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Use of Figurative Language in *The Land of the Sun* by Hanan al-Shaykh

Abstract. When expressing ourselves, whether in speaking or writing, we construct our discourse according to specific patterns suited to what we want to communicate. The various types and forms of figurative language are used for many different reasons and are still considered a prerogative of high literature. In her short story *The Land of the Sun* (*Arḍ al-Shams*, 1994) the Lebanese writer Ḥanān al-Shaykh (b. 1945), like all Arab authors, makes extensive use of different figurative devices. In the present paper, the focus of the analysis is to determine the specific rhetorical figures and techniques al-Shaykh employs in order to create the canvas of her narrative and to convey her message to the readers. Working within the frame of cognitive semantics and stylistics a literary interpretation of the story *The Land of the Sun* is offered.

Key words: *story, narrative, figurative expressions, idioms, cognitive stylistics*

1. Introduction

Hanan al-Shaykh started her career as a writer in the late 1960s, making her mark in 1980 with the publication of her famed Lebanese Civil War novel, *The Story of Zahra*. She has also penned half a dozen other novels, two collections of short stories and two plays that deal mainly with women's role in society, conservative religious traditions, the relationship between the sexes, and the institution of marriage. She is one of the leading women writers in the Arab world and "is without doubt one of the most accomplished fiction writers in Arabic today" (El-Enany 2006: 185).

Hanan al-Shaykh is remarkably persistent with the themes of her stories. In Ghandour words:

She is clear about what she disdains – mores that harangue female potential, traditions immune to the times, the veil as identity politics, people devoid of humor, the mosque in the public square. But, although she is unfettered in her candor, she doesn't wield an ax. Al Shaykh is just interested in telling stories, and she tells them with a simplicity that abhors self-conscious thought.

In the short story *The Land of the Sun*, included in the collection *I Sweep the Sun off Rooftops* published in 1994, al-Shaykh does exactly this. She tells a simple, but disturbing and thought-provoking story, which clearly implies solutions to the issues raised in the story. In her narrative, al-Shaykh chooses to employ extensively different rhetoric figures such as simile, metaphor and metonymy as well as quite a few phraseological units (PUs). For this reason, the first aim of the present paper is to explicate al-Shaykh's textual choices; that is to say, how she employs the Arabic language and many interwoven figures of speech when she narrates her story of a car accident in the desert, and of two characters, their mindset, feelings and ways of expressing themselves. The second aim is to elucidate how cognitive linguistics and stylistics approaches can facilitate the process of literary interpretation. I consider exploring the figurative language and cognitive structure of a story to be of great significance for the literary analysis of the text. This is because the "creative interplay of language and thought is particularly evident in figurative language" (Katz et al. 1998: 3).

1.2. A short summary of *The Land of the Sun*

The short story *The Land of the Sun* is an account of a dramatic chain of events that unfolds in a very short period of time. Although the narrator is not prominent, he is omniscient and takes up the role of a silent observer. He explores his characters from inside and outside. Furthermore, the reader feels his presence and emotional involvement not only through the topic of the story, but also through the language choice.

A car with four passengers hits a camel on a desert road, turns over several times and halts beside the road, badly damaged. A team of "hired workers," who make their living by catching and selling live "creatures with unusual markings," have a camp near the place of the accident. Two young men from the camp see the accident and rush to save the people in the car, hoping they are alive under the scorching desert sun. They manage to turn the car upright and pull out two men and a child, all dead. There is a fourth passenger – an injured woman, still alive, but because of the accident, her scarf is down, uncovering her hair and earrings. Worse than that,

her dress is up, exposing her naked belly and belly button with fine hairs around it. The two men, who have never seen an uncovered woman, feel uncomfortable and cannot bring themselves to touch her and pull her out of the car. Nevertheless, one of them, Jāsīm, after watching for some time the gasoline leaking out and realizing how dangerous this is, darts forward in a desperate attempt to drag the woman out of the wrecked car but fails to save the only passenger alive before the car explodes. The final lines of the story reveal the feelings of shame and anxiety of the young man who will definitely remember the car accident, but most of all, the image of the half-naked woman for a long time. The reader is left to speculate whether such a grotesque experience has changed anything in the men's traditional mentality.

2. Theory and methodology

Before moving to the main goal of the paper, some theoretical considerations and methodology explanations are in order. I shall present first some essential tenets of narratology theory, followed by a summary of the methodology for extracting figurative expressions. Finally, an outline of cognitive linguistics theory and metaphor is given.

2.1. Narrative and story

To begin with, I shall briefly define *narrative*, *story* and their *components* as I will be using some of them in my analysis. As Barthes perceptively noticed, "narrative is international, trans-historical, transcultural: it is simply there like life itself" (Barthes, 1977: 79). For the cognitive scholar Turner (1996: 4–5) the narrative is fundamental for the human way of thinking: "Narrative imagining – story – is the fundamental instrument of thought. Rational capacities depend upon it. It is our chief means of looking into the future, of predicting, of planning, and of explaining. It is a literary capacity indispensable to human cognition generally". Furthermore, for the literary scholar Brooks (1992) and the philosopher Ricoeur, (1984–8) narrative is related to understanding of our very existence.

Mieke Bal in her international classic *Narratology. Introduction to the theory of Narrative* defines a *narrative* text as a "text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof". Further, she defines important concepts in narratology as follows:

A story is a *fabula* that is presented in a certain manner. A *fabula* is a series of logically and chronologically related *events* that are caused or experienced by actors. An *event* is the transition from one state to another state. *Actors* are agents that perform actions. They are not necessarily human. To *act* is defined here as to cause or experience an event. (Bal 1997: 5).

It should be underlined that the distinction between story and narration is important since “a story may have a separate existence from its narration. As such, it can be told in different ways by different narrators” (Porter Abbott, 2007: 40). Then the narration of the story “would be different, with different words, different emotional inflections, different perspectives, and different details” (Ibid.). As mentioned above, I am interested in examining the textual choices made in the writing process by al-Shaykh in her narration of the story. In order to give a comprehensive account of these and the rhetorical purposes of the story I shall follow Popova’s use of “story” and “narrative” interchangeably to refer to a coherent series of reported events thus deliberately disregarding the “distinction often drawn between true (factive) and imagined (fictive) events” (2015: 2). On the other hand, it is necessary to note that dealing with lexical semantics makes “a degree of subjective judgement inescapable” (Toolan 2009: 4). Toolan raises yet another especially important issue that is directly related to the present case which deals with a not very well-known culture like the Middle Eastern and Arabic in particular. He expresses it in the following way:

The words on the page that we read and make sense of, find the story in, and derive expectations and feelings and understanding from, always come to us integrated within a context of situation and of culture. A variety of kinds of background knowledge informs our reading of a present narrative text (...) (Toolan 2009: 5)

2.2. Method for identifying metaphor and figurative expressions

Methodologically the study can be placed within the field of cognitive stylistics since it is a combination of “rigorous and detailed linguistic analysis” and “theoretically informed consideration of the cognitive structures and processes that underlie the production and reception of language” (Semino & Culpeper 2002: ix). For the purposes of the present paper, the detailed linguistic analysis is primarily concerned with identifying linguistic metaphors and related figuratively used words and expres-

sions. To do so MIPVU (Metaphor Identifying Procedure) method is used (Steen et al. 2010).

The MIPVU procedure is a revised and extended version of MIP. Both MIP and MIPVU are utilized to identify linguistic metaphor at the level of the lexical unit. It is assumed that there is "a one-to-one correspondence between words, concepts and referents" in the text. The words on the page "evoke concepts, and these concepts in turn designate referents in the projected text world" (Steen et al. 2010: 92). As the researchers state that the identification of metaphors in discourse using MIP is not concerned with "identifying metaphorical utterances or with finding conventional linguistic metaphors that may arise from postulated conceptual metaphors" (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 2). Analysts applying MIP have to work through a series of four systematic steps. First, they have to read the entire text-discourse carefully in order to establish a general understanding of the meaning. Then they have to determine the lexical units in the text-discourse. In step 3a, the analysts must first specify the contextual meaning of the lexical unit, that is, "how it applies to an entity, relation or attribute in the situation evoked by the text" (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 3). In step 3b, they have to determine whether the lexical unit "has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context" (Ibid. 3). Such basic meanings are likely to be more concrete [what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste]; related to bodily action; more precise (as opposed to vague); [and] historically older. Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit (Ibid. 3). The last fourth step is to mark the lexical unit as metaphorical (Ibid. 3). In order to specify the contextual and basic meanings, analysts can adopt different dictionaries or reference works.

An important issue is the fact that a quite frequent form of metaphor in fiction is "directly expressed metaphor, which occurs in the form of similes, analogies and other non-literal comparisons" (Steen et al., 2010: 92). Steen and his colleagues consider these expressions "direct" since the words in the text activate concepts that "refer directly to their referents in the text world, that is the source domain terms are used directly ("literally") at the linguistic level". (Ibid. 93). Since MIP is an identification procedure that is based on detecting indirect lexical meanings it "cannot deal with such manifestations of metaphor in discourse, for in simile there is no formal incongruity" (Ibid.). Although such lexical units "are not metaphorically used themselves, they are related to metaphor" (Ibid. 94). In order not to lose these directly expressed metaphors and their signals, MIPVU as an extended MIP is employed in this paper.

2.3. Cognitive linguistics and conceptual metaphor

One of the main tenets of conceptual metaphor theory is that “[o]ur ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 3). Applying this approach means that in everyday language the metaphors with their underlying conceptual structures are considered as primary. On the other hand the metaphors in literature are believed to be creative and novel manipulations of the same underlying conceptual structures.

Another important theme in cognitive linguistics and more specifically cognitive semantic research has been the insight that “the relation between words and the world is mediated by the language user him/herself. That is why quite a number of our concepts are directly related to aspects of our bodily experience” (Taylor 2006: 577). According to Sweetser the large-scale conceptual metaphor “Mind-as-Body” is very probably *motivated* by correlations between our external experience and our internal emotional and cognitive states ...” (1990: 28). Thus, “the vocabulary of physical perception shows systematic metaphorical connections with the vocabulary of internal self and internal sensations” (1990: 45). Sweetser also proves that verbs of sense and perception in English and Indo-European, which depict the sensory modality of sight (vision) and hearing, conceptualize abstract senses of mental activity. These activities for vision are: knowledge, intellection, mental ‘vision’, understanding, mental or physical manipulation, control (1990: 33–38; see also Lakoff and Johnson 1980). For hearing: mental attention and understanding, but also heed. The other senses – smell, taste and touch are often linked to subjective expressions of emotion and personal preference (Sweetser 1990: 35). Lakoff, Johnson, Gibbs and other cognitive linguists called these linguistic phenomena of understanding and conceptualizing the world through our bodily experience “embodiment” (Johnson 1987; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff & Johnson 1999; Gibbs 2005).

In the following pages, the abundant use of such conceptualizations utilized in *The Land of the Sun* will be examined.

When reading literary texts people tend to be more aware of metaphors and generally figurative language since in literature they are “more prominent or noticeable than those in other types of discourse” (Dorst 2015: 4). As Dorst points out, people usually expect literary texts to contain more metaphors and other rhetorical figures “due to their aesthetic function, but this expectation need not correspond to actual usage” (Ibid.). In her analysis of the interaction between register and relation to metaphor, Dorst revealed

that in all four registers she investigated (academic, news, fiction and conversation) “fiction was not the register with the highest number of metaphor-related words” (2015: 11). However, the selected story *The Land of the Sun* in a way ‘breaks’ this rule, since it contains a significant number of figurative expressions, even though it is very short (about 600 words).

3. Figurative expressions in *The Land of the Sun*

Applying the above-discussed method for identifying figurative language to the text of *The Land of the Sun* yielded seven phraseological units (PUs), more than fifteen metaphoric expressions, eight similes and five metonymic expressions. There are many definitions of PU, but here PU is defined as a stable, cohesive combination (Naciscione 2010: 32) of two or more words that create a compound whose meaning “cannot be fully explained by the syntactic and semantic regularities of the combination” (Burger, cited in Dobrovolskij et al. 2005: 31). For considerations of space, all types of figures will be given in the discussion part as they appear in the English translation with literal translation when the Arabic original is different.

4. Discussion of the findings

The great number of figurative expressions identified in a story of 600 words is ample evidence for the significant role they play in the narrative and the development of the story itself. In what follows, I shall examine closer their functions in the narrative.

The physical environment of the desert, or the “situational context”, as Kövecses calls it (2018), is depicted in the story in a perceptible and sensible way, easy to imagine and even possible to feel physically. This is achieved mainly through a few metaphors and metonymies. They address readers’ general knowledge about deserts and prompt inferences that are directly or indirectly communicated by the text (see Leech & Short, 2007). Boundless and ageless, hot and lethargic the desert, desert animals and natural phenomena are present throughout the entire story of al-Shaykh. The place where the events unfold is “*expanses of land so vast that the eye was scarcely able to take them in*. It is a *silent land*, (lit. silent emptiness) *where there was nothing* (lit. devoid of everything) but the *sun burning the sand tirelessly* day after day, *the intense shimmering brightness of mirages*, the sudden gusts of wind and the night frosts”. The two young men had the remaining passengers

out *on the burning sand* (lit. on the flames of the sand) *in the full glare of the sun ...*"

To emphasize yet again the vastness and metaphorically the immensity of the desert the author describes the car as a "*green spot*"; the tent camp as a "*larger splash of color on the sand*" (lit. colored spot) pitched in the "*bare landscape* (lit. in the nakedness of the desert)".

Desert animals add more details to the scene. The team of hired workers is "roaming the sands (lit. until they almost get lost in the desert) in pursuit of "*creatures* (lit. what still lives in the sand) *with unusual markings* (lit. with rare colored skins)". The dying camel is "*beating the sand in a terrifying flurry of movement like a cyclone*".

Desert phenomena and animals are employed in describing the crashed car – the machine looks "*as if it were a species of lizard he had not seen before* or *as if it were a mirage created by the desert* and at the end when the wreckage of the car explodes turning *into a mirage burning in its own dryness.*"

The daily life of the hired hunters is presented as "*a peaceful humdrum existence* (lit. within the frame of peaceful daily rhythm), *disturbed only by occasional bad dreams* (lit. spoiled only by befalling of unpleasant dreams from time to time)".

It is possible to see that the language utilized to picture the desert follows a smooth, flowing pattern. This helps conceiving the desert as a silent witness of the transience of human life and against its vastness and eternity, the drama and the conservative "narrow" frame of mind and upbringing are situated.

Even though the author presents the small number of events in the story by employing figurative phrases or literal language depending on the incident itself, the frame of the story is generally designed figuratively. Thus, the two most important events that provide the setting for the whole story are presented figuratively with the intention of creating an atmosphere of especially intense anticipation and drama. The story begins with the description of a car that "rolled over and over before it *sank to the ground like a slain bird*" and later the reader learns that it had hit a camel on the road. An important event at the end of the story is when "*the strong-smelling fluid* [the leaking gasoline] *took the decision out of their hands, igniting spontaneously* and *in a flash* (lit. in the blink of an eye) *transforming the car* (lit. the heap of the car) *into a mirage burning in its own dryness: it was a long time since it had been filled with water*". In between these two major events, minor, nonetheless important incidents take place. The narrative explicitly and directly follows the physical actions of

two young men who are trying desperately to pull the passengers of the car before it explodes. The content is such that it does not allow much use of figurative language, since it primarily depicts concrete people, and concrete actions.

The actors or the agents in the story are the two youths from the camp. Their physical actions are described by various active verbs: *hurrying in the direction, trying to drag, arrived at a run, got the crumpled door open, managed to free, looking at each other, moved to avoid, rushed back, leaned, reached out his arms to take hold, backed away, regretting his retreat, begging him for support, trying not to look or listen*. To comment briefly, it is clear that some of the verbs and verbal nouns (also in Arabic) and their complements are chosen conscientiously to have strong semantic connotations that make the plot especially vivid and intense.

The narrative in this part of the story is disrupted here and there by accounts of the mental and psychological state of Jāsim and his comrade. Steen and his colleagues (2010: 98) have observed in fiction texts the tendency to increase use of figurative language when it comes to describing characteristics of people, their mental or emotional states. This is applicable to the present story. Thus the two young men with *silent complicity disregarded* what they had seen and *devoted their energies* to dragging the driver, who appeared *dead* (lit. has parted with life). They choose to 'save' the two other people in the car who obviously cannot be rescued and put them "*on the burning sand* (lit. on the flames of the sand) *in the full glare of the sun, which made the blood run more furiously and hastened their deaths* (lit. hastened the departure/ascending of their souls)".

One of the main focal points in the whole story is the tangible and detailed description of the only passenger alive and worth saving. This is a woman and she is half-naked. The other central point in the story is the reaction and the feelings experienced by Jāsim, the youngster who arrived first to the scene of the accident. He is *gazing in shock* (lit. as if struck by lightning) at the horrible sight and nudity of the woman. His companion, comes later, and is also shocked by the scene and nakedness of the injured woman. They *catch each other snatching a look at the woman* but decide to ignore her. "The two youths stood quite still looking at each other, *exchanging unspoken words* (lit. froze in their places, exchanging silent glances and dialog)". The reason for this peculiar behavior of the two men and especially Jāsim's is graphically depicted employing several similes and PUs: He had never seen a woman's nakedness before. "He had never seen a woman at all *without yards of material wrapped around her, covering her from head to her black-hennaed feet, and revealing only her*

eyes behind a gauze opening in the cloth, like two insects caught in a fishing net (lit. without meters of material wrapped around her from head/tip to toe(s) hidden by black henna, revealing only her eyes as if they were two insects behind an opening in the cloth weaved like a fishing net)". The story finishes as the two men set about the task of dragging the three victims out of reach of the blazing wreck "with great application, trying not to look or listen as *the fire consumed the woman*, although *the feel of her stomach would stay with Jāsim for a long time* (lit. would not leave Jāsim's hand)".

For reasons of space, it is not possible to comment extensively on all PUs, metaphors, similes, metonymies etc. present in the text, but some important observations and characteristics should be explained. First, the extensive use of concrete and physical similes creating realistic, sensible and tangible images must be emphasized. Animals, natural phenomena and objects are the source domains. For example: the crashed car is like a *slain bird, mirage and lizard*, the dying camel is beating the sand like a *cyclone*. The eyes of women are like *insects*, caught behind an opening weaved like a *fishing net*. Body parts (*eye, hand, head, toes, heart, blood, soul*) are often employed in metaphors and metonymies that involve cross-domain mappings which also provide the reader with a "vivid visualization of images rather than concepts" (Steen et al., 2010: 96; Dorst, 2011a: 287–314).

It is important to emphasize that personification as a type of metaphor is often used in the story. It is recognized that this is one of the most basic and frequently used metaphors. Even though that personification has been studied extensively "there is still much debate about the actual definition of personification" (see for overview Dorst 2011b: 113). For the purposes of the present paper, I adopt the definition Hamilton (2002: 409) gives for literary studies:

We personify when we metaphorically ascribe agency to normally inanimate objects, turning non-existent or imaginary entities into realistic actors or agents. As cognitive linguist would describe it, to personify is to 'map' information from a 'source domain' onto a 'target domain'.... Mapping occurs simultaneously at conceptual and linguistic levels.

It is natural that people use human beings as "their prototypical or default frame of reference" and thus inanimate objects acquire human properties (Dorst 2011b: 115).

In the story, a few inanimate objects serve as realistic actors or agents, such as the desert, the sun, the car, the gasoline, the fire and some body parts. In order to identify personifications in discourse, it is important to see

how they are realized linguistically. In the examined story, most of them are nominal conceptual personifications but “depend heavily on the use of verbs” (Dorst 2011b: 117). Nominal personification is when both source and target domains are expressed by nouns. Consider the following examples:

- (1) *the sun burning the sand tirelessly day after day*
- (2) *in the full glare of the sun, which made the blood run more furiously and hastened their deaths* (lit. hastened the departure/ascending of their souls)
- (3) *the green dot [the car], which was still shuddering and clanging painfully.* (lit. the green dot, whose joints were scarred and still shuddering because of the rolling and the violent jolts that it suffered.)
- (4) *the strong-smelling fluid [the leaking gasoline] took the decision out of their hands, ... transforming the car* (lit. the heap of the car) *into a mirage burning in its own dryness*
- (5) *expanses of land so vast that the eye was scarcely able to take them in*
- (6) trying not to look or listen as *the fire consumed* [lit. ate] *the woman*
- (7) *as if it [the car] were a mirage created by the desert*

The inanimate entities in the examples above, whether it be the desert, the sun or the car (presented through a metonymy), metaphorically perform activities associated with real actors. Dorst is right in arguing that the assignment of agency happens “via a violation of selection restrictions” (Dorst 2011b: 117) revealed through linguistic analysis. However, in order to identify the particular agent, the analysis has to be at a conceptual level (Ibid.). Hence, in the case of example (1–2) it is possible to say that the relevant conceptual metaphor could be SUN is a DESTROYER or a KILLER. For (3–4) – CAR/GAZOLINE is a PERSON.

As for examples (1), (5), (6) and (7), the verbs used mean concrete actions and the basic senses of these verbs involve human agents. However, the contextual senses involve non-human entities, but these verbs have acquired abstract metaphorical meaning that is so conventional that their human origins are barely noticeable. This means that these verbs can be considered “instances of conventionalized linguistic personification” (Dorst 2011: 121–2).

Examples (4–6) are very interesting from another point of view because they comprise not only personification but also metonymy simultaneously. Thus, in example (4) hands as body parts are metonymically used for a person (part for the whole). In example (5), eye stands metonymically for brain, intellect or a person.

The examined personifications have clear communicative and expressive functions in the text together with a strong visualizing effect.

In the discussed story seven PUs were identified – quite a significant number for such a short text. Two of the PUs mean ‘to die’, but are based on slightly different images as part of their inner form. The PUs *fāraqa l-ḥayāta* – dead (lit. has parted with life) and *ṭulū’u ’arwāḥihim* – their death (lit. the departure/ascending of their souls) present death from two different perspectives. These two PUs are employed in a close proximity to each other and thus the author not only achieves expressiveness and vividness but also hints at the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the choice the two men have made. Two other very common PUs *min ḥīnin ’ilā ’ākḥara* – occasional (lit. from time to time), *khaybātu l-’amali* – disappointments (lit. dashed/shattered hopes) are used in one sentence. In this part of the story, after the abrupt start, comes the description of the “silent emptiness and vastness” of the desert and the humdrum existence of the workers. Thus, the PUs fit well in the narrative and contribute to the fluency and richness of the discourse.

There is one very long sentence that includes the PU *min ra’sihā ’ilā ’akhmaṣi qadamayhā l-mukhtabī’ayni bi-l- ḥinnā’i* – from head to her black-hennaed feet (lit. from head to her toe(s) hidden by black henna). The last component of this PU is extended with a whole phrase (*hidden by black henna*), after that two similes, (*eyes ... like two insects (...) cloth weaved like a fishing net*) come. The entire sentence is elaborated and deliberately composed in order to explain a central issue. It adds not only expressiveness to the narrative but serves particular discourse goals. This specific PU metaphorically emphasizes and reiterates one of the main ideas in the story – women’s imprisonment as members of the society.

Another PU *yaḍribu ...kaffan ’alā kaffin (nadaman)* (lit. he struck one palm against the other (out of remorse)) seems also to be carefully and consciously selected. It is employed together with the metaphoric expression *he felt a sudden pang in his heart* (lit. as if stung in the heart) and the adverbial *all of a sudden*. Thus, all these phrases underscore Jāsim’s immediate and deep regret for backing off and being unable to pull the injured woman out of the car.

The PU *bi-lamḥati baṣarin* (lit. in the blink of an eye, in a flash) is utilized in the final passage when everything is happening very fast and nothing can be done to rescue the woman as the gasoline takes the decision instead of the two men and they have to watch the woman being consumed (lit. eaten) by the fire. The last expression is considered a fixed phrase close to a PU.

As we noted above, Sweetser and other cognitive linguists have proved the systematic connections between semantic meanings and the domain of perception. Al-Shaykh in her story creates an especially material world. Moreover, there are a great number of verbs and nouns related to vision and hearing. Thus, for example, verbs such as *to see, to appear, to look, to become*

evident, to gaze, snatch a look, stare or nouns like *eye, vision, appearance, the blink of an eye, glance, sight, shimmering, brightness, glittering, mirage* establish connection between vision and intellection. They can be seen as a foundation of the cognitive metaphor UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING. Verbs and nouns expressing notions related to hearing such as *to moan, to die away, to wait in ambush, quiet, silent, noiseless, noise, sound, cry, groans, screams* are linked to understanding and knowledge as well. The visual and audible nature of the metaphors throughout the story helps in creating an especially real and sensible world for the reader on the one hand. On the other hand, it clarifies, emphasizes, and provokes thought, and, maybe, brings back distant memories. The author chooses to exploit the same conceptual metaphor in different ways in the story, and this repetition most likely makes the narrative more coherent and accessible to the reader (see Kreuz & Roberts 1993). Moreover, this metaphor in concert with the other rhetorical figures, contributes to the persuasive power of the story.

In *The Land of the Sun*, Al-Shaykh makes an attempt to convince her readers about the surreal and grotesque situation in which both sexes in the Middle East live due to conservative social and religious norms and dated cultural traditions. In reality, and metaphorically in the story, women are trapped physically in their houses and clothing. Men are trapped psychologically in their minds by the way they are brought up. The main character makes a desperate attempt to escape from his confinement; he seeks help and support from his companion but is unsuccessful. He is conscious about his and his friend's inability to break through and deeply regrets that but it is too late. Al-Shaykh leaves open the question of whether this tragic incident has changed or will change in the future Jāsim's and his companion's mindset.

5. Conclusions

In this article, I have examined the broad use of rhetorical figures and PUs employed in *The Land of the Sun*. I hope to have illustrated how they allow the author to express multiple discourse goals simultaneously – to tell a story about women's vulnerable position in society, relations between sexes, reign of conservative traditions and religious beliefs, and how they lead to tragic consequences. Through the story and its graphic and powerful images, al-Shaykh asks the question of whether all this is necessary or functional in a society or in life general.

In Ḥanān al-Shaykh's story figurative language as a whole and metaphor and metonymy in particular, play a significant role in how the narrative is built on both the cognitive-linguistic and emotional levels. At the same time, their importance is revealed through the generated very special subtle connotations that contribute to aesthetic appreciation of the text and the story itself, and achievement of desired discourse goals. Recent research on the effects of metaphors and other figures of speech shows that they create more dynamic and interesting texts, attract attention, generate emotional responses, and stimulate taking action (Larson 2013). All this is very true about the text world created by al-Shaykh in her short story *The Land of the Sun*.

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Gebrauch der Bildsprache im *The Land of the Sun* von Hanan al-Shaykh

Zusammenfassung

In der Konstruktion des Hintergrunds ihrer Kurzgeschichte *The Land of the Sun* bedient sich die berühmte arabische Schriftstellerin Hanan al-Shaykh einer beeindruckenden Vielfalt figurativer Elemente.

Mein Vortrag geht der Frage nach, in wie weit der Diskurszweck und die thematische Bedeutung al-Shaykhs Text mittels einer detaillierten linguistisch-konzeptuellen Analyse identifiziert werden können. Auf der Grundlage der Analyse einer signifikanten Anzahl figurativer Elemente, die via MIPVU identifiziert wurden, zeige ich, wie es der Autorin möglich war, in ihrer Kurzgeschichte eine Anzahl verschiedener Diskurszwecke simultan zu verfolgen: das Erzählen einer Geschichte über die verwundbare Stellung von Frauen in der Gesellschaft, Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern, die Vorherrschaft konservativer Traditionen und Glaubensauffassungen, und wie diese zu tragischen Konsequenzen führen.