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Metaphors in Iraqi Media Discourse: Newspaper Headlines as a Case Study

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Abstract

The current study investigates the conceptual metaphorical expressions in news discourse (newspapers headlines) and how they are constructed to shed the light on the Iraqi affairs metaphorically. The researcher tries to find answers on how the metaphors represented the sociopolitical and economic issues, how they were addressed metaphorically in the Iraqi newspapers headlines, and what the common conceptual source domains that addressed these issues. The researcher adopted the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to investigate and classify the dominant source domains in the Iraqi newspapers headlines. Data are the headlines that gathered from the Iraqi daily newspapers in Arabic and are translated to English literally. The researcher used the Metaphorical Identification Procedure (MIP) by Pragglejaz Group (2007) to identify the lexical units that are metaphorical to extract the contextual meanings of these units and how they function to be metaphorical. The results revealed that the journalists used different conceptual source domains in the Iraqi newspapers headlines; they are FIRE, HEAT, ANIMAL, FOOD, GAME, and BIRTH metaphors to convey different target domains that focused on the Iraqi sociopolitical and economic issues. The study concluded that the metaphors are used pervasively in the Iraqi newspapers headlines to shed the light on different cases in the Iraqi daily life talks and the common and dominant source domain is the concept of ANIMAL Metaphor.

Keywords: metaphor, Metaphor Identification Procedure, newspaper headlines, source domain, target domain.

الاستعارات في الخطاب الإعلامي العراقي: عناوين الصحف أمودجا

حيدر طعمه جاسم الساعدي

جامعة ميسان – كلية التربية الاساسية

قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المخلص

تبحث الدراسة الحالية في التعبيرات الاستعارية الادراكية في الخطاب الإخباري (عناوين الصحف) وكيفية بنائها لتسليط الضوء على الشأن العراقي أستعارياً. ويحاول الباحث العثور على أجوبة حول كيفية تمثيل الاستعارات للقضايا الاجتماعية والسياسية والاقتصادية، وكيفية تناولها أستعارياً في عناوين الصحف العراقية، وما هي المجالات المصدرية الادراكية المشتركة التي تناولت هذه القضايا. أعتد الباحث نظرية الاستعارة الادراكية (CMT) لاكوف وجونسون (1980) لدراسة وتصنيف المجالات المصدرية السائدة في عناوين الصحف

العراقية. عينات الدراسة هي العناوين الرئيسية التي تم جمعها من الصحف اليومية العراقية باللغة العربية وترجمتها الى اللغة الانكليزية حرفياً. استخدم الباحث استراتيجيات التعرف الاستعاري (MIP) لمجموعة براغليجاز (2007) للتعرف على الوحدات المعجمية الاستعارية لاستخراج المعاني السياقية لهذه الوحدات وكيفية عملها لتكون مجازية. وأظهرت النتائج أن الصحفيين استخدموا مصادر ادراكية مختلفة تستخدم في عناوين الصحف العراقية؛ وهي استعارات النار والحرارة والحيوان والطعام واللعبة والولادة لنقل مجالات مستهدفة مختلفة تركز على القضايا الاجتماعية والسياسية والاقتصادية العراقية. وخُصت الدراسة إلى أن الاستعارات تستخدم بشكل واسع في عناوين الصحف العراقية لتسليط الضوء على حالات مختلفة في أحاديث الحياة اليومية العراقية وأن المجال المصدر المشترك والمهيمن هو مفهوم الاستعارة الحيوانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعارة، عناوين الصحف، استراتيجيات التعرف على الاستعارات، المجال المصدر، المجال المستهد

1. Introduction

Mass media plays an important role in addressing the daily social, political, and economical news. A piece of news needs to be written in a way to attract a reader's attention. To do this, journalists choose linguistic units to formulate news which fit what they want to convey. In other words, different language aspects are used to form a headline or article using cognitive or pragmatic expressions to be the bait in which a journalist uses to catch a reader's attention to the issues that he or she addresses and focuses on in media discourse, especially, newspapers. Metaphor is one of these aspects that are used in media, in general, and newspapers, in particular.

Since our conceptual system is naturally metaphorical (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), metaphors are seen in all of our daily talks. It can be reflected in media discourse too, especially newspapers in different languages. Arabic is one of the languages that are full of metaphorical expressions; either spoken or written language. Arabic newspapers, just like other languages, resort to use metaphorical expressions to address different daily issues. Journalists devote to attract their readers' attention by formulating the language of news especially headlines in such a way that let them read the whole article.

Most research has focused on the English data to investigate metaphors to find out the most common conceptual domains in newspapers by analyzing the language of the well-known newspapers in the world. However, the current study investigates the metaphorical representation of the social, political, and economical issues in Iraqi newspapers to see how the metaphors are addressed in Arabic headlines of Iraqi newspapers. Moreover, it needs to see the universality of metaphors in Arabic data especially newspapers.

The current study aims to address the conceptual metaphors in Iraqi media discourse; newspapers and investigating the social, political, and economical issues and how they are constructed metaphorically. It also aims to identify and classify source and target domains and it highlights the incongruity between a literal source domain and metaphorical target domain to elicit the conceptual metaphors in the Iraqi newspapers headlines.

The researcher purports to answer the following questions:

1. What are the metaphors that are used to represent the Iraqi sociopolitical and economic issues in newspapers headlines?
2. How were these issues addressed metaphorically in the Iraqi newspapers headlines?
3. What are the common conceptual domains that are used in newspapers headlines?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

According to Merriam Webster dictionary, metaphor is “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest likeness or analogy between them.” Charteris-Black (2004) states that the word “metaphor” anciently belongs to the Greek word “metaphorin.” It contains two parts; the first part is “meta” which means with or after and the second part is “phorin” which means carry or bear.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) define metaphor as “a device of the poetic imagination and rhetorical flourish.” Metaphor is spreading in our daily life talks. It includes thought and action; not just language. Larson (2011) indicates the need to greater sensitivity to the metaphorical presence and implications since individuals try to depend on metaphor in understanding reality. Therefore, metaphors are pervasive about what we hear every day.

Basically, our conceptual system is naturally metaphorical. The core of metaphor is to understand and experience one thing in terms of another. Our thought processes are metaphorical. This is what we mean to say that the human’s conceptual system structural and defined metaphorically. In this case, structuring the way in which people think and the conceptual system of humans is metaphorical (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

Dirven (1985) posits that the process of metaphor is “an association of properties” which focuses on a figurative interpretation rather than the literal interpretation, which is excluded. Metaphors have to be mapped. Mapping metaphors requires knowing the conceptual source and target domains. The process of mapping is a process in which we understand one thing in terms of another one (Lakoff, 1987). The conceptual domain, in which we can metaphorically draw expressions to understand one another (Kövecses, 2010), plays a role in the mapping process. These two conceptual domains link the cognitive ability with the meanings of these two domains (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980 and Kövecses, 2010).

We need to distinguish between a metaphorical concept and metaphorical expressions. A metaphorical concept is like “ARGUMENT IS WAR”. But the metaphorical expressions include words and other linguistic expressions come from the more concrete conceptual domain (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980 and Kövecses, 2010).

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), there are three kinds of metaphors; they are structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors. Structural metaphor means a concept that is structured to give meaning to the structure of the target domain through understanding the structure of the source domain. Ontological metaphor enables the humans to understand the target domains through the use of objects, substances, etc. In other words, Ontological metaphor means understanding the abstract target domain through the use of the spatial orientations which are up-down, in-out, front-back, etc.

2.2 Previous Studies:

More functions played a role in headlines. They grab the attention of readers to point out the attitude of the writers to a story, to give hints of what is happening, or to focus on the gist of the article (Morely, 1998, cited in Soler, 2008).

Journalists use specific metaphors in front-page headlines to help the reporters to give a definition of a topic, prefer to use a particular conceptualization and convince the readers so that they share metaphors (Koller, 2004 cited in Soler, 2008).

Soler (2008) analyzes the headlines of three newspapers. They are Financial Times, El Pais, and El Mundo. He analyzes the headlines, which are published in the business section of these newspapers, identify the contrast between the contextual meaning of a word/ multiword of a headline with its basic meaning.

Religion as a source domain plays a role in addressing cases such as climate change in the UK newspapers. Woods et al (2011) analyze 122 British newspapers using the RELIGION metaphor to deform the case of climate change.

Negro (2016) analyzes conceptualizing the financial crisis that happened in 2008 in press; English, Spanish, and French newspapers. They are Financial Times, Expansion, and Les Echos. She Finds out that journalists used intensely the metaphorical imagery to attribute the crisis. The crisis is depicted as “a living organism, a disease, a natural disaster, a weather phenomenon, and a harmful object.” The crisis is evaluated negatively as harmful effects. Also, she finds out that conceptualizing the crisis across languages is common and divergent.

Jinlin (2021) investigates the metaphorical reasoning of the Chinese reform and opening-up in BCC corpus which stands for Beijing Language and Culture Corpus Center. Jinlin uses the words (Reform and Opening-up) to find out that there is a tendency to use four source domains (journey, war, building, and nature) in the People’s Daily newspaper. They show ideologies supported by the government promotion which showed people’s inspiration of devotion, patience, openness, etc.

Renzi et al (2016) investigate the nuclear power issue in media discourse to examine the role of metaphors that play in the domain of policy. They analyze the metaphors of nuclear energy of the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 in the “UK national broadsheet and tabloid newspapers.” They find out that there are different categories of metaphors are classified as rebirth, devastation, and sickness.

Onal (2021) investigates the use of metaphors to attribute the COVID-19 pandemic in the Turkish media. The study focuses on underlying the conceptual metaphorical expressions and word combinations that cover different pandemic aspects and the metaphorical distributions among the metaphorical modals. She finds out that there are different source domains such as enemy, monster, or examination are used to describe the target domain which is COVID-19. Moreover, WAR metaphor was the most productive domain to attribute COVID-19.

Khudoliy (2018) investigates the cognitive analysis of the political texts in the American newspapers and magazines such as USA Today, Newsweek, The Washington Post, and Wall Street Journal. He finds out that the most frequently used metaphors is the source domain of aquatic habitat.

Altohami (2019) investigates the representation of metaphors in journalistic discourse to attribute the Arab Spring Revolutions. He finds out that different source domains were used to manipulate the aspects of the Arab Spring Revolutions. Gamification is one of the most common representations of metaphor to attribute these events. For this reason, the Game metaphor is considered as the most dominant source domain to cover the revolutions in journalism.

Newspaper discourse is not only investigated by using metaphor theories. There are other studies which investigated other aspects such as pragmatics in the newspapers headlines in the Iraqi newspapers (Al-saedi, 2020). Scholars also paid attention to the Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate the Iraq cases in press (Dirk, 2006) and how Iraq was represented in media discourse especially newspaper headlines (Al-Saedi, 2020). Newspaper articles are analyzed to investigate CDA of a BBC article about Saddam and Bush II (Al-Shaibani and Kadhim, 2013). Besides critical discourse analysis, systematic functional linguistics is used to analyze online newspapers (Asad et al,

2019). Finally, metaphors are investigated not only in newspapers discourse in Iraqi community but the other studies that focused on investigating HOT and COLD metaphor in the Arabic that is spoken by Iraqi people (Jabber & Al-Saedi, 2020).

3. Method

The current paper will investigate the Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in media discourse (newspapers headlines). The researcher will use the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by Pragglejaz (2007) to check the metaphoricity of the lexical units from the selected sampling data. Pragglejaz Group presented MIP as an attempt to “create an explicit, reliable, and flexible method for identifying metaphorically used words in spoken and written language.” It aims to determine whether or not a lexical unit in a particular context can be attributed metaphorically. It adopts an approach in which a large number of words can be considered to convey metaphorical meaning of words in context. It requires to decide whether or not a word conveys a metaphorical meaning expressing figurative type of meaning if it is metonymic, hyperbolic or another type of meaning. They suggested a four-step procedure to identify the metaphorical meaning in context. Step one focuses on reading the text-discourse to understand the meaning in general. Step two includes determining the lexical units of the text-discourse. Step three contains three sub-steps. They are; (a) establishing the meaning in context (contextual meaning) of each lexical unit and taking into account what comes before and after the lexical unit, (b) determining whether or not the lexical unit has more contemporary meaning in other contexts. Basic meanings tend to be more concrete, relevant to bodily action, more precise and older historically, and finally, deciding whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the lexical meaning. In step four, the lexical unit must be marked as metaphorical after deciding the contrast of the contextual meaning with the basic meaning.

The current study is limited to use MIP to identify the lexical units and use only the ones that are identified as metaphorical meaning in context. The researcher will compare the basic meaning (using MacMillian Online dictionary to extract the literal meaning) with the contextual meaning of the selected lexical units to indicate the metaphorical presence in newspapers headlines and to decide whether or not the lexical unit is metaphorical. Then, he will identify the conceptual source domain and what the target domains of each source refers to.

3.1 Data Collection

The selected data is 55 newspapers headlines that are collected from the Iraqi national newspapers in 2021 that are published daily since Iraq had different economic, social, and political issues which were addressed metaphorically in the headlines of these newspapers. The headlines are Arabic and the researcher translated them to English literally to avoid any changes which may violate the presence of metaphoricity. The data were limited to the metaphorical expressions that are used in the newspapers regardless of their source domain. This helps to have a general idea about the use of metaphor in the Iraqi newspapers.

Then, the collected data will be classified according to their source domain to know what the headlines address (target domains) in the Iraqi situation/ affairs.

The researcher had chosen the year of 2021 since Iraqi people lived different situations which affected the country's economy and sociopolitical situation. In 2019, the protests led to close the academic establishments and all other governmental offices. It caused a chaos and the protests demanded the government to step down because of the financial corruption and unemployment. Moreover, by the end of 2019, the COVID-19 was declared as pandemic by WHO. Iraq just like other countries resorted to quarantine. All these reasons caused austerity and economic crisis which were reflected on the economic and sociopolitical life of the Iraqis. Its effects reached its bulge in

2021. Therefore, it became a material in mass media especially for the newspapers journalists since they focused their news materials in newspapers headlines (online and printed).

4. Data Results and Discussion

4.1 FIRE Metaphor

Several target domains are characterized in one specific source domain. This can be illustrated in the concepts of WAR, BUILDING, FIRE, and so on. Target domains are characterized by essential role that is played by a source domain (Kövecses, 2010: 136, 138). The metaphorical target domains such as emotions can be comprehended in association with the concepts of FIRE and HEAT as anger, desire, and love (EMOTION IS HEAT (OF FIRE)).

In the Iraqi newspapers headlines, we can notice that the concept of FIRE is metaphorically used to express the resentment and indignation of Iraqis from the situations that they have because of the sociopolitical and economic issues of the country; as in the following headlines.

H1 The proposal of the Finance Minister to deduct the employees' salaries ignites the indignation of the Iraqi street. (Azaman Newspaper April 14, 2021)

H2 The fuse of demonstrations "ignites" and electricity "fades away" from "Alwahida" to the southern provinces. (Almuraqib Aliraqi April 28, 2021)

H3 Fire of Washington and Summer "inflames" the government. (Almuraqib Aliraqi June 30, 2021)

H4 The electricity ignites the fuse of demonstration in the south and the government raises "the white flag." (Almuraqib Aliraqi July 1, 2021)

H5 Alkadimi attempts to put out the fire of turmoil and assures the folks of Altarmiya. (Adstour Newspaper August 24, 2021)

H6 "The Matching" threatens to ignite the "fuse" of upcoming political crisis. (Almuraqib Aliraqi November 3, 2021)

H7 Does the flame of protest extends "against counterfeiting" to the legislative dome? (Almuraqib Aliraqi December 15, 2021)

H8 "Reckless" decision ignites the sparkle of "big uprising" against caretaker government. (Almuraqib Aliraqi December 26, 2021)

According to the Metaphorical Identification Procedure (MIP) by Pragglejaz Group (2007), the researcher focuses on the lexical units of fire in the above headlines to determine the basic and contextual meanings whether or not they show metaphoricity in the Iraqi media discourse. The lexical units, which are from different parts of speech, are ignite, blaze, fire, flame and inflame.

'ignite'

Basic meaning: "to make something start to burn"

Contextual meaning: it expresses anger that the journalists wanted to convey to their readers in the headlines. It contrasts with its basic meaning since it expresses how to lit fire. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

"blaze"

Basic meaning: “to burn strongly and brightly”

Contextual meaning: it expresses the state of ANGER. It contrasts with its basic meaning which it expresses the action of firing something. For this reason, it is metaphorical.

“fire”

Basic meaning: “flames and heat from something is burning in an uncontrolled way”

Contextual meaning: It expresses ANGER. Its literal meaning contrasts with its contextual meaning which it means the physical fire. It is metaphorical.

“flame”

Basic meaning: “the brightly burning gas that you see coming from a fire”

Contextual meaning: It expresses ANGER too. It contrasts with its literal meaning since it refers to fire itself. In this case, it is metaphorical.

“inflammation”

Basic meaning: to make a situation worse by making people more angry or excited.

Contextual meaning: It expresses ANGER. Therefore, it contrasts with its basic meaning which imply the inflammation of fire. It is metaphorical.

In short, the lexical units that are chosen show that they have contextual meanings. Consequently, they are metaphorical and they play a role as FIRE metaphor as in ANGER IS FIRE. Since a source domain states an intense situation such as an action, event or state (Kovescs, 2010:143), the above headlines showed different situations as a FIRE concept because they address sociopolitical issues in the Iraqi community and express conflicts and indignation of the issues that the journalists shed the light on in formulating these headlines.

Besides, these issues, the FIRE metaphor can be seen as a source domain to address economic cases such as “rising prices” as in:

H9 Modifying the substances of food ration blazes the prices. (Tareeq Alsha’ab August 9, 2021).

H10 The coalitions blaze “bazaar” of selling the ministries positions and the “economic basket” tops the list. (Almuraqib Aliraqi December 19, 2021)

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 170-171) clarifies understanding the example of “Inflation has gone up” in constituting two metaphors “INFLATION IS A SUBSTANCE” and “MORE IS UP.” There are two ways of metaphorical projection to understand this example via an ontological metaphor by viewing it as a substance and via an orientational metaphor by viewing “more” oriented as “UP.” It allows us to understand the sentence in terms of understanding the situation.

In headlines 9 and 10, when prices go up, they are viewed and understood in terms of fire. In the Iraqi culture, rising prices is connected to fire. Therefore, understanding any rise in prices involves the presence of the term “fire.” Based on Lakoff and Johnson’s above notion, rising prices viewed and understood in two projections. First, it is viewed via an ontological metaphor as FIRE and it is viewed via an orientational metaphor as “MORE IS UP.” Consequently, we can conclude the metaphorical concept “RISING PRICES IS FIRE” because, as in headline 9, the journalist addressed one of the issues that face the Iraqi people by using the concept of FIRE to understand this issue and

the Iraqi people are used to understanding the term “rising prices” in terms of “FIRE” repeatedly in their daily life. The same happens with the headline 10 where selling the governmental positions because of privatization was addressed using the same concept to refer to “RISING PRICES.” In other words, the journalist addressed the conceptual system of the Iraqi to shed the light on the sociopolitical and economic issues because he or she realized that culturally and repeatedly. This issue is addressed by the use of the concept of FIRE.

4.2 HEAT Metaphor

Besides FIRE metaphor, heat is considered as a well-known metaphorical concept to express anger as a target domain. Kövecses (2010:123) reveals that anger is expressed metaphorically as hot fluid in a container as in ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER. In other words, as a source concept, heat is an element that used to correspond anger a target concept (Ibid, 125). For example, “She flipped her lid.”

Iraqi newspapers headlines used the word “boiling” as lexical unit with its parts of speech as a source concept to express ANGER as a target concept to express indignation on the sociopolitical issues that face Iraqis in their daily life and addressed in mass media. Therefore, the journalists used the word (boiling) to shed the light on such issues by using it as a metaphorical expression. This can be noticed in the following headlines:

H11 Political “trickery” leads to “boiling” in the heart of Baghdad in the middle of fears from “collision.” (Almuraqib Aliraqi April 27, 2021)

H12 Iraq is on sill of violent “public boiling” (Albayyana Aljadeedah Newspaper June 10, 2021).

H13 Collapse of the electricity system in Iraq increases the public anger a boiling and demands to make immediate solutions. (Albayyana Aljadeedah Newspaper July, 4, 2021).

H14 Iraq and Summer are a boiling tale. (Almashriq Newspaper July 1, 2021).

H15 The electoral conflict boils in the liberated regions. (Almuraqib Aliraqi August 11, 2021)

H16 Public and political boiling due to “Normalization conference” and demands to chase the “Alfitna sheikhs” (Almuraqib Aliraqi June 26, 2021)

H17 The South boils again: a demonstration and fire shooting. (Almustaqbal Aliraqi December 23, 2021)

The lexical units that are common in these headlines are “boiling” and “boil.” The researcher found out that these words are metaphorical since he compared the basic and contextual meanings of these words as in:

“boiling” and “boil”

Basic meaning: “a boiling liquid has become so hot that there are bubbles in it and it is becoming a gas”

Contextual Meaning: It expresses the state of ANGER. It contrasts with its literal meaning which it expresses the state of a liquid to be hid in a container and accompanied with gas or steam.

4.3 ANIMAL Metaphor

In ANIMAL metaphors, a feature of an entity needs to correspond a feature of another entity similarly (de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2000). The concept of ANIMAL can also be used metaphorically as a source domain to attribute humans. Kövecses (2010: 152) states that metaphorically the human behavior may be grasped as an animal behavior. For this reason, we can realize the concept “HUMAN BEHAVIOR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOR.” That means we use human characteristics to animals and then, we understand human behavior by human-based animal characteristics. Habitat, size, appearance, behavior, and relation are considered the parameters that associate humans to animals. Consequently, individuals are described as animals (Martsa, 2003). Not just behaviors are understood metaphorically as animal behavior, but people are attributed as animals as in the concept “PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS.”

In the sampled data of newspapers headlines, the researcher found out that the journalists used many lexical units to represent the concept of ANIMAL metaphor as a source domain to address the Iraqi affairs; as in the following headlines:

H18 The octopus of corruption bites parts from the “food basket” and conceal it from the Iraqi citizen. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper August 1, 2021)

H19 The bulk dogs and rats break into the Iraq elections. (Alnahar Newspaper August 1, 2021)

H20 “Alhalboosi’s” octopus wraps around the elections offices and unleashes for counterfeiting. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper August 16, 2021)

H21 The lions of intelligence hunts Albaghdadi’s assistant by ... (Azaman Newspaper October 12, 2021)

H22 Integrity chases the “whales”: 58 ... (Almustaqbal Aliraqi Newspaper April 20, 2021)

H23 Alkadhimi increases his war against “the whales” ... (Alhaqeeqa Newspaper April 29, 2021)

H 24 A “whale” of corruption swallows curriculum printing case ... (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper December 26, 2021)

H25 The government of Alkadhimi returns one trillion and a half to the state’s treasury from the whales of corruption. Alhaqeeqa Newspaper November 1, 2021)

H26 Audio Records with names and numbers relate to corruption cases concerns senior whales of corruption ... (Albayyana Aljadeedah Newspaper November 28, 2021).

H27 Three whales take over the lion’s share from the dollar stocks. (Adstour Newspaper June 8, 2021)

H28 Hitting on the heads of whales continues relentlessly... (Albayyana Aljadeedah Newspaper June 13, 2021).

H29 Military legions joins the popular mobilizations to cut the “snake’s head” (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper August 24, 2021)

H30 The committee of “Abu Irgheef” issues arrest warrants for new whales of corruption. (Alhaqeeqa Newspaper April 4, 2021)

H31 The wolves of parties sharpen their tusks to prey the deer or Alzawra'ah park and the park animals for sale cheaply, and they do not worth half of their values

H32 The American “serpent” substitute its “skin” in Iraq by a political “maneuver” (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper April 11, 2021)

H33 The “Turk” claws stick to the body of the Iraqi north and appreciate its wounds (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper April 29, 2021)

H34 The Saudi snake wraps around the power (electricity) towers and cuts air on the Iraqi children. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper July 8, 2021)

H35 Alkadhimi in the “house of serpents” (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper July 26, 2021)

H36 The snake of corruption wraps around the neck of one of the governmental ministries (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper September 21, 2021)

The above headlines included the lexical units, which are the names of animals such as octopus, dogs, rats, lions, snake, whales, wolves, tusks, prey, deer, claw and serpent showed contextual meanings as follows:

“Octopus”

Basic meaning: a sea animal with soft sound body and eight long arms called tentacles.

Contextual meaning: it expresses that the corruptors who have the power to control all the positions in the contry and can do whatever they want. Therefore, its contextual meaning contrasts with its basic meaning to make it metaphorical.

“dogs and rats”

“dog”

Basic meaning: an animal kept as a pet, for guarding buildings or hunting.

“rat”

Basic meaning: an animal like a large mouse with a long tail

Contextual meaning: both dogs and rats refer to the new nominators who won the elections of the parliament. They contrast their basic meanings which express the physical animals, dogs and rats, snice they express a state of mocking when they are attributed as dogs and rats. In this case, it can be inferred that they are metaphorical

“lion”

Basic meaning: a large African wild animal with golden fur. The male lion has thick hair around its head called a mane.

Contextual meaning: since the name of “lion” expresses strength, it always used to attribute persons who have an absolute strength or it is used to praise someone for doing heroic works. It contrasts with its basic meaning since it attributes the lion itself but in headlines it attributed the heroic works which are made the men of Iraqi intelligence. It made it to be metaphorical in context.

“snake”

Basic meaning: a long thin animal with no legs and a smooth skin. Some snakes have a poisonous bite to kill.

Contextual meaning: It refers to ISIS militants who hide themselves in the Iraqi desert. It contrasts with its basic meaning which refers to the physical head of a snake as in headline 29. It is used as metaphorical in context.

“whale”

Basic meaning: a very large sea animal that breathes air through a hole on the top of its head.

Contextual meaning: all the words “whale(s)” in the headlines refer to the politicians who are attributed as corruptors. It contrasts with its basic meanings which it refers to a sea creature. In this case, the word (whale) is used as a metaphorical lexical unit.

“wolf”

Basic meaning: a wild animal similar to a large dog that lives in groups.

Contextual meaning: Just like the other names of the animals used in the headlines, the word “wolf” refers to the politicians or corruptors who belong to the Iraqi parties that hold positions in the Iraqi parliament and government. It contrasts with its basic meaning which refers to the name of an animal. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

“tusk”

Basic meaning: one of the two very long pointed teeth on an animal such as an elephant or a walrus

Contextual meaning: it refers to the power that Iraqi parties have to seize the Iraqi famous zoo and park “Alzawra’ah.” It contrasts with its basic meaning which refers to the sharp teeth that the animals have. That’s why it is metaphorical.

“prey”

Basic meaning: “to hunt another creature in order to eat it”

“deer”

Basic meaning: a large brown animal with long thin legs.

Contextual meaning: “prey the deer” refers to seizure of the animals in the park and dominate its land. It contrasts with its basic meaning which it does not literally prey the deer since the members of the parties are not real wolves but it metaphorically means seizing the whole park.

“claw”

Basic meaning: the sharp curved end of some animals’ toes, for example, a cat.

Contextual meaning: It refers to the military operations that happened from time to time on the Iraqi lands by the Turkish army. It basic meaning contrasts with its contextual meaning since the basic meaning depicts the nails of a wild animal. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

“serpent”

Basic meaning: a snake, especially a large one.

Contextual meaning: In headline, 32, it expresses the American intervention in the Iraqi affairs. It contrasts with its basic meaning which it refers to reptile animal. In headline 35, it expresses the visit of the Prime Minister Mustafa Alkhadhimi to Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. The journalist considers these two countries as the house of serpents because it contrasts with the ideologies of the newspaper. Therefore, its basic meaning contrasts with the contextual meaning since the real house of serpents is a place where the stones, cliffs and so on. The journalist tried to satire or mock this visit to these countries.

The names of animals are associated with the term “corruption” especially the words “whale and octopus” which attributed the politicians who are accused with corruption as in headlines 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 30. Since the financial and political issues that Iraq faced, they generated the use of the metaphorical concept of ANIMAL, which common in the Iraqi culture, to attribute the politicians as octopus and especially as whales. It made it very common in journalism when reporters or the journalists attribute a politician, they associate him or her with whales and octopus because of the prevalence of corruption. In short, the target domain A POLITICIAN/ CORRUPTOR corresponds the source domain of ANIMAL metaphor (A POLITICIAN/ CORRUPTOR IS AN ANIMAL).

Metaphors that relate to the concept of ANIMAL show the negative characteristics of human beings (Kövecses, 2010: 153). This can be comprehended when we read headline 31 “The wolves of parties sharpen their tusks to prey the deer or Alzawra’ah park and the park animals for sale cheaply, and they do not worth half of their values” in addition to headline 19.

In Iraqi culture, the word “wolf” is used either to show positivity or negativity to attribute a human being. For example, on one hand, we say “He or she is a wolf/ you are a wolf” to attribute someone positively in context to express someone’s smartness or acumen. On the other hand, we say “they are wolves which want to tear you down” to attribute someone negatively to express, for example, harassing someone, robbing valuable things, having strength and domination over weak humans, and so on.

However, the animals such as dogs and rats, as in headline 19, are always used to show the negative side of humans in the Iraqi culture. Moreover, if someone tries to insult someone, he or she attributes him or her as a dog or rat. The journalist, in headline 31, attributed the politicians, who were member of the Iraqi parliament and government wanted to takeover most famous park in Iraq which is Alzawra’ah park, as wolves tried to prey the deer since those politicians tried to sell the land of the park. The same is with attributing the politicians as dogs and rats as in headline 19. They were nominated to win a position in the Iraqi parliament. Therefore, the journalist tried to convey to the readers that those politicians are not qualified to lead the country and their goals were to siphon the country’s wealth. In short, both these headlines showed negativity to attribute a human as an animal.

The corruptors who attributed as animals, are also depicted as criminals, victims are the country or the public, and the crime scene is the country’s siphoned money or the wealth. This can be seen in headlines 27 and 30. Consequently, it can be inferred the metaphorical concept A CORRUPTOR IS A CRIMINAL.

In this case, the concept of ANIMAL generalized highly to be HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL. The above headlines showed the negativity that the journalists wanted to convey to their readers. However, the researcher found out that one of the headlines which refers to the concept of ANIMAL shows positivity as in headline 21 “The lions of intelligence hunts Albaghdadi’s assistant by...” In this headline (H21), the lexical unit which is the noun (lions) show a contextual meaning.

Associating a human to an animal depends on behavior to highlight a feature such as “courage” as in “John is a lion” (Lakoff and Turner, 1989 cited in Alenazy and Saidat, 2015). The attribution of someone’s courage for admiration or someone’s cowardliness for mocking enables us to use an animal’s name such as “lion” as in “He is a lion” and “He is a poor lion who has lost everything.” Using the characteristics of an animals became firm and can be used repeatedly. Therefore, to understand the name of an animal, we need to recognize the acceptance of features for a lion culturally (Rouhi and Mahand, 2011).

Since the word “lions” is a symbol of strength in the Iraqi culture, the journalists attributed the intelligence men as lions. In this case, the concept of ANIMAL affirms that we use the animals’ characteristics such as “lions” to attribute human beings as in the case of Iraqi Intelligence men who were attributed positively by journalists to express the successful mission metaphorically.

For ideological purposes, the journalists used the concept of ANIMAL as metaphorical expressions to attribute countries and their representatives as in headlines 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36. In these headlines, it can be noticed that instead of using human based-ANIMAL metaphor to attribute these countries such as the United States, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, etc. they are treated as animals. In other words, they are attributed negatively for ideological purposes. Consequently, the researcher found out that these countries metaphorically expressed as in the concept A COUNTRY IS AN ANIMAL.

4.4 FOOD Metaphor

The concept of FOOD can be used as a source domain to refer to a target. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 46-47) mentions examples that show how the concept of FOOD used metaphorically as a source to express IDEAS as a target domain as in

“What he said left a bad taste in my mouth.”

“... half-baked ideas”

“I just can’t swallow that claim”

“We don’t need to spoon-feed our students”

“He devoured the book”

“Let’s let that idea simmer on the back burner for a while

Other examples are included in (Kövecses, 2010:21) about cooking and food as a source domain:

“What’s your recipe for success”

“He cooked up a story that nobody believed”

What can be noticed from the above examples is that English used the concept of FOOD together with cooking to express a target domain metaphorically as in IDEAS ARE FOOD.

In the same vein, we can observe the use of the concept of FOOD as a source domain to express the issues that the journalists wanted to convey in writing the newspapers headlines as in:

H37 Biting the salaries is (playing with the employees’ nerves) (Almashriq Newspaper April 18, 2021)

H38 The Turkish forces bite the Iraqi lands as a preamble to achieve the dream of “Othman’s State” (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper May 31, 2021)

H39 MPs and observers: ISIS and factions get ready to “swallowing the state” immediately after the evacuation of American forces. (Almada Newspaper July 25, 2021)

H40 The octopus of occupation bites parts from the “food basket” and conceal it from the Iraqi citizen. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper August 1, 2021)

H41 The octopus of occupation swallows 25 billion dollars by “currency transferring” (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper August 5, 2021)

H42 “Privatization” devours the “economy” of Iraq and dominate all the governmental establishments. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper August 8 2021)

H43 The world watches astonishingly.. Taliban swallows Afghanistan (Adstour Newspaper August 16, 2021)

H44 A “whale” of corruption swallows curricula printing case for 12 years. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper December 26, 2021)

Based on Pragglez Group (2007), the lexical units such as (bite, swallow, and devour) show contextual meanings:

“bite”

Basic meaning: “to use your teeth to cut or break something usually in order to eat it.”

Contextual Meaning: It refers to a different meaning in context because it does not show its literal meaning. It means the intention of the government to cut parts of the employees’ salaries to cover the lack in the annual budget which resulted from the corruption, as in headline 37. It contrasts with its basic meaning which it means cutting the food using teeth. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

In the same vein, we see, in headline 40, it expresses cutting some materials from the food ration. It causes to lose millions of dollars as a financial corruption and it leads to indignation of people because it affects their limited budget. In this case, it contrasts with its basic meaning to make it to be metaphorical.

In headline 38, it expresses the invasion of the Turkish army to the Iraqi villages northern Iraq. It, also, contrasts with its basic meaning which it means biting something physically. For this reason, it is metaphorical.

“swallow”

Basic meaning: “to make food or drink go from your mouth down through your throat and into your stomach.”

Contextual Meaning: it expresses the control and domination of an organization to all parts of a state as in headline 39 and 43. Since the ISIS attacks the Iraqi forces and the factions dominate all the positions in the Iraqi government, the journalist conveys that if the American forces leave Iraq, either ISIS or the factions may takeover Iraq completely. It considers Iraq weak in comparison with the potentials that ISIS and the factions have. It becomes like a bite and easy to swallow. That’s why it contrasts with its basic meaning. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

The same is here with “swallowing Afghanistan” in headline 43. Swallowing food does not take a moment to do that. The journalist attributed controlling Afghanistan by Taliban did not take too much time. That’s why the journalist used the word “swallow” to indicate the speed in which Taliban Militants to takeover the whole Afghanistan after leaving the American forces. The purpose behind focusing on this piece of news because the ideologies of the newspaper is against the existence of ISIS militants and factions and Iraq to avoid takingover the whole country, and it supports the American intervention. That’s why it contrasts with the basic meaning to make it metaphorical.

In headlines 41 and 44, the word “swallow” expresses the disappearance of billions of dollars from the annual budget because of the corruption. It, also, contrasts with its basic meaning. For this reason, it is metaphorical.

“devour”

Basic meaning: “to eat something very fast because you are hungry.”

Contextual Meaning: It expresses how the economic crisis happened because of the privatization as part of financial corruption. It led the crisis to occur since it devoured billions of dollars by the corrupted politicians. It contrasts with its basic meaning which it refers to eating fast. In this case, the word shows metaphoricality.

What we saw in English metaphors that the concept of FOOD is used to express IDEAS as a conceptual target domain. However, the Iraqi newspapers used the concept of FOOD and ANIMAL as a conceptual source domain to shed the light, for example, on CORRUPTION as a concept to a target domain in headlines 40, 41, and 44:

Since billions dollars siphoned from the Iraqi annual budget, it caused poverty and lack in the budget. Also, it caused sociopolitical issues to Iraqis such as corruption which led to economic crisis and unemployment in the country.

The researcher found out that the journalists used the metaphorical concept of FOOD with ANIMAL to shed the light on the siphoned money by the politicians in the Iraqi government which caused financial corruption. This led the researcher to sum up that politicians are corruptors and corruptors are animals. In other words, as it concluded the metaphorical concept will be A POLITICIAN IS A CORRUPTOR and A CORRUPTOR/ POLITICIAN IS AN ANIMAL which devour the country’s financial sources.

Since the metaphor in these headlines relate to the concept of FOOD, the researcher had noticed that the siphoned money including siphoning the salaries and food basket (ration) are attributed metaphorically as the food of corruptors. For this reason, it can be concluded the metaphorical concept SIPHONED MONEY IS FOOD.

Moreover, the concept of FOOD was used to refer to giant animate beings which can swallow or bite things. This can be seen in headlines 385 “The Turkish forces bites the Iraqi lands” and 39 “MPs and observers: ISIS and factions get ready to “swallowing the state” immediately after the evacuation of American forces.” In these headlines, it can be noticed that a country such as Turkey and organizations such as ISIS and factions in Iraq are treated as animate beings which can bite or swallow food as in the Iraqi lands and state. Therefore, it can be realized the metaphorical concept A COUNTRY OR ORGANIZATION IS AN ANIMATE BEING. The concept of FOOD is expressed metaphorically as a source domain as in A LAND OR STATE ARE FOOD to attribute the conceptual target domain which is the Iraqi lands or state.

Finally, since cronyism and nepotism are common in the Iraqi community, it caused to make corruptors/ politicians control all the governmental positions by privatizations. This led to propagate unemployment. Consequently, it affected the Iraqi economy and caused sociopolitical issue in the Iraqi affairs. It can be seen in headline 42 “Privatization” devour the “economy” of Iraq and ... In this headline, it can be noticed the lexical unit which is the verb “devour” used to express the metaphorical concept of FOOD as a source domain to attribute the Iraqi economy as a target domain because privatization is attributed as an animate being. It can be concluded the conceptual metaphor ECONOMY IS FOOD.

4.5 GAME metaphor

Gamification plays a role in representing an event metaphorically. Iraqi sociopolitical events were metaphorically represented in the concepts of GAMES. The game of chess was highlighted in the Iraqi newspapers headlines as in:

H45 “The American pawn” moves towards its first goal in Iraq. (Almuraqib Aliraqi April 29, 2021)

“pawn”

Basic meaning: “one of the eight small pieces that each player has in a game of chess.”

Contextual Meaning: it expresses the American intervention in the Iraqi affairs and their supporters and followers move to do their goals in Iraq. The journalist considered their intervention as a game of chess in which the Americans could move their pawns to achieve their goals. That’s why it contrasts its basic meaning in which it made it to be metaphorical.

This headline is projected through the conceptual metaphors A COUNTRY IS A CHESSBOARD and ACTORS OF COUNTRIES ARE CHESS PAWNS. Since the United States has interests in Iraq, it considers it a field to fight its enemies; the factions which follow Iran. Therefore, the journalists used the chess game to conceptualize this political game (chessboard) to face foes in this game. In other words, the journalists expressed politics as a game in the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A GAME.

In terms of gambling, the data showed the use of card game (gambling) in the newspapers headlines:

H46 Political parties gamble with the citizen’s suffering and play with the electricity card. (Almuraqib Aliraqi July 4, 2021)

H47 Staying means dissolution ..Washington gambles with its soldiers in a losing game.

According to Praggeljaz Group (2007), it can be noticed that the lexical units “gamble” and “card” show contextual meanings in the above headlines.

“gamble”

Basic meaning: “to risk money or something valuable in the hope of winning more if you are lucky or if you guess something correctly.”

Contextual meaning: The journalist used the word “gamble” to shed the light on two different cases using the card game. In headline 46, the gamblers are the political parties which played and the pawn is the billions of dollars which siphoned from the state budget without finding solutions to issue of electricity crisis.

In headline 47, since the ideologies of the newspaper is not in agreement with the American policy, the journalist stated a warning to the American forces that staying in Iraq and intervening in the Iraqi affairs are just like playing a card game which it is considered as gambling. The price would be their soldiers' lives. That's why it contrasts with its basic meaning. For this reason, it is metaphorical.

“card”

Basic meaning: “one of a set of 52 small pieces of thick stiff paper used for various games” and “thick stiff paper”

Contextual meaning: The same is with the word “card” which it contrasts with its basic meaning since there is no a card called electricity in the card games. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

It is noticed that the journalist used the card game to refer metaphorically to the sociopolitical issues and how the Iraqi citizen suffers from the politicians as in headline 46 “Political parties gamble with the suffering citizen and play the electricity card.” This headline manifests the conceptual metaphor POLITICIANS ARE GAMBLERS, ELECTRICITY IS A GAMBLING CARD, and CITIZEN'S SUFFERING IS A PAWN.

Since the American forces are still settled in Iraq, the politicians and the factions, who are against their staying in Iraq, warn the American forces not to stay long in Iraq. Otherwise, they would face the resistance. For this reason, the journalists formulated the headlines based on the card game (gambling) to shed the light on staying the American forces to be a pressure card to leave the country. These ideas were generated in the conceptual metaphors WASHINGTON AND ITS SOLDIERS ARE GAMBLERS, A COUNTRY IS A CARD GAME, and STAYING IS A LOSING GAME.

Another conceptualization of gamification is the use of “marathon” concept to refer to a race in conceptualizing an event in the Iraqi newspapers headlines as in:

H48 The fifth Iraq electoral marathon started in Iraq with participation of millions. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper October 10, 2021)

H49 Washington precedes “marathon” of coalitions by a political maneuvering to seize the elections. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper April 28, 2021)

H50 The committees of “Alitar Altanseeqi” set out in a marathon to “resolve” the disputes (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper December 20, 2021).

“marathon”

Basic meaning: “a race in which people run on roads over a distance of 42 kilometers about 26 miles.”

Contextual meaning: the word “marathon” contrasts with its basic meaning since the players are runners who run for distances to win a prize. However, it expresses the crowd who voted in elections. They get out in groups like marathons to the elections centers and the coalitions which strived to win the elections. Moreover, the committees of coalitions who strived to make agreements with other nominators who won in the elections. They strived to make and be allies which enable them to establish the government and choose the next Prime Minister.

Conceptualizing the word “marathon” entails a track, runners or racers, and end line. All runners in a marathon try to reach an end line to gain a prize. Metaphorically, it corresponds the concepts ELECTIONS ARE MARATHON/GAME, ELECTORS ARE RUNNERS/RACERS, and RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS ARE THE ENDLINE. This can be noticed in headline 48 “The fifth Iraq electoral marathon started in Iraq ...”

For ideological purposes, Headline 49 “Washington precedes “marathon” of coalitions by a political maneuvering to seize the elections” shows another actor in the metaphorical process. It is another runner which would seize the results of elections before the marathon started. The runner is “Washington.” The runners are conceptualized as the political coalitions. In this case, the conceptual metaphor is manifested as WASHINGTON AND POLITICAL COALITIONS ARE RUNNERS/RACERS and to obtain the prize entails seizing elections. In other words, it is conceptualized in the metaphorical concept SEIZING ELECTIONS IS A WINNING PRIZE.

In headline 50 The committees of “Alitar Altanseeqi” set out in a marathon to “resolve” the disputes, the politicians of the Alitar Altanseeqi which is a coalition that include the followers of the previous Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Almaliki, are depicted as RUNNERS in a MARATHON. They strived to resolve the disputes with other coalitions to become the biggest alliance in the Iraqi parliament where they can choose the new Prime Minister from their coalition. Therefore, the journalist metaphorically tried to convey that POLITICIANS ARE RUNNERS and RESOLVING DISPUTES IS THE WINNING PRIZE OF THE MARATHON. Consequently, from the above headlines, it can be noticed the concept of GAME plays a role in Politics where it is expressed as POLITICS IS A GAME.

Finally, headline H51 “The Turks continue playing on the “northern” field of Iraq and the government sits on “terrace” (Almuraqib Aliraqi April 29, 2021), addresses the violation of the Iraqi sovereignty metaphorically by using the concept of GAME to cover the Turkish attacks to the Iraqi villages. This headline includes that lexical units such as “playing” and “terrace.” They entail the conceptual metaphor of GAME. They show their contextual meanings according to Pragglejaz Group as in

“play”

Basic meaning: “to take part in a sport or game.”

“field”

Basic meaning: “an area of a land covered in grass and used for sport”

“terrace”

Basic meaning: “a series of wide low steps of a football pitch where you can stand and watch the match”

Contextual meaning: The words “play, field, and terrace” contrast with their basic meanings since they refer to a game on a field. However, contextually, the journalist was mocking the invasion of the Turkish army to the Iraqi villages northern Iraq. Therefore, they are metaphorical.

In this case, it can be noticed that the above headline conceptualizes the metaphors A COUNTRY IS A PLAYER, A COUNTRY IS A GAME FIELD, and THE GOVERNMENT IS A SPECTATOR.

To sum up, the journalists manifested the attacks that happen from time to time by the Turkish army to the Iraqi villages on the borderlines. The Turkish army strikes these villages without any justifications and the Iraqi government does not take an action against these attacks. Therefore, the journalist attributed the Turkish army as player who played freely on the field (Iraq) and the government plays the role as an audience without taking a step to cease these attacks.

4.6 Birth Metaphor

The concepts of MAKING and CREATION play a role in newspapers discourse. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) elaborate the natural human experience of birth. Conceptualizing an idea using the concepts of MAKING and CREATION requires an object, container, and container object. An object refers to the baby. A container refers to a mother. A container object refers to a mother's substance (flesh and blood). Therefore, it grounds the concept of CREATION which refers to its core as MAKING a physical object. Abstract entities can be conceptualized in the concept of birth as in"

"Our nation was born out of a desire for freedom."

"The University of Chicago was the birthplace of the nuclear age."

In the Iraqi newspaper discourse, the journalists formulate the headlines that correspond the concept of birth in a way of having a hard birth delivery to address the sociopolitical cases as in:

H52 After a hard parturition, the parliament votes on all the items of the financial budget except item 41 and fixes the price of the Dollar. (Alzawra'a Newspaper April 1, 2021).

H53 Alkadhimi cuts the umbilical cord which feeds ISIS after dismantling its financial Transfer System. (Alhaqeeqa Newspaper May 24, 2021)

H54 After a hard parturition and not feeling embarrassed, the parliament holds its sessions. (Albayyana Aljadeedah Newspaper June 30, 2021).

H55 The womb of "electoral commission" delivers "distorted" parliament and the boycott option is looming. (Almuraqib Aliraqi Newspaper November 11, 2021).

The lexical units "parturition, umbilical cord, womb, delivers, and distorted" refer to the process giving a birth. Based on Pragglejaz Group (2007), the researcher extracts their basic and contextual meaning to see how they are used metaphorically to correspond the cases that the journalists wanted to convey to the readers.

"parturition" (hard parturition)

Basic meaning: "the action of giving birth to young; childbirth."

Contextual meaning: it expresses the long time especially when the parliament suspended all its sessions although there were cases and decisions were needed to take for the people's sake. However, it contrasts with its basic meaning which refers to have a difficult physical birth process. In this case, the journalists depicted having a hard parturition to imply the suspended sessions. Therefore, it is metaphorical.

“umbilical cord”

Basic meaning: “a long tube that connects a baby to its mother before it is born and through which it receives food and oxygen”

Contextual meaning: it refers to the financial support that ISIS used to get, but the Iraqi Prime Minister cut this support by the military operations that carried out against ISIS militants. We know that the umbilical cord feeds a fetus inside its mother. Cutting it means that a fetus will live a normal life with no need to its mother. The term is used to underestimate ISIS and consider it as a fetus which gets its food from its mother. Therefore, without the financial support, ISIS will lose its power and consequently, it becomes easy to finish them. In this case, it contrasts with its basic meaning and considered metaphorical.

“womb”

Basic meaning: “the organ in a woman’s or female animals’ body where a baby grows before it is born”

Contextual meaning: every female must have a womb which enables her to get pregnant and give a birth. Metaphorically, the role of the electoral commission is to notarize the results of elections and declare the winners who will lead the legislative authority in the Iraqi parliament. The journalist considered this process after taking a long time as a womb that gives a birth. It contrasts with its basic meaning and be metaphorical.

“deliver”

Basic meaning: “to help a woman to give a birth to a baby”

Contextual meaning: The electoral commission is not physically giving a birth since it is not a real female who has the potential to give do that. In this case, we can notice that there is a contrast with its basic meaning and considered metaphorical.

“distorted”

Basic meaning: “to change the way that something looks, sounds, or behaves so that it becomes strange or difficult to recognize”

Contextual meaning: the journalist used the Birth metaphor to attribute the winners to be new members of the parliamentary term ironically just like giving birth a distorted newborn trying to convey that those members are not qualified to lead the legislative authority. In this case, the journalist mocks the new parliamentary term. For this reason, it contrasts with its basic meaning and considered metaphorical.

In headlines 52 and 54, we can see that holding the parliamentary sessions became hardship and burden since the parliament members had to vote to pass the financial budget and the other laws that people waited for. Voting for passing the financial budget took a long time. In headline 52, it can be noticed that the journalist addressed the endorsement of the financial budget to correspond the concept of BIRTH. It entails the conceptual metaphor VOTING FOR THE FINANCIAL BUDGET IS A HARD BIRTH DELIEVERY/ PARTURIATION. In headline 54, we conceptualize the metaphor A PARLIAMENTARY SESSION IS A BIRTH DELIVERY.

In headline 55, it is noticed that the journalist focused on the concept of BIRTH to convey that the Iraqi parliament is the worst since it was attributed as “distorted.” That means the container gave a birth and the object was the bad parliament. Headlines 52 and 54 attributed birth process as a hard parturition and did not focus on the container (mother). However, it is noticed from headline 55 that container is known. Obviously, the journalist used metaphorically the lexical unit which is “womb”

In this case, it is realized the conceptual metaphor ELECTORIAL COMMISSION IS A CONTAINER and A DISTORTED PARLIAMENTARY TERM IS A NEWBORN. Therefore, it is realized that headline (55) contradicts the ideology of newspaper and the journalist since the sponsors of the newspapers are the politicians who run against the other politicians in Iraq.

Finally, in headline 53, we know that feeding the fetus is transferred through the umbilical cord during pregnancy. The journalist tried to let us convey the process of cutting the financial support to ISIS considering the way to send the support as an umbilical cord. Metaphorically, the separation of fetus from a mother means cutting the umbilical cord. By using the conceptual metaphor of BIRTH, it corresponds the concept ISIS FINANCIAL SUPPORT IS A FUTUS’S FEEDING, and FINANCIAL TRANSFER IS AN UMBILICAL CORD. Since the newspaper supports the Iraqi PM’s viewpoints, ideologically, the newspaper tried to tell the readers the role of the Iraqi PM to fight ISIS metaphorically.

5. Conclusions

This study investigated the conceptual metaphors in Iraqi newspapers discourse. The researcher concluded the following

The journalists wrote the newspapers headlines metaphorically.

The headlines included different conceptual domains; they are FIRE, HEAT, ANIMAL, FOOD, GAME and BIRTH. The concept of ANIMAL metaphor is considered as the common and dominant metaphorical concept in the current study.

The source domains attributed different target domains that addressed the Iraqi sociopolitical and economic issues such as corruption, national security, financial crisis, and so on.

The researcher found out that there is incongruity between the literal and contextual meanings of the metaphorical expressions which had the role in interpreting the issues that the journalists focused on in formulating the newspaper headlines.

Both the concepts of FIRE and HEAT showed the same target domain which is ANGER.

Besides ANGER, the concept of FIRE metaphor shed the light on RISING PRICES since there is a correlation between the fire and rising prices in the Iraqi culture.

Based on the metaphorical expressions PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS and HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL, it is concluded that the concept of ANIMAL metaphor showed a higher use in the Iraqi newspapers headlines which focused on corruption and the actions of politicians and corruptors to entail the conceptual metaphors A POLITICAN/ CORRUPTOR IS AN ANIMAL, CORRUPTOR IS A CRIMINAL, etc.

The metaphorical concept of FOOD, in the same vein, focused on the politicians and corruptors who siphoned the country’s wealth considering them as the animals who devour food. It entails the conceptual metaphors that relate to finance and economy of the country such as ECONOMY IS FOOD, SIPHONED MONEY IS FOOD, and so on.

The GAME metaphor played a role in the Iraqi policy and all the political issues. It entails the conceptual metaphors POLITICS IS A GAME, A COUNTRY IS A CHESSBOARD, POLITICANS ARE GAMBLERS, A COUNTRY IS A CARD GAME, A COUNTRY IS A PLAYER, A COUNTRY IS A GAME FIELD, POLITICANS ARE RUNNERS, etc.

Finally, the metaphorical concept of BIRTH was used to shed the light on the financial budget of the country, elections, and the Iraqi parliament. It entails the conceptual metaphors VOTING FOR THE FINANCIAL BUDGET IS A HARD BIRTH DELIVERY/ PARTURIATION, A PARLIAMENTARY SESSION IS A BIRTH DELIVERY, etc.

Based on the concluding notes, the researcher proposes investigating other conceptual sources domains in the Iraqi newspapers discourse which may address other issues and studying the newspapers headlines are not enough; he suggests investigating the headlines, lead and the whole text of an article to reveal the metaphorical expression in text. Furthermore, the researcher suggests investigating the underlying ideologies in newspapers discourse by using the Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA). Finally, he suggests investigating other cognitive aspects such as metonymy besides metaphors.

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