Hani Abumathkour
ORCID: 0009-0002-2659-5797
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

Metaphor Realization in Jordanian Arabic Proverbs: An Exploratory Study

This paper aims at identifying the most common constructions that realise metaphor in a group of commonly used Jordanian Arabic proverbs. The metaphorical instances in the data were identified using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (cf. Pragglejaz Group 2007). The analysis of the data focused on the form of the linguistic metaphors in Jordanian proverbs as this aspect of analysis has been paid less attention for favour of idea-content aspect of metaphors since Aristotle. It was found that metaphor is mainly realised by the constructions: genitive, grammatical metaphor, post-modification, pre-modification, and sentence metaphor. The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data showed that the most common types of metaphor realization were sentence metaphor and grammatical metaphor. A future paper with a larger size of data might show further constructions that realise metaphor in Jordanian Arabic.

Keywords: Jordan Arabic language, metaphor, structure, proverbs

Metaphernrealisierung in jordanischen arabischen Sprichwörtern: Eine explorative Studie

Der vorliegende Aufsatz verfolgt das Ziel, die häufigsten Konstruktionen zu identifizieren, die in einer Gruppe allgemein gebräuchlicher Sprichwörter der jordanischen arabischen Metaphern realisieren können. Die metaphorischen Instanzen der Datenbasis wurden unter Zuhilfenahme des von der Pragglejaz Gruppe entwickelten Metaphernidentifizierungsverfahrens identifiziert (vgl. Pragglejaz Group 2007). Die Analyse der Daten fokussierte auf die Form der sprachlichen Metaphern unter den jordanischen Sprichwörtern, zumal diesem Untersuchungsaspekt bisher weniger Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt wurde, als der seit Aristoteles bevorzugten Ideen- und Inhaltsseite der Metapher. Es konnte gezeigt werden, dass die Metaphern hauptsächlich durch die folgenden Konstruktionen realisiert wurden: Genitive, grammatische Metaphern, Postmodifikationen, Prämodifikationen sowie Satzmetaphern. Eine Folgestudie anhand eines größeren Datensets könnte weitere metaphernträchtige Konstruktionen ans Licht bringen.

Schlüsselwörter: jordanische arabische Sprache, Metapher, Struktur, Sprichwörter

Author: Hani Abumathkour, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Múzeum krt. 4/a, 1088 Hungary, e-mail: madkor79@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Defining metaphor has been controversial among linguists (cf. Devylder/Zlatev 2020: 256). Nevertheless, Kövecses (2010: 4) defines metaphors as "understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain". Hence, the fundamental nature of metaphor is experiencing one thing in terms of another (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 5). The first domain i.e., Source Domain is mostly abstract, and the other one

i.e., Target Domain is concrete. The need for making the first domain more simplified or understandable triggers off the use of metaphors. These metaphors can help the speakers to communicate their own ideas hinging on the shared knowledge of the audience. For example, in the sentence *Don't waste your time with wrong people*, *time* is an abstract domain that can be explained in terms of another concrete domain i. e., *money*. Thus, we can notice the conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY which is expressed by the linguistic metaphor *don't waste your time*. Consequently, there is a source domain and target domain which can both have a kind of similarity (cf. Kövecses 2015: 21). The similarity between money and time stems from their importance to the vast majority of people. Moreover, the similarity arises from the concept of quantity or value as money and time can be both measured in the conventional ways i.e., minutes or hours for time and currency for money. Furthermore, the source domain is from which we get metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain. The target domain is recognized through this way. Also, Kövecses (2010: 7) indicates that the direction of metaphor making is normally from the concrete domain to the abstract one but not vice versa (see also Lakoff/Johnson 1980, 1999). These unidirectional mappings of conceptual metaphors are governed by the principle of unidirectionality (cf. Kövecses 2010: 7). However, based on psycho-physical studies, Shen and Porat (2017: 80) have shown that there is a bidirectionality of domains in the verbal domains. This claim of bidirectionality of metaphorical domains should wait for further research in various languages.

Stockwell (2002: 105) demonstrated that originally metaphor was associated with poetry or literature. However, nowadays, it is not simply seen as a poetic device, but rather as an essential component of how people communicate and understand a diverse range of abstract concepts and human events (cf. Gibbs/Macedo 2010: 680). Additionally, metaphors possess persuasive power, as they can be used to influence others based on shared experiences or knowledge (cf. Moser 2007: 170). Consequently, metaphors are present in everyday conversations and are intertwined with both our thinking and actions, revealing that the fundamental nature of the human conceptual system is metaphorical (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 3). Thus, an approach or method should be developed to effectively identify the metaphors that surround us, as this would aid linguists in their task of recognizing metaphorical instances in language. Pragglejaz Group (2007) provided a procedure to identify metaphors (and metonymies) in discourse. The current study will follow the same procedures to identify target metaphorical instances in the data. This "metaphor identification procedure" (MIP) includes some steps to spot the metaphorically used instances of language in any discourse. First, the entire text should be read to understand the general meaning. Then, lexical units should be determined. Next, the meaning of each lexical item should be identified based on the context as well as its basic meaning. A decision should be made whether the basic meaning is different from the contextual meaning. If the contextual meaning and the basic meaning are not different, the lexical items

is marked as non-metaphorical. If the contextual meaning and the basic meaning are distinct, the reader should find out if the meanings have some similarity. In case there is any similarity between the two meanings, the lexical item is marked as metaphorical. Otherwise, it is marked as non-metaphorical and excluded from data.

When examining metaphors in language, it is crucial to consider the stylistic elements of the linguistic expressions that contain metaphorical meanings. Stockwell (2002) explored metaphor from a stylistic viewpoint, revealing that it was initially associated with literary and poetic functions. As a result, it is important to discuss the diversity in how metaphors are expressed, which can include various stylistic features that reflect the language users' preference for different metaphorical representations. These stylistic representations of metaphor may also include other tropes such as simile and analogy, as well as various grammatical structures such as premodification, compounds, copula constructions, genitive case, apposition, and others. Moreover, Stockwell (2002: 110) showed that certain conceptual metaphors are more pervasive than others such as GOOD IS UP and LOVE IS A GAME. These conceptual metaphors can generate a lot of expressions in language. These expressions doubtlessly can vary in terms of structures. This variation in structure of the linguistic metaphors can provide an arena for scholars to look at metaphors from a different perspective. The current research is an attempt to explore metaphors from a structural perspective. This paper will address the question of metaphor in one language i. e., Jordanian Arabic.

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) book, "Metaphors We Live By", was a seminal work that launched the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as the dominant approach for studying metaphor in language, according to Kövecses (2017: 13). Within the CMT framework, Lakoff (1993: 208) argued that "metaphor is not only a matter of language but of thought and reason". Many cognitive linguistics studies have employed CMT as a theoretical foundation (e.g., Csábi 2004, Kövecses 1990, Skorczynska/Deignan 2006, Zibin/Hamdan 2019, among others). Nonetheless, this theory has been subjected to criticism from various perspectives and for several reasons over the last four decades (e. g., Kövecses 2008, Pragglejaz Group 2007). Therefore, this paper will not employ the CMT in the analysis of data, as the focus will be on the structural representations of metaphor. It appears that CMT is inadequate for providing a comprehensive and rigorous analysis of cross-reference mapping (cf. Glynn 2002: 541, see also Kövecses 2008).

The centrality of grammatical or syntactic aspect of the language with ignoring any other psychological or philosophical aspects has been attributed to the Chomskyan grammar (cf. Steinberg/Nagata/Aline 2013: 368). This autonomy of syntax has paved the way for other linguistic perspectives of language. One of these has been an approach to describe language in terms of meaning and conceptualization (cf. Langacker 1991: 278). This cognitive view suggests that language is an essential component of cognition where conceptualization is "physically grounded and pervasively imaginative, both individual and fundamentally social" (Langacker 2008: 539). The semantics or the study of meaning later has gained a prominent position in linguistics.

Nevertheless, the syntactic or grammatical aspect of the language should be also in any attempt to describe language as far as grammar can contribute to the meaning. The current research will be an attempt to highlight the interplay between grammar (i.e., structures) and meaning making in language.

Probably, Brooke-Rose (1958) was one of the first studies to address the structural aspects of the metaphors. She studied the syntax of metaphor and attempted to exhibit how the grammatical constructions can contribute to the making of meaning. Moreover, Goatly (1997) tried to show how metaphors can affect grammar through presenting or clarifying ambiguities in the meanings of syntax. He surveyed the most common syntactic structures that are employed to identify the topic, i. e., the literal object/concept involved in the metaphor. These structures were copula, apposition, genitive, noun premodifier, compounds, and blends. Likewise, showed that Stockwell (2002) there are other stylistic possibilities for metaphoric realisation in addition to what Goatly (1997) presented. Stockwell (2002: 108) added simile constructions, grammatical metaphor i. e., a metaphor which exists mainly in the verb of the clause, and sentence metaphor i. e., a metaphor which exists in all the constituents of a clause. These categories by Goatly (1997) and Stockwell (2002) will be checked in the data of the current study to find out if they are applicable to Jordanian Arabic. Also, the current study will try to find out if there are other grammatical realisations of metaphor in Arabic.

The current study will use data from commonly used proverbs in Jordan. A proverb is defined as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorisable form and which is handed down from generation to generation" (Mieder 2004: 3). Consequently, the main criterion to differentiate the proverbs from the idioms is that the former is a complete sentence whereas the latter is a group of words and not necessarily a complete sentence (cf. Belkhir 2021: 599). Based on this, the data of the current study will be limited to the proverbs. Idioms will be excluded. According to Belkhir (2014: 53) proverbs can stem from human experience, ancient language, literature, religion, or history. Furthermore, many proverbs include a metaphor (cf. Mieder 2004: 8). Thus, the current study will limit itself to those proverbs from Jordanian Arabic which have metaphorical meaning. Proverbs which have literal meaning were excluded from the data.

The examination of proverbs in Jordanian Arabic has triggered off the interest of many linguists in Jordan, with a focus on various aspects such as their internal structure and meaning (cf. Al-Awawdeh 2013, Badarneh 2016), translatability (cf. Dweik/ Thalji 2015, Al-Azzam 2018, Al-Khaza'leh 2019), and analysis of specific domains or topics, such as animal proverbs (cf. Farghal 2021), food proverbs (cf. Migdadi 2015), marriage proverbs (cf. Al Momani 2015), and weather proverbs (cf. Al-Zyout 2016). Jaradat (2007) conducted a linguistic analysis of proverbs in Jordanian Arabic using two collections of proverbs, a cultural book with 305 proverbs and the encyclopaedia

of proverbs Al-Amad (1976) with 6000 proverbs. He found that JA proverbs have limited syntactic structures due to being adapted from Standard Arabic and are mainly used to support arguments. Additionally, Migdadi (2013) examined Arabic proverbs from a linguistic and pragmatic perspective but did not use data from JA specifically, instead using Standard Arabic.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the use of metaphor in the Jordanian context. Jordanian Arabic, a colloquial variety of Arabic, is spoken by approximately 10 million people residing in Jordan, a country located in the Middle East. This colloquial variety of Arabic consists of three dialects, namely Madani (spoken in cities), Fallhi (spoken in villages and refugee camps), and Beduoin (spoken in desert towns). The differences among these dialects of Jordanian Arabic mainly stem from variations in the pronunciation of certain sounds and some differences in vocabulary and structures (Cleveland 1963, Zibin and Hamdan 2019). Similar to other languages, this variety of Arabic is rich in instances of metaphorical meanings, which has attracted the attention of many linguists to explore the use of metaphor in the Jordanian context. Investigating metaphor in Jordanian Arabic has tempted a lot of linguists. Nearly, all the studies of metaphor in Jordan investigated metaphor within CMT, e. g. Al Sharif (2007), Zibin and Hamdan (2019), Bani Mofarrej and Rabab'ah (2020). Nevertheless, there has been no attempt to explore the structural aspect of metaphor in Jordanian Arabic. Thus, the current paper will be an attempt to fill in a gap in the metaphor research in Jordanian context.

2. Methods

A sample of 52 Jordanian Arabic proverbs has been prepared by the author from a recently published source i.e., "Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions in Levantine Arabic. Jordanian Dialect" by Alzoubi (2020). The proverbs have been selected based on the definitions of a proverb by Mieder (2004: 3) and Belkhir (2021: 599). Also, the selected proverbs have metaphorical meaning. Thus, the proverbs in the source with the literal meaning were excluded.

In addition, the proverbs were translated literally into English and annotated with glossing. The English equivalents of these proverbs were also presented. Next, using the structural categories of metaphor by Stockwell (2002, 1992), Goatly (1997), and Brooke-Rose (1958), the sample of the proverb was analysed and categorised.

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

This paper aims at exploring the grammatical constructions through which metaphors in Jordanian Arabic are realised. The analysis of 52 Jordanian proverbs which have metaphorical meanings showed that the main grammatical realisations of metaphor in the data were sentence metaphor, grammatical metaphor, genitive, post-modification,

and premodification. Nevertheless, the copula construction was not found in the data as "Arabic is considered by some grammarians non- copulative language" (Tahir 2009: 5) unlike English and other languages. Also, this can be attributed to the nature of Arabic language which can have verbless clauses (Defence Language Institute 1974: 60).

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of the metaphor realisations in the data.

Metaphor Realisation	Frequency	Percentage
Genitive	9	17.3
Grammatical metaphor	16	30.8
Post-modification	6	11.5
Pre-modification	2	3.8
Sentence metaphor	19	36.5
Total	**52**	**100**

Tab. 1. Metaphor grammatical realisations in the data

The most common realisation in the data which consisted of 52 Jordanian proverbs was sentence metaphor type with more than one third of the proverbs i. e., 37 %. The following are examples of the realisation of metaphor through most constituents of the sentence.

(1) الكلمة الطىىبة صدقة

    al-kalimah   *al-Tayiba*   *Sadaqa*

    DEF-word   DEF-kind   charity

    Lit. *A kind word is charity*

    'A soft answer turnes away wrath'.

(2) اللي بدق على الباب بسمع الجواب

    ʔilli   *bidug*   *ʕala*   *il-bab*   *bismaʕ*   *il-dʒawa:b*

    The one knocks on   DEF-door hears.FUT DEF.answer

    Lit. *The one who knocks on the door hears the answer*

    'A civil question deserves a civil answer/ You asked for it/ Every action is followed by a reaction'.

In examples (1) and (2) the whole sentence with all of its constituents or words realised the metaphor. Thus, these examples demonstrated that metaphor is dependent on all the lexemes in each case.

Next, grammatical metaphors constituted around 31 % of the proverbs with 16 proverbs. These proverbs contained a verb which mainly realised the metaphorical meaning of the proverb. The following are examples of grammatical metaphors in Jordanian Arabic proverbs.

(3) تعب اقدامك ولا تتعب لسانك

    t ʕib   *aqdam-ak*   *wala*   *titaʕib*   *lisan-ak*

    Make tired.IMP feet-your.2M.SG but not Make tired tongue-your

Lit. *Make your feet tired, but not your tongue*

'Self-done is well done/ Self-done is soon done'.

(4)   الطبع غلب التطبّع

il-Tabiʕ	*yalab*	*il-taTabuʕ*
DEF-temper	defeat.PST	DEF-adaptability

Lit. *The temper defeated the adaptability*

'A leopard can't change its spots'.

Another way of metaphor realisation is by using genitive case. The number of proverbs in which genitive case realised the metaphorical meaning was 9 instances. The following are examples of this kind of metaphor realisation.

(5)   درهم وقاية خير من قنطار علاج

dirham	*wiqayih*	*xayrun*	*min*	*qinTar*	*ʕila:dʒ*
dirham	prevention.GEN	better	than	quintal	medicine

Lit. *One dirham of prevention is better than a quintal of medicine*

'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure'.

(6)   الصبر مفتاح الفرج

Il-Sabir	*muftah*	*il-faradʒ*
DEF-patience	key	DEF-relief.GEN

Lit. *Patience is the key to relief*

'Patience is a virtue'.

Another type of metaphor realisation in the data was post-modification. The post-modifiers in this type were mainly adjectives. This can be attributed to the Arabic word order which is different from English, i.e., in Arabic the adjectives follow the nouns but it is the other way round in English. This kind of metaphor realisation is not common in English. There were six proverbs which contained a post-modifier which realised the metaphor in the proverb. The following proverbs are examples of this type of metaphor realisation in the data.

(7)   ذنب الكلب أعوج

ðanab	*il-kalib.GEN*	*aʕwadʒ*
tail	DEF-dog	crooked.ADJ

Lit. *The tail of the dog is crooked*

'A leopard cannot change its spots / What is bred in the bone cannot come out of the flesh'.

(8)   العين بصيرة والإيد قصيرة

il-ʕi:n	*basi:ra*	*wa*	*il-ʔi:d*	*gaSi:ra*
DEF-eye	seeing.ADJ	and	DEF-hand	short.ADJ

Lit. *The eye sees, the hand is short*

'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak'.

The last type of metaphor realisation in the data was pre-modification. The data included only two proverbs which had pre-modifiers that realised metaphor.

(9) الصلح سَيِّد ألأحكام

al-Suliħ   *sayyid*   *il-aħka:m*

DEF-conciliation   master   DEF-judgements

Lit. *Conciliation is the master of judgements*

'A lean agreement is better than a fat judgment'.

(10) المكتوب على الجبين لازم تشوفه العين

ilmaktu:b   ʕala   *il-dʒabi:n*   *lazim*   *tʃuf-u*   *il-ʕi:n*

DEF-written   on   DEF-forehead   must   see-it   DEF-eye

Lit. *What is written on the forehead must be seen by the eye*

'Fate is sealed'.

4. Conclusion

The current paper aimed at identifying the most common constructions that realise metaphor in a group of Jordanian proverbs. The metaphors in the data were identified using metaphor identification procedure. The analysis of the data focused on the form of the linguistic metaphors in Jordanian proverbs as this aspect of analysis has been paid less attention for the favour of idea-content aspect of metaphors since Aristotle (cf. Brooke-Rose 1958: 1).

The analysis of the data, both qualitative and quantitative, revealed that the two most common ways in which metaphors were expressed were through sentence metaphors and grammatical metaphors. The high frequency of sentence metaphors in the data was due to the proverbs' idiomatic nature, which makes them "frozen" expressions. Additionally, the second type of metaphor realization, which primarily relied on the main verb of the sentence, indicated that verbs play a crucial role in contributing to the metaphorical meaning of the sentence. They are not just components related to form.

The current paper constituted an exploratory attempt to explore the most common structures in a group of Arabic proverbs. The choice of the certain structures in metaphorical utterances may reflect the tendency of Arabic speakers to use sentence metaphors and grammatical metaphors more often since they can contribute to the expressive power of the utterances. Finally, a future study with a larger data could potentially uncover additional constructions that are used to express metaphorical meanings in Jordanian Arabic.

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