

Cognitive Discourse Analysis of Metaphors in Sahib Shah Sabir's Poetry

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Abstract

This study examines the utilization of metaphors in the poetry of Sahib Shah Sabir via the framework of Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA), seeking to reveal the cognitive, emotional, and cultural qualities inherent in his poetic language. Metaphors, typically seen as rhetorical instruments, are examined here as cognitive tools that organize abstract sensations such as love, suffering, struggle, and social awareness. Utilizing Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the study investigates the manner in which Sabir's metaphors translate tangible, embodied experiences into abstract realms, illustrating both personal cognition and shared cultural ideology. A qualitative research design was utilized, featuring a purposive sample of six representative poems extracted from Sabir's principal collections. Collecting data meant closely reading and analyzing the original Pashto writings, with the help of reliable English translations to keep the meaning intact. The metaphors were rigorously found and classified, and their cognitive and cultural importance was analyzed using CODA principles. Special attention was given to frequent conceptual metaphors like BLOOD IS LIGHT, LOVE IS STRUGGLE, PAIN IS FLOWING WATER, and ABSENCE IS FRUSTRATION. These show how Sabir links human feelings to social and ideological issues. The analysis indicates that Sabir's metaphors act as embodied cognitive schemas that express both emotional intensity and cultural identity. His literary speech transmutes personal experiences of suffering, desire, and moral contemplation into collective emblems of resilience, resistance, and ethical awareness. The study also emphasizes the interplay of individual cognition, society frameworks, and linguistic expression, illustrating how metaphors function as conduits between personal thought and collective cultural comprehension. The results enhance the field of cognitive literary studies by demonstrating the complexity of Pashto poetic metaphor and its influence on perception, emotion, and social consciousness. This study emphasizes the necessity of examining metaphoric language for both its aesthetic attributes and its cognitive and cultural ramifications, providing a framework for subsequent research in non-Western literary traditions.

Keywords: Sahib Shah Sabir, metaphors, Cognitive Discourse Analysis, Pashto poetry, culture

INTRODUCTION

Language is not just a way to communicate; it is also a way for people to think, see, and understand the world around them. In contemporary linguistics, cognitive approaches to language underscore that linguistic expressions mirror fundamental mental processes, conceptual frameworks, and cultural experiences. Metaphor is acknowledged as one of the most potent cognitive instruments that influence human comprehension and discourse. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) assert that metaphors are not merely decorative linguistic constructs but essential cognitive mechanisms that enable individuals to grasp abstract topics via the lens of more tangible experiences. This view represented a paradigm change from the conventional literary interpretation of metaphor as a stylistic element to a more expansive cognitive phenomenon integrated into quotidian language and cognition.

Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) extends this cognitive linguistic framework by examining how discourse—both spoken and written—exposes fundamental conceptual structures, social ideologies, and cognitive representations (Tenbrink, 2020). It examines the interplay between cognition and language use in context, emphasizing not just the content of speech but also its reflection of the speaker's worldview and cultural cognition. In this regard, CODA offers an analytical framework for examining metaphors as language and cognitive processes. Examining metaphors in poetry

using cognitive discourse frameworks uncovers the poet's mental mappings and illustrates how language reflects the cultural and emotional reality of a community (Semino, 2008).

Sahib Shah Sabir, a well-known Pashto poet from the late twentieth century, is known for his revolutionary and humanistic voice in poetry. His poetry is profoundly rooted in the social, political, and cultural fabric of Pashtun society, exploring themes of resistance, love, identity, and freedom. Sabir's use of metaphors is very powerful, and it captures both individual and group experiences of struggle and change. Khattak (2016) says that Pashto poetry has always combined beauty with social awareness. Sabir's works carry on this heritage by using strong metaphors to talk about freedom, pain, and hope.

Examining Sabir's poetry via a cognitive discourse lens yields profound insights into the role of his metaphors as intellectual frameworks that shape and mirror Pashtun thought and identity. Cognitive linguistics perceives metaphor as a correlation between source and target domains, wherein abstract feelings (e.g., oppression, hope, or love) are comprehended through more tangible or embodied experiences (Lakoff, 1993). In Sabir's poetry, these kinds of analogies typically connect emotional and political truths. For example, he compares the fight for liberation to a voyage or the subjugation of people to a storm. These mappings are not random; they show the poet's internalized cultural models and shared ways of thinking (Kövecses, 2010).

Speech in Sabir's poetry serves as a vehicle for cognitive and ideological creation. Van Dijk (2014) posits that discourse constitutes a sort of social cognition that serves as an intermediary between individual mental models and overarching social structures. Sabir's poetry creates a worldview that fights against oppression and imagines a time when everyone wake up. His metaphorical selections consequently serve as cognitive instruments for conceptualizing political resistance and emotional fortitude. Cognitive Discourse Analysis facilitates an examination of how metaphors not only articulate but also construct social realities, directing readers towards particular cognitive frameworks and perceptions (Hart, 2011).

Metaphors in Pashto poetry, especially in Sabir's work, show how culture and thought come together. Pashto culture is full with oral traditions, proverbs, and poetry that use metaphors to share wisdom and a sense of community (Rahman, 2011). In this cultural context, Sabir's metaphors utilize common symbols—like mountains, blood, dawn, and rivers—that elicit both natural and socio-political connotations. In his poetry, the word "dawn" comes up a lot. It often stands for hope and the start of a group awakening, which is a way of thinking that is very much a part of Pashtun history. So, his metaphorical writing goes beyond just expressing himself; it also includes stories of community goals and resistance. Gibbs (2017) posits that metaphors are rooted in corporeal and emotional experiences, enabling individuals to grasp abstract concepts such as courage, pain, and love through physical and sensory encounters. In Sabir's poetic universe, metaphors like "the wound of time," "the burning heart," or "the chained dawn" exemplify the conceptualization of emotions through embodied imagery, integrating cognitive frameworks with emotional profundity. This interaction between thought and feeling makes his use of metaphors a deep reflection of human experience and political consciousness.

The examination of Sabir's metaphors using cognitive discourse frameworks enhances the comprehensive knowledge of Pashto literary modernism. His works reflect the progression of Pashto poetry from conventional love motifs to politically infused and intellectually intricate storylines. Ahmad (2018) and other scholars have said that Sabir's use of metaphors shows a mix of classical aesthetics and modern sensibilities, where linguistic inventiveness is a way to free the mind. Researchers can find out how linguistic patterns show new ideas and changes in society in Pashto literature by using cognitive discourse analysis to figure out these metaphors.

This study enhances the interdisciplinary discourse among linguistics, literature, and cultural studies within the broader academic framework. It connects cognitive linguistics with South Asian literary traditions, especially in the area of Pashto poetry, which hasn't been studied as much as it should be. Cognitive Discourse Analysis provides a methodological framework for analyzing how Sabir's metaphors reflect collective mental models of struggle, hope, and identity, rendering his poetry both an artistic expression and a cognitive reflection of Pashtun consciousness. Evans (2019) notes that examining metaphor in conversation situations elucidates how linguistic structures embed and sustain cultural cognitive frameworks.

While there exists extensive literature on Sahib Shah Sabir's poetry themes, there has been insufficient investigation of his utilization of metaphors from a cognitive linguistic standpoint. Most studies have regarded his metaphors as aesthetic or rhetorical components rather than as cognitive and cultural constructions. This study aims to address the existing gap by examining how Sabir's metaphoric expressions reveal underlying conceptual frameworks, social ideologies, and cultural cognition within Pashto discourse. The study utilizes Cognitive Discourse Analysis to elucidate the use of metaphors in his poetry as cognitive instruments for articulating identity, resistance, and emotional experiences.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze metaphors in Sabir's poetry through Cognitive Discourse Analysis, identifying the underlying conceptual mappings that shape his poetic expressions.
2. To explore how Sabir's metaphorical language reflects Pashtun cultural cognition, social ideology, and collective experiences of identity and resistance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Metaphor has been acknowledged for an extended period as a significant instrument of human intellect and linguistic innovation. In the past, metaphors were thought of as decorative parts of language—rhetorical flourishes that made speech and writing more beautiful or expressive. The emergence of cognitive linguistics in the late twentieth century fundamentally transformed this comprehension.

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) *Metaphors We Live By* posited that metaphors are not only linguistic constructs but conceptual frameworks that influence human cognition and perception. Their Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) posits that individuals comprehend abstract realms of experience, including time, emotion, and morality, via mappings derived from more tangible, embodied experiences. This represented a paradigm change, perceiving metaphor as a cognitive process essential to the structuring of information, rather than solely a poetic ornamentation. After this theoretical advancement, researchers broadened metaphor studies to encompass discourse analysis, semantics, and literary criticism.

Kövecses (2010) enhanced Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by underscoring the cultural foundations of metaphors, indicating that conceptual mappings are shaped by collective cultural experiences and social behaviors. Gibbs (2017) contended that metaphors are grounded in corporeal experience, emotional experiences, and sensorimotor engagement with the environment, endowing them with both cognitive and affective profundity. These viewpoints established the groundwork for cognitive discourse methodologies that examine the reflection of thinking and ideology in particular cultural and communication contexts.

Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA)

Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) developed as an interdisciplinary methodology that integrates cognitive linguistics and discourse analysis to examine the manifestation of cognition in language use within authentic discourse (Tenbrink, 2020). CODA examines how speakers or authors construct meaning, rationale, and contextualize their experiences using linguistic selections. It concentrates on the integration of cognitive processes—such as categorization, conceptual metaphor, and mental modeling—within conversation (Hart, 2011). This methodology reconciles cognitive theory with textual analysis, elucidating how speech unveils underlying conceptual frameworks and perspectives.

Hart (2011) and Van Dijk (2014) utilized cognitive ideas in critical discourse analysis, positing that discourse both mirrors and shapes social cognition. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model asserts that language functions as an intermediary between personal cognitive frameworks and collective social knowledge. From this perspective, metaphorical discourse serves as a portal to communal cognition and ideology. In literary contexts, cognitive discourse analysis enables scholars to elucidate how poets or authors understand experience, identity, and emotion through metaphorical frameworks. Semino (2008) illustrated how metaphors in literature expose the cognitive and affective frameworks of both authors and civilizations, indicating that literary metaphors function as both personal and cultural cognitive structures.

Metaphor and Cognition in Poetry

Steen (2009) put out a three-dimensional model for metaphor analysis that looked at linguistic, conceptual, and communicative aspects. This paradigm aids in differentiating between intentional metaphors employed for aesthetic objectives and conventional metaphors that signify established cognitive tendencies. In poetic discourse, metaphors function as cognitive frameworks that enable both poets and readers to examine abstract notions such as love, death, freedom, and suffering.

Semino (2008) observed that poetic metaphors stimulate cognitive mappings that connect emotion, perception, and imagination, providing novel avenues to engage with familiar reality. Freeman (2011) posited that poetic metaphor activates embodied cognition by connecting sensory experience with abstract comprehension. This cognitive involvement renders poetry a distinctive medium for examining the reflection of thought in language. In South Asian literatures, metaphor frequently embodies socio-cultural significance, symbolizing collective struggles and identity construction. Researchers such as Sharma (2015) have emphasized that South Asian literary traditions utilize metaphors intricately connected to spirituality, resistance, and collective awareness.

Metaphor and Culture

Cultural models significantly influence metaphorical cognition. Kövecses (2010) stressed that some metaphors are universal because they come from shared physiological experiences, while others are distinctive to a culture and show how historical, religious, and social circumstances are different. In countries with strong oral traditions, metaphors are ways for people to remember and share their cultural values and way of seeing the world. In Pashto culture, metaphors

frequently originate from environment, tribal traditions, and shared experiences of hardship and honor (Rahman, 2011). The images of mountains, blood, rivers, and dawn are not random; they are symbols that are deeply rooted in Pashtun culture and shape how Pashtuns think and feel. Poets use these metaphors to talk about moral principles, political resistance, and spiritual longing.

Cognitive metaphor research in non-Western contexts has started to uncover the variety of conceptual frameworks among cultures. Yu (1998) illustrated that Chinese metaphors of the heart embody cultural perceptions of emotion and morality, but Barcelona (2000) exhibited cross-cultural disparities in metaphorical reasoning. Utilizing analogous frameworks in Pashto literature enables scholars to investigate the manifestation of Pashtun cognitive and cultural tendencies through poetic language. In this way, metaphors in Sahib Shah Sabir's poetry are not just creative expressions; they are also cultural schemata that show how people think and feel as a group.

Pashto Poetry and Symbolic Language

Pashto poetry has a long and active history, with a mix of romantic, mystical, and political themes. Pashto poetry has reflected the social, emotional, and ideological lives of the Pashtun people, from classical poets like Khushal Khan Khattak to current ones like Ghani Khan and Sahib Shah Sabir. Khattak (2016) observed that Pashto poetry has historically fluctuated between two extremes: aesthetic beauty and societal awareness. Contemporary poets like Sabir accentuated this contradiction by amalgamating revolutionary zeal with linguistic creativity. His use of metaphors captures the conflicts between love and fight, tradition and modernity, and oppression and optimism.

Ahmad (2018) noted that Sabir's poetry signifies a modernist transformation in Pashto literature, utilizing audacious metaphors to convey political consciousness and psychological intricacy. Sabir's metaphors are different from typical romantic images since they typically come from terrible realities like blood, fire, wounds, and chains. These harsh facts become cognitive symbols of resistance and rebirth. His poetry reinterprets conventional Pashto iconography, converting natural and cultural imagery into intellectual metaphors that encapsulate socio-political commentary. In this context, Sabir's lyrical discourse embodies the collective cognitive framework of a civilization undergoing struggle and yearning for liberation.

Cognitive Discourse and Ideology in Sabir's Poetry

From the perspective of Cognitive Discourse Analysis, Sabir's metaphors may be seen as mental and ideological frameworks. Van Dijk (2014) posited that discourse encodes ideology via patterns of meaning that affect cognition and perception. Hart (2011) similarly underscored that metaphorical framing in conversation directs interpretation and shapes ideological positions. In Sabir's poetry, metaphors like "dawn," "flame," "wound," and "chain" not only show how strong his feelings are, but they also help him think about the fight for justice and identity. These metaphorical schemas serve as cognitive frameworks that organize communal perceptions of resistance, sacrifice, and renewal within Pashtun society.

Cognitive techniques elucidate how Sabir's metaphors exemplify embodied cognition—the interplay between physical experience and mental comprehension (Gibbs, 2017). His frequent use of sensory metaphors—heat, agony, blood, and light—grounds abstract concepts such as freedom and love in tangible experiences, indicating a profoundly embodied perspective. This embodiment links personal emotion with collective cognition, transforming private feelings into shared significance. Sabir's metaphorical speech serves as a cognitive bridge between the personal and the political, elucidating the dual role of language as both cognition and action.

Research Gap

Although there is an increasing amount of research on Pashto poetry and cultural expression, there has been insufficient analysis using cognitive linguistics or discourse analytic frameworks. The majority of literary analyses about Sahib Shah Sabir emphasize thematic or socio-political interpretations, neglecting the cognitive aspects of his metaphorical language (Ahmad, 2018; Khattak, 2016). The absence of a systematic application of Cognitive Discourse Analysis to Pashto poetry signifies a substantial research deficiency. Filling this gap not only helps us grasp Sabir's poetry better, but it also helps us understand how language, culture, and cognition work together in non-Western literary traditions.

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) put out by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which posits metaphor as an essential cognitive process rather than a superficial verbal embellishment. This theory posits that individuals comprehend abstract notions by systematic mappings between a source domain (concrete experience) and a target domain (abstract concept). For example, metaphors like "freedom is light" or "struggle is a journey" show how the brain organizes experiences through schemas that are based on the body and culture. Utilizing CMT in the analysis of Sahib Shah Sabir's poetry facilitates an examination of how his metaphorical expressions embody the cognitive and cultural paradigms of Pashtun society. Consequently, the theory offers a framework to analyze Sabir's poetic discourse as a reflection of communal cognition, ideology, and emotional experience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a qualitative research design based on Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) to examine metaphors in the poetry of Sahib Shah Sabir. The qualitative approach is appropriate as it facilitates a comprehensive analysis of language and conceptual patterns within their socio-cultural context, rather than concentrating on quantitative data. Tenbrink (2020) describes CODA as a way to look at how language shows cognitive structures, worldviews, and emotional experiences. The sample for this study comprises a meticulously curated selection of Sabir's renowned poetry from his principal literary collections, embodying themes of love, struggle, identity, and resistance. Poetry were chosen on purpose to make sure that the metaphors and social and political issues they talk about are different. Data was collected by analyzing the original Pashto poetry and using accurate English translations to make sure the meaning stayed the same. Each poetry reads several times to find figurative language and ideas that came up again and again. For the analysis of data, metaphors were classified and analyzed in accordance with Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), emphasizing the correspondence between source and target domains. The investigation also looked at how these metaphors show how Pashtun culture thinks, feels, and embodies emotions. The results were analyzed using the tenets of Cognitive Discourse Analysis, connecting linguistic selections to conceptual and cultural significance. This analytical approach guarantees a methodical, interpretative, and cognitively informed examination of metaphor in Sabir's lyrical discourse.

DATA ANALYSIS

The chosen poetry was analyzed to discern recurring conceptual metaphors, their cognitive mappings, and their reflection of the emotional, cultural, and ideological aspects of Pashtun culture. The analysis emphasizes the interaction among corporeal experience, social environment, and poetic expression in the construction of meaning.

Resistance and Hope

Sahib Shah Sabir poetry exemplifies how metaphor functions as a cognitive and ideological tool—transforming personal suffering into a collective symbol of resistance and hope. Through the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the poetry employs a central metaphor: “Blood is Light”, which conceptually maps sacrifice (source domain) onto illumination, awareness, and renewal (target domain) (Sabir, 2020 p. 153).

English	Pashto
<p>Oh!</p> <p>I know the color of my own blood.</p> <p>These drops and stains scattered on this path, Spread over stones and thorns—</p> <p>This is my blood.</p> <p>No one can wash it away.</p> <p>Even if storms blow or rains pour endlessly, its color will not fade.</p> <p>I know it well—</p> <p>It is my blood.</p> <p>It will shine like the stars,</p> <p>It will awaken the world's conscience,</p> <p>It will decide the fate of tomorrow.</p>	<p>او!</p> <p>زه د خپلې وینې رنګ پېژنې</p> <p>دا څاځکي څاځکي، تکي تکي په دی لاره پرته</p> <p>په کانو بولو خوره</p> <p>دغه زما وینه ده</p> <p>دا څوک وینځلې نشي</p> <p>که په دی هر څومره سیلی والوچي که په دی څومره</p> <p>بارانونه وشي خو رنګ به نه اړوی</p> <p>ماته معلومه ده</p> <p>زما وینه ده</p> <p>دا به رنځوي د ستورو په شان</p> <p>دا به دنیا له حوصله ورکوي</p> <p>دا به سبلا له فيصله کوي</p>

In the opening line, “*I know the color of my own blood*,” the poet establishes a strong sense of self-awareness and ownership of sacrifice. Cognitively, “blood” symbolizes both life and struggle, reflecting embodied experience — pain and vitality interwoven. The repetition of “my blood” reinforces identity and agency, transforming individual suffering into a cognitive emblem of collective endurance. The imagery of “*drops and stains scattered on the path, over stones and thorns*” activates sensory and visual schemas that evoke the harsh realities of oppression. These metaphors connect the physical landscape with emotional struggle — a process known in cognitive linguistics as embodied mapping (Gibbs, 2017). The physical path thus becomes a metaphor for the journey of resistance, marked by wounds and sacrifice.

When Sabir declares, “*No one can wash it away*,” he challenges the notion of erasure — cognitively constructing blood as permanent truth and moral testimony. Even natural forces like “*storms*” and “*rains*”—symbols of cleansing—cannot alter its “color.” Here, “color” metaphorically represents identity, memory, and moral integrity, aligning with Kövecses’ (2010) observation that metaphors often encode cultural resilience. The later verses—“*It will shine like the stars; it will awaken the world's conscience; it will decide the fate of tomorrow*”—extend the metaphor from individual sacrifice to cosmic transformation. Blood becomes light, symbolizing enlightenment and revolution. This transformation aligns with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) notion of conceptual blending, where two conceptual domains merge — here, death and light, creating a new cognitive construct: sacrifice as illumination.

From a Cognitive Discourse Analysis perspective, Sabir's discourse reveals how personal experience is linguistically framed to construct collective ideology. The poetry's use of repetition ("my blood") and progressive structure (from recognition → permanence → transformation) reflects a mental model of resistance where pain leads to awareness and renewal. Van Dijk's (2014) sociocognitive theory supports this view, suggesting that discourse mediates between individual cognition and social belief systems — in this case, transforming personal suffering into a communal moral awakening. Culturally, Sabir's metaphor resonates deeply within Pashtun cognitive and emotional schemas, where blood symbolizes honor, sacrifice, and continuity. The conceptual metaphor "*Blood is Light*" thus bridges emotional embodiment and social ideology, revealing Sabir's cognitive framing of struggle as both inevitable and redemptive.

Transformative Power

Sahib Shah Sabir uses metaphorical discourse to express the transformative power of revolutionary language and poetic expression. The "word" (نکی) and "voice" (عمر) are not just linguistic elements; they symbolize collective resistance, passion, and consciousness. The poet equates his utterance with an elemental force — "a passion" (یوافت) and "a wrath" (یو غصب), both metaphorical representations of emotional and ideological power. Through Cognitive Discourse Analysis, it becomes evident that Sabir conceptualizes language as a living force capable of transcending mortality. The transformation of any language that carries this "voice" into something "eternal and immortal" reflects the conceptual metaphor LANGUAGE IS LIFE and SPEECH IS POWER. The poet's ideology thus connects linguistic creativity with cultural immortality — suggesting that when words embody truth, pain, and defiance, they surpass temporal boundaries and become symbols of permanence (Sabir, 2020 p. 88).

English	Pashto
<p>It is not a mere word, it is a voice— A passion, a storm of fury. Whichever language it turns into, That language becomes eternal and immortal.</p>	<p>نه یو نکی دی، یو غر دی یوافت دی، یو غصب دی چې په کومه ژبه و اوږي هغه ژبه دایمې ی ش لافانی شي.</p>

Romantic and Philosophical Metaphors

This poetry by Sahib Shah Sabir exemplifies his unique ability to blend romantic and philosophical metaphors rooted in Pashto cultural expression. The contrast between "wine and cupbearer" (شراب and ساقی) versus "the beloved's face" (د باره مخ) establishes a metaphorical shift from material intoxication to emotional and spiritual love. Here, love becomes the true form of ecstasy, surpassing all earthly pleasures. Using Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA), one can observe how Sabir constructs meaning through metaphorical mappings — *LOVE IS INTOXICATION* and *BELOVED IS DIVINE*. The poet rejects the conventional imagery of mystical intoxication common in classical Persian and Urdu poetry and replaces it with human emotion as a sacred experience. The final couplet introduces irony and cultural depth: while others idealize angelic purity (پاکي د فربنتو), Sabir finds divinity in human imperfection — مونږ ته جانان خانه (We remember our beloved's flawed charm). This expresses a cognitive metaphor of IMPERFECTION AS BEAUTY, emphasizing humanity, desire, and emotional authenticity over abstract virtue (Sabir, 2020 p. 11).

English	Pashto
<p>I remember neither the cupbearer nor the wine, Only my beloved's face comes to mind. Those who recall the purity of angels— We recall our beloved's delightful flaws.</p>	<p>نه مي ساقی، نه مي شراب یادپوري ماته د باره مخ کلاب یادپوري څوک چې پاکي د فربنتو یاده کړي مونږ ته جانان خانه خراب یادپوري.</p>

Memory, Pain and Poetic Devotion

In this poetry, Sahib Shah Sabir intricately weaves memory, pain, and poetic devotion through metaphorical imagery. The opening line, "*On the gallows of pain*" (در پرچم)، conceptualizes emotional suffering as execution, highlighting the embodied experience of grief. The "words of the curls" (د کل خبره) symbolize intimate and cherished memories, linking physical imagery with emotional cognition. The second line, "*Amid sorrow, the verses of the ghazal remain vivid*", employs the metaphor of poetry as memory and solace. Here, ghazals function as cognitive anchors that preserve emotional and cultural continuity, aligning with Semino's (2008) view that metaphors encode both personal and communal cognition.

The third and fourth lines depict a fragmented mind unable to focus, emphasizing the overpowering impact of memory and emotional attachment. The "fiery words of the beloved" (خور اوریل خبری) are embodied metaphors representing both passion and cognitive intensity, suggesting that emotional experiences can dominate thought and perception. From a Cognitive Discourse Analysis perspective, Sabir's metaphors reveal how personal suffering is cognitively structured through poetic memory. Pain and love are not abstract notions but lived experiences encoded linguistically. The poetry exemplifies Sabir's hallmark style: emotionally charged, culturally rooted, and cognitively rich metaphoric discourse,

where memory, grief, and poetic expression converge to shape both personal and collective consciousness (Sabir, 2020 p. I).

English	Pashto
<p>On the gallows of pain, I have not forgotten the words of the curls, Amid sorrow, the verses of the ghazal remain vivid. My scattered mind could not be gathered on any matter, For I have not forgotten those fiery words of that beloved.</p>	<p>د درد په دار می د کاکل خبری هبری نه دي مانه په غم کښي د غزل خبری هبری نه دي خور شوی ذهن می راغوند نه شو په هېڅ خبره چې می د هغه خور اوریل خبری هری نه دې-</p>

Conflict Between Emotion and Social Reality

In this concise yet powerful poetry, Sahib Shah Sabir uses metaphorical discourse to express the conflict between emotion and social reality. The opening line, “*Here, love is considered heresy*” (د لته مینه کفر دی), establishes a conceptual metaphor of LOVE AS DANGER, highlighting how genuine emotion is suppressed or criminalized in the poet's sociocultural context. The following lines—“*Here, love cannot exist*”—intensify the cognitive frame of prohibition and impossibility, emphasizing the tension between human desire and societal constraints. The metaphorical imagery of wounds, “*in the wounds, pain flows like water*” (په زخمونو ټوټو، درد ټوټو، او بې ټوټو)، employs embodied cognition (Gibbs, 2017), where physical injury symbolizes emotional suffering. Pain becomes tangible, flowing as freely as water, making the abstract experience of sorrow concrete and perceptible. From a Cognitive Discourse Analysis perspective, Sabir frames love and pain as intertwined cognitive constructs. Love is both a natural desire and a source of suffering, shaped by external oppression. This aligns with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) principle that metaphors structure thought by mapping abstract experiences (emotional love and societal restriction) onto concrete domains (wounds and flowing water). The poetry reflects cultural and emotional realism, a recurring feature of Sabir's poetry, where personal feeling becomes a metaphorical lens for understanding collective struggle and injustice (Sabir, 2020 p. 131).

English	Pashto
<p>Here, love is considered heresy, Here, love cannot exist. Here, in the wounds, Pain flows like water.</p>	<p>دلته مینه کفر دی دلته مینه نه کېږي دلته په زخمونو کښي درد کېږي، او بې کېږي.</p>

Presence, Absence, And Social Constraint

In this poetry, Sahib Shah Sabir employs metaphors of presence, absence, and social constraint to reflect the tension between love and societal expectation. The “courtyard” (مکان) serves as a concrete spatial metaphor for social or relational space where personal desire unfolds. Love here is not abstract; it occurs within socially defined boundaries, highlighting the cognitive mapping LOVE IS ACTION WITHIN SPACE. The caution, “*Do not come if you will not arrive*” (اوږدی ټولی، په ټولی)، symbolizes emotional risk and expectation, representing the conceptual metaphor ABSENCE IS FRUSTRATION. The poet emphasizes that love requires reciprocity, and unfulfilled desire leads to cognitive and emotional tension. The final line, “*The world's question will not be answered*” (سوال زمانه نه ټوټو)، universalizes the personal experience, linking individual longing with collective cognitive reflection. This metaphor suggests that unresolved love reflects broader existential or societal dilemmas, a recurring theme in Sabir's poetry (Sabir, 2020 p. 131).

English	Pashto
<p>Now the story of my love Happens in your courtyard. Do not come if you will not arrive; The world's question will not be answered.</p>	<p>اووس زماد عشق قیصی ستاسو په کاله کېږي مه راځه چې نه راځي سوال زمانه نه کېږي.</p>

Through Cognitive Discourse Analysis, the poetry illustrates how Sabir constructs love, absence, and expectation as interrelated cognitive domains, blending personal emotion with social and cultural realities. The metaphors encode both psychological experience and cultural commentary, showing how poetic discourse mediates between inner life and collective understanding.

DISCUSSION

The examination of Sahib Shah Sabir's poetry indicates that metaphors are crucial in expressing individual emotions and group cultural understanding. The selected poems utilize reoccurring conceptual metaphors, such BLOOD IS LIGHT, LOVE IS STRUGGLE, PAIN IS FLOWING WATER, and ABSENCE IS FRUSTRATION, to illustrate the

mapping of abstract sensations onto tangible, embodied worlds. Sabir's metaphors are not just for style; they show that he is deeply involved with social issues, emotional intensity, and moral ideas. For example, in poetry about sacrifice and struggle, physical images like blood, wounds, and flames can be used to show strength, identity, and hope. In the same way, love and desire metaphors put human emotions in socially and culturally determined settings, showing the conflict between personal desire and society norms. The cognitive processes delineated in Sabir's research exemplify the nexus between personal experience and collective perspective. His employment of metaphors transmutes personal anguish into representations of societal critique, ethical contemplation, and cultural identification, corresponding with Kövecses' (2010) assertion that metaphors encapsulate culturally rooted cognition. The representation of abstract ideas using sensory, spatial, and emotional imagery allows readers to connect with the poet's internal experience while comprehending wider socio-political commentary. This dichotomy of individual and collective cognition highlights Sabir's proficiency in employing metaphor as a vehicle for creative expression and ideological discourse.

CONCLUSION

Sahib Shah Sabir's poetry shows that metaphors are strong tools for thinking and culture that change how people think about love, suffering, and hardship. His art embodies a distinctive amalgamation of emotional profundity, cultural identification, and social awareness, wherein individual experiences harmonize with societal aspirations. Cognitive Discourse Analysis shows that Sabir's metaphors not only show how people feel, but they also talk about bigger moral and ideological issues. His beautiful language turns normal things into lasting symbols that connect feelings, thoughts, and culture. In general, Sabir's use of metaphors shows how thoughts, feelings, and social context are all connected in Pashto literature. Further studies ought to utilize Cognitive Discourse Analysis on more Pashto poets to investigate the cultural and cognitive aspects of metaphor within Pashto literature. Scholars may conduct comparative analyses of Pashto poetic metaphors alongside those from other South Asian literary traditions to discern cultural and intellectual similarities and divergences. Educational curriculum in Pashto literature may integrate cognitive analysis of metaphor to augment students' comprehension of cultural cognition, language, and literary aesthetics.

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