

A Cognitive Linguistic Study of a Sample of Translated Metaphors in the Qur'anic Text^(*)

Hamdi Ebeid Khalil Khalil
Faculty of Arts, Suez University

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to consider the translation of metaphor from a cognitive perspective in the Qur'anic text. Metaphor exists abundantly in the Qur'anic discourse and needs to be tackled from a different perspective other than its traditional one. In this respect, the present paper focuses on this alternate idea of metaphor through investigating samples of metaphor from a cognitive perspective and how this contributes to enriching the language of the Qur'an. The paper attempts to analyze certain schemas in which concrete entities are used to explain otherwise purely abstract interpretations such as death-life, darkness-light and blindness-sight dichotomies. The paper examines how the abstract aspects of metaphors are adequately transferred into translators' English versions. The paper reveals that metaphor is used widely as a cognitive linguistic device that pinpoints the universality of the Qur'an. It also concludes that overlooking the cognitive aspects of metaphor in translation may lead to incomprehensibility of the intended message and may also result in affecting the whole meaning.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor, schema, translating metaphor, source domains, target domains.

(*) A Cognitive Linguistic Study of a Sample of Translated Metaphors in the Qur'anic Text, Vol.11, Issue No.2, April 2022, pp. 81-109.

الملخص

يتناول هذا البحث النظر في ترجمة الاستعارة من منظور معرفي في النص القرآني؛ حيث توجد الاستعارة بوفرة في النص القرآني، مما يتطلب تناولها من منظور مختلف عن المنظور التقليدي. وفي هذا الصدد، يركز البحث على فكرة مُغايرة حول الاستعارة من خلال تحليل نماذج من الاستعارة من منظور معرفي وكيف يسهم ذلك في إثراء لغة القرآن الكريم. كما يحاول البحث تحليل أطر معرفية معينة، تُستخدم فيها تركيبات تجسدية لشرح تفسيرات تجريدية تمامًا؛ مثل ثنائية الموت والحياة، الظلمات والنور، والعمى والبصر. كما يفحص البحث كيفية نقل الأبعاد المجردة للاستعارة في النسخ المترجمة باللغة الإنجليزية من قبل المترجمين. ويكشف البحث النقاب عن أن الاستعارة تُستخدم بشكل مُستفيض كآلية لغوية معرفية تلقى الضوء على شمولية النص القرآني. كما توصل البحث إلى أن التعاضد عن الأبعاد المعرفية للاستعارة في الترجمة قد يؤدي إلى عدم الاستيعاب التام للرسالة المقصودة، وقد يتسبب أيضًا في التأثير على المعنى ككل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعارة المفاهيمية، الإطار المعرفي، ترجمة الاستعارة، المشبه، المشبه به.

1.Introduction

When dealing with the language of religious discourse, we encounter metaphorical usage par excellence. According to conceptualists Ramadan (1995), Lakoff and Johnson (1999), Bisschops and Francis (1999), Avis (1999) and Lakoff and Johnson (2003), we approach metaphor-from being a mere embellishment device- as a vital conceptual nature in religious discourse. This can be remarkably and incomparably noticed in the Qur'anic text. This is because many Qur'anic verses must be metaphorically analyzed in order to fully grasp the abstract orientations of metaphors in their adequate context as they are meant for human perception and comprehension.

The reason for applying this approach to the Qur'an is that it abounds in scores of metaphors whose translations need to be tackled from a cognitive perspective. Any metaphor, in this regard, exploits concrete

domains that are metaphorically construed in terms of other abstract domains to enhance human understanding of cognitive imagery in the Qur'an. In translation, conceptualization of metaphor should be anticipated by translators into the target language (TL) on the basis of the two domains: the source and the target.

Metaphor in the Qur'an has been previously tackled in several studies and papers. However, there is a gap on how metaphor is cognitively applied in translation, particularly in relation to certain schemas in order to pinpoint translators' consistency in rendering the same schema over different contexts. The present study is not actually refuting the Qur'anic translations, but it investigates different translators' attempts to tackle cognitive metaphors. The present study seeks to add to the richness of translating the Qur'an and to have a deep understanding of the verses analyzed. It mainly deals with a reconsideration of interpreting conceptual metaphors in some translated versions of the Holy Qur'an by Khatib (1986), Pickthall (1993) and Ghali (2005).

2.Aim of the Study

This paper aims at investigating cognitive metaphor in the Qur'anic text in an attempt to go beyond its ordinary or traditional usage. The paper focuses on selected metaphors in the Qur'an in which concrete entities are conceptually realized as abstract ideas, which convey the intended and contextual meaning more intellectually and increasingly in persuasive manners.

The paper stresses the essential role of metaphors in forming certain imageries in the addressees' minds and their significant role in delivering messages unconsciously and in an indirectly implicit way. It also points out that metaphorical usage is of pervasive and universal nature as well as its impact and power in the Qur'an. The paper mainly tackles two schemas in the Qur'anic text, namely, death-life schema and sight-blindness schema and sometimes darkness-light dichotomy in the context of the two main schemas, highlighting source domains mapped into target domains closely associated with truthfulness-falsehood, belief-

disbelief, conviction-obstinacy and wisdom-foolishness.

The paper aims at analyzing how cognitive metaphors are rendered in the Qur'anic text in order to measure the translators' ability in capturing the intended meaning of the source language (SL). It emphasizes that religious translation, particularly the Qur'an, has a peculiar characteristic that should be given a considerable attention to echo the spirit of the original text.

3. Research Questions

- a) How do metaphors contribute to understanding one source domain in terms of another target domain, typically an abstract?
- b) In what way are translations compatible with the contextual meaning according to cognitive interpretation of selected metaphors?

4. Theoretical Framework

There has been an increasingly dramatic shift in the way metaphor is perceived. This shift is mainly characterized by concretizing the abstract. Cognitive approach to metaphor is developed and manifested through the contribution of Lakoff and Johnson in their pioneering work '*Metaphors We Live By*' in (2003). The main claim held by these researchers and linguists is that metaphorical usage is universal and ubiquitous in everyday speech, present in most sentences we utter. They also held the notion that metaphorical application is not arbitrary but it follows a specific pattern and is of a systematic characteristic. This is based on the fact that people's ordinary conceptual system is metaphorically structured in a way to enable them to apprehend complex or abstract experiences in terms of concrete concepts. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (TCM) rejects the notion that metaphor is a decorative device, peripheral to language and thought. Instead, the theory holds that metaphor is central to thought, and therefore to [language](#). People use metaphors "unconsciously and automatically" (Lakoff and Turner, 1989, p.xi). This means that metaphors are part of the mental and conceptual system and not just as linguistic expressions. Kövecses (2002, p. 6) maintains that metaphors typically use abstract concepts and assume that these concepts are

physically concrete. These interpretations run counter to classical approaches because they tackle metaphors as if they are merely linguistic and intellectual entities. Cognitive approach to metaphor is based on the fact that apprehension of abstract concepts is achieved through the widespread and largely unconscious application of metaphor, such that we understand abstract concepts in terms of more concrete concepts. Thus, metaphor has been viewed as “understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another concrete domain” (Zoltàn, 2002, p. 4).

In [cognitive linguistics](#), the conceptual domain from which we draw [metaphorical](#) expressions to understand another conceptual domain is known as the [source domain](#). The conceptual domain that is understood in this way is the [target domain](#). Lakoff and Johnson (2003:15) speak of metaphor as being orientational or structural or ontological. Structural metaphors are cases where one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another. Orientational metaphors, as they observe, are the cases which do not structure one concept in terms of another but instead organize a whole system of concepts with respect to one another. Such orientational metaphors are not arbitrary but they have a basis in our physical and cultural experience. Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p.26) view ontological metaphor as describing "non-physical thing as an entity or substance". They point out that such abstract entities are ideas, emotions, activities and events. This paper heavily depends on structural metaphors, i.e. one domain is structured in terms of another one. Metaphorical concepts are characterized by being systematic in nature. This systematicity is essential to grasping mental processes between two experiences. There is a huge system of fixed, conventional metaphorical mappings embedded in the mind. In other words, it is necessary to establish a set of correspondences between the source and target domain in order to apprehend one domain in terms of another. This system exists physically in our minds.

Via metaphorical mappings, source domain structures are used for reasoning about the target domain. Indeed, much of our reasoning makes use of conceptual metaphors...Most

conceptual metaphors are part of the cognitive unconscious, and are learned and used automatically without awareness...Novel metaphorical language makes use of the existing system of conventional metaphors. We commonly take our conceptual metaphors as defining reality, and live according to them. (Lakoff, 2008, p. 24-25)

Lakoff and Turner argue that our thinking and conceptualization processes are governed by limited number of basic metaphors which are spontaneously taken for granted. "These basic conceptual metaphors... are cognitive in nature", forming recurrent cognitive schemas and determining our composition of metaphorical images (Lakoff and Turner, 1989, p.50).

Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p.4) provide *the argument is war* as a vivid instance to elucidate conceptual metaphor which can be realized at the level of the whole utterance. This prompts us to argue that neither the constituent *argument* nor *war* is a metaphor by the virtue of cognitive theory. Here, the word *argument* stands for the source domain whereas *war* symbolizes target domain. This means that the *argument* term can only be realized in terms of war, but it is not war. "It is important to see that we do not just talk about arguments in terms of war. We can actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his position and we defend our own. We gain and lose ground. We plan and use strategies"(2003, p.4). For instance, "he attacked every weak point in our argument". His criticisms were right on target. I demolished his argument. I 've never won an argument with him. If you use that strategy, he 'll wipe you out"(2003, p.4).

5.Research Method

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive method. It attempts a twofold task: first, it investigates some aspects of metaphors from a cognitive perspective in the Qur'an and second, it discusses the analysis of their rendition into English and how this has its immediate effect on the intended meaning.

6-Data collection

The present paper focuses on cognitive metaphors which are grouped into two schemas, namely, death-life schema, sight-blindness schema and, in some cases, darkness-light schema. The rationale for choosing and collecting such schemas is that they represent a metaphorical thought line throughout the Qur'anic text. Their occurrences are associated with abstract orientations whose renditions into the target language should be judged to highlight their conformity to the communicative value of the original text. Data collection procedure has entailed selecting verses which include, for instance, the same metaphorical schema of light and darkness, tackling one of them thoroughly as a sample of analysis to exemplify the other verses featuring the same schema and demonstrate relation to them. Accordingly, the study attempts to track abstract occurrences of the chosen schemas over different contexts in which the structure of the schema depends on a dual pattern such as sight and blindness. The discussion of verses deploys cognitive textual analysis in order to investigate how the schemas are conceptualized in these verses.

7. Data Analysis

Life and death schema is prevalent throughout the Qur'anic text. This schema entails meta-structural interpretations that are based on cognitive theory of metaphor. This model of metaphor is conceptualized to construct Divine realities that are mostly associated with people's response towards certain heavenly issues. There are several Qur'anic verses which develop this conceptual interpretation. This is, for instance, given in verse (6:122) that reads as:

(أومن كان ميتا فأحييناه وجعلنا له نورا يمشى به في الناس كمن مثله في الظلمات ليس
بخارج منها)

/ʔaw man kân maytan faʔaḥyyanâu wajaçlna lahu nûran yamši
bihi fi-nnâsi kaman maḥalu fi-ḏḏulumâti laysa bixârijin minha/

Ghali: And is he who is deceased, then We give him life and make for him a light to walk by among mankind, as one whose likeness is in the darkness(es), (and) he is not coming out of them?

Khatib: Can he who was dead and We gave him life and set for him a light to walk by among the people, be like him who is in utter darkness whence he will never come forth?

Pickthall: Is he who was dead and We have raised him unto life, and set for him a light wherein he walketh among men, as him whose similitude is in utter darkness whence he cannot emerge?

This verse contains two schemas: life and death schema and light and darkness schema. These two schemas are metaphorically and cognitively interrelated. It is to be noted that the source domains of the two schemas give rise to corresponding target domains. In other words, the source domain of death and darkness is mapped into the target domain of disbelief, falsehood, hesitation and wrongdoing.

Thus, disbelief is likened to death as disbeliever is regarded as unfeeling or inanimate entity because he shows no signs of revival or prospect. On the other hand, the source domain of life and light is mapped into the target domain of conviction, faith, divine knowledge and wisdom. It is through the cognitive analysis of this verse that we can argue that death-darkness duality represents negative and abhorrent connotations whereas life-light duality stands for positive, useful and fruitful matters. That is because people endowed with the attributes of life and light show willingness to accept the Divine instructions, which positively reflect their worldly life and the Hereafter. Just as light illuminating in the darkness, belief and guidance are beaming into the darkness of delusion, uncertainty and insecurity. Death-darkness and life-light dualities in this this verse are concomitant with the rewards rightly granted to believers and punishment inflicted upon disbelievers in this world and the next. That is because insight of the truthfulness after blindness and being aware of Oneness of God after negligence, according to Attabary (2001), is likened as life and light illuminating one's path. Similarly, whoever is engulfed in darkness cannot easily discern his destination due to being immersed in darkness and following a path that is deviating from righteousness and guidance.

Accordingly, disbelievers are depicted as they were stuck into a

death-darkness like. They are physically alive but spiritually dead and being in darkness as they refuse or turn away from the path of right-guidance and engulfed in falsehood. It can be concluded that light represents concrete domain that is metaphorically pursued in the Qur'an with reference to Allah, the Prophet, guidance, compliance to God's tenets, the Qur'an and many other positive qualities while darkness is exploited with reference to negative qualities. Such mappings of death-life schema are found in others verses as Sura (3:27), Sura (6:95), Sura (16:21), Sura (30:19) and Sura (35:22). On the other hand, identical mappings generated by darkness-light schema are also encountered in Sura (2:257), Sura (5:16), Sura (14:1), Sura (14:5), Sura (33:43), Sura (57:9) and Sura (65:11).

As for the translation of these schemas, the three translators have provided different versions. Ghali provides "deceased, then We give him life" for the death and life duality and provides "a light", and darkness(es)" for darkness-light duality. Ghali's rendition is acceptable and reflects the cognitive meaning in this verse. Nevertheless, he had better footnote the target domains of the above schemas. His use of the plural form of darkness(es) is better than the singular form and reflects the contextual meaning. It is worth mentioning that the word 'light' is used in the singular form as the source of light is only one, there is one and true light, i.e. Allah. The word 'darknesses' is used in the plural form. This indicates that there are several darknesses as the source of falsehood and the means to go astray are countless.

Khatib almost provides the same translation except the word "dead" as an equivalent for death. However, Khatib's translation is considered more reflective and capturing the conceptual meaning as he (1986, p.183) footnotes the word "dead" as "morally dead because of disbelief in God". Similarly, Pickthall renders the schema in question as "dead and We have raised him unto life". The word "dead" in Khatib and Pickthall's translation is more fitting than Ghali's "deceased" as "dead" suits the religious context and displays figurative shades of meaning mostly evolved around lacking life whether physically or conceptually.

On the other hand, "deceased" is mostly used in physical sense and is often used in the documentation of death in legal situations. Khatib and Pickthall's insertion of the adjectival form "utter" in front of the word darkness also adds to the meaning as it depicts the scene of overwhelming darkness in which disbelievers are locked and sealed to the light of the truth. Therefore, the insertion of the word "utter" is quite necessary since the degree of complete indulgence in darkness must be expressed according to the context of this Qura'nic discourse.

Further instance of this schema is given in verse (16:65):

(والله أنزل من السماء ماء فأحيا به الأرض بعد موتها إن في ذلك لأية لقوم يسمعون)

/wallâhu a?nzala mina-ssamâ?i mâ?an fa?aḥyâ bihi-l?arḍa baḥḍa mawtihâ ?inna fi ḏâlika l?âyatān liqawmin yasmaḥûn/

Ghali: And Allah sends down from the heaven water; so He gives life therewith to the earth after its death. Surely in that is indeed a sign for a people who hear.

Khatib: And God brings down water from heaven (clouds), then therewith revives the earth after being dead. Surely in that is a sign for a people who hearken.

Pickthall: Allah sendeth down water from the sky and therewith reviven the earth after her death. Lo! herein is indeed a portent for a folk who hear.

It is worth emphasizing that the Qur'anic text contains a recurrent metaphorical use of death-life schema in the sense of barrenness and growth. Death and life metaphor here is employed to map concrete entities into other abstract domains. In this verse, the word /mâ?/ "water" acts as the source domain that signifies life as its target domain. On the contrary, dry or dead land as a source domain symbolizes death as a target domain. Assabuny (2005, p.454) states that "land was metaphorically described as /mayyit/ "dead" to denote its dryness and inability to produce plants as if it were a soulless body where it is characterized by being futile and useless".

The use of this schema in such a cognitive metaphor is one of the

most miraculous and vivid descriptions. It indicates a complete change in the state of land after sending down rain to augur a fresh era of this land. It is noted that whenever the word /mawt/ "death" collocates with the words /balad/ "land" and /?ard/ "earth" in the Qur'an, a cognitive metaphor arises. In this verse, Allah strikes a similitude between the barren land and those complying with or rejecting God's signs. The Almighty Allah revives the land after its death by bringing forth vegetation and likewise He is able to do with your hearts, restoring them to humbleness. Such a likeness explicates the fact that "as Almighty made the dead hearts of infidels enlightened and enlivened by the Qur'an, so does He revive the land after being dead by sending water from the sky" (Ibn Kathir 1996, p.281).

Ghali gave as an equivalent to death and life schema the clause "He gives life therewith to the earth after its death". He rendered the word /mawt/ as "death" while the phrase "gives life to" as an equivalent to /fa?ahyâ/. On the other hand, Khatib and Pickthall translated /mawt/ as "dead" and "death" and the verb "revives" and "reviven" as a rendition to /fa?ahyâ/. The three translations express the meaning component of this verse. However, Khatib's use of the verb "revives" is more accurate as it indicates a gradual and logical change of the land from being "barren" to being "fertile and fruitful". The verb "revive" denotes making something strong or healthy again. It, as Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1995) observes, means to "come back or bring something back into existence or popularity". It can be added that the possessive determiner in Pickthall's translation in the phrase "after her death" is not accurate since the referent in this context is inanimate that necessitates the use of inanimate possessive determiner "its" as indicated in Ghali's translation "its death".

Another verse in which Allah refers to the Resurrection by using the analogy of the earth coming back to life after its death is (35:9) that reads as:

(والله الذى أرسل الرياح فتثير سحابا فسقناه إلى بلد ميت فأحيينا به الأرض بعد موتها كذلك
النشور)

/wallâhu-llađi ʔarsala-rriyâha fatuθîru saĥâban fasuqnâhu ʔila baladin mayyitin faʔaĥyyanâ bihi-lʔarḍa baĥḍa mawtihâ kađâlika-nnušûr/

Ghali: And Allah is (The One) Who has sent the winds. So they stir up clouds, then We drive them to a dead land, then therewith We give life to the earth, after its death. Thus is the rising up.

Khatib: And it is God Who sends the winds that stir up cloud, then We lead it to a dead land, and We revive thereby the earth after its death. So shall be the Resurrection.

Pickthall: And Allah it is he who sendeth the winds and they raise a cloud; then We lead it unto a dead land and revive therewith the earth after its death. Such is the Resurrection.

This verse is laden with divine phenomenal experiences that go beyond the human might. There are conceptual interconnections between these heavenly experiences. The Almighty Allah sends the wind carrying water to a dead land to mark its revival after being infertile as the greatest manifestation of His uniqueness of the act of Resurrection and as a sign to testify to Allah's limitless Power. This also stands as a refutation of those who deny Resurrection. Such a heavenly circulation is always evoked when it comes to the signs of outstanding might and the Resurrection of the dead. In this verse, resurrection is realized through revival and rebirth from the land which acts as a source domain as the case with many Qur'anic verses in which resurrection is conceptually understood as the growth and reproduction of land after its dryness and death.

Therefore, resurrection is viewed as the target domain which can be comprehended through some experientially delineated source domain of growth. There is a correlation between the literal denotation of the word /nušûr/ which means, "spreading and unfolding" and the metaphorical designation as "resurrecting the dead in the day of Judgment" (Ibn Manzur 1993, p.206). In a similar way, Al Asfahany (2003, p.495) explains that the meaning of the polysemous noun /nušûran/ and the polysemous verb /našara/ is derived through metaphorical extension from

the expression /našru-θθawb/ literally, “spreading the cloth”. An analogy is established between the heavenly act of Resurrection and the earth being revived after it has perished. In other words, “as the dead land came back to life, the organs are analogously brought to life, or just as the wind brings together parts of the clouds, so it brings together parts of the organs and just as Allah drives the winds and clouds to a dead land, He sends soul and life to the body” (Abu Hayyan, 2001, p.288). The same analogy is expressed by Al Qurtuby (1998, p. 347) in his interpretation of this verse stating that “this is the way you are brought to life again after being dead”. The use of this polysemous word and its different derivatives in such a metaphorical way, i.e. "bringing to life again" is an indication of the signification of the process of bringing forth vegetation and absolute and all-out power of Allah to raise those who are in the graves. Such metaphorical interpretations can be observed in several Qur'anic verses such as Sura (7:57), Sura (16:65), Sura (22:5), Sura (30:24:50), Sura (43:11), Sura (45:5), Sura (50:11) and Sura (57:17) in which rebirth of the dead land representing the source domain is mapped into Resurrection as the target domain.

The three translators almost provide the same translation for the duality of death and life "dead land " and "revive" except "give life" in Ghali's translation as an equivalent to /fa?ahyyanâ/.The three renditions echo the intended meaning of this Qur'anic verse. However, as it has been already analyzed, the word "revive" is more reflective of the conceptual meaning as it reflects a complete change of something to a fresh status. The three translators managed to capture the restrictive meaning in this verse, namely, restricting the heavenly experiences mentioned: sending wind carrying water, reviving the dead land and Resurrection to the Almighty Allah alone eliminating all other possible candidates.

Khatib employs the cleft structure "And it is God Who sends the winds". The most familiar types of focusing structures, according to Lambrecht (1994), Herriman (2004), and Claude (2009), are cleft structures. These structures are utilized to focus and limit the meaning to

a certain referent as opposed to other possible referents. Cleft structure implies the idea of contrastive focus. This term means "the speaker's knowledge that the person in question, as opposed to other possible candidates the addressee might have had in mind, is the right selection for this role" (Chafe, 1976, p.33).

Ghali used the pseudo-cleft structure "And Allah is (The One) Who has sent the winds" to express the restrictive connotations. His translation does the original to a great extent. Pickthall combines both cleft and pseudo-cleft structures "And Allah it is he who sendeth the winds". This rendition seems the most accurate one as it is loaded with more than one focusing structure to convey the restrictive content of meaning. Thus, the three translators managed to echo the idea of exclusiveness and emphatic implications implied by the SL structure. As for the target domain, the word /ʔannuṣūr/, Khatib and Pickthall provide as an equivalent the word "Resurrection" whereas Ghali translated it as "rising up". Khatib and Pickthall's translation is more acceptable and indicative of the contextual meaning of this verse as the word "Resurrection" is more preferable in religious discourse in denoting such a meaning than "rise up". It, as Webster's Ninth New Colligate Dictionary (1990) notes, "is often capitalized: the rising again to life of all the human dead before the final judgment".

Sight and blindness metaphors are very common across the Qur'anic text. They are specifically employed in spiritual and religious contexts. Ibn Manzur (1993) uses the word /baṣar/ under different derivatives and in a variety of meanings ranging from physical capacity of sight to mental and spiritual connotations. Other derivatives of the word /baṣar/, according to Ibn Manzur (1993, p.65), include the word /baṣīrah/ which is used in the sense of "argument and insightfulness into a thing" or "sagacity and lesson", the word /tabaṣṣur/ which denotes "contemplation, reflection and recognition" and the word /tabṣīrah/ used in the sense of "enlightenment and admonition". It can be argued that all these derivatives could not only indicate physical capacity but are mostly employed in conceptual orientations in religious discourse.

Azzamakhshary (2001) speaks of sight-blindness dichotomy as differentiating between physical capacity and conceptual capacity of sight and blindness. He (2001, p.45) observes that "blindness of sights is not as grave and harmful as blindness of insights." The sight and blindness duality is a source domain that is frequently exploited to illuminate abstract domains. Throughout the Qur'anic text, sight stands cognitively and symbolically to light, wisdom, purity, and spiritual elevation whereas blindness is laden with such connotative shades as ignorance, impurity, arrogance, disbelief and going astray.

Cognitive interpretations of blindness/sight dichotomy is given in verse (13:16) :

(قل هل يستوى الأعمى والبصير أم هل تستوى الظلمات والنور أم جعلوا لله شركاء خلقوا كخلقه)

/qul hal yastawi-l'ʾaḥma wa-lbaṣīru ʾam hal tastawi- ʾūlūmātu wa-nnūru ʾam jaʿalu li-llāhi šurakāʾa xalaqu kaxalqih/

Ghali: Say, 'Are the blind (man) and the beholding (one) equal? Or even the darknesses and the light equal"? Or have they made up for Allah associates who created the like of his creation.

Khatib: Say: 'Can the blind and the seeing be held equal? Or can the darkness and the light be held equal? Or have they imputed associates to God who created the like of His creation.

Pickthall: Say: Is the blind man equal to the seer, or is darkness equal to light? Or assign they unto Allah partners who created the like of His.

Both blindness-sight and darkness-light dualities are employed in this verse to indicate the universality of the Qur'an. Almost in all cultures, sight is symbolically linked to smooth and conspicuous access to one's route whereas blindness is associated with vagueness or deviating from the designated path. The same holds true to darkness-light duality where it stands for positive and passive connotations. In this verse, sight is used as the source domain that is mapped into the target domain of rightly guided persons. It can be said that Allah sets a resemblance through which believers are likened to /ʾal baṣīr/ who is

endowed with insight and guiding light that he seeks to avoid darkness. For this reason, "man is said to have sight if he leaves disbelief and comes to the insight of belief" (Ibn Manzur, 1993, p.64). On the contrary, blindness is the source domain mapped into conceptually target domain of those who are straying from the right path without a fixed cause or aim that leads to Allah. They are depicted physically as the blind and spiritually as aberrant. Similarly, darkness-light duality can be interpreted this way.

The darkness-light duality in this verse is further explicated in the analogy drawn between blindness-sight dichotomy in the sense that those blind people live in vagueness as they are not able to see the light surrounding them. This holds analogously to disbelievers who are deprived of perceiving the light of the truth which acts as an inspiring and illuminative force. On the other hand, faith is pursued in terms of sight which is closely connected to light. This prompts us to argue that faith is depicted as sight by which believers discern truth and righteousness whereas disbelief is viewed as blindness which veils disbelievers' physical capacity of sight as if they were blind.

The three translators have slightly differed in rendering the above verse. Ghali rendered blindness-sight duality as "the blind and the beholding one" and darkness-light duality as "darknesses and the light" whereas Khatib and Pickthall provide "the blind and the seeing", "the blind and the seer" and darkness and light" respectively. Ghali's translation is more accurate and indicative of the cognitive perspective than Khatib and Pickthall's. That is because Ghali uses the noun phrase "the beholding" as an equivalent to /baṣīr/, which is better than "seeing" and "seer" as it implies not only visual recognition but also mental comprehension. According to Webster's Ninth new Collegiate Dictionary (1990), 'behold' means to "perceive through sight or apprehension".

It, as Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1990) adds, differs from 'see' in that it "carries a strong implication of a definite ocular recognition and of distinct recognition than see". Consequently, 'behold' chosen by Ghali is more reflective of the original text than 'see'.

It can be added that 'behold' is of an archaic usage and is more likely to be found in religious discourse. Archaic vocabulary, as El Zeiny (1994, p.196) notes, "is more likely to suit religious context as it produces on the reader an impression of holiness and historicity". Moreover, Ghali's usage of the plural form of 'darknesses' is more suitable to the target domain developed by this word and is more preferable than the singular form used in Khatib and Pickthall's translations.

An interesting verse exhibiting metaphorical interconnection between source domains giving rise to completely abstract domains is (22:46) that reads as:

(أفلم يسيروا في الأرض فتكون لهم قلوب يعقلون بها أو أذان يسمعون بها فإنها لا تعمى الأبصار ولكن تعمى القلوب التي في الصدور)

/ ?afalam yasîru fi-l?arḍi fataḵûna lahum qulûbun yaçqilûn biha ?aw
?aðânun yasmaçûn biha fa?innaha la taçma-l?abṣâru walakin taçma-
lqulûbu-llati fi-ṣṣudûr/

Ghali: Then have they traveled in the earth so that they have hearts to consider with or ears to hear with? Surely then it is not the beholdings that (grow) blind, but (it is) the hearts within the breasts that (grow) blind.

Khatib: Have they not traveled in the land so that they have hearts to comprehend with, or ears to hear with. Surely it is not the eyes that become blind, but it is the hearts that are in the chests that become blind.

Pickthall: Have they not travelled in the land, and have they hearts wherewith to feel and ears to wherewith to hear? For indeed it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts, which are within the bosoms, that grow blind.

The context of this Qur'anic discourse is closely interlinked with its preceding verses. In this verse, Almighty Allah asks people to roam into earth in order that they may have hearts to understand with and ear to hear with. They are urged to travel in physical sense and using their minds to ponder for it is not adequate to have a sound vision to see things well. A sound heart that entails a rational and wise perspective is more

important than physical capacity of sight. In this verse, hearts act as physical entities or containers that carry the abstract reference to 'feeling', 'sense' and 'insight'. On the other hand, visual impairment, i.e. blindness is an imaginative representation of the state of 'lack of wisdom, 'foolishness', and irrational thinking'. Ibn Kathir (1996) adopts a somewhat identical interpretation of sight-blindness duality in this discourse. He (1996, p.265) observes that "the blind person is not the one whose eyes cannot see, but rather the one who has no insight. Even if the physical eyes are sound, they still cannot learn the lesson". Thus, the above verse clearly establishes an important and an undeniable truth: real blindness is not the lack of sight but the lack of insight that makes a person truly blind. The heart is supposed to be a tool of discernment and wisdom that goes beyond the physical. There are some factors that interfere with the mental functions of the heart such as heedlessness, indulgence in sin and sensuality and stubbornness that cause the inner blindness.

Ghali translated the target domain represented by the expression /yaçqilûn biha/ as "consider with" which, according to Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1995), is used in the sense of "to give attention to (a particular subject) when judging something else". This equivalent reflects the mental imagery implied by the original. Khatib translated it as "comprehend with" which is more indicative of the intended meaning than "consider". The word "comprehend" involves a total understanding of the nature of the object and is mainly based on mental ability or capacity to grasp something. The word "comprehend", according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate dictionary (1990), means "to grasp the nature, significance or meaning of". It also observes that the word "comprehend" is used to "stress the mental process of arriving at a result". It implies capturing the significance or nature of something within a total scope. For these reasons, the connotations of 'comprehend' are different from 'consider' as the former seems more comprehensive and is often a bit stronger than the latter.

Pickthall translated the same expression as "wherewith to feel". His

translation falls short of the essential component of the original text as the word "feel" is not denotatively or connotatively conveying the conceptual shade of meaning. It, as Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1995) observes, is used in the sense of "experiencing a particular feeling or emotion". Thus, Pickthall's rendition is not accurate in this context and the least acceptable version. For the clause /faʔinnaha la taçma-lʔabşâru/, Ghali provides "it is not the beholdings that (grow) blind" whereas Khatib and Pickthall provide "it is not the eyes that become blind" and "it is not the eyes that grow blind". Ghali uses the word "beholdings" while Khatib and Pickthall employ "eyes" for /ʔabşâr/. Ghali's rendition is more appropriate than the others as, it has been explained earlier, "beholding" is more suitable for religious contexts and combines both visual and mental capacity. The three translators managed to echo the conceptual meaning by employing the cleft structure "it is the hearts". This adds to the essential components of the SL structure. It is noted that the three translators were short of collocational distribution in "grow blind" and "become blind" because the word 'blind' collocates with the verb 'go' rather than with 'grow' and 'become'. However, Ghali and Pickthall's version "grow blind" is better than Khatib's. The word 'grow', as Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1995) observes, means "to increase in size or amount". Accordingly, 'grow' here implies the concept that those who stick to Allah's ordinances grow in their belief while those deviating from Allah's cause grow in their falsehood and obstinacy.

An extra conceptual aspect of blindness-sight and deafness-hearing dualities is displayed by the verse (11:24) that reads as:

(مثل الفريقين كالأعمى والأصم والبصير والسميع هل يستويان مثلا أفلا تذكرون)

/maθalu-lfarîqayni kalʔaçma wa-lʔaşammi wa-lbaşîri wa-ssamîçi hal yastawiyâni maθalan ʔafala taðakkarûn/

Ghali: The likeness of the two groups is like the man blind and deaf, and the man beholding and the hearer; are the two equal in likeness? Will you then not be mindful?

Khatib: The likeness of the two parties is as that of the blind and the deaf, and the seeing and the hearing. Are they both equal in likeness? Are you not admonished?

Pickthall: The similitude of the two parties is as the blind and the deaf and the seer and the hearer? Are they equal in similitude? Will ye not then be admonished?

This verse contains blindness-sight duality as well as deafness-hearing duality. These dualities are best approached and analyzed in terms of conceptualization. This is based on the fact that a clear reference is made to faith team and infidel team as they represent the two parties in this verse. Deaf-blind is at odds with and hearing-seeing because the former duality is used to describe the infidel whereas the latter is a description of the believer. Blindness-sight and deafness-hearing dualities represent a source domain that is cognitively structured into the target domain of faith team and disbelief one. The infidels are depicted as blind and deaf as they neither perceive the truth nor adhere to God's guidance.

On the contrary, believers are described as seeing and hearing as they clearly vision the guiding light and hear God's call. According to Ibn Kathir (1996), the verse applies to faith team and disbelief team through taking into account the above dualities. He (1996, p.129) observes that the unbeliever is blind to the right in this world and in the hereafter, deaf to hear arguments and does not hear what benefits whereas the seeing and hearing(believer) distinguishes right and falsehood, follows good, leaves evil and differentiates between conviction and suspicion. Thus, a set of correspondences is established between the source domain of blindness-sight/deafness-hearing and the target domains of faith and unfaith. Attabary's interpretation (2001) hints at such mappings between the source domain and the target one in this verse. The team of disbelief, according to Attabary (2001, p.376), is likened to the blind who does not see a particular thing and the deaf who does not hear anything. This is the case with the team of disbelief which is left in misguidance and confusion and being deaf and blind to the truth. The team of faith is

likened to the hearing and the seeing as they are conscious of God's arguments, are faithfully admitting God's Oneness and are willingly acting upon His teachings.

It can be added the interrogative mood /hal yastawiyân maṭalan/ "are the two equal in likeness" in this verse upholds the cognitive interpretation of the verse dualities. That is because the interrogative mood is not superficially put for a mere interrogation, but it is pragmatically oriented. The illocutionary force of the interrogative mood here is denial and negation. In other words, disbelievers depicted as blind and deaf are not equal or comparable to believers depicted as seeing and hearing who can distinguish right from wrong and who can rightly and wisely learn lessons.

Ghali rendered the duality /ʔal ʔaçma / and /ʔal ʔaşamm/ as "blind" and "deaf" and the duality /ʔal baṣîr/ and /ʔassamîç/ as "the beholding" and "the hearer" while Khatib translated the two dualities as "blind" and "deaf" and "seeing" and "hearing". Pickthall almost adopted the same translation except "the seer and the hearer" for the second schema. The three renditions are reflective of the intended meaning of this verse. However, Ghali's employment of the word "beholding" is more preferable than "see". It can be argued that Khatib (1986, p.287) footnotes the word /ʔal farîqayn/ "the two parties" in the verse as "that is, believers and unbelievers". Thus, he managed to set the floor for the cognitive perspective of the above mentioned dualities and instill in the minds of the addressees the abstract domains understood in terms of concrete domains. The conceptual metaphor of blindness is also pursued in contexts where the disbelievers' hearts are sealed to the guidance and the lessons to be learnt in the Qur'an. This can be noticed in the verse (41:44) that reads as:

(قل هو للذين آمنوا هدى وشفاء والذين لا يؤمنون في آذانهم وقر وهو عليهم عمى أولئك ينادون من مكان بعيد)

/qul huwa lilaḏîna ʔâmanû hudan wašifâʔun wallaḏîna la yuʔminûna fî ʔâḏânihim waqrun wa huwa çalayhim çama ʔulâʔika yunâdawna min

makânin baçîd/

Ghali: Say, "To the ones who have believed it is a guidance and a cure; and the ones who do not believe, in their ears is an obstruction, and for them it is a blindness; those are called out from a place far (away)".

Khatib: Say: For those who believe, it is a guidance and a healing. And as to who do not believe, in their ears is heaviness, and for them it is a blindness. Such shall be called to from a far place.

Pickthall: Say unto them (O Muhammad): For those who believe it is a guidance and a healing; and as for those who disbelieve, there is a deafness in their ears, and it is blindness for them. Such are called to from afar.

The above verse is about the Qur'an and how it is perceived by the faith team and infidel team. This is because the infidels asked if the Qur'an had been revealed in a language other than Arabic. The verse firmly established the fact that the Qur'an was sent down to the Prophet Muhammad in the tongue of his people known for their eloquence and linguistic excellence. It was revealed when the Arabs reached the apex of eloquence and mastery of the Arabic language and all the linguistic arts. This proves the miraculous nature of the Qur'an which challenges Arabs with something they perfected throughout ages. The word /çama/ "blindness" in this verse represents the source domain mapped into the target domain of heedlessness, turning away, ignorance and misleading. The Almighty Allah tells that the Qur'an is a guidance and a cure from all suspicions and ailments for those who believe while those who do not believe, they are not guided by the Qur'an due to their arrogance and stubbornness. Those who do not believe in the Qur'an do not benefit from its guidance and do not see its light because they have blocked all ways of listening and contemplation. They do not show any signs of responding like whoever is called from a very far place, so he does not hear nor responds to the caller.

The three translators almost provide the same rendition of the word /çama/ as "for them it is a blindness". It is noted that the three translators

have employed the source domain of the word "blindness" in a way that seems acceptable. Nevertheless, Khatib (1986) managed to reflect the contextual and intended meaning to a great extent by adding an illustrative note on the conceptual domain of this metaphor. The word /çama/ "blindness" in this verse is a vivid description of those who do not believe in the Qur'an. This can be evidenced by providing the interpreting clause "neither do they comprehend its meaning, nor can they be guided by its wisdom and magniloquence" (Khatib,1986, p.636).

Ghali and Pickthall had better reflect the target domain of the word "blindness" by supplying a commentary or a footnote as the case with Khatib. It is important in this regard to shed light on the word /waqr/ "deafness" as it further clarifies the context of the above verse. The word /waqr/, according to Azzamakhshary (2001, p. 832), means "heaviness in the ear". The physical impairment signified by this word is mapped into the target domain that disbelievers' ears are deaf to hear or comprehend the Qur'an and this only increases them with their deafness, abomination to their abomination and blindness to their blindness. Ibn Kathir (1996) interpreted the word /waqr/ in a way that is compatible with its conceptual denotation. He (1996, p.120) observes that it is used in the sense of "lack of understanding what is in the Qur'an". The three translators provide as an equivalent to the word /waqr/ "obstruction", "heaviness" and "deafness" respectively. The three versions are doing the original but Pickthall's version "deafness" is the best one as it collocates with the word "ears" in the TL more than the other versions and emphasizes a total degree of turning away and deviating from the Qur'an and God's call.

The same target domain of "blindness" holds true to the following verse (30:53) that reads:

(وما أنت بهاد العمى عن ضلالتهم إن تسمع إلا من يؤمن بآياتنا فهم مسلمون)

/wama ?anta bihâdi-lçumiy çan dalâlatihim ?in tusmiçu ?illa man yu?minu bi?âyâtinâ fahum muslimûn/

Ghali: And in no way will you (even) be a guide to the blind out of their errancy; decidedly you will not make any to hear except for the ones who believe in our signs, and so they are Muslims.

Khatib: You cannot guide the blind out of their aberration. You cannot cause anyone to hear, save those who believe in our Signs: They are indeed Moslems.

Pickthall: Nor canst thou guide the blind out of their error. Thou canst make none to hear save those who believe in Our revelations so that they surrender (unto Him).

The context of this verse entails that the word /çumiy/ "the blind" is best interpreted from a cognitive perspective. This verse is a consolation to the Prophet not to feel despair and grief due to his people's reluctance to his call. The Almighty Allah states a clear fact to the Prophet that it is not in his ability to guide the blind to the truth and bring them back from their misguidance as they do not wisely use their hearts or common senses to understand God's signs and revelations. The three translators employed the source domain "the blind" as an equivalent to the word /çumiy/. Nevertheless, Khatib provides an explanatory comment to echo the target domain of this word. He (1986, p.538) footnoted the meaning of word /çumiy/ in this verse as "that is blinded at heart or close-minded". Consequently, Khatib's comment-based rendition proves to be the most apt and the closest to the original meaning since it implies that just as they lost the benefit of eyesight, they also lost the benefit of their insight. It is worth noting that Khatib (1986, p.504) is consistent in rendering the same word /çumiy/ over almost the same context in Sura (27:81) by providing the very same comment in an attempt to shed light on the conceptual orientation of the word in question. This turns out to be more illustrative and enriching than just translating the source domain. Cognitive interpretations displayed by sight-blindness schema are also observed in further contexts such as Sura (7:64), Sura (17:72), (20:124), Sura (20:125), Sura (25:73), Sura (35:19), Sura (41:17) and Sura (51:21).

8. Conclusion

Cognitive metaphor theory has to do with context rather than with words. This theory adopts the mainstream that metaphor is best approached in terms of mental representation. The Qur'anic text abounds with metaphorical images that depend on conceptual brain circuits for their understanding. This can be achieved through mapping from concrete to abstract domains where the most common sources are concrete while the most common targets are abstract concepts. Cognitive metaphors are mainly used to make the language of the Qur'an apprehensible to its readers. Human perceptive organs are utilized to achieve this end over several Qur'anic contexts. Not only are they used in the strict physical sense but are also employed to manifest abstract orientations. In this regard, they are associated with deep and mental recognitions and perceptions in a way that appeals to the intellect of the addressees to consolidate or refute certain precepts.

Analysis of cognitive metaphors in the Qur'an reveals that some schemas are universal in the sense that they are exploited in most cultures to designate similar conceptual interpretations as the case with death-life, darkness-light and blindness-sight schemas. Metaphors in the Qur'an are not decorative devices but intellectual mechanisms used in the context of cognitive theory metaphor. The linguistic creativity of the Qur'an is an optimal and extraordinary example of using metaphor in novel and unprecedented ways.

The three translators have rendered cognitive metaphors of the selected verses in a different way. Their renditions are acceptable in most cases. Nevertheless, they had better add explanatory notes when needed to clarify the target domains in order to reflect the mental images as did Khatib in many cases. His approach, in many cases, is characterized by providing commentaries and footnotes to conform to the contextual meaning and cognitive aspects of metaphorical usage in the Qur'anic text. Ghali showed a better choice of translation equivalents that are religiously adequate and fitting as has been observed throughout the data analysis. Ghali's adherence to the exact semantic content in his translation results in naturalness and appropriateness of the English

equivalents for the SL structures. Pickthall, on the other hand, managed to echo cognitive implications of metaphors of the selected data in some cases while he falls short of conveying the cognitive interpretations in other instances. The three translators showed a better understanding especially in relation to employing focusing structures that add to the metaphorical mappings between the source and target domains.

Acknowledgement: This paper is based on a presentation at The 3rd International Conference on: “Interdisciplinarity in Linguistics, Literature, Translation, and Culture: Trends and Challenges”, Helwan University from 29 to 31st October 2019.

References

- Abu Hayyan, I.Y.M. (2001) /ʔal baḥru-lmuḥit/ “*The Inclusive Sea*”. (Vol.7). ed.by Adel Ahmed Abdel Mawgoud & Ali Muhammad Moawad. Dar Al Kutub Al-Ilmiyya.
- Al Asfahany, A. A. (2003). /ʔal mufradât fi ġarîbil -qurân/ “*The Peculiar Items of the Quran*”. ed. by Wael Ahmed Abdel-Rahman. Al Tawfiqiyah Bookshop.
- Al Qurtuby, A. A. (1998). /ʔal jâmiç li ʔaḥkâmi-lqurân/ “*The Inclusive (Book) of the Judgments of the Quran*”. (Vol.8). ed. by Ibrahim Muhammad Al Gamal. Dar Al Qalam Lil-Turath.
- Assabuny , M. A. (2005). /ʔattafsîru-lwâḍiḥu-lmuyassar/ “*The Evident and Easy to Grasp Explanation*” (6th ed.). Al Ufuq for Printing and Distribution.
- Attabary, A. M. (2001). /jâmiçu-lbayân çan taʔwîl ʔâyi-lqurân/ “*The Inclusive of Explanation about Interpreting The Verses of the Quran*”. (Vols.9-12). ed. by Abdullah Ibn Abdel Muhsin Al Turkey in collaboration with Arabic and Islamic Research Center. Dar Hajr for Printing, Publication and Distribution.
- Avis, P.D. (1999). *God and the Creative Imagination: Metaphor, Symbol and Myth in Religion and Theology*. Routledge.
- Azzamakhshary, A. M. (2001). /ʔasâsu-lbalâġah/ “*The Foundation of Rhetoric*”. Dar Ihyaa Al-Turath Al Araby.
- Bisschops, R. & Francis, J. (1999). (ed.s) *Religion and Discourse*. Peter Lang A.G. *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (1995). Cambridge UP.
- Chafe, W. (1976). “Givenness, Contrastiveness, Definiteness, Subjects, Topics and Point of View”. In *Subject and Topic* edited by Charles N. Li, 27-55. Academic Press.
- Claude, A. S. (2009). *Cleft Constructions in Spoken English*. VDM-Verlage.

- El-Zeiny, I.T. (1994). *Approaches to the Translation of the Quran: A Comparative and Critical Analysis*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Faculty of Humanities, Al Azhar University.
- Ghali, M. M. (2005). *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Quran*. Dar An-Nashr for Universities.
- Herriman, J. (2004). *Identifying Relations: The Semantic Functions of Wh-Clefts in English*. Text 24 (4): 447-469.
- Ibn Kathir, H. D. (1996). /tafsîru-lqurâni-lçõîm/ "Interpreting the Glorious Quran".(Vols.3-5-7). Al Eman Library for Publication and Distribution.
- Ibn Manzur, J. A. (1993). /lisânu-lçrab/ "The Tongue of the Arabs" (2nd ed.). Dar Sader.
- Khatib, M. M. (1986). *The Bounteous Koran: A Translation of Meaning and Commentary*. Makmillan Press LTD.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Lakoff, G. (2008). "The Neural Theory of Metaphor". In *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* edited by Raymond Gibbs, 17-38. Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*. Basic Book
_____. (2003). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Turner, M. (1989). *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lambrecht, K. (1994). *Information Structure and Sentence Form*. Cambridge University Press.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1995)*. (3rd ed). RR Donnelly and Sons Company.

Pickthall, M.M. (1993). *The Meaning of the Glorious Korân: An Explanatory Translation*. Dar Al-Kitab Allubnani.

Ramadan, Z. (1995). *From a Metaphorical Point of View. A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Cognitive Content of Metaphor*. Walter De Gruyter.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1990). Merriam Webster Inc.

Zoltàn, K. (2002). *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford University Press