



## A COGNITIVE-SEMANTIC APPROACH TO THE INTERPRETATION OF DEATH METAPHOR THEMES IN THE QURAN

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### ABSTRACT

*In previous literature, conceptual metaphor has been used as a comprehensive cognitive tool to explore systematic categorization of concepts in the Quran. Death metaphor themes have either been studied from rhetorical or conceptual perspectives, but metaphor interpretation needs both linguistic and conceptual knowledge. This paper will explore the function of both linguistic and conceptual knowledge in metaphor interpretation in the Quran. This paper has used the technique of key words and phrases for data collection and metaphor identification procedure (MIP) for metaphors identification. Thirteen conceptual metaphors were found in the data. The key conceptual metaphors were analyzed through the lexical concept cognitive model theory (hereafter LCCM) to find out the functions of linguistic and conceptual knowledge in metaphor interpretation. The findings reveal that conceptual metaphor gives only relational structure to the linguistic metaphoric expressions, whereas interpretation needs integration of both linguistic and conceptual knowledge. Conceptual simulation of metaphoric expressions is a multilinear process of multiple conceptual schemas and language. The findings*

*also reveal that LCCM needs the tool of intertextuality for clash resolution of contexts in text interpretation. This paper holds that meaning construction depends upon multilinear processing of conceptual schemas and language. Furthermore, it asserts that the gap in LCCM may be resolved through the tool of intertextuality in metaphor comprehension. This study suggests further studies on relationship between conceptual schemas and lexical behaviour and an elaborate model for text interpretation, combining LCCM and intertextuality.*

**Keywords:** Cognitive model, cognitive semantics, conceptual metaphor, fusion, lexical concept

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Death is the most certain of all probable future events, yet it is itself the most elusive phenomenon, and there is no unanimity on its nature among the philosophers (Brown, 2008; Lovemore & Brian, 2011). However, it is the most common phenomenon of life, and therefore, it is a vital part of human verbal discourses. Due to its ambiguous nature, death is often expressed in figurative language. The concept of death is pervasively used in the Quran, but in exegetical and rhetorical tradition, it has been given literal treatment, and thus, the rhetoricians and exegetes missed the conceptual nature of metaphoric concept of death (Sardaraz & Ali, 2016). This has been due to theological, legal and rhetorical propensities of the exegetes, jurists and rhetoricians (Saeed, 2006).

The traditional exegetical studies have investigated the language of the Quran through the al-Jurjani's (1959, 2000) theory of metaphor, which states that inference and meaning in metaphoric expressions depends upon the investigation of the similarity between the source and target domains. In other words, the transference of dominant attribute causes the transference of meaning, which al-Jurjani (1959) calls as semantic borrowing. This theory has largely been followed in exegetical literature to investigate the resemblance based metaphors in the Quran, and many of the metaphoric concepts have been missed, which needed metaphoric treatment. The concept of death has been given either literal theological treatment or pictographic treatment or philosophical treatment as is the case with Aathya (2001), al-Aasqalani (1954), and Kathir (1998) or Qutb (2004) or al-Razi (1999) respectively.

Asad (1984) revives the cognitive approach of al-Zamakhsharī (d.1144) and holds that the unseen phenomenon in the Quran can only be comprehended with the help of human experientially delineated concepts. But, it was Berrada (2002, 2006), who introduced the conceptual metaphor approach to metaphors interpretation in the Quran because of the limitations of traditional linguistic theories. According to CMT, metaphor is cross domain mapping, embodied in human conceptual system, which generates language and linguistic expressions (Lakoff, 1993, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980a, 1980b, 1999; Lakoff & Turner, 1989). CMT regards representation and comprehension of linguistic metaphoric expressions as automatic and unconscious. This theory brought revolution in metaphor research in all discourses including the religious discourse. This model has been applied to the religious discourse in many studies (Berrada, 2002, 2006, 2007; El-Sharif, 2011; Reda, 2012; Sardaraz & Ali, 2016, 2017; Shokr, 2006). These studies concentrated on investigation of conceptual metaphor themes in religious discourse, and made considerable contribution both in religious language and theoretical debate on metaphor.

Previous literature has not only investigated conceptual metaphors in religious discourse, but has also recorded some amendments to its basic tenets. Jäkel (2002) and Shokr (2006), on investigation of conceptual metaphor LIFE IS JOURNEY in the Bible and Quran respectively, suggested for doing away with invariance hypothesis of CMT. Berrada (2007), Reda (2012), and Alhusban and Alkhawaldah (2018) argued that conceptual metaphor cannot explain novel metaphors and complex images in the Quran. Moreover, El-Sharif (2016) and Sardaraz and Ali (2016) have argued that CMT needs linguistic knowledge in interpretation of religious discourse. However, these studies did not suggest any model for metaphors interpretation in the Quran. This paper is an attempt to suggest a model, which can give comprehensive interpretation of metaphors in religious language.

CMT, as a model of metaphor interpretation, has also witnessed much theoretical debate. CMT fails to take into account factors, which affect metaphor interpretation, such as the integration of conceptual, linguistic and discourse knowledge (Glucksberg, Keysar, & McGlone, 1992), introspective failure (McGlone, 1996), familiarity, context and novelty (Blasko & Briihl, 1997; Glucksberg, 2003), saliency (Giora, 1997, 2002), semantic complexity (Coulson & Van Petten, 2002, 2007) and knowledge representation (Evans, 2009a, 2009b, 2010a, 2013a, 2015). It means that besides theoretical debate on its other tenets, CMT also faces challenge as a model of metaphor interpretation. In other words, metaphor interpretation is not merely online processing of metaphoric linguistic expression, but it is a constructive process, which depends upon a variety of knowledge structures and factors.

The concept of death from CMT perspective has previously been investigated in the Quran and in different Islamic cultures. Golzadeh and Pourebrahim (2013) have investigated the metaphoric concept of death in the Quran and Nahjul-Balāghah, and they found that the concept of death is conceptualized through primary metaphor DEATH IS POWER. However, they did not decipher all the manifestations of the conceptualization of death. Similarly, Bakhtiar (2014) found that death is conceptualized in Iranian culture via key metaphors DEATH IS LIFE and DEAD ARE EMOTIONAL BEINGS because of its grounding in Quranic teaching. Jalal (2014) found similarity in conceptualization of death euphuisms in Arabic and English. Sardaraz and Ali (2016) offer a detailed analysis of death metaphors in the Quran, and they have found that death is conceptualized through various source domains, such as person, captor, awful being, sleep and taste. They hold that all these source domains emanate from the key source domain of Great Chain of Being, and conclude that though CMT offers systematic characterization of concepts in the Quran, it does not unveil the relationship between experiences, conceptual system and language. They seem to echo El-Sharif's (2016) claim that religious language needs both language and thought for interpretation.

Alhusban and Alkhawaldah (2018) have used Kövecses (2011) model for metaphor interpretation in the Quran, keeping in view the limitations of CMT. Kövecses' (2011) model combines CMT and conceptual blending theory. However, this model cannot account for linguistic knowledge, therefore, this paper will apply the LCCM to metaphoric themes as investigated in (Sardaraz & Ali, 2016) to attempt a comprehensive interpretation of the concept of death in the Quran.

## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

Data for this study were retrieved from the Quran on the basis of key words and phrases relating to death, as suggested by Attride-Stirling (2001). These key words are derived from the Arabic roots 'mīm wāw tā', 'wāw fā yā', 'nūn wāw mīm', 'qāf bā rā', 'jīm dāl thā' and 'bā 'ayn thā', and were searched in the Quran, using the website Islamic city. The Islamic city website is a digital search engine, and gives all the lexical constructions of a particular root through root's search. The number of retrieved instances of the lexical items derived from the roots was 318. The collected verses were scrutinized, and those verses, which were repeated, were removed. In order to get the theme of death from the extracted data, all the verses were read, and those instances of the lexical items, which did not convey the concept of death or concepts, related to death, were removed. The data distillation led to selection of 191 verses for metaphor identification.

Metaphor identification procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz, 2007) was used to identify those lexical items, which metaphorically represented the abstract concept of death. This procedure has four steps, which include reading the verses, tagging the lexical units relating to death, investigating its meaning and the evaluation of its meaning in its situational context with its more conventional meaning, as exemplified in various dictionaries. If there was difference between the meaning of the lexical unit in the situational context and the conventional meaning, the lexical item was tagged as a metaphor. In order to arrive at the metaphorical meaning of the lexical unit, three dictionaries (i.e. Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968) were consulted.

Once the metaphorical lexical units were identified, conceptual metaphor themes were abstracted from the data in accordance with CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980a, 1980b). Metaphors were then categorized on the basis of source domains as suggested by Kövecses (2002). The metaphor identification, abstraction and categorization led to a corpus of 59 verses. It was found that death as target domain was used in 49 lexical units in 11 different conceptual metaphor themes. Besides, death also served as source domain in 18 lexical units 2 conceptual metaphor themes. It was found that Great Chain of Being and Space provide the key source domains for the abstract concept of death, while death, as a source domain maps the target domains of barrenness of land and sleep.

The conceptual metaphor themes have been analyzed through LCCM. According to LCCM, interpretation is a constructive process, which depends upon the fusion of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. The unit of linguistic knowledge is lexical concept (hereafter LC), while that of non-linguistic knowledge is cognitive model (hereafter CM). The LC can have access to large number of semantic potentials, encoded in CMs. But, it is the situational context, which guides the way of a LC to have access to the particular non-linguistic knowledge, encoded in the CM. If the LC finds a match in the primary CM, it leads to literal conception, but if it finds a match in secondary CM through clash resolution, it gives figurative conception (Evans, 2006, 2009b, 2010a, 2013a). Thus, whereas, CMT regards metaphor comprehension as automatic and unconscious, LCCM regards metaphor comprehension as a constructive process, which needs the fusion of both language and thought. According to LCCM, conceptual metaphor provides one type of knowledge in metaphor comprehension and interpretation. A sample of conceptual metaphor themes have been analyzed in the next section.

### 3.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The data categorization reveals that various conceptual metaphor themes are used to map the abstract concept of death. These include sleep, personification, perceptual experiences, force, space, possession and container. One example from each of these categories is shown below.

#### 3.1 Death is Sleep

The concept of death is mapped through the source domain of sleep in the Quran (Sardaraz & Ali, 2016). This metaphor has been analyzed in (Quran 36:52) as below.

(1) قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا مَنْ بَعَثَنَا مِنْ مَرْقَدِنَا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ

“qālū yāwaylanā man ba’athanā min marqadinā hādhā mā wa’ada l-rahmānu”

“They will say: Ah! Woe unto us! Who hath raised us up from our beds of repose?”

[The reply will be], "This is what the Most Merciful had promised"

The LC ‘*marqadinā*’ is metaphorically used, which according to CMT, is the surface realization of conceptual metaphor RESURRECTION FROM DEATH IS AWAKENING and DEATH IS SLEEP. The lexical item ‘*marqadinā*’ is, no doubt, derived from the root ‘*rā qāf dāl*’ which means ‘bed, sleeping place’ (Ibn Fāris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970). RESURRECTION IS AWAKENING FROM SLEEP metaphor structures the domains of sleep and death. But literally, resurrection is not awakening from sleep and death is not sleep. Therefore, clash arises in matching the two domains which is resolved by further search for figurative meaning.

The lexical items which constitute the metaphor are ‘*man ba’athanā min marqadinā*’ (Who hath raised us up from our beds of repose?). The LC ‘*ba’atha*’ is a 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular perfect verb suffixed with object plural pronoun ‘*nā*’. The verb can give access to semantic potentials such as sent, consigned, delegated, roused, raised up, raised from sleep, revived, resurrected etc. depending upon the context. Similarly, the LC, ‘*marqadi*’ is indefinite noun which may have the semantic potentials of places of sleep, beds or graves. The meaning of ‘*marqadi*’ as a sleeping place becomes incongruent in the situational context because of preceding and succeeding LCs which depicts the apocalyptic event. Therefore, its meaning is to be further searched in the secondary CMs.

The pronoun ‘*man*’, preceding the LC ‘*ba’atha*’, makes the expression a type of rhetorical question, which shows the utter surprise of the speakers. This surprising effect is created by the preceding sentence. The LC ‘*yā*’ is a vocative particle, which on combination with possessive noun phrase ‘*waylanā*’, expresses the emotion of extreme agony and anguish. Thus,

the metaphor is anaphorically explicated by this exclamatory sentence. It shows that it does not mean raising up from sleeping bed, but it means the act of resurrection from the graves. It means that on resurrection, they would realize that the promised event had occurred and would feel astounded at the terrible situation (Aathya, 2001; al-Tha'labi, 2002). Moreover, the metaphor also has cataphoric reference to the succeeding sentence '*hādhā mā wa'ada l-rahmānu*' (This is what the Most Merciful had promised), declaring the truth of what had been promised before. All these relational and referential aspects of the LCs guide the LC '*marqadi*' to achieve the informational characterization of graves. The noun '*al-ajdathi*', in the proceeding verse (Quran 36:51), means graves which further defines the LC '*marqad*'. Thus, though literally, it can be asserted conceptual metaphor motivates the linguistic expression, but its meaning is linguistically mediated. Conceptual metaphor can at best give relational structure. It can be represented in the following diagram.

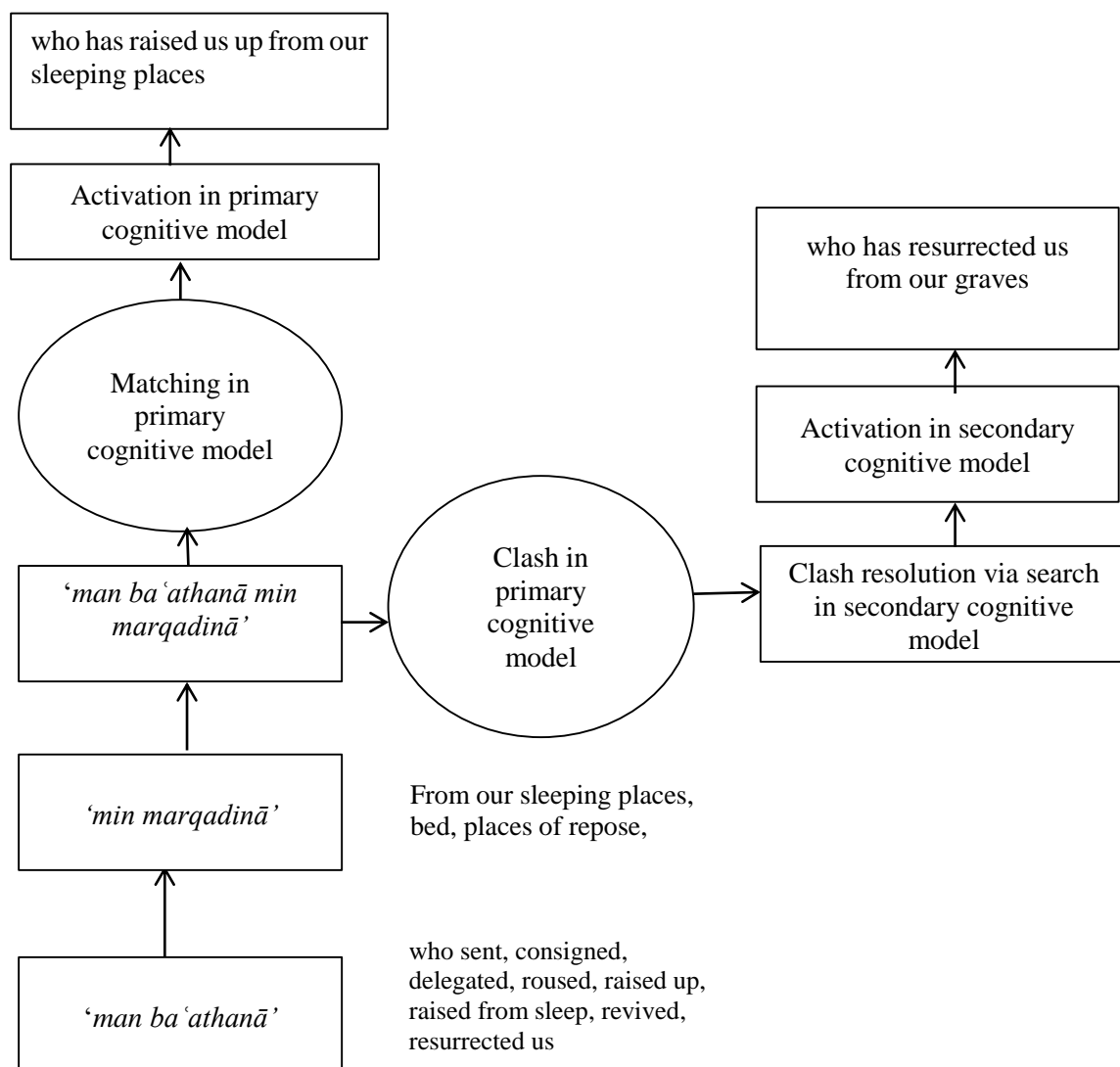


Figure 3.1: Meaning construction in '*man ba'athanā min marqadinā*'

The above discussion also reveals that the claim of LCCM that meaning is utterance based (Evans, 2006) needs reconciliation with its claim of situational communicative context. The situational context of a specific utterance may not provide sufficient information to arrive at the intended probable meaning of the utterance. In the above instance, it is not the utterance itself which guides the audience to the intended meaning. Rather, it is the context, in which the utterance is situated, which helps in achieving the informational characterization. Evans (2006, 2009b), no doubt, clarifies such an aspect of situational context by explaining the referential nature of LC, but Evans (2006, 2009b) does not explicate such an assertion, when he explains the meaning construction process. Therefore, it can be suggested that Evans' (2006, 2009b) thesis of meaning as utterance based needs modification in light of the tenets of LCCM itself. Meaning does not reside in the utterance itself, but it resides in the context of the utterance. This will lead to a pressing question, what does constitute the situational context, whether it is the situational context of the utterance itself or the situational context in which the specific utterance gets its definite morphological form? Closely allied to this, is the question whether it is the situational context of the sender or the situational context of the receiver? It has been debated by Kecskes (2008), but it needs reconsideration, because the clash in private contexts may be resolved in conversation by gestures which is not possible in text interpretation. However, these issues are not within the ambit of this article, and therefore, they will be explored in future research.

### 3.2 Personification

The analysis of the data reveals that death has been personified as captor, awful being, person and creature. DEATH IS CAPTOR metaphor is found in the following verse.

(2). قُلْ فَادْرَأُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

'qul *fa-id'raū* 'an *anfusikum* *l-mawta* in *kuntum ṣādiqīna*'

Say: "**Avert death from your own selves**, if ye speak the truth." (Quran 3:168)

In the above verse, the verb '*id'raū*' gives metaphoric character to the noun, '*l-mawta*'. The verb is derived from the root '*dāl rā hamza*', which embodies the concept 'to cause something to incline or to push back', while the noun '*al-mawta*' is derived from the root '*mīm wāw tā*', which means 'loss of vitality or death' (al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). This linguistic expression instantiates the DEATH IS CAPTOR metaphor. But death is, literally, not an entity



which captures someone. Therefore, the meaning becomes incongruent in the situational context, and the secondary CMs are to be searched for intended probable meaning.

The LC *'id'raū* is plural imperative verb prefixed with particle *'fa'*. It can have access to large number of semantic potentials such as incline towards one side, push back, keep off, drive back, eliminate or avert (al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). Similarly, the LC *'al-mawta'* may give access to the semantic potentials of death, the end of life, the end of vitality, loss of senses or intellect, barrenness (al-Isfahani, 1970; Ibn Fâris, 1979; Lane, 1968). When the two LCs combines together in the situational context provided by the preceding sentence connected to it through the particle *'fa'*, the verb *'id'raū* gets the semantic argument of 'prevent from happening' or 'avert from happening'. This is because the preceding sentence serves as antecedent to the metaphor, and it provides the cause of what is challenged in metaphoric expression. The imperative nature of the verb emphasizes the inevitability of the happening of death. Death is here conceived as an event in life of an individual which is predestined, and its occurrence cannot be averted or prevented. Accordingly, the metaphor would be interpreted as 'thereby avert (the occurrence of) death from your own selves'.

The above discussion reveals that metaphor interpretation is a constructive process, and is not merely online activation of conceptual schema. Conceptual metaphor provides only one type of knowledge which resides at the level of primary CMs, but it cannot stop further semantic retrieval. Interpretation of figurative language is a constructive process, which needs the fusion of both linguistic and conceptual knowledge. The relational and referential aspects of LCs determine the access route to the conceptual knowledge and the intended probable meaning. Partial structure of the meaning construction mechanism is given in Figure 3.2 below.

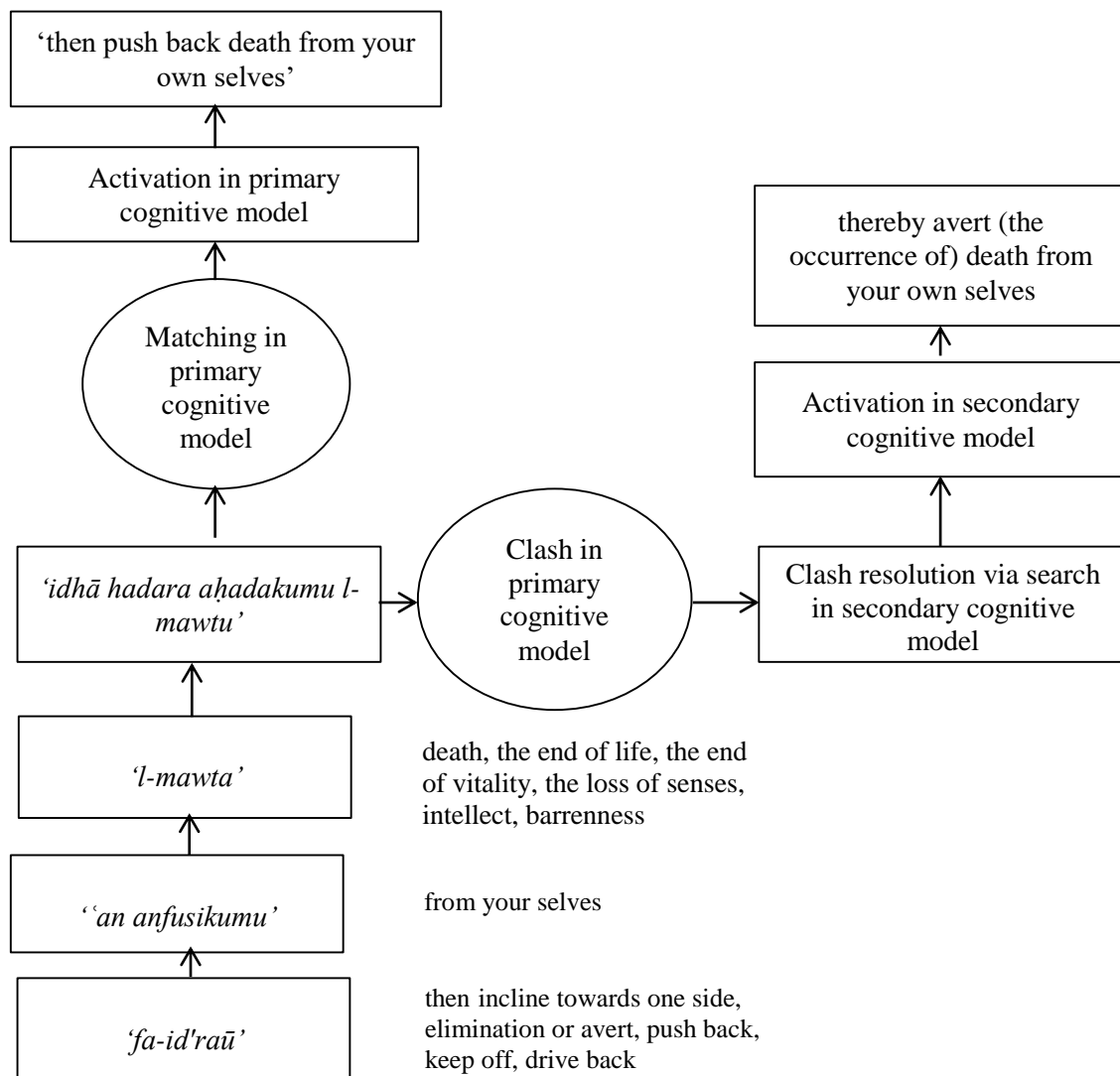


Figure 3.2: Meaning construction in *'fa-id'raū 'an anfusikumū l-mawtu'*

### 3.3 Undergoing Death is Tasting It

MIND IS BODY is one of the key conceptual metaphors. The conceptualization of death as tasting owes its origin to the key metaphor MIND IS BODY (Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 2002). This metaphor can be analyzed in the following verse,

(3). كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ

*'kullu nafsin dhāiqatu l-mawti'*

“Every soul shall have a **taste of death**.” (Quran 3:185)

The lexical item *'dhāiqatu'* on combination with the noun *'al-mawti'* reflects the instantiation of UNDERGOING DEATH IS TASTING IT metaphor. The lexical item *'dhāiqatu'* stems

from the root ‘*dhāl wāw qāf*’, which encapsulates ‘the taste of something like food’ (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970). The root of noun ‘*al-mawti*’ is ‘*mīm wāw tā*’, which signifies ‘the loss of vitality’ (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970). The sentence means that death has a taste, which everyone will have to taste. However, death is not tasting, but rather, it is a very poignant painful experience. Therefore, the result is clash in the primary CMs of ‘*dhāiqatu*’ and ‘*al-mawti*’, and further meaning is to be explored in the secondary CMs.

The LC ‘*dhāiqatu*’ is feminine active participle in nominative case because of its combination with the feminine genitive noun ‘*al-mawti*’. The nominative case of the active participle ‘*dhāiqatu*’ brings the genitive case of the definite noun ‘*al-mawti*’, and its function is to point to the future in temporal frame of reference. Moreover, when the singular indefinite feminine noun ‘*nafsin*’ combines with the LC ‘*kullu*’, the LC ‘*nafsin*’ attains the meaning of plurality. It is a declarative statement which states the truth of death for every living creature. The active participle ‘*dhāiqatu*’ can have semantic potentials of taste, relish, gusto, inclination, liking, perception, experience (Lane, 1968). The LC ‘*al-mawti*’ has the semantic potentials of death, the end of life, the end of vitality, loss of senses, loss of intellect, barrenness (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). When the LC ‘*dhāiqatu*’ combines with LC ‘*al-mawti*’ in the declarative sentence, it gives access to perception of pain at the time of death. Thus, the noun ‘*al-mawti*’ gets the semantic argument of the poignant event of life, which is to be experienced by every living being. This is because that death is the separation of soul from the body, for which various LCs derived from the root ‘*wāw fā yā*’ have been used in the Quran. Thus, the figurative conception would be that ‘every living being will have to feel the pangs of death’. Diagrammatically, the meaning construction can be represented as below.

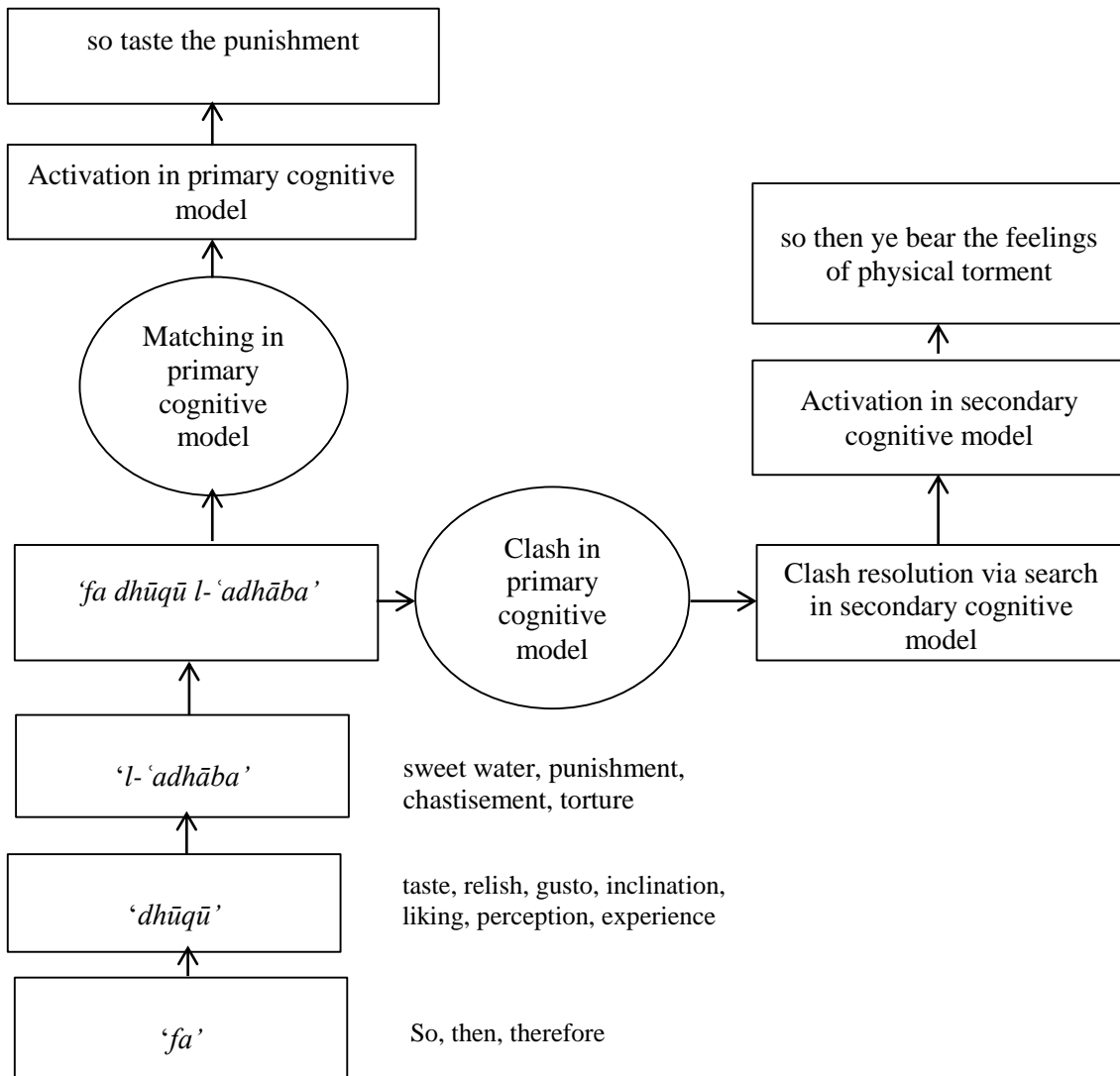


Figure 3.3: Meaning construction in ‘*idhā hadara aḥadakumu l-mawtu*’

### 3.4 Death is Force

Death is also conceptualized as force in the Quran which causes physiological change. It has been derived from the key metaphor CAUSES ARE FORCES or EMOTIONS ARE FORCES (Kövecses, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Maalej, 2007). This conceptual metaphor can be analyzed in the following verse.

(4) يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ الْمَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ

‘*yanẓurūna ilayka **nazara l-maghshiyi** ‘alayhi mina l-mawti*’

“looking at thee with a **look of one in swoon at the approach of death**.” (Quran 47:20)

In this verse, the LC '*l-maghshiyyi*' signals the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS FORCE. The passive participle '*l-maghshiyyi*' is derived from the root '*ghayn shīn wāw*', which embodies the concept of concealment or covering something with something (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970). On combination with the noun '*naẓara*', literally, it means 'with concealed looks'. In the context of approaching death, it means 'looking at you with a look of one misted with death'. But death does not cover up looks. The approaching of death or its fear can cause physiological change in the eyes of a person, but look is not something which can be covered up or misted. Therefore, further search for meaning is to be made in the secondary CMs.

The definite noun '*l-mawti*' in genitive case has the semantic potentials of death, the end of life, the end of vitality, loss of senses or intellect, barrenness (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). While the LC '*l-maghshiyyi*' has the semantic potentials of concealed, misted, overwhelmed, terrorized, swooning, senseless, unconscious; knocked-out (Lane, 1968). The spatial prepositions '*alayhi*' and '*mina*', preceding the definite noun '*l-mawti*', point to the effect of the cause, which is death, on a person. The preposition '*alayhi*' gives reference to the power which death has on a person, while the preposition '*mina*' refers to the death itself. Therefore, when the indefinite noun '*naẓara*' combines with passive participle '*l-maghshiyyi*' and then integrates with the definite noun '*l-mawti*' through the closed class LCs of spatial prepositions in the context provided through anaphoric reference of the plural imperfect verb '*yanẓurūna*' to the preceding part of the verse particularly to the noun '*l-qitālu*', the clause '*naẓara l-maghshiyyi*' gets the semantic argument of 'with a look of a person, terrified and fainting'. Thus, the intended probable interpretation would be 'staring at you with a look of a person, terrified fainting as if overwhelmed by the (pangs of) death'.

The above analysis reveals the instantiation of FEAR OF DEATH IS FORCE WHICH CAUSES PHYSIOLOGICAL CHANGE metaphor. However, the analysis shows that conceptual metaphor becomes manifest after interpretation of the linguistic expression. It shows that some of the conceptual metaphors become evident after the linguistic metaphoric expression is linguistically analyzed. The inference of fear can only be inferred from the linguistic expression in its situational context. This finding corroborates the findings of Glucksberg (2003) that after the metaphor has been explained, the conceptual metaphor is identified. It shows that the linguistic knowledge plays a dominant role in establishing links between LC and conceptual knowledge. The referential nature of LC has a vital role in defining its CM. The process of meaning construction is given diagrammatically below.

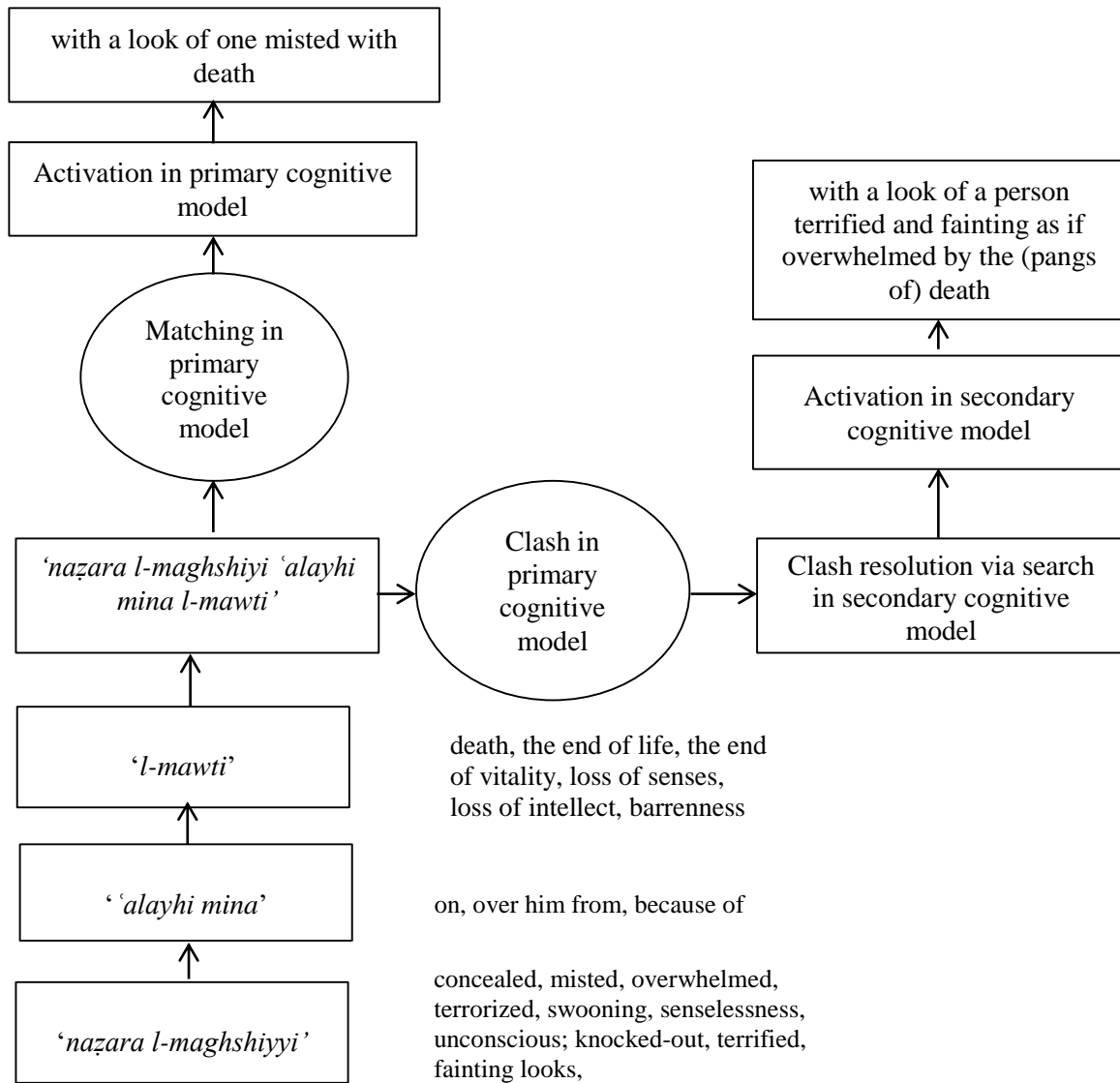


Figure 3.1: Meaning construction in *'nazara l-maghshiyi 'alayhi mina l-mawti'*

### 3.5 Death is Space

Death is conceptualized as an event in human life, and event is structured in terms of space in human conceptual system. Past is conceptualized back, while future is mapped as front (Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980b). This study has found that death has been mapped as stationary object in space with reference to the moving observer in verses (Quran 2:56, 4:159, 8:6, 11:7). DEATH IS LANDMARK IN BOUNDED SPACE is analyzed in the following verse.

(5). يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ

'*yujādilūnaka fī l-ḥaqqi ba 'damā tabayyana ka-annamā yusāqūna ilā l-mawti wahum yanẓurūna*'

“Disputing with thee concerning the truth after it was made manifest, as if **they were being driven to death** and they (actually) saw it.” (Quran 8:6)

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), the spatial prepositions are generated by sensorimotor neural structures in the human conceptual system. These neural structures help in conceptualization of spatial relation concepts, aspectual concepts and bodily movement concepts. In (Quran 8:6), the locative preposition ‘*ilā*’ is generated by the visual perceptual apparatus in human brain, and it helps in comprehension of spatial relation of the moving observer with reference to ‘*l-mawti*’ (death). The verb ‘*yusāqūna*’ is generated by locomotive neural structures. These neural structures help in comprehension of abstract concept of death in terms of spatial relations between the moving observer and a specific landmark in the bounded space. According to CMT, the linguistic expression is surface realization of DEATH IS A LANDMARK IN THE BOUNDED SPACE metaphor.

But death is not literally a landmark or a place in the space. The noun ‘*l-mawti*’ has the semantic potentials of death, the end of life, the end of vitality, loss of senses or intellect, barrenness (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). It means that the LC ‘*l-mawti*’ is schematic in content. It includes subjective experiences which one has to undergo, and every experience gets the event structure. In other words, death is an event, having certain kind of subjective experience. Every experience is durational in nature, and it gets temporal frame of reference instead of spatial frame of reference. This temporal frame of reference may either be of synchronic or protracted or compressed duration. The LC ‘*l-mawti*’ carries the durational character. The LC ‘*yusāqūna*’ has been used in order to show the unacceptable and painful nature of this experience. The LC ‘*yusāqūna*’ is derived from the root ‘*sīn wāw qāf*’, which literally means ‘drive cattle to water’ (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). On combination with the LC ‘*yusāqūna*’ through the closed class LC ‘*ilā*’, the LC ‘*l-mawti*’ attains the semantic value of terrifying experience of death. The LC ‘*ka*’ has anaphoric reference the preceding sentence, which further explains the metaphoric linguistic expression. The anaphoric reference explains that the metaphoric expression is a part of the parable, relating the fear of going to war to the fear of experiencing the pangs of death. Hence, the interpretation would be ‘as if they were being driven (like cattle) to experience the poignant experience of death’.

This reveals that death is not inherently based on spatial frame of reference, but is based on experienter based temporal frame of reference. The conceptual metaphor provides structure to the CMs at the primary CMs recruiting contents from the space domain to structure subjective experience of the experienter or event, as Evans (2009a) held. The sensorimotor neural structures might be involved in comprehension of metaphoric language, but conceptual metaphor functions on pairing the abstract concepts in terms of the experiential concepts. In the above example, the motor neural structure and visual perceptual apparatus, no doubt, determine the mapping of driving to death and driving to some location. However, it is not death but the fear of death, which is intended to be communicated. Naturally, if sensorimotor neural structures are inevitable, it might follow the perceptual apparatus of somatosensory system, proprioception and introspection. Simulation in brain is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather, it is multimodal, and is strongly dependent upon the context (Barsalou, 2003, 2009; Sedley et al., 2016; Zwaan, 2016). The perceptual experiences, no doubt, provide the source domains for the abstract concepts, but the perceptual experiences are rich in content. In the above example, the fear of death would call for GOING THROUGH EXPERIENCE IS TASTING IT schema and DEATH IS AWFUL BEING; the verb '*yusāqūna*' need HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR; the spatial preposition '*ilā*' would invite DEATH IS LANDMARK IN SPACE. Thus, simulation of linguistic and perceptual cues need a more elaborate mechanism than merely CMT to harness the meaning of the linguistic expressions. Language has been instrumental in increasing the ability of simulation system to comprehend non-existent situations in present, past or future. Language helps in coordination of simulations and compositionality (Barsalou, Santos, Simmons, & Wilson, 2008).

### ***3.6 Death is Possession***

Death has also been conceptualized as possession through the use of possessive pronouns in the Quran. Possessive pronouns help to conceptualize one entity by invoking a perceptual reference point of another through conceptual domains of ownership, kinship and body parts relationship (Langacker, 1993, 1999). Abstract concepts like states also get conceptualized as objects which are possessed (Mitkovska, 2011). The following example illustrates such a phenomenon.



(6). فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَى مَوْتِهِ إِلَّا دَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنْسَأَتَهُ

*'falammā qaḍaynā 'alayhi l-mawta mā dallahum 'alā **mawtihi** illā dābbatu l-arḍi takulu minsa-atahu'*

“Then, when We decreed (Solomon's) death, nothing showed them his **death** except a little worm of the earth, which kept (slowly) gnawing away at his staff” (Quran 34:14).

In this verse, death is metaphorically represented as something which can be possessed through the possessive pronoun of ‘*hi*’. However, death does not have the literal meaning of a possessed object or body’s part. It drives towards a clash in its contextual meaning which can be resolved through further search.

The lexical item ‘*mawti*’ is an open class LC which can give access to large number of semantic potentials of death, the end of life, the end of vitality, loss of senses or intellect, barrenness (Ibn Fâris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). The closed class LC ‘*hi*’ is relational in nature, as held by Langacker (1993, 1999). It relates death to Solomon. But, the pronoun ‘*hi*’ has its own semantic structure. It is 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular pronoun in genitive case which attains its present form due to the genitive form of the noun ‘*mawti*’. The genitive forms of both abstract noun and pronoun are dictated by the preposition ‘*alā*’. The pronoun ‘*hi*’ not only relates death as possession to Solomon, but also serves as endophoric reference which gives cohesion to the text by anaphorically referring to Solomon in verse (Quran 34:12).

The LC ‘*mawti*’ refers to the experiential perceptual state, but the state gets an event structure. It may be located in the past, present or future as a landmark or may be durational, of the person himself going through the experience of death or being observed by others. It means that the LC ‘*mawti*’ is the abstraction of rich subjective experience. In the present context, the LC ‘*mawti*’ gets the semantic potentials, not of the experiential state of dying of someone, but the experiential state of others with reference to a dead person. If the duration of death of a person is between A and B on a linear scale, and the observers know about this state after the man standing with the help of staff falls down, when the staff is undermined by creeping creatures of the earth, and the duration from B till the point of falling down is represented at C with reference to the observer, it can be represented in Figure 3.5.

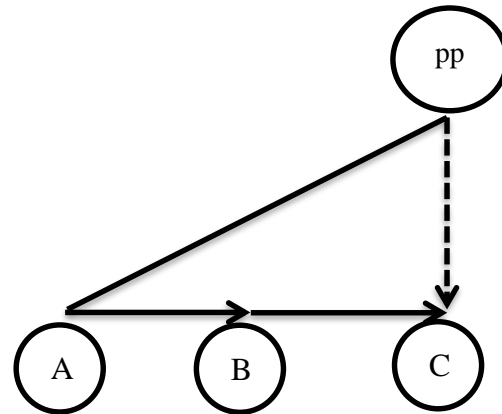


Figure 3.5: Meaning construction in '*fi ghamarāti al-mawti*'

Figure 3.5 illustrates that the LC '*mawti*' refers to the duration between B and C rather than to the actual state of death, which is represented as A and B. The duration of B and C shows dead and not simply death. Hence, the inference is that no one knew that Solomon was dead except the worms of the earth. The pronoun '*hi*' would refer to his state after death and not to his actual experience of death. This inference can only be obtained through the accumulative effect of LCs integration in the situational context while accessing the conceptual knowledge. The negative particle '*mā*', preceding the utterance, is restricted by the restriction particle '*llā*' and combines both the clauses, which is further elaborated by subsequent sentence joined to it through resumption particle '*fa*' and time adverb '*lammā*'. The discussions reveal that linguistic knowledge is an important element of data processed by the brain to simulate a particular experience and compute it for generation of meaning.

### 3.7 Death is Container

Death has also been mapped through the container schema in the Quran. Human sensorimotor neural structures provide the neural basis for conceptualization of different states in terms of space and location. Human visual apparatus and motor neurons play an important role in getting the IN-OUT container schema structured in human brain. The container schema in language is the result of topological map of the retina in the primary visual cortex in human brain (Lakoff, 2008). In the Quran, either spatial prepositions or the motion verbs reflect this metaphor, as is evident in the use of preposition '*fi*' in the following verse.

(7). وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرَجُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ

‘*walaw tarā idhi l-zālimūna **fi ghamarāti l-mawti** wal-malāikatu bāsiṭū aydihim akhrijū anfusakumu*

“If thou couldst but see how the wicked (do fare) **in the flood of confusion at death!** - the angels stretch forth their hands, (saying), "Yield up your souls: ...."” (Quran 6:93)

In this verse, the spatial preposition ‘*fi*’ has been used to show the disbelievers in throes of death as if they were in some place. No doubt, the preposition ‘*fi*’ is used in strict spatio-geometric sense in received view of prepositions. It is also used for abstract concepts including states. The preposition ‘*fi*’ is combined with the lexical item ‘*ghamarāti*’, which literally means flood or submerging water. The LC ‘*ghamarāti*’ is spatial in nature and the preposition has been used in strict spatial-geometric sense. But there is no flood of death in the literal sense of the term. Therefore, clash arises in primary CMs, which needs further search for semantic analysis.

The lexical item ‘*ghamarāti*’, derived from the root ‘*ghayn mīm rā*’, means ‘much, abundant, copious, submerging water or flood, gulf, confusion of error, obstinacy, ignorance’. Literally, it means the flood of water and drowning, flood of confusion or ignorance (Ibn Fāris, 1979; al-Isfahani, 1970; Lane, 1968). But the feminine plural noun ‘*ghamarāti*’ gets its semantic value of ‘overwhelming pangs’ in the situational context, because pangs or throes do not have flood in literal sense of the term. In the situational context, when the LC ‘*ghamarāti*’ combines with preposition ‘*fi*’, the definite noun ‘*al-mawti*’ and independent LC ‘*l-zālimūna*’, it means ‘the overwhelming pangs of death’. It is cataphorically explained by the subsequent LCs ‘*l-malāikatu bāsiṭū aydihim akhrijū anfusakumu*’ (the angels stretch forth their hands, (saying), "Yield up your souls), connected through the particle ‘*wa*’, and anaphorically by ‘*walaw tarā*’. Thus, it refers to ‘in the overwhelming pangs of death’. It reveals that the preposition ‘*fi*’ is used here with reference to the non-spatial abstract noun ‘*al-mawti*’ metaphorically. Diagrammatically, the meaning construction mechanism is represented in Figure 3.6.

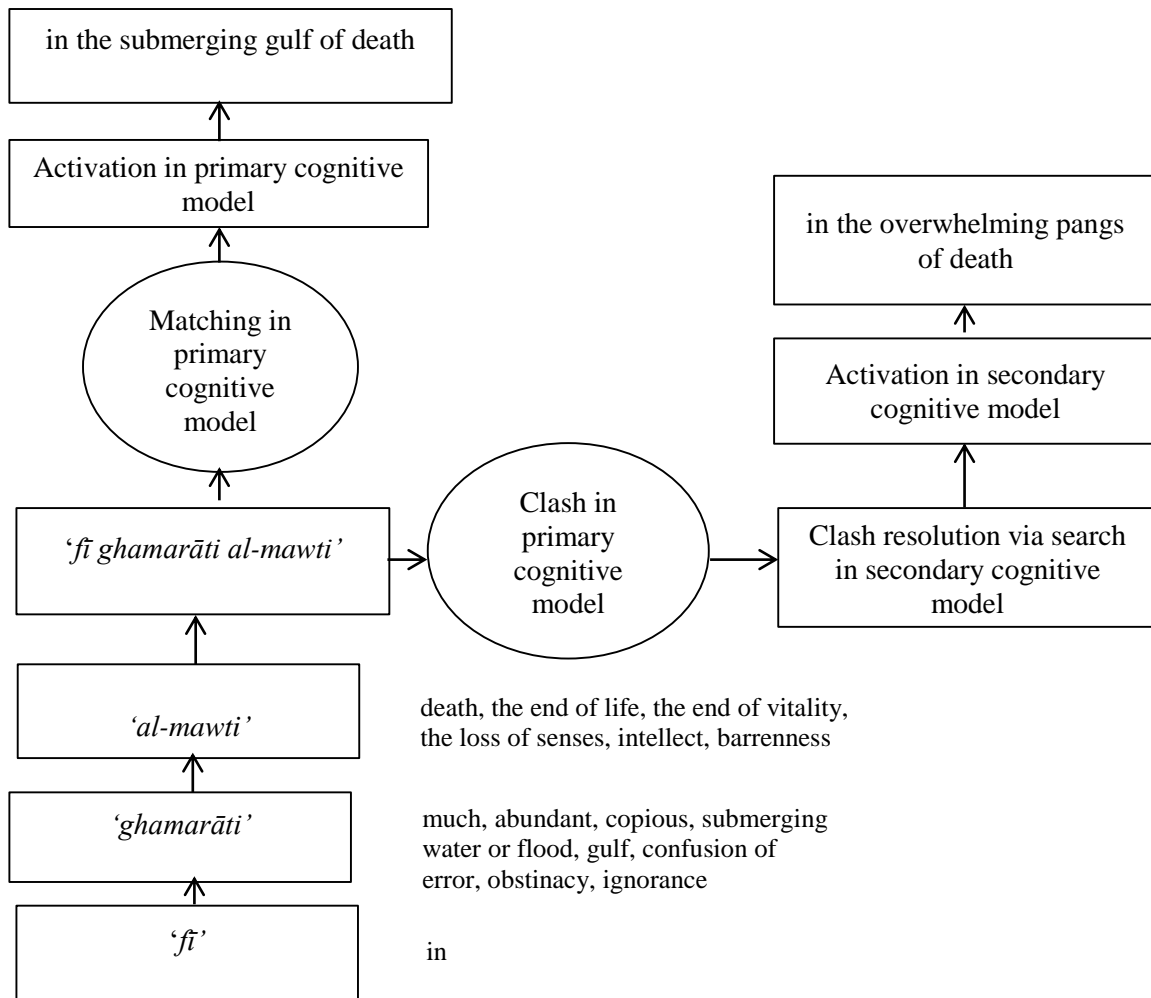


Figure 3.6: Meaning construction in [*‘fi ghamarāti al-mawti’*]

#### 4.0 DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that conceptual metaphor is pervasively used in the Quran to conceptualize the concept of death. It supports the earlier findings that death is conceptualized as sleep, personified being and perceptual experience. The earlier studies (e.g. Golzadeh & Pourebrahim, 2013; Sardaraz & Ali, 2016) found that the Great Chain of Being is the key source domain for conceptualization of death in the Quran. But, this study adds that death is also conceptualized as space, possessed entity and container in the Quran. It extends the key source domains found in earlier studies to Location/Container and Event Structure metaphors. It also supports the earlier findings that most of the abstract concepts are conveyed through conventional metaphors in the language of the Quran, which have been overlooked in the rhetorical tradition (Berrada, 2006; Libdeh, 2012; Sardaraz & Ali, 2016, 2017). This study may contribute to the growing conceptual metaphor research on the Quran.

The analysis of data also supports the CMT view of metaphor. The data shows that the linguistic metaphors are surface realization of conceptual schemas. The lexical items in various metaphoric expressions reflect the working of sensorimotor neural structures in mapping the abstract concepts in terms of perceptual experiential concepts. The role of motor neuron is evident in action verbs, *'id'raū'* and *'yusāqūna'*. The action verbs are generated in human brain through motor neuron, and are accordingly, mapped in metaphoric relationship with abstract concepts. Similarly, the perceptual neurons are responsible for container schema, spatial concepts and somatosensory schemas. The lexical items *'dhāiqatu'*, *'l-maghshiyi 'alayhi, 'ilā'*, *'mawtihi'* and *'fī ghamarāti l-mawti'* either show spatial relation concepts, dictated by visual apparatus or by somatosensory apparatus. Hence, the data supports the neural theory of metaphor (Lakoff, 2008).

CMT extends the semantic function of possessive pronouns as grammatical units denoting possession to a more active lexical unit of language used in defining concrete as well as abstract mode of possession. In traditional linguistics, possessive pronouns are regarded as possessive particles attached to a noun to denote mode of possession (Alhawary, 2011; Ryding, 2005). The cognitive perspective of possessive pronouns holds that human beings invoke one entity as reference point to describe the possessed entity in an asymmetrical manner. It is not merely “conceptual co-occurrence”, but is essentially a reference-point asymmetrical relationship. Possessive pronouns used in abstract sense are grounded in the experiential domains of ownership, social relationship and part-whole relationship (Mitkovska, 2011). The abstract concepts are regarded as possessed entities with reference to either of the mentioned source domains.

However, conceptual metaphor cannot decipher the meaning of a linguistic metaphoric expression. The analysis shows that conceptual schemas, on the model of CMT, give relational structure to the primary CMs. But, the process of interpretation is not one to one unilinear relationship of concepts in a situational context. As discussed earlier (Section 3.5), simulation in brain, on reception of a verbal or lexical stimuli in a situational context, is not an isolated phenomenon but involves combinatorial processing of multiple schema to achieve an inference (Barsalou, 2003, 2009; Zwaan, 2016). Conceptual metaphor argues for one to one unilinear relationship between concepts, but this relationship cannot explain the full semantic value of lexical items in a situational context. The one to one relationship can at best give relational structure at the primary CMs, which may further be defined or modified in a situational context by involving more perceptual schemas. Conceptual metaphor offers a static model of metaphor comprehension, but comprehension and interpretation is a constructive process, which needs a

more elaborate mechanism than CMT. These findings support the findings of earlier studies on the role of CMT as a model of metaphor comprehension and interpretation (e.g. Alhusban & Alkhwaldah, 2018; Berrada, 2007; Evans, 2010b, 2013a, 2013b; Sardaraz & Ali, 2016, 2017).

The results show that LCCM offers a better model for interpretation of metaphor, as it takes into account both the linguistic and conceptual knowledge in the situational context. The results show that the otherwise conventional metaphors show semantic distance, complexity and different knowledge structures, when the interpretation is verbalized. The results also support the main thesis of LCCM that the meanings of the words are fluid in nature, and that it strongly depends upon the situational context (Evans, 2006). Meanings are mediated by LCs integration and fusion. It means that the concepts encoded in the CMs are highly schematic, while the LCs are digitized morphological forms, having their own semantic structure. The discussion of the LC *'mawti'* in Section 3.5 reflects the rich semantic diversity, which a LC may attain in different contexts. Moreover, the data analysis of the same LC *'mawti'* in Section 3.0 supports Evan's (2006, 2009a) thesis of protean nature of words (Barsalou, 1999; Barsalou et al., 1993). Meanings do not reside in words, but rather, it is the property of an utterance. In other words, it is the accumulative effect of different LCs, integrated together in the utterance, which defines the access points to the conceptual knowledge.

The results also show that Evans' (2006) concept of situational context is problematic. As discussed in section 3.1, the situational context of an utterance may not provide sufficient information to give the intended probable meaning. The lexical item *'marqadi'* (sleeping place), in example (1) in the immediate linguistic context of the utterance, cannot be deciphered for intended probable meaning. Probably, this is the reason that the concept of punishment in the Quran after death has evoked diverse trends in theological literature (Al-Jarrah, 2011). Therefore, it is not merely the utterance where meaning resides, but it resides in the context of the utterance. Clash of contexts may lead to misleading construal and inference. Difference in the private contexts, even in the same situational context, may result in misreading of the sender's message (Kecskes, 2008). This is because of the differences in the experiential gestalts of the individuals belonging to different cultures. For example, the lexical item "Madam" is used as token of respect and politeness in South Asian or African culture, but it has negative connotation in English culture (Diligent, 2011).

This clash of contexts becomes more intense in text interpretation, because of the difference in cognitive gestalts of the writer and the receiver of the text. These differences matter the most in conceptual mapping of various concepts. A conceptual schema which is present in the modern languages may be missing in language of the ancient people (Berrada,

2007; Eweida, 2007). This suggests that the clash can be resolved through the tool of intertextuality. Intertextuality is conterminous with LCCM (Panagiotidou, 2011), because of the analogue nature of CM profile. Future research may focus on how the clash of situational context in LCCM can be resolved by suggesting a systematic model of intertextuality for interpretation of metaphors and validation of the results achieved through LCCM.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The data reveal that conceptual schemas are used to conceptualize the concept of death in the Quran. The data reveal that the conceptual schemas, shaped in human conceptual system through neural interaction with the physical world, get manifestation in metaphoric linguistic expressions. These schemas help in online conceptualization of abstract concept in language in unilinear manner. The behavioural patterns of data support the view that perceptual schemas might be a factor in simulation and language comprehension. However, the analysis shows that simulation might not be a unilinear process as held by CMT. Rather, it may require multilinear processing of multiple perceptual schemas in a single linguistic metaphoric expression. Language itself serves as stimuli to activate simulation in the conceptual system. The activation of simulation in conceptual system by linguistic stimuli results in a series of interconnected simulations involving multiple conceptual schemas and a multilinear process. In other words, interpretation needs a constructive mechanism involving the integration of linguistic knowledge and its fusion with conceptual knowledge. But the situational context of LCCM needs intertextual context, because analysis through LCCM may result in clash of contexts in text interpretation. The differences in the experiential gestalts between people of different epochs may lead to erroneous inferences, if proper method for clash resolution is not taken into account in religious language. However, the question of clash resolution through intertextual context within the LCCM necessitates future research to work out an elaborate model for metaphors interpretation in religious language. Moreover, the multilinear processing of conceptual schemas necessitate further studies on investigating the relationship between different conceptual schemas and the behaviour of lexical data in a particular metaphoric expression to arrive at some definite theoretical conclusion.

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