Extended Abstract

Conceptual metaphors of Surah Al-Jumu'ah: A cognitive- analytical approach

Farzaneh Mehrafza[1]
Ph.D. Student of Linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran.
Farzaneh.mehrafza@gmail.com

Mohammad Reza Oroji[2]*
Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran.
mohammadrezaoroji@yahoo.com

Behzad Rahbar[3]
Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.
behzadrahbar@atu.ac.ir

Introduction

Cognitive linguistics, of which includes cognitive semantics as a branch, refers to an approach to language study that began to gain prominence in the 1970s. This field is divided into two broad areas: cognitive semantics and cognitive approaches to grammar. In cognitive linguistics, it is essential to first establish cognitive semantics, after which grammar is analyzed based on this cognitive understanding. This implies that syntactic and morphological concepts are grounded in semantics. Cognitive semantics explores the relationship between human experience, conceptual systems, and the semantic structure of language. One of the major topics within cognitive semantics is metaphor (Rasekh Mahand, 2021: 24). Conceptual metaphor serves as a mechanism for understanding and interpreting meaning, and, alongside theoretical frameworks, has become a significant contribution to cognitive sciences. This is because we do not possess distinct cognitive abilities for understanding and reasoning in cognitive domains; instead, we utilize similar cognitive mechanisms in both concrete and abstract domains.

Cognitive Quranic semantics employs an approach to the semantics of the Quran that draws on the achievements of cognitive linguistics. The term "cognitive semantics" has become widely recognized among cognitive linguists and denotes a specific cognitive orientation that applies the findings of cognitive linguistics to the analysis of natural language semantics. Texts serve as significant manifestations of language, and it is evident that we can utilize semantic results in their analysis, as linguists have effectively demonstrated in practice. Cognitive Quranic semantics, in a sense, is an attempt to understand the cognitive map of this celestial book. Nowadays, all sciences should contribute to the Quran and religious thought, drawing on their insights to enhance the analysis of this sacred book and to broaden religious knowledge.

Method

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[*] Corresponding Author

This research is also based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphors and focuses on studying conceptual metaphors in Surah Al-Jumu'ah to evaluate their claim in the field of semantic studies. In this regard, the question arises as "to what extent is the theory of conceptual metaphor effective in religious texts?" This research seeks to find an answer to that question. The present study adopts a cognitive-analytical approach based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphors and employs a library method. This surah is examined and analyzed from two different aspects of metaphor; firstly, the type of metaphor, and secondly, the role of metaphor. Initially, the verses of the Surah were categorized into propositional units, as some verses consist of multiple propositions, and each proposition adds to the statistics of the repetition of that topic in the Quran. Then, to extract conceptual metaphors and conduct a more precise evaluation of the concepts within these propositions, the historical, cultural, and interpretive background of each proposition potentially containing metaphorical conceptualization was gathered and examined from various exegetical sources and Quranic vocabularies, including Tafsir al-Mizan by Allameh Tabatabai, Tafsir Nemuneh by Makarem Shirazi, Qamus Quran by Qarashi, Al-Ashbah wa al-Nazair by Maqatil bin Sulayman, Tafsir Qerra'ati, and various online sources in this field. The obtained samples of traditional conceptualizations were then re-evaluated based on modern cognitive linguistic conceptualizations. To achieve this, various types of metaphors used in the verses of the Surah were first extracted and categorized, and then each category was placed within its respective group, namely structural, ontological, and directional metaphors. Therefore, the target and source domains of each group were identified to further analyze and examine hidden layers of meanings, thereby determining the effectiveness of cognitive linguistic theory in religious texts.

Through examining Quranic evidence, the effectiveness of conceptual metaphor theory in religious texts, including the Quran, is clearly evident. Investigating metaphorical concepts in the Surah from the perspectives of metaphor types and their roles, leads to a more accurate and precise translation and interpretation of the verses. Ontological metaphors, based on the types of phenomena or material, personification, and container metaphors, were applicable in the following verses. In phenomena or material metaphors, it resulted in abstract concepts such as people, virtue, unveiling, precedence, human actions, death, Friday, and the beginning being metaphorically conceptualized as material phenomena to make them more tangible and concrete in the audience's mind.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the personal metaphors used in verses (1) Ummi (unlettered), (8) death, (9) effort, these abstract concepts do not have physicality that can be described. Therefore, by using personification metaphor, these concepts become more perceptible. In the container metaphor of verse (11) "enda", "with Allah", the abstract conceptual word of stability and permanence, which lacks physical volume, becomes understandable through the spatial relationship "with" that has volumetric properties. Another metaphor is directional metaphor found in the word 'va-abtaghu', "seek" in verse (10). Considering that divine grace and kindness are of higher importance than any worldly and afterlife grace, the directional metaphor elevates the metaphorical concept of rational grace. Moreover, composite metaphors composed of structural and ontological metaphors in verses (5), (8), and (9).

Through metaphorical imagery, coherence and consistency among the verses, abstract concepts are conveyed to the audience in a more tangible and familiar manner. Furthermore, the highest frequency of conceptual metaphors, in this surah, are in ontological, structural, composite, and directional metaphors respectively. On another note, the equal frequency of cognitive role repetition and usage role repetition of the metaphor in the first stage and then the semantic role in the second stage indicates that in Surah Al-Jumu'ah, facilitating human perception of abstract concepts through analogy and evaluation (positive and negative) takes precedence. On the other hand, the transfer of abstract concepts through the creation of novel and unfamiliar concepts in this blessed surah takes secondary priority. Also, it seems that among the verses of Surah Al-Jumu'ah, the richest hidden meanings and the window of attention of the Almighty are in verse (9). This is because the analytical aspects of this verse demand more frequency of attention and precision during the analysis period. And Allah knows best.

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