

Analyzing the Use of Metaphorical Structures Implying the Concept of "Surprise" in Nahj al-Balagha Based on Lakoff and Johnson's Theory

Marzieh Sadat Kadkhodaei, Phd student, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kashan University, Isfahan, Iran.

Ali Najafi Ivaki (corresponding author), Associate Professor, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, University of Kashan, Isfahan, Iran. E-mail: najafi.ivaki@yahoo.com

Amir Hossein Rasulnia, Associate Professor, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kashan University, Isfahan, Iran.

Amir Hossein Madani, Associate professor of Persian language and literature department, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kashan University, Isfahan, Iran.

Introduction

Cognitive linguistics is one of the new trends in linguistics that has created effective tools and methods for analyzing different texts. Conceptual metaphor is one of the important theories in this science. According to this theory, "metaphor" is not just a literary arrangement to embellish words, but it refers to the conceptualization of one semantic domain in the form of another semantic domain, and based on this, in explaining abstract concepts, metaphors play a significant role in the field of religious texts. Therefore, the present study tries to extract those metaphorical expressions that contain the concept of "surprise" from the sermons of Nahj al-Balagha and analyze them based on the theory of cognitive metaphor by adopting a qualitative approach and a descriptive-analytical method.

As a coherent religious text, Nahj al-Balagha includes various personal and social issues that Imam Ali (AS) has explained in different ways; therefore, in order to benefit from the concepts and teachings of this precious book, the author's methods of expression should be considered from different points of view. In the meantime, the explanation of abstract concepts is very important because such concepts cannot be described in their essence and the speaker's ability to conceptualize them is very important.

Methodology

The metaphorical expressions indicating the concept of "surprise" in the sermons of Nahj al-Balagha were analyzed based on the theory of Lakoff and Johnson - who believe in the conceptualization of abstract concepts based on concrete concepts. To further explain the issue, after defining the science of linguistics, we analyzed metaphor from the perspective of this science, and while analyzing examples of Nahj al-Balagha sermons, we expressed the types of metaphors in this science.

Results and Discussion

Cognitive linguistics is an approach that considers language as a means to organize, process and transmit information (Geeraerts, 1995, p. 148). As stated in the definition of this science, "cognitive linguistics is the study of language in a way that is compatible with the structure of the mind. This view considers language to be a reflection of the mind" (Rasakhmohand, 2013: 25). In another view, cognitive linguistics is a science that "analyzes the meaning of words, sentences and texts and presents them from different perspectives in a systematic way" (Safavi, 2017: 212). Therefore, cognitive linguistics studies language in its cognitive role, which is the connection of human information structures with the outside world. In this science, interaction with the world takes place through the informational structures of the mind, and natural language is emphasized as a means of organizing, processing and transmitting information (Gulfam, 2011: 60).

This linguistic approach consists of two branches of grammar and cognitive semantics. According to linguists, the term "cognitive semantics" was first proposed by Lakoff. According to this attitude, language knowledge is not independent of thinking and cognition, but language behaviors are considered part of cognitive talents that provide the possibility of learning, reasoning and analysis for humans (Safawi, 2012: 363). In this field, we come across different theories, one of which is the theory of "conceptual metaphor".

Conclusion

The study and analysis of the cognitive metaphors of the concept of "surprise" in the sermons of Nahj al-Balagha indicated that the complex system of conceptual metaphor, which is derived from the audience's daily experiences and relationships with the surrounding environment, takes the above concept from an abstract realm far from real imagination and understanding and makes it tangible for the audience.

Examining the evidence of Nahj al-Balagha shows that Imam Ali (AS) has expressed surprise of various abstract topics such as: the greatness of God, the creation of the universe, the angels, the neglect and ignorance of people, the violation of the covenant and ignoring the truth.

The conceptualization of the abstract field of "surprise" can be understood in the framework of conceptual metaphors in the Alavi discourse, and the explanation of this semantic field with metaphors has a high frequency, and the analysis of linguistic expressions suggests that among the mappings of conceptual metaphors, the mapping of "place" has received the highest frequency

Reference

- Al-Bahrani, K. A. (1996). *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha* [Commentary on Nahj al-Balagha]. Islamic Research Foundation. (Original work published 1375 SH) {In Persian}
- Al-Farahidi, K. b. A. (1989). *Al-Ayn* (2nd ed.). Hijrat Publications. (Original work published 1410 AH) {In Arabic}
- Gholam, A., & Yousefi Rad, F. (2002). "Cognitive Linguistics and Metaphor." *New Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 15, 59–64. {In Persian}
- Hashemi, Z. (2010). "The Theory of Conceptual Metaphor from the Perspective of Lakoff and Johnson." *Adab Pazhuhi*, 12, 119–140. {In Persian}
- Houshang, H., & Saifi, M. (2009). "Conceptual Metaphors in the Quran from the Perspective of Cognitive Linguistics." *Quranic Sciences and Teachings Research Journal*, 3, 9–34. {In Persian}
- Ibn Manzur, M. b. M. (1993). *Lisan al-Arab* [The Tongue of the Arabs] (3rd ed.). Dar Sader. (Original work published 1414 AH) {In Arabic}
- Ibn Mitham, M. b. A. (1984). *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha* [Commentary on Nahj al-Balagha]. Daftar Nashr al-Kitab. (Original work published 1404 AH) {In Arabic}
- Kövecses, Z. (2016). *Language, Mind, and Culture* (J. Mirzabeigi, Trans.). Agah Publications. (Original work published 1395 SH) {In Persian}
- Qureshi Benabi, A. A. (1998). *Mufradat Nahj al-Balagha* [Vocabulary of Nahj al-Balagha]. Qibla Publications. (Original work published 1377 SH) {In Persian}
- Rasekh Mahand, M. (2014). *An Introduction to Linguistics: Theories and Concepts* (4th ed.). SAMT Publications. (Original work published 1393 SH) {In Persian}
- Saedi, G. (2004). *Dictionary of Ibn Arabi's Mystical Terms*. Shafiei Publications. (Original work published 1383 SH) {In Persian}
- Tavakkolnia, M., Mirhosseini, Y., Hassoumi, V., & Mousavi Bafraei, M. (2018). "The Function of Conceptual Metaphors in Explaining the Concept of 'God' in Nahj al-Balagha." *Nahj al-Balagha Research Journal*, 58, 171–190. {In Persian}
- Tarihi, F. (1996). *Majma' al-Bahrain* [Confluence of the Two Seas] (S. A. Hosseini, Ed.). Mortazavi Bookstore. (Original work published 1375 SH) {In Persian}