

## **A Cognitive Semantic Study of the Impact of Socio-Cultural Factors on Meaning Construction in Selected English and Arabic Proverbs: A Contrastive Study**

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**Thesis Title:** A Cognitive Semantic Study of the Impact of Socio-Cultural Factors on Meaning Construction in Selected English and Arabic Proverbs

**Subject/major:** Cognitive Semantics

**Institution:** Department of English, College of Arts, University of Baghdad

**Degree:** Ph. D. in Linguistics

**Year of award:** 2018-2019

**Supervisor:** Ayad Hameed Mahmood, Ph.D.

**KeyWords:** cognitive semantics, meaning construction, conceptual metaphor, conceptual integration, blend, culture, English proverbs, Arabic proverbs

### **Abstract**

This study presents a cognitive semantic analysis of the impact of socio-cultural factors on meaning construction in selected English and Arabic proverbs. The main questions that the study tries to answer are related to the extent to which metaphorical usage is relevant to understanding culture and the extent to which the differences in using metaphors in both languages can be related to socio-cultural factors. The study aims at examining the applicability of the Conceptual Integration Theory to the analysis of English and Arabic proverbs to investigate the impact of socio-cultural factors on constructing the meaning of the proverbs under study. In addition, the study examines the universality of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the shared and culture specific conceptual metaphors in the proverbs under study. Another aim is to examine the role of grammatical structures of proverbs in determining the kind of conceptual integration network. The study hypothesizes the applicability of Conceptual Integration Theory and universality of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and that both are efficient to study the impact of socio-cultural factors on meaning construction in English and Arabic proverbs. The study also hypothesizes the significant role played by grammatical structures in understanding proverbs by determining the kind of the conceptual integration network. To achieve the aims of the study and verify its hypotheses, a model based on the Conceptual Integration Theory and Conceptual Metaphor Theory has been adopted to analyse a sample of selected English and Arabic proverbs. The

selected sample consists of 60 English proverbs and 60 Arabic proverbs. The proverbs belong to six topics, namely, social interaction, communication, coping and learning, human life, social life, and social viii position. These topics have been selected according to the international system for classifying proverbs introduced by Kuusi (2001). At the theoretical part, the study has arrived at the conclusion that the Conceptual Metaphor Theory introduced by Lakoff and Johnson in their book *Metaphor We Live by* (1980) was introduced by (البرجاني d. 471) in his books *أسرار البلاغة* (1959) and *دلائل الإعجاز* (1989). At the practical part, the study has arrived at the following conclusions, among others: the applicability of Conceptual Integration Theory to the study of English and Arabic proverbs, the universality of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, and the efficiency of the mentioned theories in showing the impact of socio-cultural factors on meaning construction in the English and Arabic proverbs. The study ends up with a number of recommendations and suggestions for further studies based on the findings of the study.

**Cite as:** Taher, I. I. (2019). A Cognitive Semantic Study of the Impact of Socio-Cultural Factors on Meaning Construction in Selected English and Arabic Proverbs: A Contrastive Study. Department of English, University of Baghdad (Ph.D. Dissertation). Retrieved from *Arab World English Journal* (ID Number: 248. November 2019, 1- 300. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/th.248>)