

An Analysis of Metaphors for the Concept of «Anger» in the Narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.) with an Emphasis on Ethical-Emotional Education

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Abstract

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The present study, adopting a cognitive semantics approach, analyzes the conceptualization of anger in the narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.) and elucidates how conceptual metaphors structure human understanding of divine and human anger. The research corpus comprises forty narrations from Imam Reza(A.S.) concerning anger, analyzed through a cognitive approach and the tool of conceptual metaphor. The findings indicate that anger in these narrations is situated within three domains: divine, human, and satanic. In the divine domain, anger is conceptualized through the source domains of force, distance, and fire. These source domains play a deterrent role in human education and serve as reminders of the severe consequences of sin. This anger arises from moral values and is directed toward the reform of human beings, not personal vengeance. Such a paradigm renders ethically-oriented human anger justified and purposeful. The origin of divine anger is divided into two levels: doctrinal and behavioral. Anger in the human domain can be differentiated based on its nature and the manner of confrontation. The domains of motion, disequilibrium, force, heat, mountain, key, and substance conceptualize the nature of anger, while the domain of force manifests in the confrontation with anger. Satanic anger is conceptualized on the basis of medicine, signifying Satan's exploitation of this emotion as a tool of seduction and cognitive disruption. From the perspective of emotional education, the analysis of the narrations highlights emotional self-awareness, anger management, psychological equilibrium, ethical boundary-setting, and conscious forgiveness. Anger in these narrations is regarded as an accepted emotion within human beings and is construed as constructive anger when it is restrained and leads to moral growth. Those who attain this station are counted among the believers, the best of people, and the virtuous (muhsinīn).

Keywords: Narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.), Conceptual Metaphor, Cognitive Analysis of Emotions, Emotional Education, Anger.

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1. Introduction

The present study is situated at the nexus of three disciplines: cognitive linguistics, Islamic teachings (specifically Razavi narrations), and educational psychology. The central issue is how abstract and complex concepts such as “anger,” as a fundamental human emotion, are understood and conceptualized in religious texts, particularly in the narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.). Within the framework of cognitive linguistics, language is not merely a tool for expression but a reflection of mental structures and human cognitive patterns. According to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), established by Lakoff and Johnson, metaphors are not simply literary devices but fundamental cognitive mechanisms for understanding and experiencing abstract concepts through concrete and experiential ones. Therefore, an examination of metaphors related to anger can unveil the underlying mental and cultural models behind this concept. The significance of this research lies in an existing scientific gap: no focused study has yet been conducted that cognitively and metaphorically analyzes the concept of anger within the corpus of Razavi narrations and, from this analysis, extracts components for emotional-ethical education. This research seeks to fill this lacuna.

2. Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to analyze and identify the conceptual metaphors employed in the narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.) for the conceptualization of “anger.” This aim is pursued by answering the following main question: Based on which metaphorical source domains is anger conceptualized in Razavi narrations, and what role do these conceptual metaphors play in understanding, recognizing, and managing the emotion of anger, and ultimately, in extracting components of ethical-emotional education? The study seeks to elucidate how the utilization of these metaphors can lead to the presentation of an educational epistemological model for managing this powerful emotion.

3. Methodology

This research is a documentary study conducted using a descriptive-analytical method. The research corpus comprises approximately forty narrations from Imam Reza (A.S.) collected with a focus on the theme of anger. Two search methods were employed for data collection: first, a target-domain-based search, in which keywords signifying anger, such as *ghaḍab*, *ghayz*, and *sakhat*, were identi-

fied and extracted from Razavi narrative sources. Second, a source-domain-based search, in which concepts like “fire,” “punishment,” “force,” and “curse” served as the basis for searching as potential concrete domains. Following the compilation of the narrative corpus, data analysis was conducted using the analytical tool of “conceptual metaphor” within the theoretical framework of Lakoff and Johnson, and drawing on Kövecses’ categorization of anger metaphors. At this stage, the metaphorical mappings present in each narration were extracted, followed by the identification of source and target domains and the types of image schemas. Finally, the findings of this analysis were discussed to derive implications for emotional education.

4. Findings

Data analysis revealed that the conceptualization of anger in Razavi narrations occurs across three distinct realms: the Divine, the Human, and the Satanic.

1.The Realm of Divine Anger: This anger is not a psychological emotion but the Divine Will to punish sinners. Its source is divided into two categories: doctrinal (e.g., ghuluww [exaggeration in religious belief], unbelief) and behavioral (e.g., arrogance, oppression). Findings indicated that Divine anger is conceptualized through three primary source domains:

“Anger is a Force”: The use of the preposition ‘alā (denoting ascendancy and dominance) alongside the word ghaḍab and the term sakhaṭ portrays anger as a directional, dominant, and all-encompassing force from above.

“Anger is Distance/Separation”: The collocation of ghaḍab with la‘n (meaning to expel or banish) conceptualizes anger as a rejection from Divine mercy and the creation of spiritual distance.

“Anger is Fire”: The promise of nār (fire) for sins such as usury (reza) is a symbol of Divine wrath and its burning consequence.

2.The Realm of Human Anger: This realm is itself divisible into two parts: “the nature of anger” and “confronting anger.”

Conceptualizing the Nature of Anger: Six primary source domains were identified. “Anger is Movement/Imbalance,” formed by the collocation of sakana (to subside/calm) with ghaḍab, signifying a disturbance in psychological stability. “Anger is Expulsion/Distance,” manifested in the Imam’s (A.S.) behavior toward an offender with the command “Ukhruj ‘anni” (Leave my presence!), demonstrating the interpersonal and ethical consequence of anger. “Anger is Force/Heat,” rooted

in the term *ghayz* and its physiological signs like body heat, conceptualizing anger as internal pressure and discernible energy. “Anger is a Substance,” shaped by the expression *kazm al-ghayz* (suppressing rage), which depicts anger as a hot fluid inside a container (the chest). “Anger is a Mountain,” signifying the magnitude, dominance, and disruption of self-awareness in an enraged individual. And “Anger is a Key,” with the expression “*al-ghadab miftāḥ kull sharr*” (Anger is the key to all evil), introducing this emotion as a gateway to other vices.

Conceptualizing Confronting Anger: In this section, anger is conceptualized as a “controllable and restrainable force.” Expressions such as “*lam yukhrijhu ghadabuhu ‘an al-ḥaqq*” (his anger does not cause him to deviate from the truth) and the injunction “*lā taghdab*” (Do not be angry) frame anger as a force that the believer manages within the path of truth, transforming it into a moral virtue through pardon and forgiveness (‘*afaw*). Thus, controlling anger is not suppression, but a transformation of its energy into an opportunity for self-awareness and inner growth.

3.The Realm of Satanic Anger: In this realm, anger is conceptualized based on the source domain of “Medicine” (*safūfuhu fa-al-ghadab*). This metaphor likens unconscious anger arising from temptation to a purgative drug that Satan uses to drain morals and undesirable behaviors from the human being. This mapping distinguishes destructive and cognitively impairing anger from constructive anger.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research demonstrated that the Razavi narrations, by utilizing a rich network of conceptual metaphors and image schemas (such as force, movement, substance, and place), elucidate the abstract and multidimensional concept of anger in a tangible and comprehensible manner for the audience. The main conclusion is that the model extracted from these narrations introduces anger as an accepted feeling that requires discernment and management. This discernment is rooted in the tripartite “Divine, Human, and Satanic” division, each possessing a different function and consequence. The extracted components of ethical emotional education are: emotional self-awareness (recognizing the bodily signs of anger based on the source domains of heat and force), deterrence (by depicting the consequences of Divine anger with metaphors of fire and distance), moral boundary setting (distinguishing constructive, value-based anger from destructive, personal, and Satanic anger), control and balancing (with an emphasis on establishing calm

and suppressing rage), and conscious forgiveness (as the ultimate goal of anger management for moral growth). The findings indicate that, from the perspective of Razavi narrations, an individual who reaches this level of emotional-moral management is counted among the “believers,” “the best of people,” and the “virtuous” (muḥsinīn). Over

all, this research presents an epistemological-educational model in which cognitive metaphors are not only tools for understanding but also guides for the practical ethical training and transcendence of human beings.

It is suggested that future research apply this analytical model to other narrative texts and the Holy Quran. Furthermore, there exists the possibility of designing educational packages based on these metaphors for teaching anger management to various age groups. Further interdisciplinary research between cognitive linguistics and educational psychology can empirically test the precision and efficacy of these metaphorical models.

Keywords: Conceptual Metaphor, Anger, Razavi Narrations, Ethical-Emotional Education, Cognitive Linguistics, Source Domains, Anger Management.