks category . If the entity has certain features to share with the most representative member of a category , then it is a member of the category at question (Kortman : 2020) . There are two simple ways to understand the concept of prototype . Certain members of a category are instantly identified and their representations come to the minds . If those members are treated or seen as the most typical ones that represent the category , then the following definitions are workable ' typical and/or central examples' , 'most ideal and/or representative example in the class' or ' best instance of something' . If prototypes are dealt with cognitively , then they are cognitive -point-reference (Ungerer and Schmid : 2006) .

Let us turn our attention to the prototype's role in mental representation. The question " How do we understand the meanings of a word ?" Experts say that people's mental representations concerning a certain word meaning lead to the understanding of that word . Those representations , on concrete occasions, are created or formed when a new linguistic form is met . We are of good ability to name the things that surround us in our environment and form mental representations about those things. When a kid , for instance , hears the word 'bird' and a boy points to a robin , then the kid forms the mental representations of 'bird' . Linguists see and refer to these representations as semantic prototypes. Semantic prototypes of language users' are socially different . Semantic prototypes are formed in concrete situations . They are relevant to occasions , events , objects , phenomena that is why they are seen as full and complete (Tatiana : 2007).

3.DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSTION

In this section , the researcher analyzes his data to arrive at plausible answers for the questions set above.

Question No. 1

 Name something a funeral director would hate to discover about the body they are about to bury .

Table No. 1

Possible Responses	The Responses' Scores
That is alive	60
That is the wrong person	18
That is reeks	6
That is missing	5
That has something contagious	4

Discussion

It is shown in the drawn table above that the response " that is alive" is the prototypical one due to its high score which is sixty . Most of the participants who had participated in the game responded the first response , and the main reason or cause for giving such response is the commonality and/or familiarity of the idea that the dead person might be alive . In fact , such response may have a little logical sense. At the same time it would be scared and horrible for the alive people who attend the funeral . The other

responses are highly relevant to the question , but their scores are not as high as of the first . That is why , they are seen as non-central ones.

Question. No 2

2.If you live to be 100 , what do you think you will be doing on Saturday night?

Table. No 2

Possible Responses	The Responses' Scores
Sleeping	37
Watching TV	28
Having sex	5
Dancing	4
Drinking	4
Eating	3
Gambling	3

Discussion

The possible interpretation of the question is that " what do you do at Saturday night if you are 100- year- old?" Most of the participants have given the response of sleeping which has 37 points . It is the prototype of the given question .The participants answered the question consciously and instantly as everyone knows that old people mostly do not do anything but sleeping. The participants' background knowledge , the commonality , familiarity of the response are major factors of forming the first response. If we have a close look at the other responses , we can deduce that the responses are culture-specific ones. In Iraq , we rarely find a man or a woman whose age is 100 can do the actions listed above. So , all the responses except the typical one are formed due to the factor of culture and custom .

Question No. 3

3.Name something that might be a day old .

Table No .3

Possible Responses	The Responses' Scores
Food	50

A baby	16
Animal/ insect	8
News	3

Discussion

   As shown in the table " food" is the typical response as it might be stored in the refrigerator a day or more . The participants have responded such response due to the factor of daily experience . That is to say , the participants' life experience has a vital role in forming the typical response . Moreover , almost everyone knows or familiar with the idea of soring food for day(s) . Here an other factor is used to form the response of food which is commonality and/or familiarity . The other responses have , in fact , a logical sense to be responses to such a question , but the rules of the adopted theory say that the response that scores more points is regarded as the prototype of the category at question .

Question No . 4
4.Name something a wife turns on just to annoy her husband .
Table No. 4

Possible Responses	The Responses' Scores
TV	50
Radio	23
Vacuum	13
The lights	4

Discussion

   If we have a very close and accurate look at the responses , we can say that all of the responses are fantastic sources of annoying to anyone asleep or even active. TV as shown is the prototype and it is the simplest one since it is controlled via remote control , it does not need actions or physical energy. It is easy to be remembered and mentioned due to the large sizes of TVs in our houses. So , the factors of commonality , familiarity , technological development, the participants' age (gender) as women know how they can annoy their husbands. The other responses have scored good points , but are regarded non-typical ones. The last one is the poorest response due to its the four points .

Question No. 5
5.Name something that thrill seekers love to ride on .
Table No.5

Possible Responses	The Responses' Scores
Rollercoaster	77
Motorcycle	8
Hang glider	3
Zip line	3

Discussion

All the given responses are used for joy and entertainment, but they differ in their scores according to the individuals' preferences . It sounds that most of the participants prefer rollercoaster most . This preference comes due to the commonality as it is more common than the other responses listed below it. The factor of technological development also has a significant role since such game works or needs too much electricity to function properly .Moreover , the participants' age is another reason for forming the given typical response as kids may not have such thinking style , and are not , in fact , allowed to take part in such games.

Question No. 6
6.Name something people try to squeeze into.
Table No. 6

Possible Responses	The Responses' Scores
Tight clothes / shoes	84
Parking spot	3
Crowded bus	2
Dining booth	2

Discussion

The given responses show that all of them are things that people attempt to squeeze into , but the points of the responses are different. The first one is the most representative response due to the commonality factor . Most of the people, regardless age or gender ,

have tried squeezing into tight clothes or shoes . If we gaze once again at the points of the typical response and compare them with the points of the others , we find a huge difference in numbers . The factors of background knowledge and the daily experience have good roles in forming the first response . In terms background Knowledge , people are aware of the things that they need to squeeze into and try them on. In terms of daily experience , most of us have experienced tight clothes and /or shoes . The other responses are possible and logical ones and regarded as marginal due to their poverty of points.

4.CONCLUSION

 Depending on what has been above-mentioned and since the researcher has followed the prototype categorization theory , he arrives at that , Each social group possesses its typical category member or example. Each single person and/ or social member has his/her categorization abilities in picturing things ,concepts , ideas …etc . His/her knowledge , thinking style , lifestyle can all influence categorizing the surroundings . Categorization , in our daily life particularly via adopting the prototype theory , is achieved by comparing the marginal member with the typical one . As a result , the similarity degree ,that the new member shows or shares with the typical instance, allows us to categorize it as a member of the category at hands. The factors of commonality and familiarity of a category member play an important role in creating the prototype(s) of that category .The factors of the participants' background knowledge , age , scientific and technological development have been used in forming the most representative response(s) .

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