

The Cognitive Perspective on Arabic Spatial Preposition 'Ala

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Abstract : In general, the Arabic preposition 'ala encodes the sense of UP-DOWN schema. However, the use of the preposition 'ala can has many extended schemas that still have relation to its primary sense. In this paper, we show how the framework of cognitive linguistics (CL) based on image schemas can be applied to analyze the spatial semantic of the use of preposition 'ala in the horizontal and vertical axes. The preposition 'ala is usually used in the locative sense in which one physical entity is UP-DOWN relation to another physical entity. In spite of that, the cognitive analysis of 'ala justifies the use of this preposition in many situations to seemingly encode non-up down-related spatial relations, and non-physical relation. This uncovers some of the unsolved issues concerning prepositions in general and the Arabic prepositions in particular the use of 'ala as a sample. Using the Arabic corpus data, we reveal that in many cases and situations, the use of 'ala is extended to depict relations other than the ones where the Trajector (TR) is actually in up-down relation to the Landmark (LM). The instances analyzed in this paper show that 'ala encodes not only the spatial relations in which the TR and the LM are horizontally or vertically related to each other, but also non-spatial relations.

Keywords : image schema, preposition, spatial semantic, up-down relation

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