

Metaphors of Anger in Persian, Kurdish, and Guilaki: A cognitive Linguistics Perspective

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Extended abstract

1. Introduction

Against the traditional view which considers metaphor as an ornamentation used in literature, cognitive linguistics holds that metaphor is not a deviant phenomenon of normal language, rather, it is a way of thought and a powerful instrument of cognition. It is apparently embedded in our cognition, and reflected in our language and action. Both our reasoning and emotion are conceptualized and structured metaphorically (Lakoff and Johnson, 1987).

Emotions, as an important aspect of human experience, have been among the focuses of cognitive linguistics. Emotions, which are experienced personally, are remarkably subjective and intangible in nature. Thus, metaphor can be regarded as an efficient tool to depict the emotions vividly.

The present study aims to examine and compare metaphorical expressions of anger in three western Iranian languages i.e. Persian, Kurdish and Guilaki. Stefanowitsch's (2006) metaphorical pattern analysis was used for collecting metaphors and the conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) and Kovecses's cultural view (2005) were adopted as the analytical framework.

This paper tries to shed light into the similarities and differences between metaphorical expressions related to anger in these three languages. The findings of this study show that these languages share many metaphorical expressions of anger. The similarities can be

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attributed to the universality of conceptual metaphors and similar human experiences whereas differences in metaphorical expressions can be related to specific different cultural modes in these languages.

2. Theoretical framework

In this study, the standard conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) and Kovecses's (2005) cultural approach were adopted as the analytical framework. The conceptual metaphor theory is so famous and some of its concepts and terms like source and target domains and mappings are well-known that there is no need to define and explain them again. Kovecses (2005) tries to explain the role of culture in forming metaphors. He introduces some universal and near- universal metaphors and explains the expectation which conceptual metaphors vary cross-culturally. Then, he classifies different kinds of this variation in three groups: congruent metaphors, alternative metaphors and unique metaphors. In this study, first, similarities and differences were recognized and then extracted metaphors were classified based on Kovecses's introduced groups.

3. Methodology

In this article, the spoken form of three Iranian languages i.e. Persian, Kurdish and Guilaki was the topic of investigation. The Data was collected by interviewing 40-70 year-old native speakers of these languages regardless of their gender. Persian, Kurdish and Guilaki are spoken in wide areas of Iran but three cities were chosen for gathering our data: Tehran, Saanandaj and Rudsar, respectively. Lexical items (anger, indignation and fury) referring to the target domain under investigation were selected and extracted in the corpus. Then, all metaphorical expressions were identified and categorized in coherent groups representing general mappings. Then, metaphorical expressions of these three languages were classified and compared.

4. Results and discussion

In the beginning, researchers expected a great deal of variation in metaphorical expressions of anger in these languages, especially Kurdish and Guilaki, because Kurdish is spoken in cold mountainous regions and Guilaki is spoken in mild and humid climate. It was expected that more harsh metaphors might be found in Kurdish and more colorful metaphors in Guilaki, but it was not so.

Islam is the religion of almost all speakers of these languages, and the trace of religion was seen in forming some metaphors in these languages.

The analysis of our data revealed that anger is heat/fire/animal behavior was frequently used in these languages. However, anger is darkness and anger is death/forgetfulness were just seen in Kurdish and Guilaki, respectively. After classifying metaphors, no unique metaphor was detected. But congruent metaphors were more than alternative metaphors.

5. Conclusions and suggestions

This study tried to investigate metaphorical expressions of anger in three western Iranian languages. After identifying and classifying anger metaphors in these languages, some similarities and differences were recognized. Similarities can be the result of the same human experiences or the same origin of these three languages. Differences can be related to different cultures.

The reasons for this variation cannot be obviously explained unless some other studies are done on Iranian languages from different branches and the results compared with the results of this study.

Also, some studies can be done on languages whose speakers have different religions, because it seems that religion can also influence conceptualization. Investigating and comparing conceptualization in spoken and written forms of languages can be another interesting topic of study.

Keywords: cognitive semantics, metaphorical pattern analysis (MPA), congruent metaphors, alternative metaphors and unique metaphors.

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