

Paradigmatic Analysis of a Metaphorical Expression

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Abstract: This paper proposes the existence of a particular type of constructional idiom, that it referred to as ‘paradigmatic pattern’. It is shown that, while it is clearly a metaphorical expression, it does not participate in a systematic conceptual mapping that could explain its central role in framing immigration discourse. It is presented an analysis in terms of the concept of paradigmatic phraseological patterns mentioned above. It is concluded by sketching the outlines of an extension of Metaphorical Pattern Analysis (Stefanowitsch 2006) that captures conceptual mappings not only between source and target domains in the sense of conceptual metaphor theory, but between domains of any kind and that as Paradigmatic Pattern Analysis.

Keywords: Metaphorical Pattern Analysis, paradigmatic phrase logical patterns, idiom, framing, metaphor, paradigmatic patterns, concept, expression.

Introduction. The existence of a particular type of constructional idiom referred to as ‘paradigmatic pattern’. Like a metaphorical pattern (in the sense of Metaphorical Pattern Analysis), a paradigmatic pattern establishes a correspondence between a word occurring in a particular slot of the idiom and another word more typical of that slot, contributing to a conceptual mapping between the domains instantiated by these words. Unlike in the case of metaphorical patterns, the domain evoked by the paradigmatic pattern is not the domain in which the pattern occurs in its literal meaning, but a domain evoked by a highly frequent co lexeme in one of the slots.

As in the case of metaphorical patterns, however, this co lexeme contributes (aspects of) its meaning even when it is replaced by another word. I suggest a generalized version of Metaphorical Pattern Analysis, referred to as Paradigmatic Pattern Analysis, to deal with such expressions. The term *frame* is introduced in Lakoff (2004) and defined as a “mental structure that shape[s] the way we see the world” (Lakoff 2004); the specific examples he and others discuss are mostly cases of metaphorical mappings in the sense of conceptual metaphor theory to the extent that the two notions are equated (see, for example, Lakoff 2007: 69). This is understandable, as metaphor is probably the most well-researched cognitive mechanisms that project the logic of a linguistically instantiated source domain onto a target domain, shaping the way we think about the latter. However, there may be other types of conceptual mapping that are instantiated in (and/or emerge from) salient linguistic expressions and that can serve to shape the way we see a particular aspect of the world.

Another type of non-metaphorical framing mechanism based on the relationship between co lexemes (in sense of Stefanowitsch and Gries 2003) in a constructional idiom has been discussed. A case study of the phrase “language is the key to integration”, which plays a central role in the discourse surrounding immigration policy is presented. This phrase constitutes a particular type of constructional idiom which refer to as “paradigmatic phraseological pattern” and which establishes a linguistic correspondence between the co lexemes occurring in its

variable slot, contributing to a conceptual mapping between the domains associated with these co lexemes.

A general approach to linguistic patterns that (potentially) instantiate conceptual mappings from one domain to another: It is paradigmatic pattern analysis. Metaphorical patterns in the sense of Stefanowitsch (2006) are just one type of paradigmatic pattern – one, where the items in the paradigm belong to domains that are qualitatively different such that an entity could not literally be part of both domains. In what is considered the most typical case in conceptual metaphor theory, the reference (or source) domain is concrete and directly experienceable, the target domain is abstract and not (or only partially) experienceable, which can be analyzed as representing a metaphorical pattern that could be represented as [(mindcontainer) filled with (memorysubstance)], instantiating the mappings. But there does not need to be such a difference in concreteness and/or experienceability.

In general terms, once our subdomain has been arranged following the SLD, we can establish the set of paradigmatic relations that hold among its members. A paradigmatic relation refers to the relation among elements of the same category, and concerns substitution, more specifically, at the lexical level. There are some lexical relations that can be studied, such as: synonymy, homonymy, hyponymy/hyperonymy, and archilexemes. Firstly, homonyms are unrelated senses of the same phonological word. We can find the word *part* as a verb and a noun:

➤ *Part* (noun):

- ✓ “some but not all of a thing;
- ✓ a role played by an actor in a play, film/movie, etc;
- ✓ the words spoken by an actor in a particular role;
- ✓ music for a particular voice or instrument in a group singing or playing together;
- ✓ a line on a person’s head where the hair is divided with a comb.”

➤ *Part* (verb):

- ✓ “ if two things or parts of things part or you part them, they move away from each other.”

As we can see in the examples above, *part* can be a noun and a verb; therefore, they are lexemes of different categories but with the same spelling. Consequently, the meanings are not related, although the pronunciation is the same. In other words, they are homographs (senses of the same written word) and homophones (senses of the same spoken word). Strictly speaking, this lexical relation is not ‘intra-domain’. However, it is also possible to observe that within the same category, there are different senses of the same word. This means that they are also homonyms of the same syntactic category, and with the same spelling. For instance, in the definition of *part* as a noun there are four unrelated senses of the same word.

Hyponymy is the semantic relation of including terms that belong to a lower rank in meaning. As it is stated by Saeed [4, 69], “hyponymy is a relation of inclusion”, and “a hyponym includes the meaning of a more general word”. Hence, the more general term would be the hypernym or superordinate, whereas the more specific instances are the hyponyms.

Taking into account the Stepwise Lexical Decomposition, the hyponymy of the selected group of verbs would be separate. However, if we search for the verb *separate* in the Word Net webpage, the inherited hyponymy provided is *change*: (undergo a change; become different in essence; losing one's or its original nature) “She changed completely as she grew older; The weather changed last night”. Thus, our subdomain can be allocated within the general class of *change of state verbs*.

Nevertheless, within the subdomain under study, *separate* can be considered the archilexeme, as it is the topmost hyponymy in terms of which all other items can be defined directly or indirectly. The set of differentiating features or differentiate that characterize primarily

hyponymy relatives can be described by resorting to semic analysis as it was established in Lexematic Studies [1].

We are going to analyze the semantic features that determine the components of meaning of a word, following the theory of the analysis of meaning in terms of distinctive features that H. Geckeler (1984) explains in his book “Semantica estructural y teoria del campo lexico”.

Apart from the contribution of lexematics to the analysis of the components of the meaning of a word mentioned early in this study, [1, 263] also makes reference to a group of linguists in the United States that follows, to some extent, this analysis made in Europe. We shall regard as a paradigm any set of linguistic forms wherein:

(a) the meaning of every form has a feature in common with the meaning of all other forms of the set;

(b) the meaning of every form differs from that of every other form of the set by one or more additional features.

The common feature will be said to be the ROOT MEANING of the paradigm. It defines the semantic field which the forms of the paradigm partition. The variable features define the SEMANTIC DIMENSIONS of the paradigm. [1, 265] Taking these approaches into account, the next table contains our selection of verbs, analysed in accordance with the methodology provided by Pottier (1967): Cause, move or be apart, separate, detach, disassemble, disentangle, disconnect, divide, part, segregate, sunder.

Conclusion. For a clear understanding of the lexematic analysis in the table, it is necessary to explain why the different semes that appear in this diagram have been chosen.

First of all, it has been interpreted that the core meaning of our group of verbs is (cause to) move or be apart, since an event which separates things needs by default a movement and makes someone or something to be apart.

Secondly, it was difficult to decide whether to include or not “into parts” in the list of semes; but after looking up exhaustively several pages of definitions we reached the conclusion that, for a verb like disconnect, for example, the separation is not made into parts, as we can disconnect the Wi-Fi connection, and no parts result; we are just cut off from the stream. Therefore, its inclusion was necessary.

Thirdly, looking at the results obtained in the British National Corpus (BNC) (which will be commented on later), a clear distinction between whether the subject of the action (a person or a thing) had to be made; so that is why “people” and “things” are included as other semes. Therefore, they can be considered as an advance of the next section, in which a syntagmatic analysis of our corpus of lexemes will be made considering the study of the selection restrictions of the verbs.

All in all, the archilexeme would be the verb separate itself, and it is the nuclear word since it serves as a model in terms of which all the other words can be defined. Nevertheless, if we observe the data displayed in the table, we can see that the verb disconnect does not share what we have considered as the main seme. Consequently, this contradicts the idea that the meaning of every form has a feature in common with the other ones that are part of the set; i.e. the members of the semantic field.

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