

The Mortality of Metaphors: A Semantic-pragmatic Study of the Conventionalization of Jordanian Arabic

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ABSTRACT

The present paper investigates the mortality of metaphorical expressions used in Jordan. These metaphors are classified into animal, color, plant and inanimate object metaphors. The study focuses on the semantic-pragmatic aspects of these metaphorical expressions such as conventionalization, opaqueness, and their pragmatic significance and whether their implications change depending on the pragmatic settings or over time. It also aims at finding out whether the age of the speaker plays a role in the understanding of the conveyed meaning both as encoders and decoders. The study also seeks to find out whether the frequency of using these metaphors is affected by the age of the speaker and whether these metaphors are new or old to the community. The sample of study was 500 participants of three different age groups. Those were interviewed and then orally tested. The results showed that metaphors in Jordan could be classified into active, vanished and dead metaphors. Vanished metaphors were very small in number. It was also concluded that age was not a key factor in the pragmatic processing of the metaphors, and it was not a statistically significant factor in recognizing and interpreting metaphorical expressions. People understand metaphors differently and look at them from different angles depending on the pragmatic situation and on the interlocutors themselves. The data analysis revealed that Jordanian Arabic had a large number of dead metaphors.

Key words: Metaphor, Analogy, Dead Metaphor, Active Metaphor, Metaphor Conventionalization

INTRODUCTION

The use of metaphors is a very common strategy used by the speakers of any language. The speaker assumes that the listener should effortlessly grasp the intended meaning of the metaphor since it is considered to be mutual knowledge. Of course, the speaker has an image in his mind, therefore, the listener is supposed to draw and analyze that same image in his mind, otherwise, we can state that there is a decoding problem or even an encoding one.

The decoding process, we assume, is the one that requires more attention for the current study. Therefore, the study attempts to test the mortality of metaphors as a style of interaction between people in the pragmatic context. The varied factors that may affect the mortality of a metaphor are looked at and judged for intangibility using variables such the age and education of the speakers (encoders) and the listeners (the decoders). Furthermore, it also looks at the mortality of metaphors in relation to their categorization (i.e., animal metaphors, plant metaphors, inanimate object metaphors, etc.)

The term metaphor comes from Greek and it means to carry something beyond its limits and in this case, it is to carry the meaning beyond what meets the ear. For example, the word *dog* when used metaphorically, could mean anything

but the animal. All the context surrounding it must be analyzed momentarily to understand the intended meaning. In *what's up dog?*, it means friend while in *you are such a dog*, it may mean naughty.

Zhang (2009) states that metaphors are used as a reaction to our daily creative thinking. It does actually make a difference to use a metaphor than to say things bluntly and straightforward. Therefore, the use of metaphor surpasses what people expect. It is a literary form that we use in our daily interactions to bring the listener into better understanding of the image and meaning we want to express. It could reflect sarcasm, irony, endearment, praise, or dispraise among many other intended meanings.

Furthermore, as a linguistic, pragmatic form as well as a literary form, the study of metaphors had been so popular. Lakoff's and Johnson's (1980) *The Metaphors We Live By* is one of the most famous studies in the field. They clarify that metaphors are present in all aspects of our language, however, they stress the importance of proper encoding and decoding of the used metaphors and the importance of the context in which they are used. Guaranteeing these two factors ensures both the effectiveness of the metaphor in the communicative interaction as well as no misinterpretation may take place and eventually biases the meaning.

The encoder may sometimes encode a message in a metaphor that he invents and in such a case he should expect one of two possibilities, either his metaphor passes the decoding filter or fails it. If it fails, then he finds himself obliged to explain and clarify the image and meaning he intended to convey. There are cases, nevertheless, in which the failure to decode an active metaphor suggests that it is dead (i.e. it has become conventional and part of every day's lexicon) or may not be known by the decoder, and either way an explanation of the metaphor is expected.

To judge the mortality of metaphors, a list of 50 metaphors were tested against different homogeneous age groups of 500 speakers. Homogeneous in that they belong to the same speaking community. Our hypotheses were:

- A. If an age group fails to decode a metaphor known or used by an older group age, then the metaphor is either dying or already dead.
- B. If the younger age group uses a metaphor not known or used by older age groups, then it is both active and newborn; and not yet lexicalized.
- C. If an inanimate object metaphor has vanished, then the object is not used anymore or has disappeared.
- D. If the inanimate object metaphor is newborn, then the comparison is related to a newly invented or used object, and it is active.
- E. Animal and plant metaphors live longer than other metaphor types.

It is important to establish our notion of active, endangered, dead or vanished. By Active we mean, the metaphor is used to describing metaphors that are widely used and are still recognized as metaphors where the encoder and decoder still make a metaphoric connection between the objects. By endangered, we mean that the metaphor is recognized as a metaphor by some while as a lexicalized expression by others. By dead, we mean that the metaphor has become fully lexicalized and the interlocutors do not draw any metaphorical image in their minds, (i.e. the metaphoric expression has become part of their lexicon). By vanished, we mean that the literal expression observed its status in the language and no more connections can be drawn between the objects because one of the objects is not known to the community anymore or no more in use.

The study seeks to find out whether the interlocutors decode metaphors in a timely manner without any misinterpretation and, based on the results, determine the factors for the mortality or immortality of these metaphors. This research should provide evidence that the recent development in human life and the rapid technological changes that came into existence forces language users to delete images of things that they do not use anymore and rather replace them with images that correspond to their daily lives. For example, in Jordan, we may say,

1. Ali kumbuter
Ali computer
'Ali is a nerd/computer'

This statement means that 'Ali' is intelligent and very quick in doing calculations. Normally, such a metaphor would be easily decoded by anyone provided that they know

what a computer is and what it can do. Those who have no idea what a computer is will necessarily need an explanation and they usually belong to older age groups.

Another counterexample, which is also used in Jordan is found in (2),

2. hatha shelileeh
this part of dress-my
'This is my dress.'

This metaphor actually means that 'I have nothing to hide.' *Shelileeh* is the lower part of the traditional Arabian male dress. This part of the dress was used in the past to carry things due to the lack of bags and was sometimes used to carry food to animals. As a metaphor, it was used to assure the listeners that you have nothing to hide by comparing the dress to an empty bag. Today, if this metaphor is used, many would struggle to understand what it means because they do not know what *shelileeh* refers to. Such a metaphor could be considered as dead.

Objectives of the Study

To this end, the current study focuses on investigating whether the different age groups of Jordanian speakers use and understand the same metaphorical expressions; whether metaphors vanish, die or transfer from one generation to another. Also, it aims to detect what could be classified as active, endangered, dead metaphors or vanished. We secondarily focused on the pragmatic significance of the use of these metaphors and how their use is affected by the pragmatic situation and setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Metaphor is a linguistics strategy used commonly in literary works and in daily language to serve several purposes. Ateeq (1985) explains that, according to Arab linguists, a metaphor is a figure of speech that is semantic and pragmatic, and which involves analogy. For them, comparison must be cognitively involved between two domains. For them, metaphors and similes are two faces of the same coin and have the same impact despite the fact that one of them makes an implicit analogy while the other makes an explicit one.

Furthermore, the intelligence and creativity of humans are indisputable. Fromkin and Rodman (1998:188) see that humans are capable of drawing implicit comparison between things. An animate could be compared to either animate or inanimate things in certain qualities. Of course, the context is a major factor in the type of comparison supposed by the user. Therefore, if an object is used in a metaphor in a context, this does not mean that the same image is drawn if the same object is used in another metaphor. Here, the pragmatic situation plays the key-role. To explain this idea, let us use the following example from the local dialect of the Jordanian community,

3. el-hmar el-mukhtit
the-donkey planner
'The donkey is the planner.'
4. el-mukatit hmar
the-engineer donkey
'The planner is a donkey'

In example (3), which is considered very offensive, the donkey is compared to a planner because they used to follow the traces of donkeys when building a road as it was believed that donkeys usually took the safest and easiest road and, therefore, it could be said that they planned the rout of the roads, thus considered as smart. Pragmatically speaking, it is an invitation for those who plan and build roads not to show off. In example (4) the planner is compared to a donkey in stupidity if the planner has done something wrong. Native speakers do not struggle to understand the implicit connection between the two entities compared.

Moreover, the mutual background knowledge of the two images drawn- the compared images- must be known to all speakers. MacCormac (1987) explained that we must connect what is familiar to what is unfamiliar. The concepts in question must be familiar to all interlocuters. For example, *Ali* is known to all, and *the lion* is known to all. *Ali* has done something that is similar what *the lion* does. This thing is also known to all. Therefore, *Ali is a lion* means *Ali is brave*.

Metaphors, as a pragmatic phenomenon, have received attention since the ancient time. Several theories have been put forward to explain the cognitivity involved in processing metaphorical expressions. According to Black (1962), there are the substitution, comparison, and the interaction theories. Each of these theories looked at metaphors from a different angle. Black's interactional theory considers the relationship between the metaphoric expression and the context in which it is used. Ricoeur (2004:41) stressed the importance of context to the metaphor. The pragmatic context contributes to the semantic component. Mey (1993:64) states that pragmatically speaking, all metaphors will prove to be wrong or misunderstood if not properly 'contextualized.'

Pelc (2012) explains that the metaphoric situation forms a triangle and involves three compulsory elements, the metaphorical expression, the proper sense and the tenor. Once all of these elements are present, then a metaphorical situation is ideal. The failure of a metaphor is thus conditioned and the negligence of any of the tringle elements leads to misunderstanding the situation.

Verbrugge and Mccarrell (1977) clarify that the processing of metaphors requires a connection that relates what is abstract to the concrete meaning of the topics involved. This connection triggers the understanding of the image. The concrete meaning can also convey abstract ideas. For example, *happiness* is abstract, however, its meaning is considered concrete.

Tendhal and Gibbs (2008) explain that pragmatically, the decoders employ metaphors to draw inferences form the utterances. According to Sperber and Wilson (2008); and Wilson and Carston, (2006), certain cognitive language faculty is required by the decoders during the mapping of conceptualized images. The process is rapid, and immediate reaction is expected from the decoder. However, if the decoding fails, the listener may seek explanation.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) believe in the universality of metaphors. Metaphors, they claim, are copied in all languages by all communities. The concepts are the same

and have similar understanding, therefore, all members of the community can properly establish metaphorical connections. Hence, a lion resembles bravery and strength for all communities. They (ibid) believe in the validity of their claim due to the fact that humans are intelligent and capable of cognitively drawing connections between the concepts and the qualities of these concepts and, thus, produce a fully acceptable and comprehensible metaphors.

Pourdana et al. (2014) tested metaphorical awareness against a group of EFL learners. They believe that the universal concepts are comprehended with a high degree of accuracy among people from different cultures. This leads us to believe that the use of metaphors could be looked at as a parametric phenomenon. It could be parametric (community specific) in some cases but non-parametric (universal) in some other cases.

Metaphors are parametric if they are used in certain cultures or by certain communities and cannot be cognitively processed by interlocuters of other communities. For example, X object is only known in Y community, then any metaphorical use of X is understood and properly processed by the members of that community (i.e. community specific metaphor). On the other hand, if the X object is known to all communities and can be processed properly by the communities, if used metaphorically and the connection between the object and the metaphor are understood, then it is non-parametric but universal.

The concreteness or the abstractness of the compared entities does play a role in the decoding process of the metaphor, however. To explain this, let us assume that A is compared to B in C quality. A and B are concrete while the quality of comparison C is abstract. Once this abstract quality is known for the interlocuters, then the metaphor passes the decoding filter. It is, in fact, the abstractness of the metaphor that calls for the cognitive processing of the metaphor. For example,

5. shoof ha-X el-hayeh-Y (refereeing to Z- person)
look at this snake...
'here comes the snake!' (metaphorically, he is like the snake, malignant)

In (5), we can imagine two people talking and a third person is approaching them. One says this sentence to the other to convey an abstract quality to describe the approaching third person. The third person Z is present and can be seen, the concrete image of the snake Y is present, and hence, what is missing is the abstract quality which the speakers assume that the listener knows. Once the image is established in the decoder's mind and fully interpreted, then the metaphor passes the filter and can be considered active. If the image is not established and vagueness shows up at the decoder's impressions, then we may consider the metaphor either not properly decoded, dead or vanished.

Snowball (1991:124-126) sees that a metaphor must excite to continue to be active. He states that,

A metaphor is a trope, or figure of speech that functions by taking a word or phrase, usually applied to one object and applying it, instead, to a completely different object.....metaphors do not, however, last forever

since this energetic function seems to be key element of metaphor, we may say that an expression that has lost its ability to excite has lost its metaphorical character

Pawelec (2006:117) clarifies that if the conventional meaning of a metaphor “does not fit the object described,” then we as users know it is a metaphor. So, if A is not B and we say that A is B, then the listener must understand and be aware that such a statement is metaphoric. Pawelec (Ibid:118) defines a dead metaphor as:

A ‘dead’ metaphor is a lexical item with a conventional meaning different from its original meaning (or some previous meaning in the chain of semantic change). Therefore, there is no need to consult the original meaning in order to understand a dead metaphor.... a dead metaphor is the product of a semantic shift in the history of a language. This process – perhaps like all social processes – is gradual. It is also reversible for special uses in discourse – a dead metaphor can be ‘revitalized’.

Thus, the revival of a dead metaphor is possible, however, the two compared objects must exist, otherwise, the connection may be irretrievable.

METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Data Collection and Procedure

Although much research in the field of metaphor has been conducted, there has been little research that exclusively concentrated on the Jordanian metaphoric expressions. Hence, the current project aims to shed light on some metaphorical expressions and to examine and compare them among different age groups from a cognitive semantic-pragmatic perspective. In this section, the theoretical framework, we used, is explained along with an explanation of how these metaphorical expressions were collected and linguistically analyzed.

The present research falls under the category of descriptive-qualitative research. The listed expressions were categorized into different categories. The list of metaphors, we used, were 100 metaphors. The Participants were asked to listen to each expression and then respond by explaining the meaning of the expressions they had heard. If they understood the expression and explained its correct meaning, the metaphor was marked active, and if they were not able to figure its figurative meaning, the metaphor was marked dead. We were concerned with studying metaphors of different categories such as colors, animals and other inanimate objects used in the Jordanian dialect.

We began to collect our metaphors from random speakers of the Jordanian dialect from different ages by talking with them on general topics and taking notes of any metaphoric expression they used; this process took us around three months. We also collected 20 metaphors from blogs where the participants spoke the local dialect. This process took about three months. These expressions were then organized in a test and were orally administered to 500 participants over a period of nine months in 2016 and 2017. We grouped the participants into three major groups based on their age.

Group A under 18, group B 18 to 50, and group C over 50. The grouping was done thus for a purpose. We assumed that we can judge the mortality of a metaphor based on the age of the users. If the younger group fails to recognize the metaphor, then it is dead. If the older group fails to recognize a metaphor, then it is new born or dead. (cf. hypotheses above).

Furthermore, if the participant recognized the metaphor, then he was asked to explain what it was used for and the setting in which they would use it.

After the data were collected, all expressions were translated into English, transliterated in roman script and then glossed. No complex statistical analysis took place as it became clear to us at an early stage of the research and after the test results that it would be unnecessary. However, we include our data in the appendix for further investigation. The data were all authentic and no manipulation took place during the test or interviews.

Theoretical Framework

Dead metaphors

A dead metaphor is one that is not perceived or recognized as a metaphor anymore. This may happen due to the fact that its linguistic usage has changed, conventionalized; or that the users have opted for an alternate expression, vanished. Til (2011) clarifies that a metaphor may become conventionalized to the degree that it loses its figurative value.

Moreover, Nöth (1995) defines a dead metaphor as the expression that is not conceived by the interlocutors as a metaphor any more. A dead metaphor is that one which we use in our daily language, and which we do not know it had been originally used as a metaphor; instead, we think of it as a word which has a full meaning inventory like other words in the dictionary. Put differently, it has become part of our lexicon with new values and features.

Nöth (Ibid:131) puts forward diachronic stages for the metaphor to become conventional (i.e. to become mortal and eventually dead). These stages are:

Stage I: The metaphor is born, and it is the result of Man creativity (i.e. new-born).

Stage II: People start to use it in their daily language and still recognize it as a metaphor.

Stage III: The metaphor becomes a lexicalized metaphor due to frequent use.

Stage IV: The literary meaning of the metaphor disappears in favor of the lexicalized metaphor.

Stage V: An opaque metaphor comes into existence.

Stage VI: The metaphor is dead.

We tested our data against these stages and explained the diachronic process using dictionaries of Arabic.

Active metaphors

Taverniers (2002:12:13) sees the concept of the “Live metaphors” as “ad hoc metaphors.” These are the result of other creative minds of the speakers. They offset the redundancy of the daily language and the straight forward expressions used by the people. The context in which they are used in order to determine their value.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS AND RESULTS

After the administration of the test and the interviews, we found that they can be categorized into three major groups, active, dead and vanished.

The data shows that 42% of the metaphors are dead, 55% are active, while only 5% are vanished. Among the metaphors that are active, two were found to be new-born as they were not recognized by over 99% of the older age group. Only two of the vanished metaphors were recognized by 0.4% of the participants.

The data proved that some of our hypotheses were correct and some others were not. Here, we list our hypotheses and relate them to the findings.

A. If an age group fails to decode a metaphor known or used by an older group age, then the metaphor is either dying or already dead.

The data proved that the results of the three groups were identical. The three groups did not recognize 42% of the metaphorical expressions as metaphors; add to this, age was not a significant factor. All the participants share the same knowledge. This could be due to the limited number of metaphors we used or to the limited number of participants. We, however, see that these metaphors were conventionalized and that the number of participants and the data were adequate.

B. If the younger age group uses a metaphor not known or used by older age groups, then it is a newborn and not yet lexicalized.

That data show that there are two new-born metaphors based on the hypothesis. the two unrecognized metaphors, were not known to over 99% of the older age group.

C. If an inanimate object metaphor has vanished, then the object is not used anymore.

The data revealed that six metaphors disappeared (vs. dead). They are not in use anymore. The objects used for the sake of analogy do not exist anymore or are no longer used by the speakers. However, only two participants from the older age group were able to recall two metaphors.

D. If the inanimate object metaphor is newborn, then the comparison is related to a newly invented or used object, however, it is active.

The data show that two metaphors are new-born. One of which is related to some kind of candy sold in the market; tooty-fruity. This metaphor compares a woman to that candy in sweetness. The other metaphor *mqarqish* 'crusty' compares a laughing person to a crusty piece of bread. Hence, we cannot assume that this hypothesis is valid, and more investigation is needed since the latter metaphor does not resemble a newly invented or known object.

E. Animal and plant metaphors live longer than other metaphor types.

That data shows that animal, plant and color metaphors are all active. They are also recognized depending on the pragmatic context in which they are used.

To this end, we turn our attention to the mortality of the dead metaphors and discuss how they have become conventionalized. We collected the etymology of these metaphors as shown in table 1, and then showed how they developed into lexical items in the Jordanian dialect.

Table 1 shows some examples of dead metaphors in Jordanian Arabic¹. The following is an explanation of these dead metaphors; a brief explanation of their etymology and the context in which they are used.

6. Hatha sarasai

This-is troublemaker

'This is a troublemaker.'

sarsari in example (6) is used to describe an ill-mannered person or a troublemaker. The word *sarsari* sometimes refers to thieves and outlaw people. The word comes from Turkish and it means an informant of the police and was included in the Jordanian lexicon with its Turkish meaning for quite some time. Historically, the word was launched in the Ottoman Empire as a job title for government informants similar to the police of today at a time of political corruption. Political corruption transferred to *sarsaria* who became themselves corrupt and since then the word *sarsari* started to describe corrupted people. The word "sarsari" is commonly used today and in daily language and its meaning is clearly understood with no need to know the original word *sarsari*. It can also be used by friends as a complement or praise for an action which they consider as daring for them. Add to this, it started to be conjugated according to the rules of the dialect, for example, *sarsarah* is the abstract noun of the word and *tasarsar* and *yasarsar* are verbs. This metaphor is only used in Jordan and thus it parametric.

tuz is yet another word taken from Turkish. It meant salt. It was first used by traders who were forced to pay taxes for the goods they traded except for salt. They used it during the daily inspections made by the Turks to mock them. Later on, it started to be used by everyone in the country for the same purpose until it was conventionalized with the meaning of so what/I do not care. This word spread all over the Arab countries with the conventionalized meaning including those countries that were not once part of the Turkish Empire. Pragmatically, it has been in use also in a slang proverb *tuz ya hamad* with the meaning of 'what you have done, is useless', if you ask someone to do you a favor and they fail

Table 1. Dead metaphors in Jordanian Arabic

Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Current meaning
سرسري	sarsari	Secret police/informant	Troublemaker
طز	tuz	salt	I do not care
نشمي	nashmi	Ox or a type pf tree	Jordanian
عواية	'awayiah	Voice of the dog	Old and junky
فكح	fakah	A leg disorder	Escaped
مهوي	mhawi	In love	Careless and reckless
مزة	muzzah	Appetizer	Beautiful girl
هوشة	hoshah	Ox	A fight
ختيار	khetyar	Slow-walker	Old man

to do it. The same proverb is also used to humiliate people with the meaning 'you are nothing'. Thus, the use of *tuz* is considered very offensive in formal settings. However, it is widely used among people with strong social network ties.

7. Hatha nashmi
This-is good/dependable person
'This is a dependable man.'

nashmi originally means an ox or a type of trees. English officers used it during the mandate of Jordan to describe the Jordanian soldiers and knowing that they had no knowledge of what it exactly meant. It metaphorically means strong and hardworking. After that, Jordanians- families and relatives- started to use it to welcome their soldiers when they got back home. The word is used today, and, in most contexts, it means Jordanian, however, it is also used as an adjective to mean strong and dependable. None of the participants were able to traceback the word to its origin. This word is a special case as Jordanians never used it as a metaphor themselves, rather the English did. It became conventionalized by the English, and afterwards, Jordanians copied the word with the meaning that is active today. The use of this metaphor is parametric as it only describes Jordanians. Other Arabs use it to refer only to the Jordanian nationality. Pragmatically, it is a positive word among Jordanians, however, at certain contexts, it can be used to mock others in situations where someone does something undesirable or uncalled for. For example, if someone breaks something, hits it, or messes things up accidentally, he should expect the word, *nashmi*.

8. sayartuh 'awaiah
car-his junky
'His car is junky.'

'*awaiah* comes from '*awa* 'bark'. The analogy was between the noise made by the car and barking to indicate that the car is broken or old. Today, the word means a broken or junk car with no reference to the barking sound of the dog. The image entails that barking dogs can rarely do any harm and so do the car which can do no good. Pragmatically, the use of this word can be very offending especially when talking with people about what they own. No expressions, where the word was used with non-moving, were recorded. Therefore, it can only describe moving objects and not people.

9. fakah al-liss
escaped the-thief
'The thief escaped.'

The word *fakah* originally means, in Standard Arabic, a disorder that causes a person to have an unbalanced walk. It developed into this new meaning after being widely used to describe football players who always missed the goal. Then it was conventionalized with the meaning of escape. It can be used today as a verb or as an adjective.

The word *mhawi* is yet another good example of dead metaphors. It means a person who is careless or who would do anything risky. It originated from *hawa* 'love' and *hawi* 'in love'. It was used to compare a person to a lover who does not make responsible judgments about his actions believing only his heart and feeling and who is always absent minded. Due to the word's excessive use as a metaphor, it became lexicalized and carried this new meaning of being

reckless. A similar example can be seen in *hoshah* 'a fight'. This word originates from *hayshah* 'ox'. The analogy is between the person and the ox in the act of fighting. It became lexicalized with this meaning and no connection to the animal is made.

Furthermore, the word *muzah* 'a beautiful girl' is widely used today among new generations, however, none of the participants was able to trace it back to its original metaphor. The word comes from *mazah* 'appetizers served with alcohol'. Beautiful girls used to be compared with *mazah* in sweetness and good taste. It immigrated into *muzah* and carried the new meaning. The original meaning is completely dead. Add to this the use of the word with its new meaning was extended to describe good looking males after deleting the feminine inflection and becoming *muzz* 'good looking male'.

Moreover, it was noticed that people do not draw connections or think of such words as metaphors. For them, they are words with fixed meanings in their lexicon which can be used in all possible grammatical structures and undergo all possible derivations. They have become part of their lexicon and interestingly are used, themselves, in newer metaphorical expressions. For example,

10. ka'enak khetyar
as.if.you.are old man
'You look like an old man.'

The example in (10) provides a lively example of a dead metaphor that is used in a new analogy with the new meaning. Here the comparison is between a young man and an old man in the state of shape, health and actions. The word *khetyar* comes from the root *khatarah* 'to walk slowly'. The original metaphor was to compare a person with a slow-walker, then it described old men who walk slowly because of age and after that the analogy disappeared, and the word was lexicalized with the new meaning. Now, when a person is compared to *khetyar*, no connection is made to a slow-walker, rather it is made to an old man, *khytyarah* to an old woman, *khetyariah* to old people males or/and females, and *mkhatier* as an adjective that means 'old and have white hair and wrinkles'.

To this end, we turn our attention to vanished metaphors. These metaphors are shown in table 2.

Table 2 shows a list of vanished metaphors in Jordanian Arabic. These metaphors were used in the past to compare people to certain objects in some quality as shown in the metaphorical meaning in the table above. Today, these objects do not exist, and the metaphorical expressions related to them consequently disappeared. They seem not to have reached the degree of lexicalization probably because they were not used frequently and were only used by a small minority of the people (i.e. they were not used in every day's language.) and, thus vanished. Another plausible reason why they vanished could be that they found competitors to replace them and remained weak and eventually were easy to forget when the concrete objects disappeared. For example, the word *Datsun* was replaced with '*awahyah*, a metaphor which was frequently used and strong enough to become a dead metaphor. *laqaq* 'talkative and nagging' which comes from the stork-the bird- replaced *sharit*. *Lebah* was replaced with

Table 2. Vanished metaphors in Jordanian Arabic

Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Metaphorical meaning
داتسن	datsun	Datsun: A discontinued car brand of Nissan	Old and junky
شريط	sharit	Audio tape	Keeps rewinding and talking
كوثر	kawther	A brand name of mineral water	Pure and clean
لبادة	lebadah	Saddle leather	Unbearable person
شليف	shalif	Huge hay container	Extremely obese

Table 3. Active metaphors in Jordanian Arabic

Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Metaphorical meaning
كمبيوتر	kumbuter	Computer	Smart
حية	hayah	Snake	Malignant
طلق	talaq	Bullet	Fast
حرير	harir	Silk	Soft
أخضر	akhdar	Green	Loving/wet/easy
تعلم	Ta'lab	Fox	Cunning
مدھن	midhin	Fatty	Rich
طيارة	tiyarah	Plane	Fast
فطبول	futbul	Football	Fat/obese

Jonson 'a patch brand name' which is a transdermal patch that sticks to the skin and releases heat for relief of muscle pain. *shalif* was replaced with *fotbul* 'football'.

On the other hand, metaphors that were considered active are those that use an analogy of animals, plants and objects that are commonly used in daily life. These seem to remain intact and unconventionalized. The following table shows some examples of active metaphors.

Table 3 shows selected examples of active metaphors². These comprise animal, plant, color and inanimate objects. These could be considered as universal concepts and could probably mean the same in different cultures. We cannot state that they are parametric, however, some of them could be considered as not universal in some meanings. For example, 'foxy' cannot be used to describe a beautiful woman although it does so in English.

CONCLUSION

The study of the mortality of metaphors in the Jordanian community turned out to be a fertile topic for research. The

categorization of metaphors is found as valid in order to show the borderlines between metaphors and to avoid over-generalizations. We have found out that most of the dead metaphors have become used in analogy themselves.

11. la timshi zai al-sarsariyah
don't walk like the-troublemakers
'Don't walk like troublemakers.'

Most dead metaphors are related to abstract concepts. They are also parametric in that most of them are only used by Jordanians either to describe Jordanians or concepts used in the community.

The borderline between being lexicalized and unlexicalized has to do with the frequency of the use of the metaphor in people's daily interactions and the presence of the compared items in concrete forms. We see that the presence of the concrete forms as a stronger factor in the immortality of the metaphor regardless of its frequency. However, if the object to which the comparison is made is abstract, then there is a great chance that it would be lexicalized due to the frequency of its use.

We can also speculate that, conventionalization is due to the excessive use of certain objects and images as metaphors by younger ages who do recognize the metaphor and later, transfer these words to even younger people who do not recognize the concept of metaphor and eventually acquire them as lexical items.

Analogy across cultures can be similar but the quality or feature selected by a certain community could be different from that used in another community. By the same token, a quality or feature used in metaphors can use different entities in the comparison.

Age was found to be an insignificant factor in determining mortality and this could be due to the strong social ties and the openness in the Jordanian community where social gatherings allow all to participate in the conversations.

END NOTES

- 1 For a complete list, see the appendix
- 2 For a complete list, see appendix B.

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APPENDIX

A. Dead metaphors			
Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Metaphorical meaning
سرسري	sarsari	Secret police	Troublemaker
طز	tuz	Salt	I do not care
نشمي	nashmi	A type of tree	Jordanian
عواية	'awayah	Voice of dogs	Junky
فكح	fakah	A leg disorder	Escaped
خزق	khuzuq	Pierce	Difficult to deal with
صينية	sinieh	From chine	Large plate
متكآك	mtaktak	From etiquette	Smart looking
مهوي	mhawi	From love	Reckless
مسح	maseh	Wipe	Flattened/defeated
هوشة	hoshah	From ox	A fight
ليخة	leikhah	Type of food like omelet	Much confusion/disorganization
مزة	muzah	From appetizer	Beautiful girl
شليل	shalil	Part of a dress	Nothing to hide
همجي	hamaji	Barbarian	Act impolitely
مسنقر	msnager	From peak	Angry
طرمة	tarmah	From deafness	Disorganized
إسفين	isfin	Cotter	Cause trouble
خنشور	khanshour	Man	4 th year college student
جخة	jakhah	Boast	Excellent
مجعلك	mja'lak	From chew	Wrinkled
طاش	tash	From heedlessness	Hanging around
انقلع	ingala'	From chopping	Left
صنديد	sindeed	Ox	Strong
معنتر	ma'antir	From Antarah ibn Shaddad	Acting restlessly
قصاص	qassass	From clipping	Liar
ختيار	khetiar	Slow-walker	Old man
ننف	tetif	Pull out	Greedy
جلدة	jeldej	Leather	Greedy
كحتة	kuhta	Scraping	Greedy
شلف	shallaf	From prostitute	Damaged
طرطور	tartour	Tall	Have no say in
طنط	tant	Talkative	Spoiled boy
كربون	karboun	Carbon paper	Copy
شقفة	sheqfeh	Piece of cloth	Beautiful
اخوث	akhwath	Fat belly	Stupid
معصص	mu'assiss	Coccyx	Thin
عزومة	'azoumah	Determination	Invitation for food
مسلكع	mslke'	Slow-walker	Thin and weak
مهرش	mharish	From scratch	Big
امعة	ima'a	From liquid	Have no say in
مفيز	mfaiyiz	Have a Visa	Dead or crazy

B. Active metaphors			
Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Metaphorical meaning
طبل	tabl	Drum	Stupid
غرق في التفكير	Gharaq fi attafkeer	Drowned	Deep thinking
طنجرة	tanjarah	Large pot/cooker	Stupid
تيس	teis	Male goat	Stupid
عاشق	'ashiq	Lover	Absorbed something
بلبل	bulbul	nightingale	Quick to respond
شوال	shwal	Big bag	Fat and dumb
ذهب	thahab	Gold	Perfect
ملونة	mlunah	Colored	Always have change of heart
حمار	hmar	Donkey	Stupid
كمبيوتر	kumputer	Computer	Smart/intelligent
حية	hayah	Snake	Cunning
غزال	gazal	Deer	Beautiful
بارد	barid	Cold	Emotionless
خبز الصاج	khbz aasj	Thin bread	Slim
طلق	talaq	Bullet	Fast
سلق	salaq	Hound	Fast
حرير	harir	Silk	Soft
خريس	kharis	Metallic fiber	Very curly hair
الغريبة مرة	murah	Bitter	Difficult
اخضر	akhdhar	Green	Young/lover/wet
لوح	louh	Board	Stupid
ليل	leil	Night	Black
وجه البكسة	wajh elbuksah	Face of vegetable container	The best
حمار صليبي	humar salibi	Foreign donkey	Strong/never gets tired
ثعلب	tha'lab	Fox	Cunning
مسطرة	mastara	Ruler	Sharp and minute
ساعة	sa'ah	Clock	Respect time
مدھن	medhin	Fatty	Rich
خوافة	khawajah	Foreigner	Good person
فستق	fustuq	Peanuts	Beautiful
اسود	aswad	Black	Black-hearted
احمر	ahmar	Red	Hot/dangerous/lively
صقر	sager	Falcon	Dependable
ذيب	theeb	Wolf	Dependable
طيارة	tayarah	Plane	Fast
جمال	jamal	Camel	Beautiful body (fem.)
مسمسم	msamsam	Covered with sesame	Simpatico
مخمج	mkhamij	Putrefactive	Lively/rotten
زي الميه	maiyah	Water	Tasteless
مخشب	mkhashib	Like a piece of wood	Hard to deal with
قفل	guful	Lock	Hard to reason with
مهبر	mahbir	Full of meat	Valuable
عود	'oud	Tree branch	Very slim
حصان	hsan	Horse	Strong/beautiful (fem.)
اسد	asad	Lion	Strong/brave
عقرب	'agrab	Scorpion	Cunning

B. Active metaphors			
Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Metaphorical meaning
فطبول	furbul	Ball	Fat
حشش	hashash	Consumed hashish	Laughed
شورية	shourabah	Soup	Easy
عمود	'amoud	Pole	Very tall
أرنب	arnab	Rabbit	Cowered
مكسرين	mkasarin	Broken	Family of the deceased
مجبزين	mjabareen	Splinted	Family of the deceased

C. Active -new born metaphors			
Word in Arabic	Transliteration	Original meaning	Metaphorical meaning
فرقس	qargash	Became crusty	Laughed too much
توتي فروتي	tooti frooti	Type of candy	Sexy and beautiful