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An Epistemological Look into "Concept" In Arabic: A Contrastive View

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Abstract. The paper mainly focuses on the term "concept" and "perception", as to know whether they mean the same, denote the same sign, and have the same meaning, or whether they differ in terms of significance and meaning. In this paper, we will try to compare them through their multiple definitions and their different uses in different sciences and disciplines of knowledge according to various theorists in the field. The "concept" and "perception" are two important terms in terminology, and despite this importance, scientists and researchers have not been able to define them clearly because they are connected with almost all areas of life and types of science, so the definitions continue to greatly vary, and the opinions of researchers differ on this matter, which made the argument difficult to point out direct differences between them historically and theoretically.

Keywords. Concept, Perception, Terminology, Arabic, Differences

1. Introduction

The term is an epistemological concept that is mostly used in all sciences, and it is a principal key in almost all disciplines of knowledge, Al-Khwarizmi (2008) mentioned that "the (term) must be put in place for each concept. The term expresses the concepts of all knowledge. As stated by many scientists in the field that there is no knowledge without a term. (Alqasmi, p 327) To understand the function and essence of a concept, we must first know that knowledge includes all the experiences and skills that an individual acquires from his learning and experiences, and all that is known in the aspects of life, such as dogmas, facts, information, priori knowledge, and accumulative experience that he/she gained from the reality in which one lives in, and this is what made the concept a field of science intertwined with interdisciplinary issues and rambling opinions that are highly controversial among researchers and Specialists, which, in other words, means that the researcher must be familiar with all sciences and knowledge as to understand what is exactly meant by the concept.

The discussion in this research will be on the term "concept" and "perception", as to know whether they mean the same, denote the same sign, and have the same meaning, or they differ in terms of significance and meaning. In this paper, we will try to compare them through their multiple definitions and their different uses in different sciences and disciplines of

knowledge. The concept and perceptions are two important terms in terminology, and despite this importance, scientists and researchers have not been able to define them clearly because they are connected with almost all areas of life and types of science, so the definitions of each of them varied, and the opinions of researchers differed on this matter, which made it difficult to differentiate between them. Those who "use the term (perception) see that perception has two main dimensions, which are (truth), and (notion). Every perception applies to individuals that has certain implications and a set of attributes, while those who prefer the term (concept) use the words "inclusion" and "comprehensiveness" "instead of (truth) and (the notion).

In fact, perhaps the reason for this disagreement is due to the way of understanding each of these two terms, for those who "tend to use the word (concept) instead of (perception) prefer it because visualization refers in Arabic to the mental process and its product, while the concept is limited to the result obtained in the mind out of this thinking process" (Alqasmi, 327).

This is what made some terminologists distinguish between these two terms, so they went on to say: "We must first point out in this regard that a number of non-theoretical terminologists - as well as some theoretical terminologists, headed by Gentilhomme - distinguish between "perception" and "concept". Gentilhomme went on to say: "We develop the concept - which is content that is describable by lexical content versus visualization - and it is the content that is completely determined by a necessary definition." Perhaps this difference in understanding terms is the reason why the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has recently replaced the term "concept" with the term "perception" (Alqasmi, 329)

2. The Concept: Discussion and Analysis

The concept is a linguistic term in its basic form; signifying what we can understand and what can be understood as well. It is an understood, perceived and rationalized meaning" (Abi Alhassan Bin Faris, 457) such meaning presents the form of the concept of an object name, which can be understood, learned, realized and drawn from the apparent meaning of the word, which mainly consists of two essential parts; the first side that draws the connotations of the meaning and its contexts, and the second denotative side which goes beyond the uttered expression, it may be a word, a text or an event. Sager J. C. John (1990) notes that the concepts are "constructs of human cognitive processes that help organize things through systematic or arbitrary abstraction." (197) A concept can also be viewed as the mental image grasped from the very essence of things, as an essential element of thinking that represents an individual perception. It consists of a set of characteristics that are common to the category of separate things; it consists of self-learning experiences, knowledge, and every single thought that can exist from the facts of the things that the individual lives with. It is a group of opinions and ideas that help to understand and clarify experiences and information, and it is also a picture or idea that the mind has acquired from what it has experienced. It is difficult to find out the dimensions of the concept and what they indicate because the concept relates and fits in the fields of scientific and cultural life, it can represent the following aspects:

A- "Concepts are mental constructs and innovations used to classify personal issues for both the acquired and external worlds." (Recommendations of the English Standard BS. 3669/1963).

B- "The topics of all fields of knowledge, and of all human activities such as objects, characteristics, phenomena, etc. are represented by concepts." (ISO R 704).

C- "The concept is a mental construct that classifies the personal issues of the external and acquired worlds through arbitrary abstraction." (ISO R 704).

D- "The concept is a unit of thinking resulting from the collection of personal topics related to common characteristics." (German {DIN} document).

E- "The concept is a harmonious set of provisions related to the subject of a core value that is composed of provisions that reflect its own characteristics." (The proposal has been submitted to ISO R 704).

F- "Many schools of thought offer different definitions of the concept." (Final version of the ISO R 704 (1985) manuscript document).

And these limitations that were developed for the "concept" led many researchers to talk about it as to develop an accurate definition that includes all its aspects and dimensions. This has resulted in the emergence of different definitions of the variation in scientific fields, such as psychology, sociology, logic, philosophy, linguistics and many others. The study of the concept is an important thing in the life of the nation, as it is an element of thinking and mental construction that represents an individual material or immaterial thing, and consists of a number of characteristics common to a class of individual things, and these characteristics play an important role in the way of thinking and communicating. Maria Capri states that "Concepts are not isolated in knowledge structures, but are part of organized groups called fields of knowledge or disciplines, which are the characteristics of organizing concepts that form the same field." (2012, p.69)

Also, it is quite important to start studying the concept and constantly renewing it. We desperately need this kind of study. The study of concepts is an important input to solve many of the problems that result from not knowing what is emerging in the field of concepts and terminology. The Knowledge of the concept occurs after realizing something new through one of the senses, and after defining it completely, a person can draw a picture of a thing and, thus visualization will happen as a consequence to it. Every intuition cannot be useful and acceptable in the field of thinking and knowledge without a concept, and it will lead us to error, therefore, concepts must be studied, and Kant believes that "intuition without concepts are (blind), and concepts without intuition are (hollow). Intuition means sensory knowledge (Materialism), but concepts are abstract (mental) knowledge. He means (blindly) that it is meaningless without the concepts. It also means (hollow) when a gap occurs between theoretical knowledge and concrete forms. So the senses are in dire need of concepts, and concepts are also in need of the senses. As Mary Klodlom states "The concept is directly related to the perception of the world and its various things. ---- embodies things on an intellectual level, and every change in the properties of these things necessarily leads to a change in the concept level." (2012. P 20)

The concept consists of ideas and opinions that are related to something in order to clarify and define it in order to be easily understood, therefore, concepts must be analyzed in order for the image to appear in the mind, Laith Alhusein (1988) notes "The analysis of concepts takes great importance from being clear to us the logical conditions that must be absorbed by the process of formulating concepts or Its definition or derivation and the nature of the relationship that links the concept with experience or links it with other concepts in theory.(41-42)

The concept is generally a physical or abstract mental perception of a situation, an event, or something. The material concept can be defined as a perception of things that can be perceived through the senses, whereas the abstract concept is an idea or group of ideas acquired by the individual in the form of symbols, or generalizations of certain abstractions. It is also an intellectual unit that consists of abstracting a set of characteristics related to a thing or a group of things, so that it can be expressed by one term or one symbol. The definitions of the concept vary according to the fields of thought or theories of science. Each science looks at the concept

from the angle that pertains to it. According to logicians, it refers to the essential characteristics and features that distinguish things or events from each other, and draws a mental picture of the utterance of the same thing. Muhammad al-Khawaldeh (1995) stated that “The logical definitions are based on the search for the essential qualities or features that distinguish these concepts from other groups of things, persons, or symbols included with them in the genus.” (p. 125)

Arab scholars have defined "concept" with a number of definitions. Abu Alhassan Al-Amdī (2010) defined the concept as “what is understood from the expression other than the place of pronunciation.” (74), whereas Abu al-Baqaa Al-Kafawi (1998) defined as “The concept is the mental image, whether words are placed next to it or not.” (820), but, Al-Thanawi mentioned that the concept of reasoning is what happened in the mind, as defined by a large number of Westerners, such as Felber who said that “It is It is a mental-intellectual structure derived from a specific thing. It is - briefly - the mental image of a specific thing that exists in the external or internal world, and he added, "In order to reach this mental construction - the concept - in our communications, a symbol is assigned to it to indicate it." (Ali Alhhamad, page 2). Additionally, Warren defined it as “a mental process that refers to a group of subjects or experiences, or to a single subject in its relationship to other subjects. (Zakarya& Fadhilah, 2008, 17) As for English, he defined it by saying: “Every emotional subject that includes meaning and significance, it is everything that an individual can think about, or distinguish it from other things, and this is what we call in psychology perception, and he notices in it a general meaning, or everything that can be to infer a number of individuals or subjects. (Osama Omar, 1998. P 31)

It can be said that it is the formation of a specific symbol that is formed from the common characteristics of a group of physical objects. Perhaps the most famous definition of the concept is that “The concept in its logical meaning, is the sum of the attributes and characteristics that determine the subjects to which the term applies in a manner sufficient to distinguish it from other subjects. (Bayoumi, 1998, 32)

From the above opinions and definitions, it is clear that the concept has a number of characteristics as follows:

1- Abstraction: It means moving from the sensible to the concept, and abstraction has two levels:

The first level: which is the concepts that have distinctive dimensions that are closest to experience and are called sensible things, such as *the seat*, *the desk*, *the room*.

- The second level: It consists of concepts whose dimensions refer directly to the events of sensory experience and are called “abstract” such as *envy*, *honesty and honesty*.

2- Generalization: Collecting common characteristics among topics within a single concept, and drawing them on infinite categories of possible topics similar to them.

3- Complexity: Concepts differ in terms of their complexity and the number of dimensions needed to define them, for example: the concept of (smoke) is simple; because it is composed of three concepts, which are (ashes), (fragile), (rising in the air).

4- Differentiation of dimensions: some concepts derive their original meaning from one dimension, or two precise central dimensions, while others are based on a wide range of dimensions, all are of equal importance. , such as (size, texture, or length, weight, type of food he eats.....) Although they are closely related to the concept of the child, they are inconclusive.

As for the concept of animal: it is based on a group of dimensions of almost equal significance. It consists of: the ability to reproduce, to convert oxygen, to move, to eat, to excrete.

5- Differentiation: “Concepts differ in the number of similar concepts they represent: the concept of rain, for example: its distinction is limited and few, because there are very few words that classify types of rain, namely: rain, drizzle, and dew. From a hut, an apartment, a mansion, a tent.”

Concepts have their characteristics that distinguish them from facts or laws, they have characteristics that enable us to call a specific thing a concept and not others, and these characteristics are different in terms of number and the ability to distinguish and their connection to the concept, it may be one or more characteristics, and some of them may be related to the concept, Others are irrelevant, and some of these characteristics may help distinguish the concept from others.

A distinction must be made between these characteristics - the characteristics of the concept - and the characteristics of the truth - since each type of these characteristics has matters through which this difference can be clarified as follows:

1- Discrimination: That is, the concept is a classification of things or situations, and a distinction is made between them according to common elements, and thus the concept is more possible in summarizing human knowledge and experiences.

2- Generalization: the concept does not apply to one thing or situation as it is the solution in reality, but rather applies to a group of things and situations, and thus it is more comprehensive than the truth.

3- Symbolism: The concept only symbolizes a characteristic or a group of abstract characteristics, and therefore it is more abstract than the truth.

Concepts are distinguished from facts by other characteristics:

A- They are relatively few in number when compared to facts, as science contains fewer concepts than general facts.

B- Concepts are more stable than facts. Facts are subject to modification and change. Concepts, though they are, the speed of their change is relatively less than the truth.

C- Concepts help link many facts to each other, so they can be used to provide a relationship between different facts and make them interconnected in a way that is easy to learn.

D - It is more used than facts, as concepts can be used a lot in explaining phenomena and in confronting educational situations, as well as they are easier to remember than facts and are not forgotten quickly.

The most important thing that distinguishes a concept is its inclusion of two basic phenomena, which are the attributes and the rules. As for the attributes, they mean the basic manifestations or the distinctive characteristics related to the concept and on the basis of which the examples of the concept are distinguished and placed in the row. Characteristics of another concept according to another rule.

Brown has mentioned the basic rules of the concept as follows:

1- Affirmative Rule

This rule refers to proving or applying a particular characteristic to an object or stimulus as an example of a concept.

2- The Conjunction Rule

This rule refers to two or more characteristics that must be present together in a thing or stimulus in order for it to be an example of a concept.

3- Disjunctive Rule

This rule refers to the application of distinguishing characteristics, separate or associated with objects or stimuli, to form examples of the concept.

4- The Conditional Rule

This rule refers to the existence of a specific characteristic if another characteristic is available to define an example of the concept, and this rule takes the form (if... then). If the intended concept includes two characteristics such as (a) and (b), this rule requires the following formula If (a) occurs, then (b) must occur, and if the adjective (b) occurs, the adjective (a) will inevitably occur.

Concept types:

Concepts vary according to beliefs, cultures, and societies. Each culture has its own concepts that are specific to it, and each society has certain concepts that may differ from the concepts of other societies. The types of concepts can be limited to the following three types:

The first type:

Concepts of legal origin: They are derived from the religious beliefs of each society. In the Islamic society there are special concepts derived from the Islamic faith. An example of this is the concept of “justice”. This word and its synonyms (equality, fairness, balance) are mentioned, as well as the opposites of this term such as (Injustice, tyranny, injustice) in both the Holy Qur’an and the purified Sunnah in order to communicate the principle of justice and branch out from it, and this enables the scientist and researcher to build an integrated concept of justice and build on it.

The second type:

Concepts stemming from a hostile culture: such as the concept of secularism, communism..

Third type:

General concepts: These are the concepts that appear in every society that are different from the concepts in other societies, such as political, social, and other concepts, such as the concept of equality and freedom, and they differ according to different civilizations, cultures, and different peoples and societies. Freedom for communism is not the same as freedom for Westerners.

Classification of concepts:

Due to the multiplicity of aspects of research in the concept and the angles it was dealt with by different researchers with different disciplines, the classifications of concepts overlapped, meaning that one concept may be repeated in more than one classification, meaning that these concepts are overlapping and it is not easy to define each of them completely and accurately, and based on this matter, we have Try to review a number of classifications that talked about this matter

Concept classifications - we see a clear overlap between them, and among these classifications are the following:

First: Hoover's classification:

Talk about the hierarchical organization of concepts and define their levels as follows:

A- The Classificational Concept

It is he who describes, identifies and clarifies the basic characteristics.

b- Correlational Concept

It is one that focuses on the relationship or relations between two or more incidental concepts.

C- Theoretical Concept

This concept is one or more relationships between ideas.

Second: Al-Ani classification:

1- Conjunctive Concept

In this type of concepts, two things, two ideas, or at least two terms are combined, linked, or united, consisting of one concept. On the concept type.

2- Disjunctive Concept

This type of concept is unlike the first type, as it is built on the basis of isolating attributes, ideas, things, events, or aspects of the concept. In this type of concept, the letter (or) is used, which indicates separation between things.

3- Classification Concept

This type of concept falls within the classification or division of a particular group.

4- Relational Concepts

This type of concepts expresses the existence of a relationship between concepts, and this relationship is between two or more concepts or two or more things.

5- Scientific or procedural concepts Operational Concept

These concepts are called by this name because they include carrying out a series of operations or actions carried out by an individual or a living organism.

6- Affective Concepts

We can find this kind of concepts in the emotional field of educational goals that include concepts related to research, tendencies, and values.

3. Conclusion

From the above detailed discussion, it can be said that there is a great overlap between these two terms (concept and perception) that led to confusion between them and made it difficult to define each of them precisely. There have been many arguments that revolve around this issues, but never reached a consensus on specific outcomes regarding this matter.

Perhaps what has increased the complexity of this matter is the interdependence between the concept and the perception, as the concept consists of a number of perceptions, just as each of them is based on the mind and the perception of the thing within a mental and visual image, in addition to the reliance of each of them in its formation on the image on which the understanding is based, and on the social relations between Individuals, and the experiences that each individual goes through, in addition to the mental stimuli and the resulting multiple images, and different verbal habits. All of these factors have ultimately led to those discrepancies and differences in defining each of them. Such complexity is also intensified more when looking at the intertwined and overlapping aspects of concepts and perceptions in various fields of knowledge. Therefore, we should realize the extent of the overlap of these two terms, and the difficulty of differentiating between them.

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