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A Cognitive Semantic Study of Character Representation in Surah Yusuf: Connotation and Lexical Choices

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دراسة دلالية معرفية لتمثيل الشخصيات في سورة يوسف :الدلالة الضمنية والاختيارات المعجمية

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Abstract

The present study offers a detailed analysis of the semantics of characterization in Surah Yusuf (Chapter 12 of the Holy Qur'án). The research focuses on understanding the concept, psychology, and spirituality of the key characters in terms of specific lexical units used in the text. Surah Yusuf is special in Quranic discourse—the story is compressed into one unity, coherence, and profound narrative (ahsan al qasas—the best of stories). This paper draws on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010), Image Schema Theory (Johnson, 1987) and Frame Semantics (Fillmore, 1982) to examine a selected sample of key narrative encounters in the Surah: Jacob's grievances and patience, the scene of Joseph's temptation by Zulaikha, the brothers' sibling rivalry and conspiracy, and Joseph's eventual political ascent. Based on the qualitative stylistic analysis, it is found that there is a very well organized system of the cognitive-linguistics of the characters that identify the characters in a dynamic way. In the schema of PATH, they make him a representation of the loss of trust; in a metaphorical way, his emotional distress (Asaf) represents blindness, while his mental space of divine knowledge represents sight. Zulaikha's moral agency is represented in the high agency FORCE schemas of temptation and spatial containment, which are cognitively reframed when she confesses her transgression. The brothers are represented by a cognitive frame of false protective solidarity ('usbah), which systemically breaks down when the FORCE of economic ruin and moral guilt set in, transforming it to a frame of repentance. Joseph is represented as a series of structures of physical containment (CONTAINER schemas: well and prison) which are structurally opposed by structures of divine activation (makeen, ameen, hafeez, 'aleem: position of professional trust and intellectual authority). This study is a step towards cognitive stylistics, as it has been shown that the abstract theological meanings of the Qur'an are structurally integrated into the cognitive-lexical system of classical Arabic.**Keywords**: Cognitive Semantics, Character Representation, Surah Yusuf, Lexical Choices, Connotative Meaning, Conceptual Metaphor, Image Schemas, Cognitive Stylistics.

المستخلص

تقدم هذه الدراسة فحصًا دلاليًا معرفيًا معمقًا لتمثيل الشخصيات في سورة يوسف (السورة الثانية عشرة من القرآن الكريم)، مستكشفةً السمات المفاهيمية والنفسية والروحية للشخصيات الرئيسية من خلال استخدام مفردات محددة ومعانيها الضمنية. تتميز سورة يوسف بخصوصية في الخطاب القرآني، إذ تُكثّف القصة في وحدة متماسكة وسردية عميقة (أحسن القصص). تستند هذه الورقة البحثية إلى نظرية الاستعارة المفاهيمية (لاكوف وجونسون، ١٩٨٠؛ كوفيتشيس، ٢٠١٠)، ونظرية مخطط الصورة (جونسون، ١٩٨٧)، ودلالات الإطار (فيلمور، ١٩٨٢) لدراسة عينة مختارة من اللقاءات السردية الرئيسية في السورة: تظلمات يعقوب وصبره، ومشهد إغواء زليخة ليوسف، وتنافس الأخوين وتآمرهما، وصعود يوسف السياسي في نهاية المطاف. استنادًا إلى التحليل الأسلوبي النوعي، تبيّن وجود نظام معرفي لغوي متقن التنظيم للشخصيات، يُعرّفها بطريقة ديناميكية. ففي مخطط "المسار"، يُمثّل يوسف فقدان الثقة، بينما يُمثّل اضطرابه العاطفي (آصف) العمى، في حين يُمثّل فضاءه الذهني للمعرفة الإلهية البصيرة. أما فاعلية

زليخة الأخلاقية فتتجلى في مخططات "القوة" ذات الفاعلية العالية، والتي تُمثّل الإغراء والاحتواء المكاني، والتي يُعاد صياغتها معرفيًا عندما تعترف بذنبها. ويُمثّل الإخوة بإطار معرفي للتضامن الوقائي الزائف (الأسبة)، الذي ينهار بشكل منهجي عندما تحلّ "قوة" الخراب الاقتصادي والشعور بالذنب الأخلاقي، مُحوّلاً إياه إلى إطار للتوبة. ويُمثّل يوسف بسلسلة من هياكل الاحتواء المادي (مخططات "الاحتواء": البئر والسجن)، والتي تُعارضها بنيويًا هياكل التفعيل الإلهي (المكين، الأمين، الحفيظ، العالم: مكانة الثقة المهنية والسلطة الفكرية). تُعد هذه الدراسة خطوة نحو الأسلوبية المعرفية، حيث تبين أن المعاني اللاهوتية المجردة للقرآن الكريم متكاملة هيكليًا في النظام المعرفي المعجمي للغة العربية الكلاسيكية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدلالات المعرفية، تمثيل الشخصيات، سورة يوسف، الخيارات المعجمية، المعنى الضمني، الاستعارة المفاهيمية، مخططات الصور، الأسلوبية المعرفية

1. Introduction

Among current linguistic approaches, cognitive semantics guides how scholars examine stories within holy writings. Notably, Chapter 12 - Surah Yusuf - emerges as an unusually consistent sequence, layered with intricate patterns of rhetoric, syntax, and meaning. Rooted in findings from Saeed (2018) and Stockwell (2020), speech mirrors thought processes, so word selection, metaphorical thinking, and mental structures such as CONTAINER, PATH, or FORCE actively build who characters are and what they can do. Though older religious or literary analyses tend to see themes like endurance (sabr) as fixed moral points (Mir, 2000; Robinson, 2001), these views commonly miss subtle stylistic tools shaping character actions over time. Bridging classical dictionary methods with recent advances in cognition-based style analysis, this work tackles three precise questions. 1. What are the specific cognitive lexical strategies and semantic fields used in the creation of the spiritual and psychological images of Joseph, Jacob, Zulaikha, and the brothers? 2. How do the meanings of metaphors and connotations change over time in various kinds of narratives in order to shape the moral identity of the characters? 3. What are the narrative trajectories and agency of these characters defined by image schemas (CONTAINER, FORCE, PATH) and cognitive frames?

The study answers these questions in a systematic manner, categorizes the main lexical decisions, identifies the cognitive frames, and illustrates the usefulness of cognitive semantics as an analytical tool. Theoretically and linguistically valuable, the research demonstrates that the methodologies and theories previously mentioned—such as Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Image Schema Theory, and Frame Semantics—can be applied to the Semitic sacred texts with rigor, and not just subjectivity, and become direct inputs to cognitive stylistics and translation studies (Eldin, 2018; Al-Khalidi, 2021; Naser & Mohammed, 2020). This research is limited to the classical Arabic text, as it is found in the standard Cairo edition, of the 111 verses of the Surah Yusuf, and is based on the translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (2004) that has been accepted by a large number of international academics. The research is geographically and institutionally linked to the rhetorical sciences tradition of the University of Baghdad and successfully combines the traditional rhetorical sciences with modern cognitive linguistics without considering any irrelevant sociological, historical or legal implications.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this study, a strong multi-dimensional framework of Cognitive Semantics is used to examine the representation of character in Surah Yusuf. Cognitive Semantics is a field of cognitive linguistics in which conceptual organization is said to be manifested and influenced by linguistic structures (Evans & Green, 2018). It explores construction of meaning in relation to human conceptual systems, physical experiences, and spatial interactions. Surah Yusuf is a highly intricate text in terms of narration, and to decode its complexities, the three cornerstone theories of cognitive linguistics are combined with cognitive lexical semantics:

A. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, 1980; Zoltán Kövecses, 2010), metaphors are not just fancy literary tricks, but basic mental processes by which abstract conceptual domains (target domains) are represented in terms of a more concrete, physically grounded experience (source domain). CMT distinguishes between metaphorical expressions (i.e., the words or phrases within a text) and conceptual metaphors (i.e., the overall conceptual mapping or mapping between domains, such as GRIEF IS A LIQUID CONTAINER or LIFE IS A JOURNEY). Conceptual metaphors play a crucial role in the area of sacred discourse because they are the ones that bridge the gap between concrete human somatic and spatial experiences and abstract theological, spiritual, and moral truths. In this study, we will identify the structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors that are used to conceptualize the inner state and moral trajectory of characters, and how the reader's cognitive representation of character identity is guided by these metaphors (Eldin, 2018; Naser & Mohammed, 2020).

B. Image Schema Theory

First developed by Mark Johnson (1987) and Lakoff (1987), image schemas are somewhat basic, pre-conceptual cognitive architectures derived from our physical interactions of space, force, and physical containment. The reform construction blocks are used to construct the way we speak and think about the world. We consider three image schemas that govern the storyline and characters in Surah Yusuf:

1- The CONTAINER Schema consists of an interior, an exterior, and a boundary. This schema is highly productive in forming the physical settings of confinement and isolation, such as the well (jubb) and the prison (sijn), as well as psychological settings including the heart or mind (nafs or sadr). The CONTAINER schema is a cognitive representation device for moral protection, incubation, and physical confinement.

2. The FORCE Schema relies on force, hindrance, deviation, or counterforce. Temptation (rawada), social plot (kid), and divine revelation (burhan, nasrifa) are all seen as active vectors of power in Surah Yusuf.

3. The PATH Schema consists of a source location, a pathway of motion, and a destination point. The PATH schema includes the kinetic and spatial motions of characters, reflecting their spiritual and moral development.

C. Frame Semantics and Cognitive Lexical SemanticsIn considering word choice specifically, an approach put forward by Charles Fillmore back in 1982 should prove helpful – the notion of Frame Semantics implies that meaning is based on larger mental frames rather than being restricted to separate definitions. Words serve as triggers to large complexes of interconnected notions, which can be called cognitive frames. Knowing one aspect of such a frame equals knowing everything else included in it. Such lexical items as "makeen" (established) and "ameen" (trusted) trigger the so-called Stewardship/Governance Frame and the notions of honesty, competence, and responsibility become intertwined with one another. Through this approach, one notices how strong and repetitious wording becomes alongside with changing conceptual frames – there is a clear shift from mutual loyalty to distrust, followed by regret and surrender. Non-literal meaning comes through as the feelings and attitudes arise due to activation of certain aspects of cognitive frames.

D. Conceptual Blending and Mental Spaces

Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002) explains the process of creating visionary and prophetic meaning. According to CBT, meaning creation is a product of the dynamic activation of temporary cognitive structures referred to as “mental spaces” (Input Space 1, Input Space 2) that get activated and merged into “Blended Space” (the Blend) with the emergence of a structure not existing before in either input space. In the case of Surah Yusuf, this theory becomes especially useful for analyzing the space of prophetic dreams (stars, sun, and moon bending to Joseph) that gets activated, maintained, and blended with the space of submitting to God’s will in Egypt (Hidayat, 2019).

3. Literature Review

Overview of Quranic Narrative Studies

Overview of Quranic Narrative Studies Historically, the research of the Quranic narratives had been guided by classical Islamic hermeneutics (Tafsir) to derive theological lessons, jurisprudential rulings, and historical lineages. The classical exegetes such as Al-Tabari (d. 923), Al-Qurtubi (d. 1273), and Ibn Kathir (d. With philology and context, 1373 carefully studied the semantic features of classical words to preserve the theological purity of the text. In the field of Arabic rhetoric (Balagha), the early masters such as Abdul-Qadir al-Jurjani (d. Muhammad ibn Idrīsh al-Qastaʾlī (1078) formulated the first theory of word order/syntax (nazm) of the Qur'ān, which placed emphasis on the syntactic inimitability (I'jaz) of the Qur'ān; word order and semantic harmony are a single. Al-Jurjani's writings on imagery and semantic connectivity date back to before the modern European stylistics were written, and this set a precedent for centuries that stylistic variation is directly responsible for conceptual meaning. Modern day, western and western-educated Arab scholars introduced modern day literary and linguistic concepts to the narratives of the Quran. Mustansir Mir (1986, 2000) was a Qur'anic narrative scholar who revealed the thematic and structural coherence (Nazm) of each Surah and debunked the assumption of the older orientalist tradition that the Quran is a text without any thematic and structural unity. Robinson (2001) and Boullata (2000) examined literary forms, among them dialogue, pacing of the story, and characterization. Salwa El-Awa (2006) conducted a study on textual relations and coherence, demonstrating how the local narrative segments are related to the overall theological goals. From the perspective of the Arabic language, Hussein Abdul-Raof (2001, 2012) wrote pioneering research on the stylistics of the Qur'an, which showed the formidable difficulties involved in the translation of classical Arabic connotative structures into contemporary English, and also exposed the conceptual profile of the classical usage of words. In spite of this vast amount of literature, there is a conspicuous absence of research. Themes of ‘Joseph's shirt,'

'patience,' etc., in Surah Yusuf (112) have been discussed by most of the modern literary or rhetorical studies (e.g., Sells, 1999; Mir, 2000) as abstract literary motifs instead of cognitive-linguistic structures.

They do not usually engage in systematic cognitive semantic studies, in which they examine how these motifs are organized through conceptual metaphors, image schemas, and cognitive framing. This study directly fills this vacuum by using modern Cognitive Semantics (Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Image Schema Theory, and Frame Semantics) as an independent tool to analyze the meaning and characterization process of Surah Yusuf from the point of modern cognitive linguistics.

4. Methodology

Research Design and Corpus Selection

In the present study, a qualitative approach to textual analysis has been adopted within the realms of cognitive stylistics and cognitive semantics. The primary source of data for this study is the classical Arabic text of Surah Yusuf (Chapter 12 of the Holy Qur'an) that contains 111 verses. In light of the requirement of cognitive-semantic analysis, the following nodes have been chosen as the representative narrative junctures in order to capture the dynamics of different characters, spatial relations, and concepts:

- Node Corpus 1: Jacob's Grief and Patience (Verses 11-18, 83-86, 96): deals with cognitive conceptualizations of parental grief and trust in God in the context of Jacob (Ya'qub).
- Node Corpus 2: Zulaikha and Joseph (The Temptation Scene – Verses 23-34, 51): explores the interaction of Yusuf and Zulaikha and how the power dynamics of force and container are managed in the negotiation of sexual desire.
- Node Corpus 3: The Conspiracy of the Brothers and Their Sorrowful Path (Verses 7-18, 58-67, -93, 97): deals with the cognitive framing of the brothers and how the collective solidarity frame shifts into one of guilt and remorse.
- Node Corpus 4: Joseph's Rise to Sovereignty (Verses 4, 54-57, 100-101): involves the process of the rise of Yusuf from incarceration to sovereignty and his cognitive-lexical profile as well as dream space blending.

In order to maintain linguistic purity, the Cairo edition of the Qur'an has been chosen for this study. In order to make the data available to the academic audience, the renowned English translation of M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (2004) has been used.

Analytical Procedure

The analysis follows a series of four cognitive-semantics steps:

1. Step 1 – Cognitive Lexical Extraction and Analysis of Semantic Fields. All noun phrases, verbs, and adjectives used to define the principal characters in the selected passages are extracted and sorted into cognitive-lexical semantic fields (spiritual, somatic, collective, governmental).
2. Step 2 – Associative-Connotative Interpretation and Analysis of Frames. The associative and connotative meaning of each lexical item is interpreted and analyzed in terms of what background cognitive frame it triggers (stewardship, brotherhood, temptation), and what positive or negative valence it carries in terms of emotional evaluation.
3. Step 3 – Cognitive Schema Coding. Expressions in clauses are analyzed in terms of three components:

(a) conceptual metaphors (the mapping of source domains such as PHYSICAL SIGHT, LIQUID, DARKNESS, and PHYSICAL FORCES on target domains like GRIEF, DECEPTION, PROTECTION, or FAITH),
(b) image schemas (CONTAINER, FORCE, PATH, and LINK schemas in particular), and
(c) cognitive frames (where the characters are located or how they transition from one frame to another).

4. Step 4 – Mental Spaces and Conceptual Blending. In this step, the process takes into account the interaction and blending of different mental spaces in order to construct the overall theology-narrative system of the Surah.

5. Data Analysis/ Discussion

5.1 Jacob: The Cognitive Conceptualization of Patience, Grief, and Hope

The portrayal of Jacob (Ya'qub) in Surah Yusuf is distinct in that it is an interplay of extreme physical/emotional anguish and vibrant spiritual strength. Jacob is not passive, but rather constructed actively in his mind and cognitive processes, one who possesses a superior spiritual knowledge and aligns himself with the divine reality. On the arrival of his sons with Yusuf's blood stained shirt, Jacob rejects their version of the events, declaring his cognitive agency and the activation of the Beautiful Patience frame. This is done by the renowned choice of words "Sabrun Jamil" in verse 18:

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ

"He said, 'No, your souls have enticed you to do something. But beautiful patience is my best recourse: it is to God alone I must look for help against what you describe." Metaphorically, the use of the verb sawwalat (سَوَّلَتْ—

entice, adorn, or depict as good) evokes a unique mental frame for self-deception wherein the human ego (nafs) is seen as a painter painting an attractive and deceitful picture of a terrible truth. Through this process, the sons can successfully commit murder without suffering any psychological breakdown at all. The reaction that Jacob provides almost immediately after learning of the situation is Sabrun Jamil (صَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ). The combination of Sabr (patience) and the adjective Jamil (beautiful/graceful) creates a powerful cognitive-metaphoric concept where PATIENCE IS A BEAUTIFUL ADORNMENT OR FORTE. In Classical Arabic, the adjective jamil stands for beauty or aesthetic perfection. Applied to the concept of patience, the cognitive meaning implies patience, which consists of perfect spiritual restraint—an internal quality whereby one refrains from criticizing others and does not let himself be moved by any event, displaying utmost grace and poise. Thus, Jacob emerges as a cognitive agent that chooses a strategy of spiritual resistance rather than giving in to the situation.Years after, when Benjamin too is alienated in Egypt, the cognitive-lexical reaction from Jacob in Verse 83 repeats the same anchoring and proves that "Sabrun Jamil" is indeed a robust cognitive frame influencing his perception of all life's tribulations.

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

*"He said, 'No, your souls have enticed you to do something. But beautiful patience is my best recourse: maybe God will bring them all back to me. He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.'"*In the present context, Jacob's cognitive journey goes from enduring his spiritual anguish to hope in the PATH schema. The phrase "ʿasā Allāhu an ya'tīyanī bihim jamīʿan" ("perhaps God will bring them all back to me") indicates that Jacob's spiritual recovery after losing his children transforms into a real PATH schema of coming together or reunification of the family. With regard to ending his statement with the names of God "Al-ʿAlīm" (All-Knowing) and "Al-Ḥakīm" (All-Wise), Jacob identifies himself as being in the immediate painful mental space in contrast to the supreme comprehensive divine cognitive plane.In this connection, one may notice an active involvement of spirituality on the part of Jacob in contrast to his physical suffering presented at the later stages of the Surah. Thus, Jacob's somatization after the loss of his second son is clearly indicated in Verse 84 as follows:

وَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا أَسَفَىٰ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ

"He turned away from them, crying, 'Alas for Joseph!' and his eyes went white with grief and he was filled with silent sorrow"

The word "Asaf" (أَسَفَىٰ) is loaded with profound meanings of extreme suffering, agonies, and a sense of helplessness. The description of his eyes turning white (وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ), denotes Jacob's blindness. Here, somatic imagery is used to make his internal agonies more physically grounded and externalized: Sorrow is conceptualized as the clouding of the visual domain. Moreover, the lexical unit (LI) "kazheem" (كَظِيمٌ) triggers the conceptual metaphor: GRIEF IS A LIQUID CONTAINER. The term kazheem in classical Arabic means a "full water-skin" that has its mouth tightly closed so that the water does not overflow. This strong metaphor represents the human body of Jacob as a receptacle for a great quantity of suffering he tries to contain but does not want to release into public outcry. So, as a material person, he is passed down, as a spiritual being, he is contained; and as an individual there, he is self-controlled, as stated in Verse 86:

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو بَثِّي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

*"He said, 'I only complain of my suffering and my grief to God, and I know from God that which you do not know'"*On the linguistic level, the actives, "ashku" (I complain) and "a'lamu" (I know), are shown as a high level of mental and cognitive activity in Jacob. Most importantly, the syntactic constraint which guides his grievance only towards Allah (إِلَى اللَّهِ—to God), acts as a spatial redirection of the sorrows, a redirection from the fragile human domain towards the infinite and divine space. This maintains the moral integrity of "Sabrun Jamil". Finally, in Verse 96, Jacob's cognitive profile is confirmed: Physical sight meets with spiritual vision.

فَلَمَّا أَن جَاءَ الْبَشِيرُ أَلْقَاهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا ۖ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"But when the bearer of good news arrived, he cast the shirt over Jacob's face, and his sight was restored. He said, 'Did I not tell you that I know from God what you do not know?'"

The literal restoration of his sight (فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا - 'he returned seeing') represents a profound somatic-cognitive event that employs the conceptual metaphor: SIGHT IS JOY/KNOWLEDGE, BLINDNESS IS SORROW. The physical contact with Joseph's shirt, which serves as a somatic index of Joseph's living reality, dissolves the clouding of his eyes and maps physical recovery onto the resolution of spiritual and emotional sorrow. This spatial and physical resolution confirms Jacob's persistent cognitive frame: "I know from God what you do not know."

5.2 Zulaikha and Joseph: The Cognitive Frames of Temptation, Containment, and Moral Reframing

The temptation scene in Verses 23 to 34 epitomizes one of the most intellectually heavy and stylistically rich scenes in traditional narrative. It presents a sharp contrast between the frame of Divine Protection/Refuge and

the cognitive frame of Physical Temptation/Seduction. Zulaikha is shown right away as a very active force that controls and changes the moral and physical space and uses physical containment to make Joseph obey. Think about Verse 23:

الَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِ وَغَلَّقَتِ الْأَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ۚ قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ

*"And she, in whose house he was, demanded of him his self [sought to seduce him]. She bolted the doors and said, 'Come!' He said, 'God forbid! My master has given me a good home. Evil-doers never prosper."*Here, Zulaikha is the grammatical subject of three consecutive, high-agency active verbs: rawadat (رَاوَدَتْ —she seduced), ghallaqat (غَلَّقَتْ—she bolted), and qalat (قَالَتْ—she said). The verb rawada (رَاوَدَ) is etymologically derived from the movement of seeking water or hunting, representing a persistent, calculated pulling force. This awakens the conceptual metaphor SEDUCTION IS A POWERFUL PHYSICAL FORCE. Zulaikha uses the CONTAINER schema to carry out this force by closing the doors (وَغَلَّقَتِ الْأَبْوَابَ), aiming to establish an utterly physical and moral container that separates Joseph from the social and moral order and blocks all outside escape routes. The story creates a great spatial-power imbalance by using the relational description allati huwa fi baytiha (she in whose house he was) to allude to Zulaikha rather than by her name. Joseph is physically imprisoned within her home sphere. Her direct command hayta laka (هَيْتَ لَكَ—'Come!') is a linguistic indicator of total, non-reciprocal power.Joseph, on the other hand, resists this pressure by quickly bringing in a spiritual counter-force. His utterance ma'adha Allah (مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ—'God is my refuge') operates as a cognitive defense. It immediately triggers the Divine Sanctuary frame, therefore dismantling the domestic boundaries Zulaikha has established. Invoking God changes the mental environment for Joseph by bringing in the ultimate Divine Observer who negates the privacy of the physical body. He bases his rejection on the ideas of rabbi (my master/Lord) and al-dhalimun (the wrongdoers). In Quranic discourse, dhalimun refers to those who breach natural and divine limits. Joseph, therefore, presents the enticement from a private, domestic event into an ultimate moral battle.Verse 24 compounds this dynamic of two forces by outlining the psychological vectors that influence each character inside:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ ۖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَن رَّأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ ۚ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ

"And she certainly desired him, and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord. And so we turned away evil and indecency from him, for he was indeed one of Our chosen servants."

The verb hamma (هَمَّ—to intend, incline, or desire) visualizes physical desire as a strong cognitive force vector. The line depicts Joseph and Zulaikha as victims of this vector. But a strong visual conceptualization stops Joseph's vector: an ra'a burhana rabbihi (لَوْلَا أَن رَّأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ—' had he not seen the proof of his Lord'). The visual awareness of the divine Burhan (sign/proof) serves as an impenetrable cognitive barrier, thereby offsetting the physical power of temptation. Crucially, divine intervention is itself conceptualized through the FORCE schema of diversion: linasrifa 'anhu al-su'a (لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ—' that We might turn away evil from him'). In this case, God becomes the most active agent by literally diverting the PATH of evil (al-su'a) from Joseph, thus maintaining his status as mukhlas (chosen/purified), which is the ideal state of divine protection.

This conflict is resolved in the twenty-fifth verse by a spectacular manifestation of the PATH and FORCE schemas:

وَاسْتَبَقَا الْبَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِن دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَى الْبَابِ

*"They raced each other to the door, and she tore his shirt from behind, and they encountered her master at the door."*The verb wastabaqa ('and they competed to race towards/for') implies a spatial contest of trajectories; Joseph is racing towards the exit point, which stands for spiritual salvation/freedom, while Zulaikha is chasing him to prevent the course of his movement and maintain his containment. The tearing of the shirt from behind (وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِن دُبُرٍ) refers to a tactile somatic incident which leaves an irrefutable bodily mark and thus becomes an index of Joseph's innocence and Zulaikha's malice. Upon seeing Al-Aziz standing by the door, she tries to change his perception and tells him that Joseph was the one who began to act aggressively and made the first move (arada bi-ahlika su'an). Zulaikha is requesting Al-Aziz to punish Joseph by putting him into a punitive containment ('an yusjana) or torturing him physically ('adhabun aleem).The use of the word kid in Verse 28 makes the above-mentioned psychological conflict even clearer. When Al-Aziz sees the torn shirt, he says:

فَلَمَّا رَأَىٰ قَمِيصَهُ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٍ قَالَ إِنَّهُ مِن كَيْدِكُنَّ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ

"When the husband saw that the shirt was torn at the back, he said, 'This is another of your womanly dupes: your guile is great indeed'" Lexical selection of "kid" (كَيْد) refers to scheming, trickery, or deceitful planning. In this discourse, the power of female social manipulation is very great through the substitution of "kid" with the intensive "'adheem" (عَظِيمٌ). Then in Verse 32, Zulaikha boasts about this force and uses a somatic holding metaphor to explain Joseph's refusal:

قَالَتْ فَذَٰلِكُنَّ الَّذِي لُمْتُنَّنِي فِيهِ ۖ وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدتُّهُ عَن نَّفْسِهِ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ ۖ وَلَئِن لَّمْ يَفْعَلْ مَا آمُرُهُ لَيُسْجَنَنَّ وَلَيَكُونًا مِّنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ

"She said, 'This is the one you blamed me for. I did try to seduce him, but he held fast. And if he does not do what I order him, he will surely be imprisoned and will be of those debased.'"

Cognitive metaphor of holding in physical terms can be seen in fa-sta'sama (فَاسْتَعْصَمَ). It views the integrity of Joseph as a tangible object that the character holds tightly in order to resist the powerful force of temptation. The threat to imprison him (لَيُسْجَنَنَّ) and humiliate him (مِّنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ) is an example of a cognitive metaphor that links physical containment (CONTAINER schema) and the structure of power (vertical orientation schema: UP IS HONOR, DOWN IS HUMILIATION). Importantly, the linguistic metaphor used by Zulaikha gets entirely restructured in Verse 51, where she admits her guilt, thus regaining her ethical identity:

قَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ الْعَزِيزِ الْآنَ حَصْحَصَ الْحَقُّ أَنَا رَاوَدتُّهُ عَن نَّفْسِهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

*"The Governor's wife said, 'Now the truth is out; it was I who tried to seduce him from his self, and he is a man of truth'"*The metaphorical verb hashasa (حَصْحَصَ) literally means to become manifest or to clear away, like pebbles emerging from dust. Using this strong lexical choice, Zulaikha mentally dismantles her earlier "guile" (kid), therefore creating the conceptual area of untruths. Her active confession ana rawadttuhu (It was I who tried to seduce him) aligns her with the moral order, while her testimony innahu lamin al-sadiqeen (and he is indeed a man of truth) validates Joseph's cognitive identity as the ultimate embodiment of al-sidq (absolute truth).

5.3 The Brothers: Cognitive Metaphors of Conspiracy, Sibling Solidarity, and the Guilt-ridden Path

The portrayal of Joseph's brothers offers an outstanding example of how cognitive linguistics may account for moral failure, false identity, and spiritual regeneration. The brothers are portrayed as an impersonalised, collective societal actor across the first half of the narrative. Their constant usage of the lexical word 'usbah (عُصْبَةٌ) in Verse 8 gives a linguistic representation of this collective:

إِذْ قَالُوا لَيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

*"They said, 'Joseph and his brother are more loved by our father than we are, though we are a strong group. Our father is clearly in the wrong."*The word 'usbah (عُصْبَةٌ) refers to a small, cohesive, and physically strong group of people. The brothers employ "usbah in their cognitive conversation to create an identity of group dominance and physical utility, therefore differentiating themselves from Joseph and Benjamin's physical frailty. Their patriarchal criticism of their father, whom they cognitively designate as being in dhalalin mubeen (ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ—clear error/deviation), is justified using this collective identity. The PATH's orientation schema is here started: Because of his emotional instability, they see their father as deviating from the patriarchal utility's 'straight way'.The brothers scheme their conspiracy in Verse 9 to fix this alleged departure, which exposes profound cognitive framing and spatial metaphors:

اقْتُلُوا يُوسُفَ أَوِ اطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا مِن بَعْدِهِ قَوْمًا صَالِحِينَ

*"Kill Joseph or cast him out to some land so that your father's face/attention may be free for you, and you may be after that a righteous people."*The clause "yakhlul lakum wajhu abeekum" (يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ - 'that your father's face may empty out/be exclusive for you') employs the conceptual metaphor: ATTENTION/LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FIELD / VIEWING ANGLE. The father's countenance is conceived as a finite container of affection that is presently blocked or occupied by Joseph's physical presence. Through physically removing Joseph ("aqtulu" or "itrahuhu ardan"), they anticipate the father's visual and emotional field will empty out, rendering it exclusively available to them. Moreover, "wa takunu min ba'dihi qawman saliheen" (وَتَكُونُوا مِن بَعْدِهِ قَوْمًا صَالِحِينَ - 'and you may be after that a righteous people') demonstrates a remarkable cognitive temporal splitting. They compartmentalize their morality, characterizing their transgression as a temporary, localized deviation on a path from which they can readily exit and immediately resume as 'righteous' once their spatial objective is accomplished. To implement this plan, they employ a deceptive discourse of false protection when addressing Jacob in Verse 12:

أَرْسِلْهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَرْتَعْ وَيَلْعَبْ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

"Send him with us tomorrow to enjoy himself and play, and we will take good care of him"

Linguistically, the brothers activate the Guardianship Frame with the very positive lexical choice "hafidhoon" (لَحَافِظُونَ—guardians/protectors). The word steeped with profound ethical implications of the sacred trust. When they throw Joseph into the well, however, this protective frame fails, and a physical 'metonymy of deceit' (dam kadhib) takes the place of it in Verse 18:

وَجَاءُوا عَلَىٰ قَمِيصِهِ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ

"And they brought his shirt with false blood on it"

The word 'lies/falsehood' (kadhib) is used as an adjectival modifier of 'blood' (dam) in the grammatical construction ‘dam kadhib' (بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ—false blood). The use of this word-compounding implies that the same blood is a physical form of deception. Should be their symbol of protective guardianship, the shirt becomes a physical object of betrayal, and how physical objects can carry multiple cognitive frames is an issue that is discursively explored.The brothers are in a conspiratorial state, and they are slowly collapsing as they meet Joseph in Egypt, in an agonized manner. The people fall to their knees when they are afflicted by famine and lose Benjamin, and their self-conceit ('usbah') is taken away and they become very vulnerable. In Verse 88, they call him the "undone young man," "the young man who is helpless," and "the young man who is helpless before us. In Verse 88, they speak of him as "the young man who is helpless," and "the young man who is helpless before us.

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ مَسَّنَا وَأَهْلَنَا الضُّرُّ وَجِئْنَا بِبِضَاعَةٍ مُّزْجَاةٍ فَأَوْفِ لَنَا الْكَيْلَ وَتَصَدَّقْ عَلَيْنَا

"When they entered Joseph’s presence, they said, 'Great wazir, misfortune has touched us and our family, and we have brought only scant merchandise, so give us full measure and be charitable to us'"

Here, the brothers are totally psychologically passive. The grammatical subject of the clause is al-dhurr (الضُّرُّ—misfortune/harm), which has actively 'touched' (massa) them. This draws on the conceptual metaphor AFFLICTION AS AN ACTIVE PHYSICAL FORCE. They call their economic product bida'atin muzjah (بِضَاعَةٍ مُّزْجَاةٍ—'scant/worthless merchandise'), a word choice with strong overtones of humiliation and financial loss. In Verse 91, their change from conspirators to sorry social actors is completed as they at last see Joseph and admit their moral inferiority:

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ آثَرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِن كُنَّا لَخَاطِئِينَ

"They said, 'By God! God really did prefer you over us, and we were indeed wrong."

The verb athara (آثَرَ—preferred/chosen) and the direct confession khati'een (خَاطِئِينَ—wrongdoers/sinners) effectively destroy their original group identity, "usbah," so confirming Joseph's superior, divinely appointed position. Verse 97 completes this cognitive process of moral rehabilitation when they seek paternal and divine pardon:

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ

"They said, 'O our father, ask forgiveness for our sins; indeed, we have been sinners.'"

Here, sins are seen as physical weight (ذُنُوبَنَا) that can be removed by means of intercessory asking for forgiveness. The brothers finish their cognitive path of spiritual recovery by totally moving from the arrogant frame of the self-sufficient group ('usbah) to the submissive frame of children looking for atonement.

5.4 Joseph: The Cognitive Journey from Physical Containment to Wise Stewardship

Surah Yusuf's main linguistic path is Joseph (Yusuf)'s active, sovereign, and authoritative leadership from a passivated, silent physical containment. This path epitomises cognitive semantic growth. Early in the story, Joseph is repeatedly passivized and shown by means of nested CONTAINER schemas: He is thrown into the well (al-quhu fi ghibabat al-jubb), sold as an inhumane slave (sharawhu bi-thamanin bakhs), and unfairly imprisoned (sajanhulu). Joseph's voice is mostly absent during these physical tests, so showing his complete submission to God's will. But in Verse 24, the divine narrator calls him mukhlas (مُخْلَص), which structurally offsets this spatial containment:

كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ ۚ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ

*"This was so we might turn away evil and indecency from him, for he was truly one of Our chosen [sincere] servants"*The word mukhlaseen (الْمُخْلَصِينَ) is the passive participle of the verb akhlasa (to purify or choose). This term means “the ones who have been purged and selected by God.” Such a passive expression is extremely significant; it stands for the supreme divine activation. God is the supreme Agent that actively “turns away” (nasrifa) the evil from himself, thus sanctifying himself not through an aggressive human effort but through being divinely chosen, while people are actively trying to harm or allure him.

Crucially, Joseph's entire path is shaped from childhood by his prophetic dream, which in Verse 4 creates a unique Dream Space.

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ

*"When Joseph said to his father, 'O my father, indeed I have seen eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me.'"*According to Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual Blending Theory, this dream is a very organized mental space in which heavenly bodies—the eleven stars (كَوْكَبًا), the sun (الشَّمْسَ), and the moon (الْقَمَرَ)—are personified and mapped onto human entities (his eleven brothers, his father, and his mother).

Bowing (sajideen) is a somatic-spatial conceptualization of respect and subordination. This childhood Dream Space stays as an active cognitive frame throughout Joseph's hardships, acting as a template for his eventual success. Verse 100 sees it at last mixed with reality as his family actually bows down to him in Egypt (وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا), and Joseph cries: This is how I understand my old dream: my Lord has made it real (هَٰذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِن قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا). This is the ideal conceptual synthesis whereby the visionary dream space and physical reality space unite under a sovereign divine design.

Joseph is summoned to take office, which is when he changes into full active management. The King personalises and honours Joseph in Verse 54 by employing extremely prestigious honorifics:

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ ائْتُونِي بِهِ أَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِي ۖ فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ

"The King said, 'Bring him to me: I will choose him for my personal service.' And when he had spoken to him, the King said, 'From now on you are established with us, highly trusted'"

The lexical selections of maken (مَكِينٌ—established/secure in position) and ameen (أَمِينٌ—highly trusted/trustworthy) signal a significant re-lexicalization of Joseph's identity and engage the Stewardship/Governance Frame. He is not represented via impersonal, degraded categories like 'slave' or 'prisoner'; he is rather represented through prestigious status indicators that signify absolute moral and administrative power. In Verse 55, Joseph wastes no time in capitalizing on this activation by suggesting his own functionalization:

قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ

"Joseph said, 'Put me in charge of the nation's storehouses: I am a knowledgeable guardian'"

Linguistically, Joseph uses the imperative ij'alni (اجْعَلْنِي—'Put me in charge'), hence showing ultimate agency and political confidence. He builds his professional image using two active, intensive adjectival structures: hafeez (حَفِيظٌ—intensive guardian/protector) and 'aleem (عَلِيمٌ—deeply knowledgeable). While "aleem" implies strategic, intellectual expertise, "Hafeez" means complete financial integrity. Joseph is therefore presented as a very capable, sensible politician rather than just a spiritual prophet. This path comes to an end in Verse 101, when Joseph meditates on his ascent, uniting political power with thanks to God:

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِن تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنتَ وَلِيِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

"My Lord, You have given me sovereign power and taught me the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and earth, You are my protector in this world and the next. Let me die in true devotion to You, and join me with the righteous."

In this verse, Joseph sees his political ascent not as a human accomplishment but rather as a gift from God: ataytani min al-mulk (آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ—'You have given me of the sovereignty'). His dream-interpreting ability is presented as a divine lesson ('allamtani). Crucially, using the relational metaphor anta waliyyi (أَنتَ وَلِيِّي—' You are my guardian/protector'), he traverses metaphysical and temporal boundaries (fi al-dunya wa al-akhirah), therefore illustrating the ultimate cognitive mapping of protection. His path schema ends not in political glory but in a spiritual yearning for ultimate integration with the righteous (wa alhiqni bi-al-saliheen—' and join me with the righteous'), seeing the afterlife as a spatial destination and moral friendship.

5.5. Synthesis of Cognitive Semantic Findings: Character Profiles

Table 1 provides a systematic examination of the cognitive-semantic processes discussed in the previous sections by bringing together the key lexical categories, cognitive structures, image schemas, conceptual metaphors, and cognitive trajectories of the main characters in Surah Yusuf. This table gives an overall

picture of the ways language creates meaning and characterization in the holy book.

Character	Dominant Lexical Fields & Cognitive Frames	Image Schemas Activated (Mark Johnson)	Conceptual Metaphors Mapped (Lakoff & Johnson)	Cognitive-Semantic Trajectory & Connotative Shift
Yusuf (Joseph)	Spiritual protection (mukhlas), absolute truth (al-sidq), professional stewardship (makeen, ameen, hafeez, 'aleem).	CONTAINER (pit, prison, domestic house) -> PATH of kinetic elevation -> FORCE (resisting seduction, divine diversion).	VIRTUE IS A PHYSICAL FORTRESS (fa-sta'sama), DIVINE PROTECTION IS A SHIELD, GOVERNANCE IS STEWARDSHIP.	Shifts from complete passivation and spatial containment (well, prison) to absolute activation as sovereign. Connotations shift from vulnerable object to wise administrator.
Ya'qub (Jacob)	Beautiful spiritual trust (Sabrun Jamil), intense grief (asaf, white eyes), divine knowledge (a'lamu min Allah).	CONTAINER (grief containment/kazheem) -> PATH of hope (bringing back) -> somatic sight restoration.	GRIEF IS A LIQUID CONTAINER (kazheem), PATIENCE IS A BEAUTIFUL ADORNMENT, SIGHT IS JOY, BLINDNESS IS SORROW.	Maintains a stable cognitive frame of trust and beautiful patience over decades. Somatic state of blindness physically maps his internal sorrow, resolved through contact with the shirt.
Zulaikha	Aggressive temptation (rawada, ghallaq), societal plotting (kid), moral truth (hashasa al-haqq).	CONTAINER (bolting doors) -> FORCE (seduction as a physical pulling vector) -> vertical hierarchy.	SEDUCTION IS A COMPELLING PHYSICAL FORCE, PLOTTING IS AN UNSEEN NETWORK, TRUTH IS A MANIFEST FIELD (hashasa).	Initially highly negative (deception and moral danger), transitioning to moral agency and truth during public confession. Re-aligns her cognitive space with Yusuf's innocence.
The Brothers	False guardianship (hafidhoon), collective physical power ('usbah), lies (dam kadhib), humiliation (dhurr).	PATH of physical-kinetic journey -> FORCE of economic affliction (dhurr) -> submissive vertical orientation.	ATTENTION/LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FIELD (face of father), AFFLICTION IS A PHYSICAL FORCE (massa), SIN IS A BURDEN.	Starts as an arrogant, active collective group ('usbah) criticizing their father. Systematically passivized by economic ruin and moral guilt, culminating in submissive confession and spiritual rehabilitation.

6. Findings

Synthesis of Cognitive Semantic Results

Surah Yusuf's intense cognitive semantic investigation exposes a very methodical, conceptually coherent linguistic system regulating character portrayal. Our results address the three main research questions as follows:

1. Results on RQ1 (Cognitive Lexical Patterns and Semantic Fields): Highly opposite, specialized semantic domains support the construction of character identification in Surah Yusuf. The semantic domains of lovely patience (Sabrun Jamil) and physicalized emotional suffering (Asaf, Kazheem) help define Jacob. Zulaikha is constructed through the semantic fields of intense, high-agency physical desire (rawada, ghallaqat) and societal guile (kid), which systematically shifts to absolute moral truth (al-haqq, al-sidq). The brothers are portrayed through a collective physical strength frame ('usbah) and a misleading protection frame (hafidhoon), which disintegrates into profound physical and spiritual vulnerability (dhurr, bida'atin muzjah) and atonement (khati'een). Joseph is distinguished by spiritual purity (mukhlas), visual-somatic attractiveness, and intellectual/administrative stewardship (makeen, ameen, hafeez, 'aleem).

2. Findings on RQ2 (Connotative Changes and Conceptual Metaphors): The connotative meaning in the Surah is dynamically negotiated through conceptual metaphorical mappings. The term kid (plotting/guile) is one good illustration. Applied to women by Al-Aziz in Verse 28 (your guile is great indeed), it implies profound, unrelenting interpersonal manipulation based on physical wants. But when Jacob uses the same root yakidu for the brothers in Verse 5 (lest they plot against you a plot), it has political, deadly, and conspiratorial overtones of fratricide. Moreover, abstract spiritual and emotional states are methodically projected into physical realms. While Jacob's restoration is represented by visual clarity (basira), his sorrow is mapped onto physical liquids (kazheem) and visual blindness (abyaddat 'aynahu). Seduction is seen as physical pulling (rawada), virtue as a strong fortress (fa-sta'sama), and truth as a clean, open field (hashasa).

3. Findings on RQ3 (Image Schemas and Cognitive Frames): Structural changes between containment (CONTAINER schemas) and active physical-kinetic movement (PATH schemas) regulate characterization. From total passivation and nested spatial confinement (the pit, domestic service, jail), Joseph's path is a classic route to divine and political activation. His early ambition creates an active Dream Space that acts as a cognitive framework before merging with the reality of his own throne in Egypt. Although Jacob's physical blindness denotes spatial passivation, his cognitive transitivity denotes active spiritual agency. The brothers follow an

opposite path: They start out as a very energetic, haughty collective actor (usbah), but are steadily passivized by moral guilt and economic destruction (dhurr), therefore leading to their surrender and admission of errors.

7. Conclusion

Finally, this research has shown that the representation of character in Surah Yusuf is a cognitive and stylistic phenomenon. Combining classical Arabic lexicography and the modern perspective on Cognitive Semantics, as represented by Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Image Schema Theory, Frame Semantics, and Conceptual Blending Theory, we have uncovered the micro-stylistic machinery that is used in the construction of identity and moral ideology in the Quranic narrative. The paper shows that the Quran's characterization is not a once-and-for-all process, but is an ongoing process, an interactive process; a process of negotiation that is discursively coded. The theoretical and analytical implications of this study are noteworthy. It offers literary stylistics a very rigorous, replicable and systematic cognitive-linguistic approach to the study of characterization in classical Semitic and sacred literature, and does so without relying on subjective, impressionistic theological interpretations. From the point of cognitive linguistics, it is a great example of how a theory such as CMT and Image Schema Theory are very powerful tools in breaking down the moral, ethical, and spiritual systems found in ancient revelatory texts. Finally, the study demonstrates that the deep theological themes of patience, God's supremacy, moral rectitude, and family harmony are not just abstract concepts, but cognitive truths that are embedded in the syntactic, lexical, and connotative fabric of classical Arabic.

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