

The Metaphor of War in Print Media: A Futuristic Case Study for Language of Peace

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ABSTRACT

The study presents a makeup of linguistic metaphor how it has been widely used in the language of newspaper stories over the years. With the use of intense and handy linguistic structures, a metaphor can politicize the language which can further be used in favor or against someone to get vested results out of it. This study attempts to look into and dig out expressions where it has been used in a subtle way that an ordinary reader never deciphers it. Having said that, one linguistic community gets hold over the other and marginalize it not only linguistically but in terms of politics, war and media. Human beings are labelled as animals, and down to subhuman levels while others are glorified and sublimed in the same text—thus inching towards hatred which can further lead to social and political upheaval. The article suggests change in vocabulary words from war to peace in order to give new thoughts/words to the policy makers, writers and politicians.

KEY WORDS: metaphor, futuristic, war on terror, linguistic, print media, hate language.

INTRODUCTION

We are living in an era of ideological conflicts and social disbelief, and are facing disharmony at the national and international level, where language is used as a weapon and war is channelized through the medium of discourse. Language used for such purpose carries with it duality, irony, metaphoricity, and at times, strong satire and sarcasm. Metaphors are meant to initiate and create a war-like atmosphere to critics, and to condemn those having opposing belief systems. It is a challenge for people to understand them, encounter them successfully, to defend themselves and to have their own clear image of the world. Metaphors not only suggest similarities across different domains, but can also ‘activate conscious and sub-conscious, relational and emotional responses’ in their listeners. It is a big weapon in the modern age as it is believed, and can be seen from the surroundings that the third world war may not be atomic, but the bomb shells are already being exploded in the form of these malevolent metaphors.

Metaphor and language go hand in hand and are practiced since ages but recently the conceptual foundation of metaphor, and its involvement in linguistic model are re-discovered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their seminal work ‘Metaphor We Live By’, in 1979. According to them, the whole conceptual system in which human beings think and act, is completely metaphorically in nature. Therefore, this notion laid the firm foundation of the cognitive theory of metaphor, which was later on known as Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 2011). They believed that most of our experiences are structured, not just described, by our “conceptual systems”, and they are of the opinion that most of our conceptual systems are metaphorical.

The present study takes into account various metaphors printed in newspaper reports and examine them under the light of above said theory. What image metaphor of war entails, and how human beings are presented through these symbols/images especially in case of enemy in war? When a powerful enemy encounters the other through physical assault to damage his opponent and leave no stone unturned to destroy her through verbal attack, especially language in use. Language has never been transparent medium and it can be used in a lethal manner against the other especially when the receiving agent is un-powerful and remains in a weak state, in a zero response level. How has language remained successful in dehumanizing the other through verbal attack? The study seeks to answer these questions and has been done in pursuit of these queries.

In this study we have presented different case histories of Western newspapers language, where they have dubbed certain human beings onto the level of sub-human creatures, like ants, mice, snake and reptiles. This tendency showed a clear distinction on the part of journalists and writers as they are biased towards a certain class and a section of human cross-section. The language of war and related vocabulary has been consistently employed against Muslim population in order to humiliate them. Bourdieu (2000) language habitus claim undergoes the same notions that it is a phenomenon in which human beings are declared as nominal creatures needs to be understood and studied in its perspective. Language has evolved from mere a transparent tool to an instrumental, effective and embodied mechanism which has become lethal weapon of war and waging verbal attack on others.

The study seeks answers but also provide formidable solutions to the extent that the present idiom and vocabulary is 'war based' rather than peace related words. It amounts to challenge to the existing scholars, thinkers, global leaders in media and politics to present a counter lexicon to the hardliners sitting at the helm of affairs both in military top positions and civilian management. It is mandatory not only for human survival but also for the forth coming generation that we have more peace related words rather than the whole discourse is war based. It could give existing peace loving friends a whole new frames to think and act and consequently the whole thought processing can get changed which is at present moment based on linear thinking style. Therefore, the present study instigates the experts in language, linguistics, especially the morphologists and lexicographers to look for new peace related words/idioms.

Metaphorical Language

If we want to understand how people use metaphorical language, its functions, in what kind of situations and in what ways it is used, how people understand metaphorical language and what kind of effects it might have on them, we must need to look at real language as it is used and produced in everyday life. This focus on metaphorical language use by real people in real situations of use is only a recent phenomenon (Cameron, 2011).

How do employed metaphors function in a particular context of the text? A text does not exist in a vacuum – it is produced by someone for someone else in a certain situation and, it fulfills a particular purpose. Van Dijk (2015) elaborates, "Discourse is a complex communicative event that also embodies a social context, featuring participants as well as production and reception processes." Consequently natural discourse provides a much richer source of investigating the function of metaphor.

One of the sources of real discourse occurring is news. Since society is pervaded by media language (Bell, 1991), news influences much of our daily lives. Therefore, it has gathered much research interest. In the same vein, language carries metaphor, because it cannot be plain, all the time referring to literal meaning. So, metaphor has got the natural ability to highlight some aspect of a concept, while at the same time hiding other aspects (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Thus it becomes a very powerful tool for creating subtle persuasive messages serving ideological purposes in the press: asks for investigation.

A huge body of studies across the disciplines demonstrates because of the human nature, and nature of news item published in newspapers, the whole media are simple unable to give us a perspective that is entirely free from the subjective interpretation of events (Fairclough, 2011; Fowler, 2015). Moreover, Fairclough (2011) opined that news is seen as operating within our social system, and some part of our cognition co-exists with the social environment, which allows us to comprehend and express events through in and with language. Therefore, it becomes mandatory to analyze the written language of newspapers in terms of cognition, context and metaphor.

"War on Terror"

The phrase 'war on terror' has been so frequently employed that it is deeply entrenched in our thinking. It is rooted so deep by that we seldom realize that this phrase is not a description but a clear metaphor. The use of the war metaphor phrase needs to be dealt with great caution, especially when it is coined in the case of war on terror. Previously, the phrase 'The War on Drugs' was widely employed by the White House during 1980's and onwards. To say that we are at war with something immediately invokes some alarming associations.

What different kinds of metaphor are being employed by writers in a particular text or news items, and how does it works? In the next section we shall enlist some practices of newspapers during war on terror, and it will be evident that how through the use of metaphor, human beings are defamed and degraded to the lower level of blood-thirsty animals. Such practices are not rare; rather they have changed the whole mindset and mental frames of certain audiences. This is the reason that our public discussions regarding war on terror have a powerful impact on the way we think and act. By systematically stripping humans of humanity, those who consider themselves champions of human rights and humanity, provide a cultural platform for acts of war; and a potent cognitive framework for interpreting such acts.

In the war on terror the mainstream media labeled the rest of the enemy as 'rat trapped', most of the bloggers termed minorities as 'cockroaches' and the political regimes called for the extermination of such forces from all over the world. Officials belonging to the military urged for 'cleansing' operations, and Islam is considered as a 'cancer'. Muslims are thought to 'infest' the Western communities and Iraqi people are called 'dune coons, sand niggers and camel jockeys.' Turban wearing Afghan men are called 'diaper heads' by the Western politicians (Joan Mckinney 2001).

Concepts and Misconception

In this process, the mind allows one to understand a concept by relating to certain characteristics of another concept. This kind of transfer/mapping of metaphor shifts meaning and ideas to one thing from another, to achieve "a new, wider, special precise meaning." With repetition, this happens so adeptly that the transference is invisible and comes to seem inevitable. When the media repeatedly return, therefore, to similar patterns of image and language, these patterns begin to appear both familiar and natural. Instead of viewing Muslims as people who have been symbolically portrayed as animals, they begin in our minds to become animals, imaginatively transposed with the images that represented them. This transportation is one of the key effects of metaphor (Terence Hawkes 1972).

In the Iraq war Americans soldiers described the attack in hunting terms as "clubbing seals." Pilots flying over cities said that Iraqi soldiers "ran like ants" when bombs were dropped on them. In his book **Hidden Agendas**, veteran investigative journalist John Pilger describes and telling the details of media coverage of the mass massacre.

In a memorable report for the BBC radio, Stephen Sackur described the carnage in such a way that he separated, for his listeners, ordinary Iraqis from Saddam Hussein. He converted the ducks, turkeys and fish to human beings. The incinerated figures, he said, were simply people trying to get home. Most newspapers, however, preferred a front-page photograph of a U.S. Army medic attending a wounded Iraqi soldier. Here was the supreme image of magnanimity and tenderness, a "lifeline" the Daily Mirror called it, and the exact opposite of what had happened. (Daily Mirror, 1991)

Similar Symbolism

There has been a remarkable similarity in the symbolic vocabulary employed by the media discourses, including print media, particularly since the beginning of the war on terror. Many reporters lead their stories with "Raid Zaps Iraqi Rats," "Suspected Al-Qaida Nest," "The Vermin Have Struck Again," and "Wiper Nest of Terrorism." When we examine media sources and the public discussion of the war on terror it reveals a pattern of not just animal symbolism but the related metaphor of hunting. Reports covering the war on terror are filled with terms implying the pursuit and capture of an animal, employing verbs like 'hunt,' 'trap,' 'snare,' 'net,' and 'corral.' The much-used phrase 'hunt for terrorists' has widely replaced the more neutral verbs like 'search' and 'look for.'

Jean Paul Sartre once said that words are loaded pistol. In the same vein George. Bush referred to terrorists as 'cowards' and later on his description was quickly changed from coward to animal; his later statement remarked 'smoking them out of their holes'. A symbol which has been consequently used in the newspapers after rats, is snake. In the Western countries the serpent is considered a symbol of evil and its trajectory goes back to Satan who disguise himself in the shape of serpent in order to deceive Eve. There are certain variation of snake, serpent and viper used in the headlines news:

US Reports Calls for War on Principal Nest of Terrorist Vipers (Financial Express, May 18, 2002)

Port city of 14 million Harbours Vipers' Nest of Terrorism (London Daily Telegraph, June 15, 2002)

The Vipers awaits (London Sunday Times, March 23, 2003)

The Snake Leaves the Desert (The Weekend, Australian, April 5, 2003)

Former Arab Power Is Poisonous Snake (Birmingham Post, March 13, 2003)

Britain Bitten By A Snake (Calgary Sun, July 17, 2005)

Apart From Terrorists, BSF Jawans Fight Snakes And Scorpions At India-Pakistan Border
(INDIATIMES AUGUST 12, 2017)

Hamas designs terror-inspired 'Snakes and Ladders' (THE TIMES OF ISREAL 11 April, 2017)

Trump Read "The Snake" On His 100th Day As President As A Metaphor For Immigrants
(BUZZ Feed NEWS, 30 April, 2017)

Snakes in the backyard: China and Pakistan betray grand delusions (DAILY O20 July, 2017)

Whittick (1971) believed that Western art the snake has been typified as a force of an evil which always oppose and the just forces of righteousness. The role of snake carrying symbolic meaning of evil has also been depicted with an eagle, here eagle is representing the force of justice and righteousness overpowering the evil. The

same image has been employed in Homer's Iliad in which an eagle carrying a bleeding snake appeared in front of Greek heroes as an omen of their victory of Trojans. Similarly vipers have got a rich symbolic history, many young vipers troubling the bellies of their mothers symbolizes them plotting against their parents. During the Sixteenth century, the vipers signified a woman who is ready to sting men with their lust. The combination of snake and wiper gave the idea that the opponents desire to poison the other exactly like a snake. The serpent will definitely strike the enemy as it is included in its nature. Against the bite of snake there is no emotions, no arguments and simply no reasoning because its lethality is in its nature. When you are confronted with a snake the only thing one can do is to counter attack to save one's own life.

Another category used in the media under the labelling of animals are rats, they are specifically considered loathsome. Rats are symbolic representation of disease, destruction and death and in both oriental & occidental cultures rat has always been considered as unclean and has negative connotation. It has been observed that place of dirt, plague, and poverty are abodes of rats. When images of rats are associated with terrorists, political leaders and enemy military, it embodies a negative cultural association. There are the following headlines appeared in the mainstream media associated with rats:

- Troops Grab 50 in Raid on Afghan Rat's Nest** (NY Post, May 25, 2002)
- Rats in Trap: How Feds Snared Fort Dix Terror Plotters** Daily News (New York), May 9, 2007.
- Hussein's Rat Hole** {St. Petersburg Times (Florida), December 15, 2003}
- Out of a Rat Hole** (The Christchurch Press, December 16, 2003)
- Americans Cleared out Rats' Nest in Afghanistan** (Irish News, June 7, 2005)
- Fallujah: 'It's a Rat Nest'** (Yorkshire Evening Post, November 8, 2004)
- This Rat Better of Dead** (The Australian, December 18, 2003)
- In tackling terror, Kenya must avoid falling into the rat and cobra trap** (Daily Nation 31 May, 2014)
- Monster 16-inch rat terrifies Swedish family in kitchen: report** (Daily News, 26 March. 2014)
- My Own Private Terrorists: Why I'll No Longer Let Mouse Phobia Ruin My Life Huff Post**
(17 December, 2012)
- Syrian army launched a two-pronged offensive against Daesh (ISIL/ISIS) terrorists entrenched in the vicinity of the town of Al-Sukhnah located in Homs province.** (Sputnik International 01 August, 2017)
- ISIS trapped like rats** (Live Leak 27 December, 2015)

Civilization and Metaphor

The role of metaphor and the discourses it sustains are so fundamental that as, E.L. Doctorow has argued, "The development of civilizations is essentially a progression of metaphor." The cultural lexicon of dehumanizing metaphor is remarkably enduring; not only has it colonized discussion of the war on terror, it has permeated our public conversations about other degenerated or marginalized groups. If such groups and communities are unaware of how such metaphors influence and shape our thoughts, perception and understanding of social situations, Schon (1979) says that in this process the influence becomes even more powerful. When metaphors remain tacit or implicit, they can condition the way in which a situation is understood as problematic. The consequences of buried or hidden metaphors can, therefore, be dangerously counter-productive, constraining, and sometimes negatively controlling, the way in which individual and groups constructs, the world view in which they live and act. M. D. Nalapat writes in his article "US policy-makers ignore the Bible" published in Pakistan Observer, Islamabad dated: June 14, 2013

Indeed Osama Bin Laden's terror attack of 9/11 has turned out to have some positive spinoffs for Washington. Using the excuse of the "War on Terror", Swiss and other off-shores banking entities have been forced to reveal details of the secret bank accounts of VIPs across the globe. It is difficult to believe that US authorities will resist the temptation to trawl off shore banking systems for data on policymakers in other countries. This data can then be used to blackmail such policymakers to introducing measures which harm their own enterprises for the benefit of the US and allied entities. This columnist has always been a bit nonplussed about the manner in which successive governments in India have fashioned policies which discriminate against local in favours of outsiders....India's policy makers, several of whom have secret bank accounts abroad, as well as other assets, are most likely nervous of disclosure and therefore eager to please US authorities.

On the other hand, America is spending heavily on war, and all mechanism related to war, including language and metaphor to perpetuate its war driven policies. John Naughton writes in the most noted newspaper of the UK 'The Guardian'

"A branch of US intelligence service called Intelligent Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA) announced that it would be pouring millions of dollars into a "Metaphor Program" in the first phase of the two- phase program, performers [IARPA's intriguing term for researchers] will develop automated tools and techniques for recognizing, defining and categorizing linguistic metaphors associated with target concepts and found in large amounts of native-language text."

Language – As a futuristic Phenomenon

Language – a communicative phenomenon has been developed into a rigorous political tool, remained a major political weapon for people related to all walks of life, and especially, for those at the helm of affairs to get their vested interests. Linguistic activity at state level can play havoc with the state of the people and it can externalize those seeking human rights, freedom and justice. It becomes pivotal to re-examine whatever has been published, produced and reproduced to harness such lethal political linguistic outburst. As a futurist, one should not be oblivious of these developments occurring in linguistic and political arena. In the coming day's language can play its positive role in enhancing futuristic as peace studies and keep a guard on the theoretical as well as methodological underpinnings of language and its system. There is a dire need that one should establish mechanism in futuristic studies that can save the language from being indulge in filthy political activity. As I have highlighted American Metaphor Program and billion-dollar investment into it, if it goes unchecked it can endanger many existing structures and it would further strengthen war-friendly policy of American elites. This is a clear threat to Global Peace, as well as peace related endeavors because metaphor in language has been employed since centuries to disguise real intentions of the investor.

Assumptions: Metaphorical Humans

It may be assumed here that language is not neutral, as it appears on the surface. All the time all of the people are engaged in a linguistic activity to achieve their aims/targets, may be political, social, economic, military or educational. Investment in linguistic capital is not only done on the individual level, but, also on the state level under the patronage of rulers, through writing in the newspapers, oral discourse, speeches, policy making, discursive rules formation and computer programming. Nietzsche rightly pointed out once that human beings are metaphorical beings engaged in metaphorical phenomenon, understanding it and manipulating it. There is a dire need for all of those who are related to linguistic phenomenon, to look into this; what kind of language is being employed around, who is employing it and for what purposes: a critical gaze must examine who is writing and for what purpose?

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that metaphoric language has been extensively used in the newspaper to demean certain human beings especially in the war settings. These expressions are heavily loaded like guns and full of verbal attack presenting a war like analogy outside the war arena. There is a huge spending in metaphoric program in the West which can further aggravate the situation in which the less powerful are bound to suffer from more lethal oral attack from them. The language for peace remains totally non-existent and the intellectual class even suffers from scarcity of verbal expressions when they confront the policy makers, researchers and writers in a dialogic discussion. The lack of new vocabulary, idiom, and metaphor of peace in English language forced the think-tanks to deliberate in a fixed position marked by the frames of dominant discourse of 'others'. This according to the authors remain the prime reason why the world is moving towards more conflicts day by day, war after war, and fight over fight. If we start thinking of generating new metaphor and idiom of peace, there would be more pragmatic debate on peace and consequently less fight syndrome; a step towards peaceful world and conflict resolution.

Suggestions/Recommendations

As reflexive human beings we are always looking for new avenues and new vistas which seems quite natural phenomenon. As far as conflicts/disputes are concerned, concerned quarters hinges upon the same rhetorical rehearsal therefore resulting with the same output in which nothing concrete comes out. In order to achieve renewed objectives first linguistic behavior needs to be changed. For this purpose, the while responsibility lies on the linguists and language scholars to pave the way for alternative vocabulary that can give a sigh of relief to the old trodden thoughts and discourse. In this way old practices, debates and talks can be shunned and at the same time it could prove an energetic stimulus for neologistic thoughts to problem solving. Language in practice must be ready to embrace the future with futuristic linguistic emblem.

In the light of above discussion one feels there is a dire need to look for a new kind of metaphor—changing metaphoric language use to end hatred generating war and reactive-reactionary terrorism, which in turn can lessen the long lasting effect of war-trodden metaphor. This will not only put different thinking system in place, but it can uproot the existing structure of the language, in which we talk and write about. In the same vein, the writer has suggest following recommendations to be consider upon in order to insert practicability into the field of language and linguistics as well as for those who are at the helm of affairs – policy makers, linguists, scholars, think-tanks and politicians. In future paradigm it ought to be encouraged to using language to promote Positive Peace and Sovereign Fraternal Freedom.

- The need for an alternative vocabulary through coinage, neologism, metaphor, and idiomatic phrases from war to peace
- Reinterpretation, action and implementation
- Education/ A key to peaceful sustainable future
- Teaching defense strategic/ war studies as peace studies
- Teaching futuristic as integral to peace studies at all levels of education—primary, secondary and treasury
- Practicing peace at the individual, family, institution and social level
- Teaching and practicing Islam as peace
- Solving the historical problems such as Kashmir and Palestine
- Ending imperialism, colonialism, internal as well as indigenous, as a core cause of war on terrorism
- Converting the MIC (Military Industrial Complex) and the NATO into instruments & agents of sustainable global peace
- Continuous interfaith, intercultural and inter-civilizational reciprocally respectful and respectable interaction
- Ensuring democratic pluralism and multi-polarity for the global balance of power for peace

Aristotle communicated a long time ago that skillful use of metaphors by political actors can induce listeners to see things that they might not otherwise perceive.

In the end I would like to include a poem recently written by Dr. Ikram Azam (Co-Founder and Co-Chairperson) by the name ‘Hate Language’ surely it truly depicts his vision of futuristic language in futuristic studies.

**Hate Language.
(By: Ikram Azam)**

Language and literature

Are regarded as the repositories of

The very best that is thought and felt

In the whole wide world

Throughout human history

As encoded in the Perennial Human Values

Focusing global Peace, progress, plenty and prosperity

In the altruistic love of sovereign fraternal freedom:

Alas! Currently

Humanity is being menaced malevolently

By the curse words of hate language

Fanning confrontation and conflict

As volatile war and reactive-reactionary terrorism

Dividing humanity along

Racial, religious, sectarian and ideological fault-lines

Between the evil exploiter haves

And the ever-exploited have-nots:

The real ready remedy of this linguistic rotten root cause

Lies in a totally transformative

New Language of Peace in Love

A New Paradigm of Peace

A New Idiom and

A New Healing Metaphor!

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