A Corpus-based Study of Conceptual Metaphors on "Warm" and "Cold" from a Perspective of Cognitive Semantics

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Since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) put forward Conceptual Metaphor Theory in Metaphors We Live By, metaphor has been recognized as a persuasive cognitive tool of human thinking, and has also attracted extensive attention of linguists. It is essential to interpret concepts and languages we generate in our communication. However, based on individual social and cultural experiences and academic backgrounds, the identification and interpretation of metaphor have become a technical drawback that relevant studies are devoid of objective foundation. As the support for empirical and quantitative evidence, the corpus technology could empower research representativeness and reliability and achieve some scientific findings on a language phenomenon. Given that, Steen (2010) developed Metaphor Identification Procedure at Vrije University of Amsterdam (MIPVU). According to the context and register, MIPVU aims to judge the metaphorical representation and explore its purpose based on the semantic fields retrieved by corpus analytical tools. It is known that "warm" and "cold" matter as the basic experience on which a large body of expressions are conceptualized. And they entail a succession of metaphorical extensions. The paper intends to give an overall review on the metaphorical extensions of "warm" and "cold". And the British National Corpus (BNC) functions as a balanced general corpus that is equipped with an overall description of a language. Based on the BNC, it firstly identifies the "warm" and "cold" metaphors according to the procedures of MIPVU, and then explores the cognitive basis and projection of "warm" and "cold" based on specific exemplifications occurred in the BNC. It is expected to shed light on the fine mechanisms and better interpretation of "warm" and "cold" in English teaching and learning.

Keywords: corpus-based study, conceptual metaphor, warm, cold