

Metaphor outside Literature: A Case Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Social Sciences

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Abstract

There have been debates among metaphor theorists concerning the realization of metaphors both in literature and outside literature, including the continuity, or discontinuity between the two. The aims of this paper, however, are to examine the uses and functions of those types of metaphor on the basis of conceptual metaphor categories (i.e. orientational, ontological, and structural metaphors) identified in economics text as part of social sciences. This study adopts a theoretical framework which consists of two parts: (1) a cognitive approach, (2) a corpus-based approach. It is conducted by employing a qualitative method, particularly a textual analysis taking the form of a case study, including quantitative data in the form of frequencies of metaphor occurrence. Analyses of the uses and functions of conceptual metaphor in economics text are conducted using a monolingual corpus as data which is taken from some English economics textbooks (i.e. Micro- and Macroeconomics, Management, and Economic Development). WordSmith Tools version 5.0 is also utilized based on key words having higher Keyness Index for eliciting examples of metaphorical expressions existing in the study corpus. Research findings reveal that nineteen types of metaphor representing the three conceptual metaphor categories have been widely used in the economics text and function as alternative methods to explain, discuss, even argue those abstract concepts in economics, including economic realities, in more concrete ways. The findings also strongly support the debate that there is the continuity in terms of categorization (i.e. methodology) adopted in dealing with the types of metaphor existing in literature and outside literature.

Keywords: cognitive approach, corpus-based approach, economics text, literature, metaphor