



A Cognitive Linguistic Study of UP and DOWN in Iraqi Arabic

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to investigate the conceptual metaphor of UP and DOWN commonly used in Iraqi community. Some of the metaphorical expressions in Iraqi colloquial Arabic are widely used by Iraqi speakers in everyday language. It has been analyzed by following the cognitive theory of metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The study indicates that the Iraqi speaker experiences more of the metaphorical expressions of UP and DOWN to refer to many of the abstract concepts that shape his/her impression of everyday life situations.

Key words : metaphor, UP, DOWN, metaphorical expressions, abstract concepts.

1. Introduction

Cognitive linguistics (CL) refers to the school of linguistics that understands language *creation, learning, and usage* as best explained by reference to human cognition in general. It is characterized by adherence to three central positions. First, it denies that there is an *autonomous linguistic faculty* in the mind; second, it understands grammar in terms of



conceptualization; and third, it claims that knowledge of language arises out of *language use* (Croft & Cruse, 2004:1).

Cognitive linguistics is the study of language in its cognitive function where cognitive refers to the crucial role of intermediate information structures in our encounters with the world (Geeraerts & Cuyckens, 2007:5).

Cognitive linguistics is one of the most rapidly expanding schools of theoretical linguistics with a flourishing international cognitive linguistics community and national cognitive linguistics associations in many countries throughout the world (Evens, 2007:vii).

The main topics that is covered by cognitive linguistics are: cognitive semantics, cognitive grammar and metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor is a part of cognitive linguistics branch. It is widely used in everyday language and rarely find a language that does not have metaphor.

Metaphor is a fundamental mechanism of mind, which allows us to use what we know about our experience in physical and social cases to provide understanding of countless other subjects. Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphor we Live by* (1980:265) distinguished between three kinds of metaphors: structural metaphor, ontological metaphor and orientational metaphor. Each kind is reflected by a wide range of conceptual metaphors, which structures our everyday language. Lakoff and Johnson (ibid:15) indicate that the orientational metaphor, rather than structural metaphor, organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another. Most of orientational metaphors have to do with spatial orientation, like up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral. Spatial orientations arise from the fact that we have bodies of the sort and that they function as they do in our physical environment.



Iraqi community is a social, religious, ethnic inherited and Iraqi Arabic language is a reflection of the impact of this heritage on everyday language activities especially metaphor which covering a wide range of Iraqi Arabic language communication. This study investigates the conceptual metaphors of UP and DOWN that used by Iraqi people as a style of speaking in everyday language communication. Because there are many of conceptual metaphors used in Iraqi community, the researcher tries to use the most widely used and tries to analyze examples of metaphorical expressions for each of UP and DOWN conceptual metaphor. Each example of metaphorical expression will translate from Arabic into English.

This study is important for teachers. It enables them to be aware of how metaphorical expressions organize people's thoughts to understand the everyday language, especially, when the study gives examples in Arabic language, which will be easy for them to understand the mechanism of metaphor. It is important to show the difference between the ordinary speech in comparison with metaphorical speech.

2.Literature Review

The theory of cognitive metaphor is one of the theories that form part of the movement known as cognitive linguistics. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) a metaphor involves conceptualizing one domain of experience in terms of another, a metaphor would be "the cognitive mechanism whereby one experiential domain is partially mapped onto a different experiential domain so that the second domain is partially understood in terms of the first one". Lakoff (1993:1) defines metaphor as a novel or poetic linguistic expression where one or more words for a



concept are used outside of its normal conventional meaning to express a similar concept.

Metaphor regarded as a significant part of people's everyday conceptual systems upon which people think and act (Ching & Tsang, 2009:2). Lakoff & Johnson (1980:4) states that metaphor "is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language." Lakoff & Johnson gave some idea to illustrate the meaning of the concept to be metaphorical; they started with the concept of ARGUMENT and the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. A wide variety of expressions of this metaphor can be reflected in the daily life of the Iraqi community:

PRICE IS UP AND DOWN

[البضاعة نزلوا عليه] (They got down him the goods)

[السوق نزل عليه] (The market descended on it)

[سعره نزل] (Price falls down)

[صاعد السوق] (Bullish market)

[البضاعة صعدوا] (They rise up the goods)

According to Lakoff & Johnson (ibid), many of the expressions we do in our life situations relate to goods are partially structured by the concepts of "up and down," there is no physical rising and descending of prices, there is a verbal speech indicates that the prices are sometimes high and low.

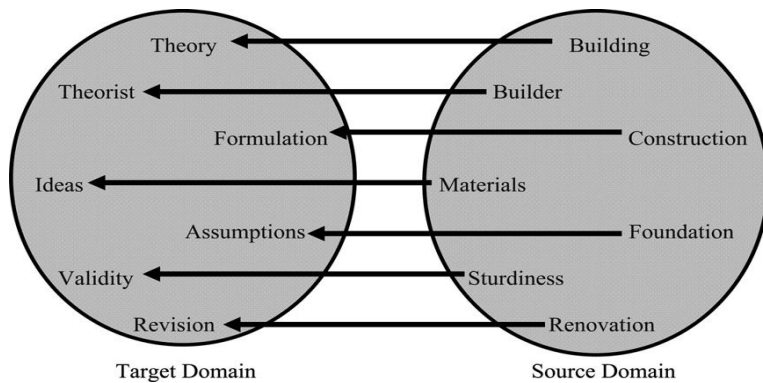
Metaphor is a central theory of Cognitive Linguistics (ibid:271). In cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor refers to the understanding of one idea, or conceptual domain, in terms of another, for example understanding quantity in terms of directionality. A conceptual domain can be any coherent organization of human experience (Wenhong, 2009:260-



261).The relationship between the two domains is happening through mapping. Mapping, according to (Geeraferts&Cuyckens,2007:190),is the fundamental notion of the conceptual metaphor, which refers to systematic metaphorical corresponding between closely related ideas. The idea of mapping is adopted by Lakoff & Johnson in 1980 as a strategy for naming such mapping, using mnemonics, which suggest the mapping. Mnemonics have the form: TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN, or alternatively, TARGET DOMAIN AS SOURCE DOMAIN (Lakoff,1993:4). The Conceptual mapping was proposed to constrain the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (ibid:6). This model analyzes the linguistic correspondences between a source and target (knowledge) domain in order to determine the underlying reason for the source-target pairings. The underlying reason is formulated in terms of a Mapping Principle. The theory also postulates a Mapping Principle Constraint, which says that a target domain will select only source domains that involve unique mapping principles. For example, the target domain of IDEA uses the source domains of BUILDING and FOOD, but it does so for.

Conceptual metaphor is used normally when we think and the expressions that represent it in a conventional way are systematically used in the everyday language; it is a concept that we usually and systematically conceptualize in terms of others. An example of conceptual metaphor is the metaphoric concept THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS where we partially conceptualize THEORIES in terms of BUILDINGS (Romero & Soria,2005:5). The primary knowledge base for interpretation is a rich set of metaphorical correspondences between abstract and concrete domains, for example love-journey correspondences (McGlone,1996:547).

Conceptual metaphor consist of a source and target domain. The choice of particular sources to go with particular targets is motivated by an experiential basis. The relation of the source and the target is such that a source domain can apply to several targets and target domains give rise to metaphorical linguistic expressions. They are basic conceptual correspondence, or mappings, between the source and target domain(Kvöecses,2003:312).The structure of the target concept (theory) is a set of argument related entities (see figure 1) that are organized by correspondences to entities in the source concept (buildings) (McGlone,2007:113).



(ibid:113).

Figure.1 Hypnotized correspondences between the concepts "theory" and "building".

Lakoff and his collaborators have formulated a vast taxonomy of conceptual metaphors, which describe the figurative expressions we used to talk about concepts such as anger (ANGER IS HEATED FLUID UNDER PRESSURE, as in Matt blew his stack), crime (CRIME IS A DISEASE, as in Midtown has been plagued by a series of bank



robberies), death (DEATH IS DEPARTURE, as in The old man finally passed away), mentality (THE MIND IS A CONTAINER, as in what do you have in mind?), and many others (ibid:111).

According to Li (2010:206) the major contribution of the conceptual metaphor theory is that conceptual metaphor enables us to organize metaphorical expressions, including idiomatic expressions in a systematic way. The conceptual metaphor assumes that many motivated idioms are based on conceptual metaphors. Conceptual metaphors exist to enhance or facilitate the understanding of certain concepts. When we take information from one domain and project it to a second domain, the latter receives in this way the structure from the former. This allows us to understand the second domain, the target, in a way that we otherwise could not.

3. Conceptual Metaphor of Up - Down

In orientational or spatial metaphors, orientations or spaces are used as a source domain, through projecting the orientational or spatial structure onto the non-spatial concept, giving non-spatial concept a space position (Wenhong, 2009:261). Orientational metaphor does not structure one concept in terms of another but instead organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another and spatial orientations arise the fact that we have bodies of the sort we have and that they function as they do in our physical environment, for example GOOD IS UP, BAD IS DOWN (Li, 2010:207).

Metaphor of UP and DOWN is shown by many expressions in which we experience them in every day of our live. The relationship between the concepts more and up is a correspondence between the conceptual domain of quantity and the conceptual domain of verticality. People are often



understand more in term of UP and understand less in term of DOWN, more corresponds in experiences to up and less corresponds in experiences to down. In this example, Prices rose, the sense is understanding quantity in term of verticality because so many cases are existed of regular experiences; there is no correspondence in real experience between quantity and verticality (Lakoff,1993:36-37).

4. Conceptual Metaphor of Up - Down in Iraqi Arabic

Iraqi Arabic speakers, especially in southern of Iraq, conceptualize many target concepts in term of Up and Down. Upward orientation comes into contact with positive evaluation, whereas downward orientation tends to go with negative evaluation. Metaphor, in Iraqi Arabic, is based on a long-term of historical cultural process. It is inherited from fathers into sons unconsciously. They used words and expressions to reflect their everyday language. Social and cultural issues that Iraqi people live in predetermine onto mapping more concrete domains in order to understand abstract target domains. They use many metaphorical expressions during daily communication to conceptualize more abstract aspects that are repeated in everyday language. By experience, many of metaphorical expressions of UP and DOWN metaphors, Iraqi Arabic speakers tend to conceptualize many of the abstract target aspects, for instance; position, price, travel, death, health,...etc. When Iraqi community speakers conceptualize abstract target aspects onto mapping of concrete abstract domains of UP and DOWN. They refer to social, religious, and economic values and positions. Up aspects in Iraqi speakers minds embodied high values and positions whereas down aspects conceptualize bad or low values.



The next part is an attempt to show some of the conceptual metaphors that the Iraqi community use to express its daily thoughts of the situations they exposed to in the real life communication, with an attempt to analyze examples of metaphorical expressions and the way Iraqi speakers use it to conceptualize the target language.

4. Analysis and Discussion of some Iraqi UP and DOWN Metaphors

4.1 PRICE IS UP AND DOWN

Iraqi Arabic speakers are so affected by changes in prices due to the economic situations that they exposed to in their history. When there is a decrease in prices, the Iraqi speaker expresses about this case by the expression [نزل سعره] (Price fall down). Literally, there is no relation between the lexical item [سعر] "Price" and the Arabic abstract concept [نزل] "fall down". The speakers tend to experience these expressions metaphorically to understand the case of [الأسعار] "Prices". Likewise, when there is an increase of prices, the speakers tend to use the concrete abstract of "up" by mapping onto more metaphorical expressions like elevated, bullish or high to understand the abstract domain of increasing price. Therefore, they experience the metaphorical expressions, for example [السوق صاعد] (Bullish market). The word "Market" is an Iraqi Arabic term refers metaphorically to the prices of currencies.

4.2 FEELINGS IS UP AND DOWN

The psychological concept of "spirituality" is so-related to the concepts of highness and lowness of feelings, the speaker conceptualizes metaphorically the concept of low to express the bad feeling or sorrow, whereas he/she conceptualizes the concept of high with the concepts of



happy and fun. When the speaker uses the expression [روحية عالية] (His spirituality are high); this means that he uses this expression to indicate that the feelings is denoting to be happy or fun, and vice versa.

4.3 CONDITIONS ARE UP AND DOWN

Iraqi people always refer to the concept of "condition", which is closely related to ask about their life of the economic events that Iraqi people currently expose to. When the situation of someone is in progress or his/her life becomes well than the past, the Iraqi speaker conceptualizes this status by referring to the concept of rising, [الأحوال صاعده] (Welfare is up), as a sign that his/her life becomes well. In the same way that the speaker uses the concept of "بالنازل" "unwell", [أموره بالنازل] (Unwell financial affairs), when someone is referring to the bad affairs. As a result, the Iraqi speaker conceptualizes the abstract concepts of having good or bad conditions of the life by experience the concrete concepts of up and down.

4.4 BUYING IS UP

In Iraqi culture, if someone buys a new car the others describe him/her as, [صاعد سيارة جديدة] (Riding a new car). The speaker experiences the first sight metaphorically. He conceptualizes the process of buying a new car or renewing it by using the conceptual expression of action of riding to the car, by other means the speaker experience the source domain of up to understand the target domain of buying.

4.5 DISCOURSE IS UP

When someone is given a speech in an official meeting like the president discourse, in conference, seminar...etc., Iraqi speakers expresses



his/her idea of given a discourse by using the concept "صاعد", as in [صاعد على المنصة] (Went up the stage). The Iraqi speaker comprehends the movement of going from his/her place to the stage as a indication to give speech, so he/she uses concrete expressions like "went up" metaphorically to understand the idea of giving a discourse.

4.6 DUTY IS UP

The Iraqi community is full of military concepts like military duty due to the long history of military events that the Iraqi country exposed to. One of the more widely used expressions is [صاعد في البرج] (Went up the tower). This expression is come from the concept of tower which is used in the military camps for monitoring and guarding. During this military history, Iraqi speaker becomes to use the concept expression of "went up" to understand the abstract concept of military duty.

4.7 OPPORTUNISTIC IS UP

Opportunistic is an ugly feature of a human being because a opportunist uses illegal and un acceptable ways to become a worthwhile person or to get social and official position. Iraqi speaker expresses his/her idea of an opportunist man as [صاعد على أكتاف الآخرين] (Be opportunist). The speaker uses this concrete concept expression of rising on a someone shoulders to understand the notion of opportunistic.

4.8 HEALTH IS DOWN

When a human being becomes sick, he/she uses many expressions to express his/her case. Iraqi speakers express their sickness metaphorically. He uses the concrete domain (collapse, low and deteriorated) to comprehend the abstract domain of health. He always experiences to use the metaphorical expression [صحته نازله] (His health deteriorated), or



sometimes [نزل وزنه] (Lose weight) as a sign that the low weight refers to bad health. Socially, when Iraqi speakers feel in good health, they use the expressions that denote to be high or up metaphorically. In the Iraqi community, when speakers have a bad health, they experience the more metaphorical expressions of concrete domain of down on mapping onto the abstract domain of health.

4.9 COMING IS DOWN

When someone comes from one place to another or from far place to near, especially when one member of the family go back on vocation, Iraqi community speaker expresses his/her idea with concrete concept "نزل" "come back" as in the conceptual expression, [نزل على أهله] (To come back on vocation).

He conceptualizes the space between farness and nearness as the space between highness and lowness, there is no logic relation between coming and down, so he/she uses more concrete concepts of down to understand the abstract concept of coming.

4.10 BURIAL IS DOWN

The abstract concept of "burial" in Iraqi Arabic is coming from the burials where the dead body is laid to a grave through the movement from the surface of the land into underground. When someone is dead, the Iraqi speaker may say, [نزلوه بالكبر] (They laid him in the grave). So, Iraqi Arabic speaker conceptualizes the concrete expressions of the action of "laying down" to understand the concept of burial.

4.11 WRITING IS DOWN

The Iraqi speaker conceptualizes metaphorically the abstract concept of writing with the concrete abstract of "writing down" in his/her speech,



the speaker when expresses about something being written as in [نزله على] الورق (Write it down on a paper). The speaker conceptualizes the expression "write down" to understand the process of writing; this comes from the idea of putting something on the others, so writing is down means writing something on the paper.

4.12 CANCELING IS DOWN

When someone is canceled from the list of names is express , [نزلوه] (Got dropped from the list). The abstract concept of canceling is conceptualized metaphorically by the conceptual expression "got dropped".

4.13 BLEEDING IS DOWN

When someone is injured and his/her blood is bleeding, Iraqi speaker describes this, as [نزل دمه] (He got low blood). This means that a person's blood is gone out from the wound and flowing to the low. Therefore, the speaker understands the operation of bleeding metaphorically by liking it to the concrete domain of "getting low".

4.14 HUNTING IS DOWN

A person who is going to the hunt is describe, as [نازل للصيد] (He is going to hunting). Iraqi speaker understands the hobby of hunting as "نازل" "going down" from one place to another. May be this idea comes from the traditional believes that the city is located in the top side whereas the countryside or the place of hunting is located in the bottom. The conceptual expression of "نازل" is used metaphorically to understand the abstract target domain of hunting.

4.15 REPARING IS DOWN



When someone's car is broken or the car's engine is out of working, the service office describes the repairing of a car, as [نزل محرك السيارة] (Dropped the car engine down). The action of dropping down the car engine from the body of a car to the land gives metaphorical meaning to the abstract concept of servicing. The concrete domain of "drop down" is used as metaphorical expression to refer to the cars repairing.

4.16 TRAVELLING IS DOWN

When a person of countryside is come from his/her city or village to the center for shopping or therapy is traditionally describe, as [نزل للولاية] (He is gone to the downtown).

The idea of travelling in Iraqi Arabic from the downtown to the city is descended from the thought of going down from the far place to the near place, the conceptual expression of the "going" is used metaphorically to refer to the thought of travelling.

4.17 PUBLISHING IS DOWN

When a writer published a new book is describe, as [نزل كتاب جيد] (A new book got published). The thought of offering a new goods in the market or publishing a new book is conceptualized as "نزل." This is related to the concept of "offeringsomething." Therefore, Iraqi speaker always conceptualizes the concept of publishing or writing a new book by using the concrete expressions of down.

4.18 DESTROYING IS DOWN

When a house is broken down, this operation is describe, as [نزلوا] [البيت الكاع] (They demolished the house). When someone wants to renew his/her house, the first step is to remove the content of old house to the



ground. Iraqi speaker uses this expression traditionally to refer to the process of destructing. The concrete domain of conceptual metaphor of the demolish the house contents is used to understand the abstract concept of renewing or destructing.

4.19 SUNSET IS DOWN

Sunset is described in Iraqi Arabic, as [نزلت الشمس] (Sun has set). Speakers see sunset as down from high to the low, from this process, the Iraqi speakers traditionally conceptualize the concrete domain of "نزلت" to understand the abstract concept of sunset.

4.20 POCKETING IS DOWN

When Iraqi speaker refers to the stolen money by someone or take what is not his/her, or sometimes refers to stingy man he often says [نزل له الجيب] (To be stolen). In order to avoid embarrassment or to be more polite, he/she refers to this situation metaphorically. Iraqi speaker conceptualizes the abstract concept target domain of pocketing by experience the concrete notion of putting something in his/her pocket as source domain.

4.21 HABITATION IS DOWN

When someone bought a new house and live in it, he always express his/her idea about this event by saying [نازل أبيت جديد] (To move into a new house). He experiences the concrete concept of "نازل" as a notion to move from old place to the new one as if he/she refers to the line extends from the high to the low. Therefore, the speaker uses the expression of staying down as a concrete abstract domain to conceptualize the idea of habitation as target domain.



4.22SUMMING IS DOWN

When someone goes to the sea or river, he/she expresses about this event metaphorically. This may be inherited from the idea on the grounds that the sea or river is low from the land, so summing is an action from the high to the low. The speaker expresses his/her idea by saying, [نازل للبحر] (to embark for sea). The speaker here is mapping onto the more concrete source domain of embark to understand the abstract target domain of summing.

4.23REPLACING IS DOWN

When someone replaces the other somewhere, he/she expresses metaphorically as if the first place was in the high level from the second place. This notion comes from the idea that some lands is higher than others. So Iraqi speakers experiences his/her idea by mapping the concrete domain of stay down, for example [نزل أمكانه] (To be instead of someone), to comprehend the notion of replacing.

4.24SEARCHING IS DOWN

When searching for someone missing or absent, Iraqi speaker expresses about this notion by saying [نزل أيدور عليه] (He is looking for him down). This expression may come from the tradition describing of absent which says [بلعته الكاع] (The ground swallowed him). Therefore, looking him/her down is used metaphorically to express getting out for search. The speaker is mapping the concrete domain of "نزل" to understand the abstract domain of searching.

4.25PRISON IS DOWN



When someone is placed in prison, Iraqi speaker expresses about this event metaphorically by using the concept of "نزله" as in this expression [نزله بالسجن] (They entered him in prison). Because the prison is characterized by the darkness, traditionally Iraqi people derived the idea of placing in prison as down place, so the speaker uses the concrete metaphorical expressions of entered him/her down to conceptualize the abstract notion of prison.

5. Conclusion

This study investigates the UP and DOWN metaphors in Iraqi Arabic community following the cognitive metaphor model by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The study has examined various kinds of metaphorical expressions that experience by Iraqi speakers which are most widely used in daily life. The study has shown that the concepts of bad and good, happy and sorrow, high life and low life...etc., are so related to the concepts of UP and DOWN. Also, the study indicated that the events, culture, and sometimes religious have effected on the speaker attitude to act his or her daily speech metaphorically. The study indicated that the Iraqi speaker experiences the more concrete of metaphorical expressions of spatial metaphor of UP and DOWN as source domain to understand many of the abstract concepts as target domain that shape his/her daily language, like: price; [نزل سعره] (Price fall down), health; [صحته نازله] (His health deteriorated), coming; [نزل على أهله] (To come back on vocation), burial; [نزلوه بالكبر] (They laid him in the grave), spirituality; [روحية عالية] (His spirituality are high), servicing; [نزل محرك السيارة] (Dropped the car engine down), conditions; [الأحوال صاعده] (Welfare is up), destructing; [نزلوا البيت لكاع] (They demolished the house), habitation; [نزل



[أنبئت جديد] (To move into a new house), searching; [نزل أيدور عليه] (He is looking for him down),...etc.

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دراسة معرفية لغوية لمفهومي (UP) و(DOWN) الواردة في العربية العراقية

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ملخص البحث

هذه الدراسة هي محاولة للتحقق من مفهومي الاستعارة (UP) و (DOWN) الواسعة الاستخدام في المجتمع العراقي. بعض من التعبيرات الاستعارية الواردة في العربية العامية العراقية تكون واسعة الاستخدام من قبل المتكلمين العراقيين خلال التخاطب اليومي. تم تحليل هذه التعبيرات بإتباع نظرية ليكوف و جونسون المعرفية للاستعارة (1980). الدراسة بينت بان المتكلم العراقي يجرب كثير من التعبيرات الاستعارية لمفهومي (UP) و (DOWN) للإشارة إلى كثير من المفاهيم التي تشكل انطباع المتكلم لمواقف الحياة اليومية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعارة, DOWN, UP, التعبيرات الاستعارية, المفاهيم المجردة.

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