Adab Al-Rafidayn Journal

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Adab Al-Rafidayn Journal

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Editor-in-chief

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A Cognitive-Pragmatic Account of Mosuli Arabic Proverbs with Special Reference to English

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Abstract
      Proverbs form an important part of any language and culture. They have been studied from various perspectives, but few scholars focus on their cognitive or pragmatic dimensions. The present study aims to analyse Mosuli Arabic proverbs from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective. In this sense, it attempts, first, to explore the mental processes that help in understanding a proverb in a possible context, and, second to identify the pragmatic functions realized in the illocutionary acts, the accompanying perlocutionary effects performed in the selected proverbs. The data analysis consists of ten proverbs that have been selected randomly from Mosuli Arabic native speakers. In this respect, every single proverb has been checked out in authentic published books about Mosuli proverbs, so as to ensure that they are authentic. The data samples are divided into categories and analysed in a qualitative method. It is hypothesized that mapping is the mental process that is used in interpreting proverbs and Mosuli Arabic proverbs are mostly directive illocutionary acts. The study used a revised model for the data analysis that covers two perspectives of proverbs, namely: cognition and pragmatics. This model is based on some theories that are taken from, first, Lakoff and Turner (1989)'s, the Great Chain Metaphor theory that helps in exploring the cognitive mechanisms in the selected samples, second, Searle (1979)'s classification of illocutionary speech acts that are used to analyse the pragmatic functions of the selected proverbs. This study concludes that mapping across conceptual domains is the mental process in

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interpreting proverbs and that Mosuli Arabic proverbs can perform different kinds of speech acts.

Keywords: cognitive-pragmatic perspective, conceptual domains, source and target domains, GCMT, speech acts.

1.1 Introduction

Proverbs are one of the difficult concepts to be defined. A proverb can be defined as a short complete sentence and well-known by the community. It contains general advice, morals, wisdom, truth and traditional beliefs in a figurative way with a literal and underlying meaning which is transmitted from generation to another (Mieder, 2004:3). Proverbs have been approached from many different points of view according to their functions in culture: didactic (Fox, 2004; Brown, 2004), therapeutic (Al-Krenawi, 2000), socio-psychological (Hass, 2002), pragmatic (Lawal et al., 1997; Honeck and Welge, 1997; Temple and Honeck, 1999), and cognitive (Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Honeck and Welge, 1999). So, there are many perspectives through which this linguistic phenomenon is investigated. In the present study, they are going to be approached and analysed from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective; specifically, from the perspectives of Lakoff and Turner (1989), and Searle (1979) respectively.

The cognitive perspective considers proverbs as "abstract theoretical mental entities, rather than as familiar, culturally embedded forms" (Honeck and Welge, 1997:608). This is because there is a belief that "proverbs cognition involves a complex set of cognitive structures and processes that are common to all humans" (ibid). The figurative language of proverbs makes them mentally economical; that is, one specific situation stated in the proverb can be applied to many different situations that share the same generic structure. The Great Chain Metaphor theory, abbreviated as GCMT, which is presented by Lakoff and Turner (1989), is adopted in this perspective. This theory allows to understand many human character traits via analogy with other forms of being that share a common feature, like animals and objects. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 165), state that there are specific-level schemas in the human's mind which are both "concrete and information-rich": they are related to

our everyday experiences and they contain a relatively large amount of information about the concrete everyday experiences. Understanding proverbs involves linking information across conceptual domains, such as the **source domain** which is the text of the proverb (literal meaning), and the situation in which the speaker intends to apply the proverb, which represents the **target domain**.

Apart from the cognitive perspective, pragmatic analyses can be done for proverbs, because they have specific meanings in certain situations that transcend their linguistic or literal meanings. Proverbs are placed within the tendency of human beings to favour indirect communication. Thus, Proverbs can function as speech acts depending on the communicative message and the context in which they are used. People use proverbs to criticize, to give a piece of advice, to threaten, to request and to fulfill other communicative functions. Such functions of language are called "illocutionary acts" by Austin (1962: 116). In this Study, Austin (1962)'s speech acts theory, and more specifically, Searle (1979)'s classification of speech acts are adopted to analyse the pragmatic perspective of the selected Mosuli Arabic proverbs.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This study aims to carry out a cognitive and pragmatic analysis on the selected Mosuli Arabic proverbs, and to identify the cognitive mechanisms that are used in interpreting proverbs ,as well as, to identify the speech acts involved in these proverbs, and to show their communicative values.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

As the literature available reveals, the study of proverbs from cognitive-pragmatic perspective has received little attention from researchers, and more importantly, Mosuli Arabic proverbs have not been examined from these two perspectives at all. Therefore, this study intends to enrich the bodying literature and to fill the gap by analyzing Mosuli proverbs from these two perspectives; cognitive and pragmatic.

1.4 Hypotheses

This study hypothesizes that:

1. Mapping between the source domain and the target domain is the process that is used in interpreting Mosuli Arabic proverbs.
2. Cognitive mapping in proverbs differs according to the context.
3. Directives are mostly used in Mosuli Proverbs.

1.5 Limits of the Study

The present study examines Mosuli Arabic proverbs in terms of a possible context since it is primarily concerned with applying the revised model to analyse Mosuli proverbs from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective (i.e. it is a theoretical study). It is limited to Mosuli Arabic dialect which is spoken. Also, it is limited in terms of data amount; twelve Mosuli Arabic proverbs are taken from native speakers who represent the old generation. This study does not account for social variables such as gender, education, social distance and so forth. Moreover, two main theories are adopted which are: Lakoff and Turner (1989)'s the **GCMT**, and Searle (1979)'s Speech Acts theory.

1.6 Methodology

The present study is a qualitative research type which describes a text or a piece of writing of the phenomenon under investigation. The results of this type of research are presented in the form of a research report. In the present study, forty Mosuli Arabic proverbs are collected randomly from native speakers including family, neighbours, relatives and some are provided by the researcher himself., then every proverb is checked out in the two published books about Mosuli Arabic proverbs; namely: *Mojam Amthal Almosul Ala'amia* to the author Abdul-Khaleq Al-Dabbagh and *Almurradad Min Al-amthal Almosullia Ala'amia* to the author Muhammad Al-Gulami. This method was chosen as kind of authenticity and to ensure that the collected data are Mosuli Arabic proverbs.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Features of Proverbs

Proverbs have certain features that distinguish them from other kinds of expressions. These features are shown in the following subsections:

2.1.1 Phonological Features

Phonetically, a proverb is normally recognized by having one of the phonic devices which are alliteration, assonance, consonance and rhyme. For example, in the proverb below, we have *alliteration* which is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words or stressed syllables (Cuddon, 1982:27).

'*Out of debt, out of danger*'

2.1.2 Syntactic Features

Syntactically, Weinreich (1978:72) (cited in Honeck, 1997:18), says that the grammatical subject of the proverb is abstract generic and that the tense of its verb is a present tense, because the past tense restricts the utterance and strips it of its potential application in many situations. For instance, "*Fair words break no bones*".

2.1.3 Semantic Features

Semantically, proverbs can have two meanings, literal and figurative. Leech (1974:10) points out that the literal meaning refers to the lexical meaning of a word. The meaning of the proverb can be understood from its components without the need of a context, as in '*never too old to learn*'. Saeed (1997:15) states that the figurative meaning consists of several rhetorical terms like metaphor, irony, and metonymy. Some proverbs cannot be interpreted literally so that the listener tries to deal with their non-literal meaning. For instance, the proverb '*No gain without pain*' means that if someone wishes to achieve something, he/she has to overcome some troubles and difficulties. This proverb might be said to a student who complains too much exams.

2.1.4 Pragmatic Features

Pragmatically, language users can manipulate proverbs to achieve certain communicative aims that transcend their linguistic form and meaning. Thus, a pragmatic reasoning is required to understand proverbs. Leech (1974:10) says that the addresser's intention which varies according to the context of the utterance,

plays a great role in selecting the proverb. This will be discussed in details in the next sections.

2.1.5 Psychological and Cognitive Features

Psychologically, proverbs function as a mirror by which we can know the way of thinking habits. They are used by people to lessen the grief which is felt by people due to a great loss as in '*There is a good time coming'*. In addition, people sometimes use proverbs to ease themselves of what grieve them (Johnson, 1954:125).

Cognitively, proverbs are considered as mentally economical because we can understand many situations from one specific situation presented in them. In other words, people can activate a whole scene in their minds about certain event just by the specific allusion to a relevant fact. For instance, Lakoff and Turner (1989:162). This will be dealt in details in the next section.

2.2 The Notion of Cognition

Cognitive linguistics is concerned with the study of language, mind and experience. In other words, its main concern is studying the relationships between language, mind and socio-physical experience (Evans, 2007: VI).

2.2.1 The Great Chain Metaphor Theory

Lakoff and Turner (ibid:172) define **GCMT** as "an ensemble, something like a string quartet, in which there are four members with spate entities, but who so often play together that their identity as a group is more prominent than their identities as individuals". They state that **GCMT** is the best way to interpret proverbs. This complex conceptual theory consists of the following members:

The first member is the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor which picks out from a specific-level schema a generic-level structure and maps it onto a large number of specific-level schemas having the same generic structure (Lakoff and Turner, 1989: 162). Let us imagine the following situation which illustrates the way in which the generic-level maps onto a certain situation. Suppose a presidential candidate who commits a personal mistake that was reported by the media before the election campaigns, thus spoiling his reputation and destroying his candidacy. Instead of blaming

himself/herself, the candidate blames the media coverage for spreading the news. The appropriate proverb which describes this situation is "Blind blames the ditch". The application of the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor to the above situation allows us to establish the following mappings between domains:

- Blind person corresponds to the presidential candidate.
- Falling into the ditch corresponds to the personal mistake.
- Being in the ditch corresponds to the spoiling of the campaign.
- Blaming the ditch corresponds to media coverage.
- Judging the blind as foolish for blaming the ditch corresponds to judging the presidential candidate as foolish for blaming the media coverage. (Lakoff and Turner, 1989: 163-4).

Thus, proverbs have the "power of generality, that is, the power to make sense of a wide range of cases". In other words, a generic-level schema can be applied to a large number of specific-level schemas which share the same generic structure (ibid. 165).

The second member of the **GCMT**, is the Great Chain of Being which allows us to understand "the complex faculties of human beings in terms of these other things" (ibid: 166). So, animals and other lower forms of being on the chain can be used to talk about humans' behaviour such as man's "aesthetic and moral sense, and rational capacity, not his physical characteristics, his animal desires, or his raw emotions" (ibid: 167).

The third member is the Nature of Things which is the relationship between what things are like and how they behave" .Thus, this theory is "a causal theory that links attributes to behaviour: the characteristic behaviour of a form of being is a consequence of its characteristic attributes" (ibid: 170-71). This theory links with the Great Chain of Being to account for proverbs.

The fourth member is the Maxim of Quantity which builds into the GCMT "a pragmatic principle of communication" (Lakoff and Turner 1989:171-72). This maxim limits what can be understood in terms of what. For example, in the proverb "big thunder, little rain" the Maxim of Quantity restricts the amount of knowledge we have about thunder and rain, excluding lightning, wind and so forth.

2.3 The Notion of Pragmatics

According to Levinson (1983:5), pragmatics is the study of language use. In other words, the relationship between language and context is essential in language understanding. Mey (1993:42) states that pragmatics is related to the relation between language and its users and particularly the communicative conditions which influence the use of language.

2.3.1 Speech Acts Theory

The term "speech acts" was firstly proposed in the work of the philosopher J.L Austin who defines it as "it refers to a theory which analyses the role of utterances in relation to the behaviour of speaker and hearer in interpersonal communication" (Austin, 1962: 61). Austin (ibid: 101), states that when people speak, they perform the following acts:

1. Locutionary acts: Austin (ibid: 108) states that this act "is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain utterance with certain sense and reference, which again is roughly equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense".

2. Illocutionary acts: Austin (ibid) states that we perform things like informing, ordering, warning, promising and so forth. He defines these acts as "illocutionary acts" which are utterances that have certain "conventional force". This kind is considered as the central point of speech acts which refers to the idea of "by saying something, we do something". For instance, when someone warns somebody by saying "danger". Thus, it refers to what someone does in saying something. In brief, it is the intended meaning of the speaker.

3. Prelocutionary acts: Austin (ibid) refers to this kind of speech acts as "what people bring about or achieve by saying something". A prelocutionary act is the effect of the utterance on the hearer such as convincing, misleading, persuading and so forth.

2.3.2 Searle's Classification of Speech Acts

The philosopher John Searle continues the work initiated by Austin (1962). Searle (1979: 12-16) classifies the illocutionary acts into five categories. These categories are as follows:

1. Assertives (representatives): the illocutionary point of this act is to commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition.

For example, stating, claiming, reporting, suggesting and so forth. In "*the name of British queen is Elizabeth*"; the speaker asserts that the British queen's name is Elizabeth.

2. **Directives:** the illocutionary point of this act is that the speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something such as commanding, requesting, inviting, forbidding, ordering and suggesting. Leech (1996: 105-107) defines this type as an intention to produce some effects by an action done by the hearer. For example: *Would you make me an orange juice?*

3. **Commissives:** the illocutionary point of this action is to commit the speaker to some future act such as promising, offering, threatening, vowing, refusing and volunteering. For example: *"I promise to be on time."*

4. **Expressives:** the illocutionary point of this act is that the speaker performs a speech act in which he/she expresses his/her feelings and attitudes about something such as a statement of pleasure, pain, like, dislike and sorrow. For example: *I am sorry.*

5. **Declarations:** the speech acts in this category are institutionalized (i.e. their success depends on the speaker being authorized by the social community). For example: "You *are fired".*

2.4 The Revised Model of Analysis

After giving a full review of the theories that are adopted to analyse Mosuli Arabic proverbs from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective, we can say that the present thesis is based on a revised model which is a fusion between the **GCMT** that is presented by Lakoff and Turner (1989), and Searle (1979)'s classification of illocutionary speech acts. The purpose of this kind of fusion is to make a link between the mental processes that are used in interpreting proverbs and how interlocutors use proverbs to perform speech acts in a possible context. In addition, the **GCMT** focuses on the mental operations more than the context, so that integrating it with speech acts theory in a revised model, links the **GCMT** to a context of use. Thus, speech acts theory tackles the proverb from a pragmatic point of view focusing on the pragmatic functions realized in the illocutionary acts, the accompanying prelocutionary effects performed in the selected proverbs in certain situations.

Speakers can perform many pragmatic functions such as criticizing, advising, threatening and so forth. Below, is an explanatory figure that summarizes the model of analysis.
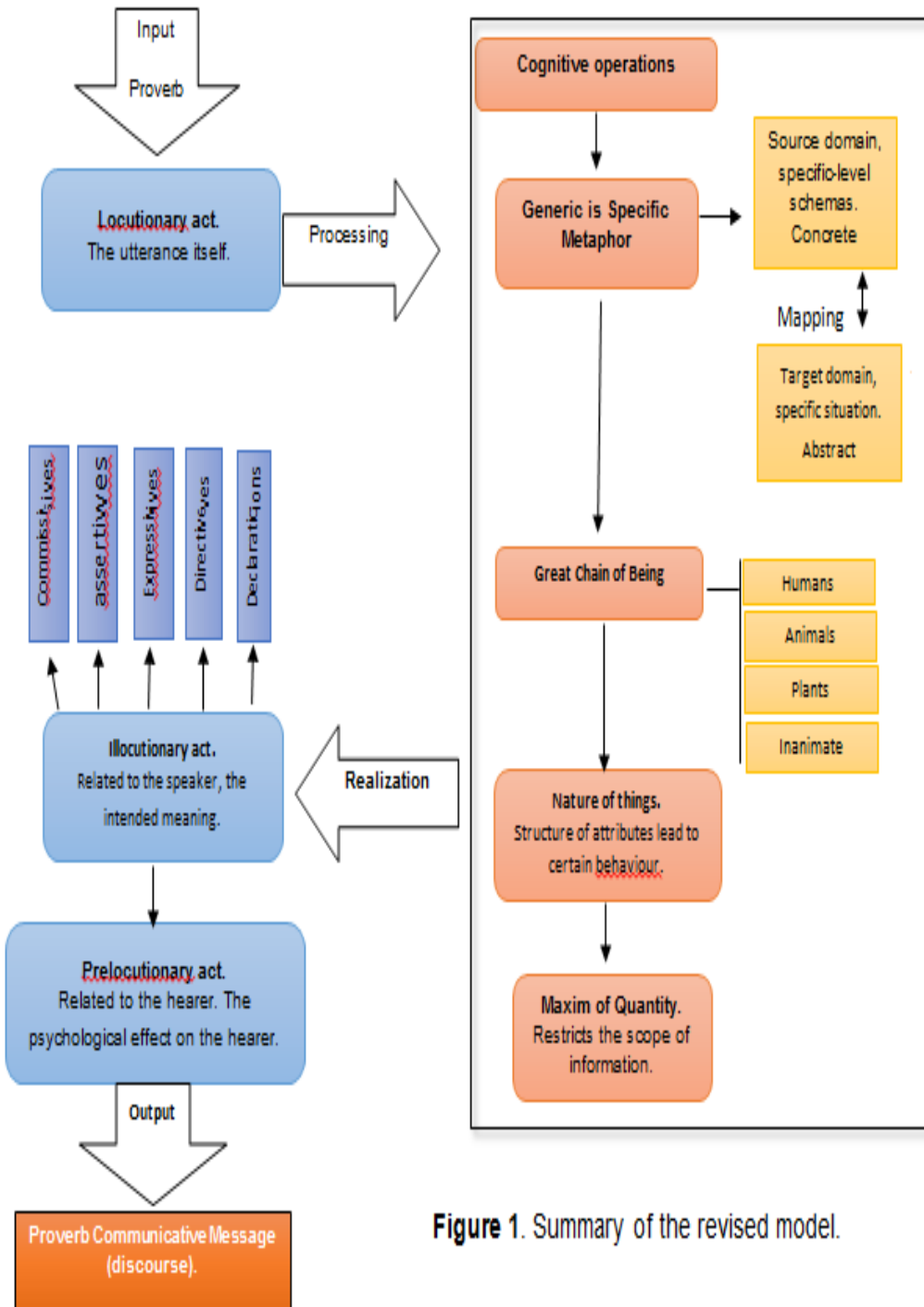
Figure 1. Summary of the revised model.

3. Data Analysis

Out of the forty Mosuli Arabic proverbs that have been analysed, twelve examples will be presented in this section due to the limits of this research.

.1   (Al-Dabbagh ,1956: 173) *"حيي تحت التبن"*
Transcription: /ħajii taħt attbin/
*Translation: **a snake under the hay.***
Context: This proverb describes a hustle person who shows gentleness and honesty. It is similar to the English saying "*a snake in the grass*". It is used in a conversation between two persons where the first one warns the other to be away from a hustle person, but the second one replies that he is so humble and helpful. So, the speaker says *"a snake under the hay"*.

Cognitive interpretation

Using this proverb in the above situation activates a generic-level schema in the hearer's mind that contains information like: there is a person who behaves in a gentle way, but in his/her deep skin he/she has hatred towards other people. Thus, there is mapping between the source domain (the proverb) and the target domain (the situation) which leads to the metaphorical understanding of the proverb. The "snake" corresponds to "hustle person". According to the GCMT, the snake is in a lower position than humans. Some snakes hide under the hay or straw and it is not easy to see them because their colour is similar to the colour of the hay. While hiding in the hay, the snake quickly devours its prey after killing it with its fatal bite. This is similar to people who hide their hatred under the cover of gentleness.

Pragmatic meaning

In the situation above, the speaker uses the proverb "a snake under the hay" to perform the pragmatic function of *warning* which

falls under the illocutionary acts of *directives*. The speaker wants to indicate to the hearer a common relevant truth expressed in the proverb that people should not be deceived by appearances. He wants to imply that some people behave in a gentle way just as a means to get what they want from their victims. The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer may agree with the listener and be cautious not to be deceived by people.

٢.   (Al-Gulami,1964:11) *"اصبر عالحصغم تاكلو عنب"*

Transcription: /ʔṣbur ʕalħuṣɣum takilu ʕinab/

Translation: ***be patient on sour grapes, so you can eat them when fully grown.***

Context: this proverb encourages people to be patient in order to get what they want to achieve. It is used in a conversation between two persons in which the first person is complaining his/her miserable condition and the other person tells him/her *"be patient on sour grapes, then you will eat ripe grapes"*.

Cognitive interpretation

Using this proverb in the specific context above activates a generic-level schema in the hearer's mind that contains generic information like: in order to achieve what we want, we have to be patient. The mapping between the source domain and the target domain happens to allow the metaphorical understanding of this proverb. According to the Nature of Things, "grapes" go through different stages which require time before reaching the ripeness stage. Hence, the same thing can be reflected in real life, we have to be patient enough to achieve our aims.

Pragmatic meaning

Mosuli people use this proverb in situations in which they want to reinforce and urge other people. In the situation above, the speaker performs the pragmatic function of *advising* which falls under the illocutionary acts of *directives*. The speaker wants to indicate to the hearer a common relevant truth stated in the proverb. She implies to her son that he has to wait and be patient to achieve what he wants just like when the farmer waits the ripeness of the

grapes. The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer may get an injection of hope and follow the speaker's advice.

۳.   (Al-Dabbagh، 1956: 24) *"اتكندغ الدست، لقالو قبغ"*

Transcription: /ʔtkandaɣ ʔddsit laqaalu qapaɣ/

Translation: ***the pot rolled and found its cover.***

Context: this proverb states that people of similar interests, group, ideas, background, characteristics or values often tend to stick together. It is similar to the English version of "birds of a feather flock together ". It is used in a conversation between two persons where the first person asks the other about the relationship between two people, and the second person replies *"the pot rolled and found a cover"*.

Cognitive interpretation

The mapping between the source domain and the target domain happens to allow the metaphorical understanding of the proverb. The "pot" and "cover" correspond to the relationship between two people. According to the Nature of Things, these two objects fit and complete each other. Thus, the same thing applies to people who share the same characteristics and mood.

Pragmatic Meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of *stating* information which falls under the illocutionary acts of *assertives* (representatives). The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer feel happy about this relationship.

٤.   (Al-Dabbagh، 1956: ۱۲۲) *"بيت الاسكيفي حيفي وبيت السقا عطشان"*

Transcription: /bet ʔlskefi ħefi wbet ʔlsaqa ʕtʃaan/

Translation: ***the shoemaker is barefoot and the water boy is thirsty.***

Context: this proverb describes a person who owns something, but at the same time he/she is deprived of it. It is used in a conversation between two persons where the first one talks about for example, a miserable state of a dentist's teeth. So, the other person says *"the shoemaker is barefoot and the water boy is thirsty"*.

Cognitive interpretation

This proverb evokes a generic information like: There is a person who does things to people, but he is deprived of them. The

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mapping happens between the "shoemaker" and "water boy" which correspond to the "dentist", while "barefoot" and "thirsty" to his "teeth".

Pragmatic meaning

The pragmatic function is *criticizing* which falls under the illocutionary acts of *expressives*. This proverb can indicate to the effects of carelessness.

5. (٣٩ :Al-Dabbagh، 1956) *"اذا كان صديقك حلو لا تاكلو كلو"*
Transcription: /ʔiða kaan ṣadiiqak ħlu lataakilu klu/
Translation: *if your friend is a sweet, do not eat all of it.*
Context: this proverb is used in a conversation between two persons in which one of them makes many heavy requests from his cousin, so the other person tells him, do not bother him with your requests, *"if your friend is a sweet, do not eat all of it".*

Cognitive interpretation

The mapping between the source domain and the target domain happens to allow the metaphorical understanding of the proverb. "Your friend" corresponds to "his cousin" and "do not eat all of it" to "do not bother him". According to the Nature of Things, once we eat a sweet, we want more and more.

Pragmatic meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of *advising* which falls under the speech acts of *directives*. The speaker implies that if you continue with your heavy requests, you may lose your cousin. The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer may persuade and avoid asking his cousin in this ungentle way.

6. (١٤٠ :Al-Dabbagh ,1956) *"ثمي اقغب من ثم امي"*
Transcription: /Θmi ʔqɣab mn Θm ʔmmi/
Translation: *my mouth is nearer than my mother's mouth.*
Context: this proverb describes a person who does not favour others on him. It is used in a conversation between two persons in which the first one asks the other to exchange the seat near the window, so

the second person refuses and says *"my mouth is nearer than my mother's mouth"*.

Cognitive interpretation

The mapping between the source domain and the target domain happens to allow the metaphorical understanding of the proverb. Here, "my mouth" corresponds to the seat of the second person and "my mother's mouth" to the seat of the first person.

Pragmatic meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of *refusing* which falls under the speech acts of *commissives*. The prelocutionary effect performed by the speaker upon the listener by means of the above proverb is angering.

7.   (Al-Gulami, 1964:79)   *"صام سني وفطغ على بصلي"*

Transcription: /ṣaam sanni wfṭɣ ʕala baṣali/

Translation: ***he fasted for a year and broke it on an onion.***

Context: this proverb is used in a sort of conversation between two persons in which they talk about a person who deprives himself of many things to get something valuable, but at the end he gets an invaluable thing. So, one of them says *"he fasted for a year and broke it on an onion"*.

Cognitive interpretation

The mapping involves linking "Fasted for a year" which corresponds to "deprives himself" and "onion" to "invaluable thing". According to the Nature of Things, "onion" has a bad smell and people do not like it.

Pragmatic meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of asserting which falls under the speech acts of *assertives* (*representatives*). The speaker wants to tell the hearer that he agrees with him that that person was patient all that time to achieve his goal, but the result was not what he wanted. The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer agrees with the speaker.

٨.   (Al-Gulami,1964:٣٩)   *"بيغ التشغب منو ماي لا اتزت بينو حجغ"*

Transcription: / biɣ ʔltʃɣab minw maai la tzit biinw ħadʒaɣ/

Translation: ***do not drink from the well and throw stones into it.***

Context: this proverb is used to encourage people not to offend those who were good and kind with them. It is used in a conversation between two persons in which the first person talks badly about another man who helped him many time, so the second person tells him "*do not drink from the well and throw stones into it.*"

Cognitive Interpretation

The "well" corresponds to "another man" and throwing stones corresponds to talking badly about him.

Pragmatic meaning

In the situation above, the speaker performs the pragmatic function of *advising* which falls under the illocutionary acts of *directives*.

9.   (٥٤٦ :1956, Al-Dabbagh) *"الديك ما يصيح الا بمزبلتو"*
Transcription: /ʔddiik ma jṣajħ illa bmazbalitu/
Translation: ***the rooster crows on his own dunghill.***

Context*:* this proverb describes a person who is active and arrogant on his own land among his family or friends, while in other places he/she is coward. It is used in a conversation between two persons where the first one tells the other that he went to someone's house to take his money, but that person attacked him exploiting the help of his brother and friend. So, the second person replies *"the rooster crows on his own dunghill."*

Cognitive Interpretation

The "rooster" corresponds to "someone" and "dunghill" to "his house". The "rooster" is known for his arrogance and pride. He looks at other creatures as being lower than him ignoring that he is in a dunghill. The same thing can be applied to the situation above.

Pragmatic Meaning

In the situation above, the speaker performs the pragmatic function of *claiming* which falls under the illocutionary acts of *assertives* (*representatives*).

10.   (١٥:Al-Gulami,1964)   *"اعطي الخبز بيد خبازتو خلي تاكل نصو"*
Transcription: /ʔʕṭi ʔlxbz biid xabazitu xalli taakil nṣṣu/
Translation: ***give the bread to its baker, even if she eats half of it.***

Context: this proverb advises people to give the thing to the one who can do it better. It is used in a conversation between two persons where the first one says that he/she wants to fix or do something, but the other person advises him/her to give it to a specialist by saying *"give the bread to its baker, even if she eats half of it"*.

Cognitive interpretation

The metaphorical meaning of the proverb is made clear when the mapping between the source domain and the target domain happens. The "dough" corresponds to "fix or do something" and the "baker" corresponds to the "specialist". Baking bread requires experience and skills and not all people can do it in a good way.

Pragmatic meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of *advising* which falls under the speech acts of *directives*. The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer may agree with the speaker's advice and go to the nearest maintenance center.

11.   (Al-Gulami,1964:108)   *"قامت الكويغ ونامت البنيغ"*
Transcription: /qaamit ʔalkawajɤ wanamit ʔabanajɤ/
Translation: ***mud domes stood and minarets slept.***

Context: this proverb describes a situation in which the non-qualified and dishonest people hold authority, while the competent and honest people are neglected and excluded. It is used in a conversation between two persons where the first one complains to the other one the miserable situation of the country and how life is getting worse. So, the second person says *"mud domes stood and minarets slept"*.

Cognitive interpretation

Here, there is mapping between the source domain and the target domain. The "minarets" corresponds to competent and honest people, while the "mud domes" corresponds to dishonest and non-

qualified ones. "Minarets" are high and lofty which symbolizes honest and competent people. "Mud domes" are made of clay and stones and used to store wheat. They are highly affected when it rains, unlike the strong, unaffected minarets. Thus, the proverb states the fact that the current situation opposes the normal case in which minarets are up, while domes are down.

Pragmatic meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of *asserting* which falls under the speech acts of *assertives*. The prelocutionary effect is that the hearer understands that this situation will not change unless competent and honest people hold authority again.

١٢ .   (Al-Gulami,1964:109) *"القغعا تتباهى بشعغ اختا"*

Transcription: /ʔlqaɣʕaaʔ titbaaha ʔbʃaʕ ʔxta/
Translation: ***a bald lady boasts her sister's hair.***

Context: it is used when there is a sort of conversation between two persons in which one of them keeps showing off achievements done by other people such as his parents or antecedents, while he lacks any personal achievement to be proud of. So, the other person replies *"a bald lady boasts her sister's hair"*.

Cognitive interpretation

Here, the mapping happens between the source domain and the target domain. The "bald lady" corresponds to "one keeps showing off", while "sister's hair" corresponds to achievements done by "his parents or antecedents''.

Pragmatic meaning

The speaker performs the pragmatic function of *criticizing* people's behaviour which falls under the illocutionary act of *expressives*. The prelocutionary effect of this proverb is that the hearer may stop showing off and to focus on his personal achievements only.

4.1 Discussion of the Findings

Going through the analysis done so far, the prominent findings can be summarized as follows:

First, since Mosuli native speakers live in the same community and geographical area, they follow the same procedure in interpreting proverbs. In addition, they have a common underlying schema of cognition which enables them to interpret proverbs in the right way.

Second, mapping is the main cognitive process that is used in interpreting Mosuli Arabic proverbs. The data analysis done so far in the previous section shows that there are two main domains; namely: source domain (i.e. the text of the proverb) which is concrete and information-rich, and abstract domain (i.e. the situation in question) which is related to human's affairs.

Third, context plays a significant role in interpreting the right meaning of the proverb, as it serves a conversational undertone for proverbs where there is no instant linguistic feedback. . The hearer depends on the contextual information available to make a link between what is said and what is meant. Proverbs are context-dependent; that is, the meaning of a proverb cannot be induced from the lexical meanings of its constituents. Thus, lists of proverbs are difficult to be interpreted unless they are accompanied with a description of their possible context. Also, cognitive mapping in interpreting proverbs, differs according to the context. When a proverb is used in different situations, the mapping of this proverb is confined to the specific situation in which it is used.

Fourth, the study finds that the selected Mosuli Arabic proverbs perform different kinds of speech acts. Moreover, the selected proverbs are metaphorical, in which one thing can be understood in terms of another. The illocutionary act and the perlocutionary effect allow the interpretation of the locutionary act (i.e. the proverb itself). According to Searle (1979)'s classification of illocutionary speech acts, the selected data reveals the following percentages:
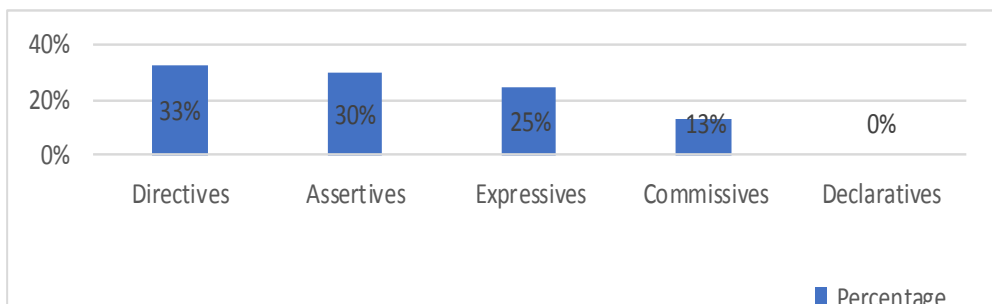
Figure 2. Percentages of Illocutionary Acts.

From the chart above, it is obvious that **directive** speech acts
are mostly used in the selected proverbs. Directives are used either
to warn or advise the addressee. **Assertives** with 30% are used for
achieving persuasion and to create a strong cooperation between the
speaker and the addressee. They are used to state information or
report and confirm facts. The analysis also shows that **expressives**
are used with 25%. These acts express the speaker's feelings about
people or things around him/her, such as criticizing other's
behaviour. **Commissives** occur with 13%. They are used to threaten
the addressee or to make a promise about something in the future.
Finally, there is no use of **declarative** speech acts in the selected
Mosuli proverbs.

5. Conclusions

Based on the analysis of 40 Mosuli Arabic proverbs that are
contextualized in certain possible contexts, the following
conclusions can be drawn:

1. Mosuli people follow the same procedure in interpreting
proverbs as they have a common underlying schema of cognition.
People who share common cultural, social and geographical
environment, have similar conceptualization of the facts around
them.

2. Cognitive mapping between the source domain and the target
domain is the main mental mechanism that the hearer follows in
interpreting Mosuli Arabic proverbs. By making use of the
contextual information, the hearer links between what is said and
is meant to reach the intended meaning of the proverb.

3. The metaphorical meaning of the proverb is made clear when it
is used in a context. The selected data shows that is impossible to
get the intended meaning of a proverb without a context.

4. According to Searle's classification of speech acts, Mosuli
Arabic proverbs can perform four types of illocutionary acts;
namely: directives, expressives, assertives and commissives.
Directive speech acts occur in the first rank in the selected Mosuli
Arabic proverbs. Assertives, expressives and commissives

represent the second, third and fourth ranks respectively. Directives are used either to advise or to warn the hearer.

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دراسة إدراكيَّة – تداوليَّة للأمثال الموصليَّة مع إشارة خاصة إلى الإنكليزيَّة

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المستخلص

تُشكل الأمثال جزءًا مهمًا من أي لغة وثقافة، فدُرست الأمثال من وُجهات نظر مختلفة، لكن القليل من الباحثين يركِّزون على أبعادها الإدراكيَّة أو التداوليَّة، وتهدُف الدراسة إلى تحليل الأمثال العربيَّة الموصليَّة من منظور إدراكي– تداولي، وبهذا الخصوص، فإنَّه يحاول، أولاً: استكشاف العمليات العقلية التي تُساعد في فهم المثل واستعماله في سياق معين، ثانيًا: تحديد الوظائف التداولية المتحققة في الأفعال اللغوية الإنجازية، والأفعال اللغوية التأثيرية التي تؤثر على المُخاطب نتيجة لاستعمال هذه الأمثال، إذ تتألف العينات من أربعين مثلاً من الأمثال العربية الموصليَّة جُمعت بطريقة عشوائيَّة من مجموعة من المتحدِّثين باللهجة الموصليَّة في هذا الصدد، وقُورنت الأمثال عينة الدراسة بكتب خاصة بالأمثال الموصليَّة، للتأكد من أنَّها أمثال موصلية حقيقيَّة، ثُمَّ العينات إلى فئات ليتم تحليلها بطريقة البحث النوعي، فيَفترض البحث أنَّ عملية الربط الاستعاري بين المفاهيم المُجردة في الأمثال والمفاهيم المركوزة في الحياة اليومية، وهي العملية العقليَّة التي تستخدم في تفسير الأمثال الموصلية الشعبية، وأنَّ هذه الأمثال هي في الغالب من المُوجِّهات التي هي الأفعال اللُغوية التي تدفع المُخاطَب إلى القيام بفعل معين، ومن أجل تحقيق أهداف البحث والتحقق من صدق فرضياته، استعمل أُنموذجًا مُنقحًا أداةً لتحليل العينات يغطي منظورين للأمثال، وهما: الإدراكي والتداولي، يعتمد هذا الأنموذج المُنقَّح على نظريتين رئيسيتين هما: نظرية لاكوف وتيرنر (١٩٨٩)، وهي نظرية السلسلة الكبيرة للاستعارة، التي تساعد في استكشاف العمليات المعرفية، والأُخرى، هي تصنيف سيرل (١٩٧٩) للأفعال اللُغوية الإنجازيَّة.

الكلمات المفتاحيَّة: المنظور المعرفي البراغماتي، المجالات المفاهيمية، المجالات المصدر، الهدف، أفعال الكلام.

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