

Analysis of Conceptual Metaphor in the Prophetic Hadith

BY

Mohammad Mohammad Ismail Mohammad Fouda

Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Suez Canal University

Department of English

Mohamed-Ismail@art.suez.edu.eg

الملخص:

الاستعارات المفاهيمية شائعة في الخطاب الديني لأنها تتيح فهم المفاهيم الدينية المعقدة بطرق أكثر وضوحاً وقابلية للارتباط. تجري هذه الدراسة تحليلاً نصياً نوعياً لكشف الاستعارات المفاهيمية المستخدمة في الأحاديث النبوية وتحديد دورها في تشكيل فهم التعاليم الإسلامية. تم تحليل مجموعة من الأحاديث الصحيحة والمأخوذة من صحيح البخاري وصحيح مسلم وسنن ابن ماجه. تستند هذه الدراسة إلى النظرية المعرفية للاستعارة التي ابتكرها لأكوف وجونسون والتي تفترض أن الاستعارة أساسية في وضع المفاهيم وذلك من خلال التحليل النقدي للأحاديث النبوية. حددت هذه الدراسة أكثر مجالات المصادر الاستعارية تكراراً وأهميتها من أجل دراسة تأثيرها على مفاهيم المبادئ الإسلامية. تتكون هذه الأحاديث من مجموعة أقوال وأفعال نسبت إلى النبي محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، مأخوذة من بعض الأحاديث الصحيحة. تم اختيار عينة عشوائية من 18 حديثاً لتحديد الاستعارات والتي بدورها ساعدت في تبسيط المفاهيم المجردة وجعلها أكثر قابلية للفهم للجمهور. توفر هذه الدراسة نظرة أولية فقط، بينما يمكن للمزيد من البحث عبر المذاهب الفكرية والإعدادات الثقافية توضيح الاختلافات في استخدام الاستعارة ومعناها. وتوضح النتائج هنا أن الرسم الاستعاري الأساسي يشكل المفاهيم الدينية. كما سلطت الدراسة الضوء على السياقات الثقافية والاجتماعية التي تُستخدم فيها استعارات الأحاديث مما يوفر رؤى حول قيم ومواقف المجتمع الإسلامي. وأخيراً، أكدت الدراسة على أهمية الأحاديث النبوية الخالدة في توفير الهداية والاتجاه الأخلاقي للمؤمنين، وأهمية الاستعارة في تشكيل المعتقدات والقيم والأفعال.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعارات المفاهيمية، اللغة المجازية، التحليل اللغوي، نظرية الاستعارة.

Abstract

Conceptual metaphors are ubiquitous in religious discourse as they allow complex theological notions to be understood in more concrete terms. This study conducts a qualitative textual analysis to uncover the conceptual metaphors employed in Prophetic Hadiths and determine their role in shaping understanding of Islamic teachings. Authentic Hadith collections including Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, and Sunan Ibn Majah were analyzed. This study is grounded in the cognitive theory of metaphor pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson, which posits metaphor as fundamental to conceptualization. Through critical analysis of Prophetic Hadiths, this study identifies the most frequent and significant metaphoric source domains in order to examine their impact on conceptualizing Islamic principles. The data comprises a corpus of sayings and traditions attributed to Prophet Muhammad, compiled from authoritative Hadith collections. A random sample of 18 full-text Hadiths was selected for metaphor identification. Preliminary linguistic analysis reveals ontological metaphors as most frequent, followed by orientational and structural metaphors. Specifically, the source domains of journey, light, and darkness are often mapped onto target domains of spiritual guidance, knowledge, and ignorance respectively. These metaphors serve to simplify abstract concepts and make them more comprehensible to audiences. While this study provides initial insights, further research across schools of thought and cultural settings can elucidate variations in metaphor use and meaning. The findings demonstrate that metaphorical mappings fundamentally shape conceptualization of theology and lived

religious practice. The study also highlighted the cultural and social contexts in which the Hadith's metaphors are used, providing insights into the values and attitudes of the Islamic community. Finally, the study underscored the timeless relevance of the Holy Hadith in providing guidance and moral direction for believers, and the importance of metaphor in shaping beliefs, values, and actions.

Keywords: conceptual metaphors, metaphorical language, linguistic analysis, metaphor theory.

1. Introduction

The use of metaphorical language is a prevalent feature in religious texts, serving as a powerful tool to convey abstract concepts and shape our understanding of complex ideas. In the Islamic tradition, the Holy Hadith holds a central position as a primary source of guidance and teachings for Muslims worldwide. The Hadith comprises the sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and provides valuable insights into the principles, values, and practices of Islam. This study aims to explore the role of conceptual metaphors within the realm of Holy Hadith, shedding light on how these metaphors contribute to the interpretation and understanding of religious teachings and concepts. By delving into the metaphoric language employed in Hadith, we can uncover the underlying conceptual mappings and cultural influences that shape the religious discourse within the Islamic tradition. This chapter serves as an introduction to the study, outlining its objectives, problem, and methodology, providing a solid foundation for the exploration of conceptual metaphors in Holy Hadith.

The study on conceptual metaphors in Holy Hadith is situated within the broader field of Islamic studies and cognitive linguistics. Islamic studies involve the scholarly examination of various aspects of Islam, including its beliefs, practices, history, and textual sources (Esposito, 2003). Within this field, Hadith studies specifically focus on the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as recorded in the Hadith literature (Al-Azami, 2003).

2. Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

To understand and present a full comprehensive approach for cognitive metaphor in *Hadith*, the study should trace books, articles, and papers that analyzed and discussed both *Hadith* as a religious discourse and cognitive metaphor as a rhetorical and stylistic device. The main purpose of a literature review is to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to both *Hadith* and cognition, and to present that knowledge in the form of a written report. Conducting this literature review assists the study in developing knowledge about the main topics of this study, namely Hadith and cognition. Another significant advantage of conducting these literature reviews is gaining a better understanding of how research findings are presented and discussed

2.1 Review of Literature:

The study of conceptual metaphor has become an established field within cognitive linguistics over the past few decades. Pioneered by researchers like George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, conceptual metaphor theory examines how people make sense of complex, abstract ideas by mapping them onto more

concrete or physical concepts rooted in embodied experience. A robust area of metaphor scholarship explores how sacred religious texts across faith traditions employ metaphorical language to communicate theological truths. Within Islam specifically, recent studies have begun analyzing metaphors in the Prophetic hadith—the records of the teachings, deeds, and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad.

As Islam's secondary authoritative textual source after the Qur'an, the hadith provide guidance for Muslims on spiritual matters as well as aspects of Islamic jurisprudence. An emerging research program thus investigates conceptual metaphors in this essential religious literature using the frame of cognitive linguistics. There are different studies that dealt with Conceptual Metaphor in the Prophetic Hadith. The related studies are divided into two domains. The first domain dealt with Studies related to Metaphor. The second domain dealt with Studies related to Metaphor and Hadith. Finally, a commentary on the related studies is provided.

2.1.1 Studies related to Metaphor and Hadith

There are few studies that dealt with Metaphor and Hadith. The hadith, the collected sayings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, are revered in Islam as a major source of spiritual wisdom, theological principles, and legal guidance second only to the Qur'an. However, despite the central role hadith play in both classical and contemporary Islamic thought, relatively little attention has been paid to analyzing their linguistic and rhetorical features. One such understudied rhetorical feature of hadith is the use of metaphor. There are few studies exploring metaphor within the hadith texts or applying metaphor theory to hadith analysis. This gap in scholarly

attention is surprising for several reasons. Firstly, metaphor is a common and vital rhetorical device used in sacred religious texts across traditions to illustrate theological realities, crystallize spiritual insights, and more intensely connect readers to truths expressed. Given the significant place of hadith in Islam, one might expect more examination of how metaphor functions within these seminal records.

The study of Salman & Al-Azzawi (2021) investigated the concepts of morality and immorality as they are understood and realized as being straight and crooked respectively. The data are selected from the Prophetic Hadith in Arabic and the Bible in English. The model adopted in the analysis is an eclectic one that represents the conceptual metaphor theory which is established by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and developed by subsequent scholars as it is shown in the theoretical background. The analysis of the data shows that Arabic and English realize the concepts of morality and immorality in terms of straightness and crookedness but Arabic has various linguistic metaphors that represent the concept of morality as being straight compared with English which has only one linguistic metaphor to represent this concept in the selected data.

The study of El-Sharif (2011) examined the emergence of metaphorical language in the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and tradition. The study is anchored by the theoretical framework provided by the cognitive theory of metaphor developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson and corpus-assisted and critical metaphor analysis approaches introduced by Jonathan Charteris-Black. The critical analysis of the Prophetic metaphors acknowledges the impact of the most frequent and significant metaphoric source domains

appearing in a corpus compiled from the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and tradition. These metaphors are introduced to an audience on the basis of Islamic religious beliefs in addition to the socio-cultural experiences and knowledge of pre-Islamic Arabs and early Muslims of the time. This study demonstrates the Prophet Muhammad's reliance on metaphorical language in introducing unfamiliar Islamic notions such as Islam and faith, rulership and Islamic laws, and rituals and unlawful practices among many other notions. The study establishes the persuasive impact of the Prophetic metaphors with reference to the three Aristotelian propositions: the ethical, emotional, and logical. Furthermore, this study builds upon the findings of previous studies on critical metaphor analysis of metaphors employed in other religious discourses, such as the Bible and the Qur'an; so, it draws attention to the need for more study of metaphors in Islamic religious discourse.

2.2 Cognitive linguistics

It is difficult to establish a specific year of the origins of Cognitive Linguistics, although there are some dates that can serve as a timeframe in which it is possible to limit them. However, years ago, particularly since the 1950s, the gestation of cognitive sciences with Chomsky and the Generativists, which have an impact on these sciences and in linguistics, when talking about mental constructions. Until now, the positions of the behaviorists postulated to study only what is measurable and observable within the psychological and linguistic disciplines –among others– that turned out to be the stimulus–response. These relationships could be measured and there

was no need to formulate invisible entities, and therefore not measurable, that will structure the mind.

2.3 Categorization

Categorization is a fundamental aspect in the study of conceptual metaphors, which are those through which we perceive the world in which we live. When we say, for example, “FOOTBALL IS A WAR”, we recognize that the metaphorical expressions that evidence this conceptual metaphor use terms of war, or that these terms belong to the category of words used to refer to the domain of warfare: the defending of the ball, the attack of the team, etc. Our daily and intellectual reality is built by categories that:

“Arise from our experience and imagination of the world or possible states of it. As we move through it, we automatically categorize people, animals, and physical objects, both natural and man-made” (Lakoff, 1987, p 6).

When we see a bench in a park, a sofa in a house, a chair in a cafeteria and a desk in a classroom, we can include these objects in a single category. They all meet the same function, although they have subtle differences: not all of them can be used for sleeping, not all of them are padded, and not all are made of the same materials. This is why the idea arises that all things are, by their nature, belonging to a particular category; however, there is categories that do not contain "things" as such, but are composed of abstract entities (Lakoff, 1987, p 6), such as emotions, social relationships, festivities or musical genres.

2.4 Experientialism

To understand “language from a cognitive point of view, it is then necessary to recognize different aspects of cognition and human

faculties,” such as the functioning neuron, perception or categorization, and try to find the relationship between these and the language. Actually, this is a position that takes into account the biological perspective of the language and the multicellular organism that has developed it over time as part of its functioning and interaction with the world, that is, of the experience that arises from the relationship between the human senses and physical and social reality.

Having the human organism as a reference to speak of language has implications philosophical ideas that Lakoff and Johnson have called “*Experientialism*”, position that opposes to the objectivism. These oppositions generate repercussions in the approach that is made to the thought as an object of study. In 1999, these philosophical foundations were expanded when Lakoff and Johnson published a volume that makes a big impact by exposing the role of perception in our conceptual structures and the normal development of our daily lives. This volume is called “*Philosophy in the Flesh*” and that is where Lakoff and Johnson do “perhaps the most comprehensive definition and explanation of embodiment and embodied mind” is found in “Lakoff and Johnson’s *Philosophy in the Flesh.*” (Goschler, 2005, p 33). In addition, they clarify the meaning of the term *cognition*, and they say it will be used in:

“The richest way possible, that is, to describe mental processes and structures that are involved in language, meaning, perception, conceptual systems and reason. Moreover, as our conceptual systems and reason arise from our bodily experience, the adjective will be used cognitively for aspects of the sensorimotor system that help our ability to conceptualize and reason” (1999, p 9).

2.5 Conceptual Metaphors Theory

Conceptual Metaphors, whose function Lakoff and Johnson proposed in 1980, have been accepted as a fundamental theory in Cognitive Linguistics. On this theory, discussed by various researchers in linguistics and computational fields (Narayanan, 1997; Kovecses, 2008; Labhart, 2002; Feldman, 2006). In addition, it has been used as a basis in multiple experimental and corpus research studies (Coulson, King and Kutas, 1998). Lakoff and Johnson discover that “metaphor is more than a literary device or a rhetorical tool,” and argue that “the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p 5).

“Cognitive theory” positions the “metaphor in a conceptual structure and not in the linguistic knowledge” (Stockl, 2010, p 194). This perspective recognizes that the metaphor is a systematic connection between conceptual domains. We categorize and conceptualize the objects and entities in the world, and these categories and concepts relate to each other in direct or metaphorical way. As we have argued before, conceptualizations what we do are the ones that build the reality that we perceive and, therefore, direct our intellectual and everyday actions.

Lakoff and Johnson assert that many of the abstract topics with which we relate on a daily basis, they are understood through metaphors. They argue, as mentioned Deignan (2005), that ideas are connected through certain links, and that the links they are conceptual metaphors (p.14). They usually function underlying language, that is, they are rarely used explicitly, but we can abstract them from various metaphorical realizations in language.

2.6 Assumptions of Lakoff and Johnson (1980)

Metaphors are present everywhere in our daily lives, since they represent an important aspect of our conceptual system, namely the set of concepts that we use to think, act and communicate. If it is the system that structures our perception, our actions, and the way we communicate with others, it means that our way of thinking and acting depends largely on metaphors, and that these are considered fundamental in defining our daily reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

The general assumption that “metaphors are conceptual in nature” runs counter to our traditional understandings of them (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Indeed, the traditional hypotheses are the following:

- “Metaphors are at the level of words and not of thought”
- “Metaphors are based on resemblance”
- “No concept is metaphorical”
- “Rational thought is in no way shaped by the nature of our brain and body”.

3 RESEARCH Questions:

The current work raises the following questions:

1. What type of conceptual metaphor in the selected sample ?
2. What is the most used type of cognitive metaphor in selected *Hadith* ?
3. What are the linguistic, semantic, and cultural objectives for using cognitive metaphor in selected ?

4 Analysis

1) The Prophet said "*The likeness of the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and kindness is that of a body: when one part of it suffers, the rest of the body joins it in wakefulness and fever.*" (Sahih Muslim).

قال رسول الله: " مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم كمثل الجسد الواحد إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالسهر والحمى " صحيح مسلم

This Hadith employs the conceptual metaphor of "Unity as a Body." This metaphor draws upon the **source domain** of the human body and maps it onto the **target domain** of unity among believers.

In the metaphorical mapping, the individual believers are metaphorically equated to the various parts of a body. Just as a body consists of different organs, systems, and limbs that work together harmoniously, believers are seen as interconnected and interdependent in their faith, love, mercy, and kindness towards one another.

Furthermore, the metaphor extends to the qualities of love, mercy, and kindness, which are conceptualized as the vital functions performed by the various parts of the body. These attributes are essential for the well-being and functioning of the community of believers.

The metaphor emphasizes the interconnectedness of believers by highlighting the response of the rest of the body when one part suffers. Just as the body experiences wakefulness and fever as a collective response to pain or illness in a particular part, believers are expected to show solidarity, empathy, and support for one another during times of hardship or distress.

The metaphorical inference from this Hadith underscores the significance of unity, love, mercy, and kindness among believers. It portrays the community of believers as a cohesive body, where each member plays a vital role in the overall well-being and functioning of the community. When one member of the community suffers, it invokes a collective response, with others sharing in the pain and actively supporting and caring for the affected individual.

The type of conceptual metaphor employed in this Hadith is a "**Structural Metaphor**." It maps the structure of a physical body onto the abstract concept of unity among believers. By using a familiar and concrete domain, this metaphor enables a deeper understanding of the importance of unity and mutual support within the community of believers.

1) The Prophet Muhammad said: "*The path to Paradise is surrounded by hardships and difficulties, while the path to Hellfire is adorned with temptations and allurements.*" (Sunan Ibn Majah)

قال رسول الله : "حفت الجنة بالمكاره ، وحفت النار بالشهوات" (سنن ابن ماجه)

In this Hadith, the journey metaphor is used to describe the paths to Paradise and Hellfire. Let's analyze the metaphorical mapping:

Source domain: Journey

Target domain: Paths to Paradise and Hellfire

Metaphorical Mapping:

- Path to Paradise → Challenging journey: The metaphor maps the path to Paradise to a challenging journey. Just as a journey can be difficult, requiring perseverance and effort, the metaphor suggests that the path to Paradise is also filled with hardships and trials.

• Path to Hellfire → Tempting journey: The metaphor maps the path to Hellfire to a tempting journey. Just as a journey can entice travelers with attractive sights and distractions, the metaphor implies that the path to Hellfire is adorned with worldly temptations and allurements.

By employing the journey metaphor, this Hadith effectively conveys the contrasting nature of the paths to Paradise and Hellfire. It emphasizes that the journey towards Paradise requires determination, endurance, and willingness to face challenges, while the path to Hellfire may appear enticing and pleasurable, but it leads to spiritual ruin.

This metaphorical comparison draws upon the familiar experience of embarking on a journey, where the destination is influenced by the choices made along the way. It highlights the importance of making conscious decisions and remaining steadfast in following the path that leads to righteousness and ultimate salvation.

Through the use of the journey metaphor, this Hadith provides believers with a vivid and relatable understanding of the spiritual paths they may encounter in their lives. It encourages them to stay committed to the journey towards Paradise, despite the difficulties they may face, and to avoid being lured by the temporary pleasures of worldly distractions that lead to spiritual destruction.

In conclusion, the metaphor of "Unity as a Body" in this Hadith provides a powerful imagery that illustrates the interconnectedness, interdependence, and responsibility among believers. It emphasizes the need for believers to cultivate strong bonds of love, mercy, and kindness, and to actively support and care for one another.

A conceptual metaphor is a cognitive mechanism that allows us to understand and experience abstract or complex concepts in terms of more concrete and familiar domains. It involves mapping the attributes or structure of one domain, called the source domain, onto another domain, known as the target domain (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Through this mapping, we can comprehend and conceptualize abstract ideas by drawing on our knowledge and experiences from the concrete domain (Kövecses, 2017). Conceptual metaphors are not merely linguistic expressions but deeply ingrained cognitive processes that shape our understanding, reasoning, and communication. They play a fundamental role in how we perceive the world, structure our thoughts, and make sense of our experiences (Kövecses, 2020).

1) The Prophet said, "*Faith wears out in the heart of any one of you just as clothes wear out, so ask Allah to renew the faith in your hearts.*" (Musnad Ahmad)

قال رسول الله: "إن الإيمان ليخلق في جوف أحدكم كما يخلق الثوب، فاسألوا الله أن يجدد الإيمان في قلوبكم" (مسند أحمد)

In this Hadith, the metaphorical comparison is made between faith and clothes. Let's analyze the metaphorical mapping:

Source domain: Clothing

Target domain: Faith

Metaphorical Mapping:

- Faith → Clothes: The metaphor maps faith to clothes. Just as clothes can wear out over time and require renewal, the metaphor suggests that faith can also diminish or weaken and needs to be revitalized.

This ontological metaphor emphasizes the need for believers to continuously seek the renewal of their faith. It compares the process of maintaining and rejuvenating faith to the act of renewing worn-out clothes. It encourages believers to actively seek Allah's assistance in revitalizing their faith and nurturing a strong and vibrant spiritual connection.

The metaphorical inference from this Hadith underscores the dynamic nature of faith and the importance of consistently working to strengthen and renew it. It highlights the understanding that faith is not a static state but requires ongoing effort and dedication to maintain its vigor and resilience.

By employing an ontological metaphor, this Hadith effectively conveys the concept of faith renewal in a relatable and tangible way. It draws upon the familiar experience of clothing wearing out to illustrate the need for believers to actively seek spiritual renewal and rejuvenation in their hearts.

5 Conclusion

This study has explored the role of conceptual metaphors in the Holy Hadith, seeking to identify their prevalence, forms, and implications. The previous chapters provided an in-depth analysis of various Hadith examples to examine different types of conceptual metaphors employed in the religious teachings of Islam. Through this analysis, the study found that the metaphors in the Hadith serve as powerful tools for conveying profound truths and shaping the beliefs and behaviors of believers. The use of metaphors in the Hadith enables individuals to grasp abstract concepts through the mapping onto familiar and tangible domains.

The present study focused on the analysis of conceptual metaphors in Holy Hadith, aiming to explore their prevalence, types, and underlying conceptual mappings within the Islamic context. The study identified five main types of conceptual metaphors, including structural, ontological, journey, personification, and orientational metaphors, through the examination of various Hadith texts. Each type of metaphor was analyzed in detail, providing examples from Hadith literature and offering metaphorical mappings that highlighted their significance and implications.

The findings of the study revealed that conceptual metaphors are an integral part of Islamic discourse and play a vital role in conveying complex religious concepts in a more accessible and relatable manner. The structural metaphors emphasized the unity and interdependence of the Muslim community, while the ontological metaphors deepened the understanding of Allah's nature and the human relationship with Him. The journey metaphors provided guidance for the spiritual and moral paths that individuals must follow, and the personification metaphors endowed inanimate objects with human qualities, fostering a deeper connection with believers. Additionally, the orientational metaphors offered valuable guidance in adhering to virtuous behavior and values.

Through the analysis of these conceptual metaphors, this study revealed the profound wisdom and guidance embedded within the Holy Hadith, enabling a deeper comprehension of Islamic teachings and their implications for moral conduct and social interactions. The study also highlighted the cultural and historical contexts that shaped the usage and interpretation of these metaphors,

underscoring the importance of understanding their significance within specific Islamic schools of thought and cultural traditions.

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