

3-Conceptual Metaphor of Marriage in English

Dr.Manal Omar Mousa

جامعة تكريت/كلية التربية والعلوم الإنسانية

Abstract

Many cognitive linguistic studies have shown that metaphor plays an important role in the human conceptual system. Metaphors are often grounded in culture and can hence serve as a good resource for the investigation of cultural beliefs expressed in language. Metaphor is a cognitive process because in metaphorical understanding the mind does not depend on the words we hear or read but on cognitive features of conceptual correspondences. Context also play an important role in interpreting and understanding the exact meaning that are used behind metaphors used in those contexts.

This study deals with metaphor as a cognitive phenomenon which is the main part of our conceptual system. Metaphor is used to understand and experience the abstract and complex concepts in terms as clearly as possible. Metaphor also performs another important function when it is used in marriage ,since it represents the main cognitive mechanism to understand this concept.

Also , this study provides a clear evidence about the cognitive nature of metaphor and how it is used by all people in everyday of life.so metaphor is a conscious process which is a highly systematic cognitive process which is used in this study to make the concept of marriage more understandable for everyone that is achieved by a set of systematic mappings between elements of source and target domains.

1. Introduction

In cognitive linguistic , metaphor is an important aspect of human thought since metaphor shapes our conceptual system. Metaphor is a central cognitive process which helps everyone to think or talk about abstract phenomenon through mapping the structure of concrete source domains to abstract domains of human experiences(Liebert et al.,1997:17).According to this view. Metaphors are part of our conceptual systems that everyone cannot think without them ,since they metaphors we live by.

Lakoff and Johnson(2003:257)point out that “ you do not have a choice whether to think metaphorically , because metaphorical maps are part of our brains ; we will think and speak metaphorically whether we want or not.”

Conceptual metaphor is a process of mapping between two domains of experiences: source and target domains. Source domain supplies the language and imagination which are used to refer to the target domain which is actually the issue in discourse.so , through conceptual domain everyone can draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain that is called the source domain while the conceptual domain that is understood in terms of the source domain is called the target domain(ibid).

Conventional metaphors are embodied in our culture in order to interpret their meanings literally(i.e. conceptual metaphors), for example, TIME IS MONEY is a conventional metaphor that become embodied in our culture by which we understand TMIE in terms of MONEY and conceptualize TIME as being spent or saved.

Tendah(2009:112)asserts that not all aspects of the source domain are mapped to the target and there are certain aspects would be selected from the source domain to be applied to the target in order to enable us to understand and structure the target in terms of the source domain.

According to the above views, metaphors are grounded in our experiences and by which language is shaped by our experiences as human beings. So, metaphors have a basis in our physical and cultural experiences. Context influences the way by which we think metaphorically and to understand metaphor as a conceptual phenomenon in English marriage.

1.2 Cognitive Linguistic

The main sub-branches of cognitive linguistic are cognitive semantics and cognitive grammar which evolved from cognitive linguistic commitments ,characterizes the general principles that governing all aspects of human language.Lak off(1990:46)refers to the commitment as a search of generalization for all the facts of the language which in turn makes the cognitive linguistic a heterogeneous movement.

On the other hand , cognitive commitment provides a characterization of language that accords with what is known about the mind and the brain from other disciplines.Lak off(ibid)emphasizes the need to provide an account of language that is consistent with what other cognitive disciplines have revealed about cognition and the brain.so cognitive commitment is a new perspective from which linguistic phenomenon can be examined. Cognitive linguistic views language as a window

which discover new important insights about the mechanism which is responsible for cognitive processes.

Cruse(2006:26)mentions that cognitive linguistic adopts a number of important assumptions , the important ones are:

The first assumption is that language has developed as a means of conveying meaning and all the structures that are related to this function ,whether syntactic, semantic , or phonological.

The second one is that meaning is conceptual in nature and it works as imposing or shaping form on conceptual and perceptual raw material in specific way.

The third assumption underlies that linguistic abilities are embodied in and are not able to be separated from cognitive abilities since there is no autonomous portion of the brain specialized for language.

Cognitive linguistic reject studying the formal structures of language as if they were autonomous , but as reflections of general conceptual organization , processing , mechanisms , categorization principles and experiential and environmental influences(ibid). Based on these grounds , on can say that cognitive linguistic studies language in its cognitive function since cognitive here refers to the important role of one word structures in our encounters with the world . Language in cognitive linguistic reflects patterns of thought .So, one should study patterns of conceptualization if there is a need to study language.

According to cognitive linguistic , the semantic structure with our conceptual system is reflected in the systematic structure in the language. Evans and Green (2006:14–15)state that cognitive linguistic adopts a hypothesis which claims that the structure of our conceptual system is reflected in the patterns of language.

1.3 Conceptual Metaphor

The study of metaphor has always of considerable importance to the study of language in general. Linguistic, rhetoricians and translation scholars have paid great attention to metaphor due to its powerful influence on expressing meaning and instilling dramatic insightful and purposeful images in the reader's mind .However , these studies have mainly approached the concept of metaphor from a purely linguistic perspective. Hence, the traditional linguistic approach to metaphor has always regarded it as a feature of language since an individual linguistic expression whose usage is based on the distinction between its figurative and literal senses .

Nida(1975:89)entails that metaphor in this understanding is an implicit comparison between two involved entities without using explicit words such as, “like” or “as”. As is the case with simile ,

which establishes this similar explicitly. For example , in the sentence “He is a lion” , the lexical item “lion” as a brave animal is used to provide an implicit comparison to human figure that is expressed by the personal pronoun”He”.This similarity is clarified explicitly in a simile by the use of a preposition as in the sentence “He is as brave as a lion”.

Dagut(1975:89)redefines metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one thing of object or idea that is used in the place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them, as in (drowning in money).

1.4 conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual metaphor theory is sometimes called cognitive metaphor theory , which is developed with the field of conceptual metaphor as one of the most influential theories in this field. It became widely known since the publication of metaphors that everyone live , by Lakoff and Johnson (1980:20)which represent the basis ground of the claim that metaphor is not simply a stylistic feature of language , but that thought itself is fundamentally metaphorical.Lakoff and Johnson(ibid:30)state that “the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another”.

So the insights of conceptual metaphor theory bridge the gap between the conceptual and linguistic levels. Here , metaphor provides one of the clearest evidences about the relationship between language and cognition , thought explaining how some aspects of our experiences in life are with others , in a way that reflects the main aspects o perception thought.

Goschler(2007:8)states conceptual metaphor theory presents an important claim that metaphorical mappings are experientially grounded , especially bodily experience .since our concepts are shaped by basic experiences , and these concepts are expressed in linguistic patterns.

Muller (2008:63)also stresses the conceptual metaphors abstract structures of thought which work as a conceptual form in term of which single lexical item s are produced and comprehended, since they are not simple projection or systems of verbal metaphors in a cognitive system. Metaphorical patterns occur outside language and not only through the use of language, for example, “a thump up”, which is a gesture or pointing up ward usually means positive effect.

Conceptual metaphor theory provides a lot of evidences about metaphor as a cognitive process .Muller (ibid:205)clarifies that metaphoric images can be used in a creative way , because they are not abstract , but life or dynamic ones which can be used to construct new expressions. They do not only comprise contextualized expressions out in a creative way.

Greetaerts(2010:204)describes conceptual metaphor theory as follows :conceptual metaphor theory rests on their essential propositions which are view that metaphor is a cognitive phenomenon , rather than a purely lexical one ; the view that metaphor should be analyzed as mapping between two domains and the notion that linguistic semantics is experimentally grounded which can provide an adequate way of expressing that would be difficult to convey without metaphor.

1.5 common Source and Target Domains

Langacker(1987:488)defines domains as “a coherent area of conceptualization relative to which semantic units may be characterized “ the two domains of conceptual metaphor have special names. The conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain that is understood in terms of the source domain is called the target domain .

The target domains are the most abstract or complex ideas or concepts such as life , love , theory , ideas , social originations and so on while the source domains are the concrete concepts like journey , war , buildings , food and a lot of others. Kovecses(2002:16–24)mentions the more common source target domains.

A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains , in which one domains (the target domains)which is an abstract or vague domains is understood in terms of another domain (the source domain)which is a more concrete domains. The conceptual domain as any coherent area of conceptualization such as meals , smell , space , articles of dress , colour , human body ,etc.(Dirven and Verspoor,2004:35).

The main process that relate the source domain to the target domain is conceptual mapping across domains which structures from the source to the target domain but not the opposite Lakoff and Johnson (2007:13) present a great number of examples about conceptual metaphors which are usually written in capital letters to distinguish them from metaphorical linguistic expressions that present true linguistic manifestations of conceptual metaphor.

In conceptual metaphor source domain is systematically used to structure target domain by means of metaphorical mapping, for example:

–He went crazy.

It is clear that conceptual metaphor is concerned with two concepts area : the source domains which is the concepts area from which everyone can draw metaphor, and the target domain

which is the concept area to which the metaphor is applied. The connections between aspects , features , or roles in source and target domain must be at the conceptual level.

Geeraets(2010:266)thinks that metaphors conceptualize the target domain in terms of the source domain , this mapping takes the form of an alignment between certain aspects or features of the source and target domains .So, conceptual mapping works in the sense that there are certain feature of the source domain that would be mapped onto the target.

Conceptual metaphor theory emphasizes that metaphor as a cognitive process that has its basis from cross–domain mappings in the conceptual system, therefore, metaphor can occur outside language.

1.6 conceptual Metaphor and cultural Models

Lakoff and Kovecses (1987:87)indicate that metaphors largely constitute the cultural models or the native understanding of non–physical, social , legal or emotional concepts. A similar thing has discussed many years ago by Lakoff and Turner(1989:87), they argued that the basic conceptual metaphors are part of the “common conceptual apparatus” which is shared by the members of a certain culture.

Quinn(1991:15)argues that metaphors simply reflect cultural models and no metaphor is needed to understand abstract concepts like love and marriage. Steen (1994:4)comments on the “common conceptual apparatus” term by equalizing this term with social and cultural speech patterns which can be found among particular language users .

According to this view, these abstract concepts emerge literary from certain basic experiences which structure them. For example, marriage in Steen’s view point is an expectational structure which is derived from “the basic infantile experience between baby and first caretaker”.

Callis and Zimmerman (2002:56)comment on such concept stating that in our western industrial society , the tendency is definitely towards the concept “RATIONAL IS UP” since these societies need a rational way of thinking and handling our emotions to be successful in our society.

Kovecses(2005:10–142)clams that conceptual metaphors could be tangible processes in our social and cultural practices. He builds his argument capacity of the source domain to become a social physical reality. He points out that in seating arrangement at a formal meeting usually important people tend to sit more centrally higher than people who are less important .Kovecses associates this social phenomenon with the metaphorical structure which is provided by the conceptual metaphor significant /Important is Higher/Central and less significant /Less important is lower /Peripheral.

Furthermore, Kovecses (2006:196) argues that the cultural model content of marriage is reflected by the metaphor of material compatibility, difficulty, success, risk, and so on. Allan (2008:34) emphasizes that conceptual metaphors can be interpreted only by considering the “cultural context” in which they occur.

1.7 Metaphor within Cultural Variation

It has been mentioned that metaphors expose and, sometimes, constitute human experiences within their cultural context. Correspondingly, metaphorical structures are supposed to vary according to these social divisions within the same culture. Kovecses (2005:3–4) argues that not all universal experiences necessarily lead to universal metaphors. At the same time, primary metaphors are not inevitably.

These social divisions have been called “dimensions” by Kovecses (2005:68). He mentions that this cultural background is argued to be universal in some cases. For example, the metaphor AFFECTION IS WARMTH is regarded to be universal due to the unconscious bodily experience of warmth. As a result, this kind of experience is called primary experience and is believed to be responsible of producing such universal metaphors.

Metaphors are not necessarily based on bodily experience because they are based on cultural variation and cognitive processes of various kinds. The divisions within societies and cultures are well-known by anthropologists and sociolinguists who study language variations within societies.

1.8 Conceptual Metaphor of Marriage

Marriage is one of the most pervasive “in our ordinary everyday way of thinking, speaking and acting” (Lakoff, 1980:53). The metaphors for marriage might regularly occur among conventional metaphors and the concept is suggested by Johnson (1993:3) to be understood and experienced in the terms of a journey, an alliance, a division of labor, a social status, a physical unity, etc. Developing additional structure of marriage derives from love. Conceptual metaphors of marriage are grounded in socio-culture which serve as a good resource for the investigation of belief in fertility that expressed language, especially in proverbs and folk verses that express a truth based on common sense or the practical experience of humanity and provide an important window the users beliefs.

Kovecses (2005:36) suggests that marriage “is conceptualized as particular kind: a physical unity of two complementary parts, which yield the metaphor MARRIAGE IS A PHYSICAL AND /OR BIOLOGICAL UNITY OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS”.

The data in the present study shows that marriage is a source domain can be mapped into IDEAS, TEMPRAMEONT, EXPERIENE and GAINING MONEY UNLAWFULLY as target domains.

1.9 The Conventionality of Metaphor

Lakoff and Turner (1989:87) believe that novel metaphors use the same mechanism of everyday thought ,but extended them and combine them in an unordinary way. So, metaphors cannot be viewed as dead or alive metaphors since they are not part of our language , but fundament part of our conceptual system.

Kovecses (2002:30)writes that conventional metaphors are the metaphor we use them everyday naturally and effortlessly for natural purposes ,e.g., to talk about concepts as argument , love , as in :

–MARRIAGE IS JOURNEY

All metaphors that have stylistic features or which can be seen as new in specific discourse that can be regarded as creative or unconventional metaphors. Muller(2005:56)conventional metaphors are embodies in our culture to the point that we literally interpret their meaning, e.g. the conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY is a conventional metaphor that has become embodied in our culture ,since we normally understand “time” in terms of money that can be conceptualized as being “spent”,”saved”or”wasted”.

Muller(2008:138)stresses that they are active since their source concepts or domains are conceptual metaphors since they are always active in production and comprehension of metaphor.

2. Data Analysis

The data in the present study shows that marriage is a source domain that can be mapped into IDEAS, TEMPERAME, EXPERIENCE and GAINING MONEY as target domains.

1–MARRIAGE IS A JOURNEY

The metaphor which appears in the above example from young to old , from acquaintance to love, from love to marriage , from becoming parents to grandparents , they held their hands and have gone through a long road of marriage of about 50 years.

So, it can be seen that the mapping between the source domain and the target domain and the inference of the metaphor that marriage is a journey. In this metaphor the husband and the wife are the travellers I this journey . The problems in love relationship symbolize he troubles encountered during the journey. So, love is represented as the travel too and the couple has to

overcome all the difficulties during this journey of marriage so as to reach the common goals of this journey. So, this metaphor emphasizes the obstacles to be gotten over in marriage.

2–MARRIAGE IS BINDING

Nowadays , love is said to be the basis of marriage .There are many common features between love metaphors and marriage metaphors .What makes this difference is that marriage is supposed to last longer and comes with more responsibilities and obligations between two people .The marriage is binding metaphor highlights this aspect of marriage.

So, under this metaphor , the husband and he wife are depicted as two people being tied together by marriage since marriage is described as “knot” and “lock” to bind husband and wife together ,because they want to stay together for the rest of their life.

3–MARRIAGE IS A JOINT ENTERPRISE

The mapping of marriage is a joint enterprise is that husband and wife are parents who run a business together and the product of enterprise corresponds with the relationship between husband and wife .So, the quality of the product reflects how love and relationship are maintained.

4–MARRIAGE IS A CUISINE

Different cultures and countries have developed their cuisines with unique styles , since eating is a basic need of all human beings .

So ,under this metaphor , the husband and wife are the chefs and their marriage is the cuisine , since maintain the relationship between husband and wife is like cooking a dish.

5–MARRIAGE IS A “Fortress Besieged”

When women are over 35, they would find that their classmates , colleagues and friends get married one after another .But they would realize at the same time that many people walk out of the **besieged fortress** openly or secretly. Under this metaphor, marriage is described as a fortress besieged, since husband and wife are portrayed 3 as locked inside a besieged fortress.

2.2 conclusion

Metaphor is not a part of our language, but it is the main part of our conceptual system, which is used as an understanding tool to understand the more abstract and complex concepts which represents the target domains in metaphor in terms of the more clear and delineated concepts which is the source domains of conceptual metaphor. So, metaphor is used by all people of all ages and educational backgrounds and not restricted to certain people as a decorating tool. Metaphor’s main function is understanding and comprehending, but it can perform another important function when it is used in marriage as presented in this study.

Metaphor is a cognitive process since its main function is understanding and experiencing one concept in terms of another. Metaphor is a kind of mapping from which patterns of metaphorical language arise and this metaphorical or conceptual mapping depends on perceived resemblance and correlations in experience influences how people think, imagine and reason in everyday life. The cognitive status of metaphor is clear, since it is used unconsciously in everyday life. It is not a deliberate process, but rather an unconscious process which occurs automatically whenever one has or tries to think in a complex or abstract concept. Metaphor is a part of our conceptual system that helps us to think, reason and act in everyday life.

Metaphor is a cognitive process not a linguistic one, since it does not depend on the words only, but on the work of conceptual mapping on perceived and cognitive correlations or correspondences between the source and target domains. The words do not tell us in which part the concepts resemble each other, but through conceptual mapping the mind will select the required features or knowledge structure from the source domain to the target domain.

Conceptual metaphor is a systematic process. The systematicity of conceptual metaphor is reflected in metaphorical mapping which is a set of systematic and not random correspondences between the source and target domains. This systematicity is clear since metaphorical mappings work in one direction only, i.e., it is a unidirectional process, it takes places from the source to the target domain and not the opposite as by the using of the metaphor of marriage in this study. Since we normally understand the abstract and new concepts in terms of the clear and known ones and not the opposite. So, conceptual metaphor is a systematic process, since it does not occur in isolated or randomly, Each conceptual metaphor is part of a more general conceptual metaphor which are all formed by everyday experience.

This study exists perspectives by integrating conceptual and empirical work from the interpersonal relationship of marriage.

Bibliography

- Cruse, A.(2006).**A Glossary of Semantics and Pragmatics**, Edinburgh University Press.
- Driven,R. and Verspoor, M.(2004), **Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics**,2nd edition ,John Benjamin Publishing Company. Amsterdam/Philadelphia.
- Evans, V.and Green, M.(2006),**Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction**, Edinburgh University Press.
- Geeraerts,D.(2010)**Theories of Lexical Semantics**, Oxford University Press.
- Kovecesses, Z.(2005),**Metaphor in Culture :University and Variation**, Cambridge University Press.
- Kovecesses,Z.(2010).**Universality of Metaphors, Metaphor and Culture**.

- Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (2003), **Metaphors We Live by**, 2nd edition, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.
- Lakoff, G. (1983), **The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor**, A. (ed), 202-251.
- Lakoff, G. and Johnson (1980) **Metaphors We Live by**, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.
- Lakoff, G. and Turner, M. (1989). **More than Cool Reason :A Friend to Poetic Metaphor**, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. (1993), **The Invariance :Is Abstract Reason Based on Image Schemata ?** "Cognitive Linguistics", 1(1), pp, 39-74.
- Muller, C. (2008), **Metaphor Dead and Alive , Sleeping and Walking . A Dynamic View**. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.
- Muller, R. (2005). **Creative Metaphors in Political Discourse , Theoretical Consideration on the basis of Swiss Speeches** , Amsterdam.