

I. ROZPRAWY I ANALIZY

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Cultural-linguistic case study of Early Arabic Poetry: Frame Semantics, mental spaces, Conceptual Integration, and the role of context in meaning construal

Kulturowo-lingwistyczne studium konstruowania znaczenia w poezji staroarabskiej – semantyka ram, integracja pojęciowa i mechanizm naruszania ramy

Abstract: The article examines complex meaning construals in selected verses from Early Arabic poetry. It describes how cultural knowledge, activated by lexical and pragmatic factors, enables accurate interpretation of the intended meaning conveyed in the analyzed examples. In exploring these construals, the study adopts a cultural-linguistic approach, using Frame Semantics to operate its analytical tools, and drawing from Conceptual Integration (Blending) Theory. It also addresses the role of contextual cues in meaning construction, applying the model of frame flouting. The results indicate that the analyzed construals can be explained as blends triggered by violations of the expectations elicited from the audience by the genre of a particular poem. The paper explores the potential of Blending Theory for examining the relationship between culture and language in research on languages rooted in poetic traditions, such as Classical Arabic. Finally, it advances the hypothesis about the role played by context-sensitive complex meaning construals in the transmission of cultural knowledge.

Keywords: Early Arabic Poetry; Classical Arabic; Cultural Linguistics; Frame Semantics; blends; Conceptual Integration Theory; frame flouting

Introduction

In the famous ode attributed to al-Ḥārīt Ibn Ḥilizza, we find the following verse (1):

(1) *wa-fa^calnā bi-him ka-mā ^calīma llāhu wa-mā ^ʔin li-l-ḥā^ʔinīna dimā^ʔū*

It can be translated as (1a):

(1a) Thus, we did to them, as it is known to Allāh, and truly, there are no bloods to those, whose time has come.

The verse follows a description of spear-fighting against the clan of Šaqīqa, who attempted to raid the Lahmid king's camel herd, under the protection of the poet's tribe. Since Šaqīqa was defeated, one can assume that the poet depicts the result of the encounter: the blood leaked out of our enemies' pierced bodies. As intuitive as it sounds, this reading to the letter is not the one preserved by the Arabic philological tradition. The earliest preserved commentaries to al-Ḥārīt Ibn Ḥilizza's poem by al-Anbārī (1963: 495–496)¹ and al-Naḥḥās (1973: 604–605),² both from the 10th century, present a different interpretation: we have slain our enemies, who were foolish enough to think of raiding the Lahmid king's property under our protection, so now no one will even consider avenging them – *dimā^ʔu-hum tuhdaru* “their blood is considered allowed to be shed” (al-Naḥḥās 1973: 604). Consequently, (1) communicates rather the meaning presented in (1b):

(1b) As it is known to Allāh, we did to them [those atrocious things], and those, whose time [to be rightfully slain for their foolish raid] had come, left no blood [worth anyone's vengeance].³

Early Arabic Poetry (EAP), the oral-formulaic poetry of Arabians from 6th and early 7th centuries, abounds in verses like (1). Their literal interpretation sometimes leaves considerable chunks of meaning to be evoked by contextual and other pragmatic factors guiding the hearer towards the

¹ *ma^cnā-hu man ^cašà fa-qad hāna ^ʔaḡlu-hu wa-ḡalika ^ʔanna-hu yaḡī^ʔu yuḡīru fa-yuḡāṭiru bi-naḡsi-hi wa-ḡidā qutila fa-laysa la-hu man yaṭlubu bi-dami-hi* “Its meaning is that when one [dared to] disobey [the Lahmid king], their appointed time [of death] came. This is because when one comes to raid [Lahmid king's property], they put themselves in danger. Thus, if they are killed, they have no one to pursue the revenge for their blood”

² *dimā^ʔ ay ^ʔinna dimā^ʔa-hum tuhdaru wa-lā yuṭālabu bi-hā* “bloods [stand here for] the meaning that their blood is considered allowable to be shed and no one pursues to avenge it”

³ Arberry (2017: 226) translated this verse as “and we dealt with them as Allah alone knows – their doom being sealed, their blood unavenged streamed”. In a Polish translation by Danecki and Witkowska (1981: 143), the lexeme *dimā^ʔ* “bloods” was interpreted as blood payment, i.e., a material compensation that could waive the blood revenge (ʿAlī 1993: 542).

intended reading. In this paper, I explore the mechanism of the meaning construal at play in such verses, as well as its relationship to cultural knowledge. Moreover, I hypothesize about the role of such complex meaning construals in preservation of cultural conceptualizations (cf. Sharifian 2003). This seems especially important in the case of cultures whose major means for the transmission of the cultural conceptualizations is poetry, as it is the case of pre- and early Islamic Arabian culture from the 6th and 7th centuries (Bielawski 1968: 22–23).

For that, I propose to follow the intuition by Polzenhagen et al. (2024: 372), who noted the potential of applying the Conceptual Integration (or Blending) Theory (BT) in ethnolinguistic research. I employed this theory to analyze the meaning construal in (1) and two other EAP verses that offer a glimpse into similar conceptual mechanisms. To represent knowledge encodement underlying the analyzed linguistic expression, I used the theoretical model of Frame Semantics (FS). It is a convenient tool for BT analyses and for representing literal meaning construals, such as (1a). It also appears to be compatible with Cultural Linguistics⁴ (CuL) (Hudson 2022), the primary concern of which – the relationship between language and cultural knowledge – constitutes the central focus of the present study. Since, as it has been noted, BT does not sufficiently address the role of pragmatic factors in meaning construal (Forceville 2020: 94–95; Abdel-Raheem 2017: 330), I employed in my study the model of *frame flouting* (Abdel-Raheem 2022) that provides auxiliary mechanisms compensating for the limitations of BT.

Accordingly, the current paper illustrates how the linguistic expression of EAP poets could elicit reinterpretation through flouting the expectations encoded within active frames, either evoked by lexical units at hand, or activated by such pragmatic factors as genre. Consequently, it examines such meaning construal mechanisms in terms of BT. Furthermore, it discusses the role these mechanisms could play in the transmission of the cultural knowledge of pre- and early Islamic Arabians.

Up to date, BT has been rarely employed in ethnolinguistic studies, such as in the paper by Ansah (2011), who examines cultural conceptualizations in Ghanaian English. To the best of my knowledge, the mechanism of frame flouting has not been addressed within CuL. Consequently, the analytical potential of these methodologies for ethnolinguistic research remains largely unexplored.

⁴ Upper-case Cultural Linguistics is the specific model proposed by Farzad Sharifian, whereas lower-case cultural linguistics is any systematic study of culture and language. Here, the upper-case spelling will be used throughout for the sake of consistency with other approaches mentioned, even if it is the broader sense of the term that is meant.

BT has been applied in a range of studies on Arabic, including Classical Arabic, notably in analyses of Qur²anic figurative language (e.g., Mehrafza, Oroji, and Rahbar 2023). It is also employed in research on Modern Arabic (e.g., Taher 2019; Nahi 2024), including multimodal approaches such as that of Abdel-Raheem (2024). It is within this latter line of research that the model of frame flouting was first proposed (Abdel-Raheem 2022). Up to date, however, BT and related models, including frame flouting, have not been applied to research on EAP or to the study of Arabic poetry in general.

The current paper presents an argument for the analytical potential of these approaches in accounting for mechanisms of meaning construal, such as those at play in EAP verses like (1), and for elucidating their relationship to cultural knowledge. Section 2 situates the objectives of the study within the framework of CuL and discusses the use of FS in operating its analytical tools. Section 3 outlines the premises of BT and the models of frame flouting. The methodologies were applied in a case study, the methods of which are briefly described in Section 4. The results are presented in Section 5 and discussed in Section 6.

Studying cultural knowledge and language: Cultural Linguistics and Frame Semantics

Meaning construal is how a conceptualization is structured for communicative purposes (Langacker 2006: 41). Studying it allows us to explore the complex relationship between language and knowledge. CuL is the ethnolinguistically oriented cognitive linguistic line of research. It studies the grounding of language in cultural knowledge (Da Silva, Cuenca, and Romano 2017: 348), i.e., in *cultural cognition* – this part of individual’s knowledge that is co-shaped by their interactions with the members of their communities (Sharifian 2008: 118). In other words, it examines “the linguistic worldview” (Głaz, Danaher, and Łozowski 2013), an entrenched, naïve “picture of the world suggested [...] by language” (Bartmiński 2012: 13).

The aspects of cultural cognition, termed as *cultural conceptualizations*, manifest in language use (Sharifian 2015: 476; cf. also Kövecses 2017: 308) through different types of meaning construals. CuL studies such cultural conceptualizations as schemata, categories, metaphors and metonymies. Since they are different types of knowledge structures, I propose to describe them using the theoretical model of FS. It is an approach in semantics and lexicography in which the meaning of words is defined in terms of

semantic frames, schemata-like structures that encode human knowledge (Fillmore 1976: 25; Fillmore and Baker 2015: 791; Petruck 2013: 1). The content of a semantic frame is abstracted from past experience and consists of a scenario with slots/roles termed as *frame elements* (FEs) that are filled while interacting with the world (Casson 1983: 431). FS is concerned with the way in which semantic frames are employed in decoding and encoding utterances (Boas 2016: 100). It defines each *lexical unit* (LU) as linked to a certain frame in our long-term memory (Fillmore 1975: 124, 1976: 25). When used, a LU evokes the frame that determines its textual behavior (Fillmore and Baker 2015: 791), chiefly by opening slots – FEs – that are either to be filled by appropriate lexical fillers or assume a stereotypical value. In my study, I use semantic frames in defining the content of (cultural) cognitive schemata⁵ that serve as the base of predication for LUs (Shead 2011: 110).

Blending Theory (BT), the context, and frame flouting

I suggest that the meaning construal found in (1) involves a conceptualization best described as *blend*. According to BT, a blend is a result of *conceptual integration* or *blending*, where two or more mental spaces are being blended into a new model of understanding (Fauconnier and Turner 2006: 425). Mental spaces can be understood as “small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action” (Fauconnier and Turner 2006: 307). They are built upon and structured by semantic frames (*ibidem*). Blending involves integration of information (Coulson and Oakley 2005: 1511) derived from *input* mental spaces, connected through different kinds of correspondences – termed as *vital relations* – into a network (Fauconnier and Turner 2006: 307, 313). As a result, the integration produces a new mental space – *the blended space* or *blend* – that participates in the ongoing discourse comprehension (Coulson 2005: 134).

Meaning construals always operate relative to contextual assumptions and expectations (Langacker 2006: 40). Different types of contexts – situational and cultural, discourse-related, bodily, conceptual-cognitive (cf. Kövecses 2021: 138–141) – are always at work, activating specific regions of

⁵ Some scholars (e.g., Ziem 2008; Kövecses 2021; Plitt 2024) tend to maintain the distinction between the notion of *schema*, as “a more generic term”, and *frame*, as “a semantic organizational unit”. In my understanding, the only dimension across which they distinguish these terms is schematicity.

interlocutors' knowledge (i.e., frames) available for constructing the mental spaces and constraining the interpretative process (Coulson 2005: 170; Coulson and Oakley 2005: 1517). As noted by Forceville (2020: 94), although BT "acknowledges the importance of pragmatic factors in meaning making, [...] it does not pay much attention to them". It is especially noticeable at ignoring the role the audience plays in the negotiation of meaning (Abdel-Raheem 2017: 330).

The process of making sense is governed by the presumption of optimal relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1986; Forceville 2020: 95): "each communicator aims at framing his or her message in such a way that the addressee will have to expend no more effort than necessary to process that message" (Abdel-Raheem 2017: 333). In other words, the communicator's message is *presumed* to be optimally relevant to the addressee in a given cognitive environment that "comprises elements from the specific situation in which a given message is communicated" (Forceville 2020: 40). One of the most important elements of this environment is the genre of the message. It might be seen as "the primary cue for channeling interpretation" (Forceville 2016: 98), providing a stable set of expectations deriving from conventions that "encourage certain kinds of interpretive behavior or response and discourage others" (Forceville 2020: 121).

I argue that the blend in (1) was constructed largely through a creative mechanism termed by Abdel-Raheem (2022) as *frame flouting*. This mechanism relies on the established expectations to fulfill the presumption of optimal relevance. However, instead of meeting the expectations, it involves a deliberate violation of them to "attract the audience's attention and to stimulate increased interpretational activity" (Abdel-Raheem 2022: 51). Frame flouting "exploits" the fact that a frame encodes the information about "what is normal/ expected/ conventional/ characteristic/ typical in a given culture or community in a given situation" (Abdel-Raheem 2022: 50). Consequently, by introducing something "unexpected" in their message, a communicator exerts pressure on their audience to search for alternative models of interpretation.

I suggest that blending is one of such alternative models. When faced with material incompatible with active frame/expectations, the hearer usually attempts to blend the active mental spaces or recruit new frames to acquire a conceptualization that mends the introduced incompatibility. It can be seen in (A), which is a case of a single-scope network blend (Fauconnier and Turner 2006: 344). The sentence evokes the `Medical_interaction_scenario`^{FN6} frame that serves for the construction of its meaning.

⁶ Frame names are conventionally rendered in Courier New font. All frame names

(a) *This surgeon is a butcher.*

An “expected” meaning construal in line with the frame is disrupted in this sentence by the occurrence of the LU *butcher*. The LU violates the expectations encoded within the frame, forcing the hearer to reinterpret the “unexpected” element in the fashion meeting these expectations. To mend the incongruency, one can run a blend, in which the concept of BUTCHER metonymically indicates certain characteristics of *Medical_interaction_scenario*’s FE [Medic].

The case study

In my study, I sought to identify the mechanism of meaning construal that accounted for the interpretation of (1) as communicating (1b) rather than (1a), i.e., the literal meaning communicated by used LUs. I hypothesize that it can be described as a blend grounded in an intentional frame flouting by the poet.

My analysis involved the comparison of two modes of interpretation: literal meaning vs. intended meaning. I assumed that the intended meaning can be reconstructed based on commentaries by medieval Classical Arabic philologists, preserved in the Arabic literary tradition. In the case of the verse (1), I relied on the commentary by al-Anbārī († 940) and al-Naḥḥās († 948), whose works contain the earliest record of al-Ḥārīt Ibn Ḥilizza’s poem. I examined what frames are involved in the verse interpretation, including frames activated by the local context and by the genre of the poem. In my analysis, I followed the presumption of optimal relevance, assuming that the verse was readily decodable for an average recipient of the poetry.

To prove that the meaning construal in (1) can be found in other EAP verses, I analyzed two additional passages attributed to pre-Islamic Arabian poets, al-Nābiḡa al-Dubyanī and al-Hansā⁹. Both can also be explained through the mechanism of frame flouting.

Whenever it was possible, I used English frames recorded in the *FrameNet* database (Baker 2017)⁷ to describe frames structuring the mental spaces. I use them as approximations of Classical Arabic frames that should be culture-specific. My translation of Arabic lexemes and expressions is based on the dictionary by Lane (1968).

marked with the indexical ^{FN} indicate a frame recorded in *FrameNet* database (<https://berkeleyfn.framenetbr.ujf.br/>, access 15-04-2025). Frame names without this index are fully hypothesized and are not to be found in the database.

⁷ <https://berkeleyfn.framenetbr.ujf.br/>, access 05-02-2026.

Results

Verse (1) consists of two hemistiches: (α) and (β).

(α) *wa-fa^calnā bi-him ka-mā ^calīma llāhu*

Thus, we did to them, as it is known to Allāh

(β) *wa-mā [?]in li-l-ḥā[?]inīna dimā[?]ū*

and truly, there is no bloods to those, whose time has come.

The first hemistich seems self-explanatory, especially when we take into consideration the local context, verses directly proceeding (1). Their translation by Arberry (2017: 226) is presented in (C):

(C) “Our sign was seen eastwards of Esh-Shakeeka when they all came, every tribe with its banner,

about Kais, clad in armour, whit a Karazi chieftain to lead them, a white rock of eminence,

and a band of noble-born warriors, checked only by the fierce thrust that pierces through to the white bone.

Then we smote with such a brow-blow that the gore gushed like water spurting from a hole in a water-skin,

and we drove them against the boulders of Thahlan helter-skelter, their thigh-veins spouting bloodily,”

The fragment is a part of a broader section of *madḥ* ‘praise’ presented by for the Lahmid king, ^cAmr Ibn Hind (Danecki and Witkowska 1981: 131). The *madḥ*-praise was one of the most important themes or sub-genres of EAP (Kowalski 1997: 49, 66). The poem contains many typical *madḥ*-praise motifs (e.g., “A just monarch he, the most perfect walking; the virtues he possesses excel all praise”, Arberry 2017: 226). Nevertheless, (C) does not contain explicit praise, instead, it is an argument for loyalty of the poet’s clan. It contains another sub-genre of EAP known as *fahr* ‘pride’. This theme involves boasting or praising oneself and/or one’s kin (Farès 1993). In (C), the poet praises the bravery of his clan that defended the king’s camel herd against the clan of Šaqīqa (al-Anbārī 1963: 493–496).

Hemistich (α) seems to function only as a reinforcement of the scene portrayed in (C). It could be rendered as assertion that the poet’s clan indeed killed enemies, defending the king’s property. This assertion is twofold: it consists of the evocation of the highly schematic *Intentionally.act*^{FN} frame and the reference to the divine.⁸ This double emphasis is in line with poet’s *fahr*-praising.

⁸ In EAP, the term *allāh* ‘the god’ might be a later insertion of oral transmitters, possibly replacing the name of the goddess Allāt, metrically identical to *allāh* (Sinai 2019: 22). It could also refer to a chief deity of a tribe/region. In the former Nabatean lands it might denote the god Dū Šarā, whereas in the central Arabia the god Hubal (Dziekan 2008: 100).

Hemistich (β) could be read as another means of reaffirmation. This would mean that the poet ends his boasting by trying to convince his audience three times that what he said was true. Although it could be in line with the poet's goal to present a case of loyalty to a tribal king, the medieval commentaries do not suggest this was the case. To find the way towards the interpretation in (1b), I argue to perceive the function of (β) as a means to reestablish the major theme of the poem: the *madḥ*-praise to 'Amr Ibn Hind. The *madḥ*-praise specifies how a person should be praised. When a poet introduces one of the *madḥ*-praise imageries, the audience immediately builds expectations for the poem's content. Thus, the recipients of al-Ḥārīt Ibn Ḥilizza could expect that he will portray the praised king as a brave, mighty, and just leader. If (β) expresses another way of reinforcing the claim that the poet's clan has defeated king's enemies, the whole *fahr* 'pride' section (i.e., C and 1) would be divorced from the major theme of the poem. This, however, would not fit the logic of the presented *madḥ*-praise that was aimed at appeasing the king, not only to convince him about the valor of the poet's tribe.

The literal reading of (β) causes the hearer to construe a mental space structured by the frame Possession^{FN}, evoked by the preposition *li-*. The mental space encompasses the negation: those whose time has come (*al-ḥā'inūn*) do not have bloods (*dimā'*). Predictably, the concept of *ḥā'inūn* 'those whose time has come' stands metonymically for the fallen opponents of the poet's party. The metonymy is based on a cognitive model structured by the frames activated in (C) and frames encoding commonsense knowledge about death. The construed mental space is an imagery of the poet's enemies not having BLOOD in particular [Circumstances]. The extra-thematic FE [Circumstances] is filled with a mental space structured by the Death^{FN} frame. It logically follows the Killing^{FN} frame activated in the preceding verses.

This imagery makes perfect sense. However, it does not reestablish the theme of *madḥ*-praise. It is also not the imagery claimed by the tradition to be conveyed in (β). I argue that what the tradition has recorded is a case of frame flouting, where the bluntness or redundancy of a literal interpretation violates the expectations elicited at the audience when they recognized the genre of the poem as *madḥ*-praise. When hearing (β), the audience might have needed to recruit a different frame to place the hemistich, the whole verse (1), and the section (C) back within the typical *madḥ*-praise scenario.

The tradition claims that this frame was UnretaliatedBlood. It belongs to a complex frame of BloodRevenge, encoding retaliation in the form of blood vengeance. This scenario, being one of the most important cultural

institutions of pre- and early Islamic Arabians (cf. [°]Alī 1993: 398–401), defines revenge for a murder as the act of killing the murderer. In this scenario, the [Avenger] role is strictly pre-defined as either the [Victim]’s kin or their ally/patron. What is important here, the blood revenge was not optional: the [Avenger] is obligated to kill the murderer of their relative or ally. This obligation was based upon so-called *‘aṣabiyyah*, a sentiment constituting a core principle of pre-Islamic Arabian tribal code of conduct: anyone possessed an unquestionable right to call upon their kin for assistance when confronting an enemy ([°]Alī 1993: 360, 394). Consequently, blood vengeance was perceived as [Victim]’s inalienable right. Thus, any failure to satisfy this obligation imposed on the [Avenger] a stigma of shame. The *UnretaliatedBlood* frame encodes such a shameful scenario: the [Avenger] discontinues their efforts to avenge the [Victim], meaning that they have declared [Victim]’s blood permissible to be shed. In other words, they strip the [Victim] from the right to be avenged.

Following the traditional interpretation of (β), we can reconstruct the mental space the poet intended to elicit as an imagery structured by the *UnretaliatedBlood*, where the [Avenger], the kin and allies of the [Victims] slain by the poet’s clan, do not fulfil their obligation of *BloodRevenge*. However, this imagery also does not seem to meet *madḥ*-praise expectations. Nevertheless, it can provide a base for an expected conceptualization given the local context (C). When faced with unexpected bluntness of the literary interpretation of (β), the audience needed to find another model of “not having blood” that could be considered a praise to the Lahmid king. If they considered the whole story conveyed in (C) – the poet’s clan defending king’s property against the robbers – as an imagery of well-deserved punishment, this conceptualization would fit the expected *madḥ*-praise scenario. In such a case, the poet conveys a praise of the just leader, the transgression against whom is outrageous – perhaps even a sacrilege. What could better express such a sentiment than the assertion that even those obligated to avenge the fallen ones consider their deed as damnworthy?

The meaning construal in (β) structures a complex single-scope blend towards the following conclusion: no one intends to avenge those who were slain, since they dared to lay hands on the property of the just king. Input spaces of the blend are structured by frames that can follow the *Killing*^{FN}. One is constructed based on lexical evocation; another is elicited by the fact that the former flouts the expectations presupposed by *madḥ*-praise. These expectations encourage recruiting a new frame that fits the *madḥ*-praise scenario and can be used to reinterpret the lexical content of (β).

It seems that the only LU that presents an opportunity for a more congruent reinterpretation is *dimāʿ* ‘bloods’. The concept of BLOOD is particularly salient for the whole BloodRevenge complex. It has been suggested that it had almost ritualistic significance when avenging a murdered kin/ally (Stetkevych 1986a,b). Moreover, when used as a subject of the verb *hadara* – as in *hadarat dimāʿu-hum* “their blood(s) went for nothing” – it evokes the UnretaliatedBlood frame that could do the job of reestablishing the *madh*-praise scenario in this place. The activation of this frame is permissible, since it also follows the Killing^{FN} frame, as an alternative of SeekingBloodRevenge, a scenario where the [Avenger] pursues vengeance. Consequently, it can be seen as analogous to the literal interpretation space structured by Death^{FN}: the relation of identity links [Victim] and dying [Protagonist], the negation expressing blood loss has an analogous typology to the conceptualization of [Victim] losing their right to be avenged. The blend in (β) is a model structured by UnretaliatedBlood. In this model, *dimāʿ* ‘bloods’ metonymically stands for the slain enemies’ right to be avenged under the laws of BloodRevenge.

The *madh*-praise scenario is reestablished through a blend elaboration that also derives from UnretaliatedBlood. The frame should inform when the [Avenger] is licensed to abandon vengeance pursuit for their kin/ally. One can imagine that a situation in which the [Victim] foolishly brings upon themselves the demise, could be one of such specific scenarios. Consequently, the elaboration involves a chain of logical deduction that leads towards the conclusion: the Lahmid king ʿAmr Ibn Hind is a just leader, the transgression against whom is a sacrilege.

The metonymic model of BLOOD FOR RIGHT TO BE AVENGED seems to be nonce, even though BLOOD functions as a vehicle in several metonymies related to BloodRevenge. It can express the meaning of *ṭalaba at-taʿr* “he sought the blood revenge”, as in *ṭalaba ad-dam* “he sought the blood” (e.g., Ḥarb 1993: 73), although BLOOD here stands metonymically for accomplishing BloodRevenge, i.e., Killing^{FN} the [Murderer]. It is also employed by a similar expression, *ṭalabtu bi-dami-hi* “I sought to avenge him”. The prepositional phrase *bi-dami-hi* expresses the instrumental meaning (lit. “I sought [the vengeance] with/by/through means of his blood”), conceptualizing the BLOOD of the [Victim] as a reason of ongoing BloodRevenge. It could instantiate the metonymy of [Victim]’s BLOOD FOR Killing^{FN} THE [Victim]. However, it could be also described using the model the BLOOD FOR RIGHT TO BE AVENGED: I sought [the vengeance] by means of his right to be avenged. The expression is used not only in Classical Arabic, but also in modern Arabic dialects (Zibin 2021:39). Nevertheless, the use of

Possession^{FN} in expression of the RIGHT TO BE AVENGED seems unique. Although there is a fixed phrase *dū dam* ‘the owner of blood’, it employs BLOOD to indicate the [Avenger]’s obligation: *rağul dū dam* ‘a man seeking to obtain the revenge of blood’.

Further examples: different shades of flouting

The verse (1) is not the only EAP instance of meaning construal employing the mechanism of frame flouting. It can also be observed in (2), a passage of another *madh*-praise from al-Nābīga al-Dubayānī’s panegyric for the Ġassānid king, ‘Amr Ibn al-Ḥārīt. Here, the poet praises the king’s clan, Ġassān (cf. al-Ḥittī 1991: 33):

(2) *wa-lā ‘ayba fī-him ġayra ‘anna suyūfa-hum bi-hinna fulūlun min qirā‘i l-katā‘ibī*

They have nothing to be ashamed of, except for their swords, in which there are notches left after engaging in battle with [many] armies.

The verse interpretation relies on the frame Shame, evoked by the LU *‘ayb*. This noun evokes the frame through a metaphor SOMETHING SHAMEFUL IS DEFECT, and it can be roughly translated in (2) as “something one should be ashamed of” (Pietrzak 2021: 81). In line with the expectations set by the *madh*-praise script, the poet declares that the king’s clan is free from any shameful/ignoble qualities. However, these expectations are violated by the introduction of the exceptive marker *ġayr* that signals that there is something shameful one can attribute to those people. This quality is described in the clause headed by the marker as notches or markings on their swords left after the many battles they fought.

The flouting of the *madh*-praise expectations encourages the audience to construct a new model for the interpretation of (2), which I propose to explain as a single-scope blend. The lexical content of the verse builds the literal interpretation mental space structured by the Shame frame. In this space, the king’s clan has a [Shameful quality] filled by the conceptualization of notches on swords acquired after fighting with many armies. The *madh*-praise affords the activation of Shame’s counterpart, the Pride frame, which structures an analogous mental space, where Ġassān clan has a [Praiseworthy quality] expressed as the imagery of the clan engaging in many battles. The attribution of militancy is a typical theme of the *madh*-praise, so the expectations of the poem’s audience can be met by this mental space. The spaces are analogous, since they are structured by counterpart frames. There are also vital relations between their elements, most importantly the relation of cause-effect connecting the [Shameful quality] and the [Praiseworthy quality]: when someone engages in many battles, their sword must get combat-related notches or markings.

The blended space is structured by the *Pride* frame, and it reestablishes the *madh*-praise scenario, by compressing the cause-effect information within the concept of the NOTCHES ON SWORDS. The compression makes the concept a fitting filler for *Pride*'s [Praiseworthy quality], transforming it into an indication of militancy or bravery.

In (2), the flouting of the active *madh*-praise expectations is easily mendable, since the intended interpretation is additionally cued by the lexical material at hand (*min qirā^{ci} l-katā²ibī* "from fighting with armies"). Nevertheless, it is not always the case, as verse (1) indicates, and as can be seen in example (3). It is the second hemistich of a verse by the poetess al-Ḥanasā² from her *ḥamāsa* poem. The genre of *ḥamāsa* is a specific mode of rallying tribesmen and encouraging them to engage in a fight. In this poem, the poetess calls up the men of her tribe to avenge her slain brother, Mu^cāwiya.

(3) *wa-lā ṣulḥa ḥattā nastaqīda l-ḥarā²idā*

There will be no truce unless we [will have to] beg our young virgins to pursue the vengeance.

The literal interpretation is a mental space structured by the frame *Truce*. Its FE [Conflict] is filled by the frame *Seeking Blood Revenge* that belongs to the complex *Blood Revenge* discussed earlier. We infer it from the global context of the poem. The *Truce*'s FE [Time] defining when it should halt the [Conflict] is expressed by the clause headed by *ḥattā* 'until/unless'. The clause communicates here a condition for the *Truce* to go into effect. It seems reasonable to assume that the [Time] should be somewhat constrained by the filler of [Conflict]. In the literal reading of (3), it is only portrayed as a situation when the tribe delegates the pursuit for vengeance to young virgins (*ḥarā²id*).

To understand the intention of the verse, I propose considering it as an instance of frame flouting that exploits a FE of the active frame. The resulting blend is a network structured by the frame *Truce*. Nevertheless, it is not this frame that suffers the flouting. The meaning communicated by the blend can be summarized as follows: there will never be a truce with the killers of Mu^cāwiya.

The first mental space in the network is constructed as a "normal" *Truce* scenario for *Seeking Blood Revenge*. In this scenario, the FE [Time] is expressed by the verb *nastaqīdu-hu* 'we delegate the pursuit for the blood vengeance to him', whose meaning is restricted by the knowledge about who can fill the role of [Avenger] in the *Blood Revenge* frame. In pre- and early Islamic Arabian culture, the role was stereotypically allocated to MEN.

The LU *ḥarāʿid* ‘young virgins’ precludes the “normal” development of the Truce for Seeking Blood Revenge scenario. It encourages the audience to construct an alternative mental space that would afford inclusion of the concept of YOUNG VIRGINS. Since Seeking Blood Revenge can be generalized as a type of Warfare, I propose that in the new space, the Truce’s FE [Conflict] is filled with this frame. The FE [Time] is defined relative to the [Conflict] and can be conceptualized as, for instance, a situation, in which the poetess’ tribe has no TRIBESMEN capable of fighting. In turn, this conceptualization can elicit the recruitment of the frame Tribe members that governs the understanding of who among TRIBESMEN can or cannot engage in combat. Since only MEN were stereotypically presumed to be able to fight, the conceptualization contains the implication that the poetess’ tribe consists of only those under MEN’s protection (Arabic *ḍimma*), i.e., WOMEN and CHILDREN. The YOUNG VIRGINS are a sub-category of WOMEN that brings into focus female sexual vulnerability requiring exceptional protection under the honor code (Abou-Zeid 1965; Dodd 1973).

The spaces are analogous, since the fillers of their FE [Conflict] are linked by the vital relation of part-whole: Seeking Blood Revenge involves Warfare. The blended space is a conceptualization of a Truce for Seeking Blood Revenge with the [Time] expressed by the verb *nastaqīduhu* ‘we delegate the pursuit for the blood vengeance to him’. However, the constraint on who can be a delegated [Avenger] is loosened in the blend. Consequently, the role is filled by the YOUNG VIRGINS, which under the metonymic tightening (Oakley and Pascual 2017: 436), stands for the general concept of those stereotypically incapable of fighting and the most vulnerable.

The elaboration of the blend affords the conceptualization of the Truce that will only be declared when the poetess’ tribe has no one capable of combat. Nevertheless, I argue that the *ḥamāsa* genre of the poem guides the audience to elaborate the blend even further. Usually, *ḥamāsa* EAP poems applied a kind of reversed psychology strategy of rallying the tribesmen. Their major method was to praise the addressees as brave and fearsome warriors who no doubt will always rise to the occasion when needed. Thus, I believe the actual reading of (3) is not that the poetess’ tribe will fight to the last of them, but that they will never quit fighting. Surely, the idea of delegating the fight to the most vulnerable members of the tribe must have sounded ridiculous. But in line with the *ḥamāsa* strategy of reversed psychology, it could only serve to convey an intimidating praise: the imagery of fighting young virgins is as absurd as the imagery of my tribesmen abandoning the mission of avenging my slain brother.

Discussion

The results present the mechanism of meaning construal that can be best described as a case of conceptual integration or blending triggered by the exploitation of genre-related cues. In my description, I propose to interpret this exploitation in terms of a frame flouting mechanism identified by Abdel-Raheem (2022). The proper interpretation of the analyzed verses depends on the assumption that both poets and their audience shared understanding of poetic genres that presupposed some expectations for poetic content. A conscious failure to meet these expectations seems to fit the notion of frame flouting. The flouting triggers a process of blending that relies on the audience's knowledge to mend the arisen incongruency.

My results display different levels of lexical involvement in flouting the background frames/expectations and mending their effects. Example (1) presents a meaning construal that relies on cues provided by the genre the most. When considering the verse in isolation, none of its LUs or even the local textual context (C) suffice to trigger the reinterpretation matching the one preserved by the tradition. Verse (3) displays a similar dependence, but only to a certain extent. Insofar as the conceptualization of the poetess' tribe fighting to the last tribesmen might be established in isolation, only the *ḥamāsa* genre could elicit a further logical conclusion: the tribe will not cease fighting and pursuing vengeance under any circumstances. The meaning construal in (2) seems the most self-contained and genre-independent. However, even this imagery relies on genre cues. If found within a satire, the verse could be read as a reproach: maybe they look so free of flaws, but look at their old, battle-worn-out swords they are too poor to replace / they do not know how to use properly while fighting etc.

Each analyzed example proves that cultural knowledge is crucial for the observed meaning construal. On the one hand, the cultural knowledge in the form of genre-prompted expectations and lexically evoked frames induces the blend-based reinterpretation. The genre of *madḥ*-praise provides the audience with a finite set of praiseworthy attributes, qualities, and deeds that can be expressed in the course of poetic recitation. Similarly, the awareness of *ḥamāsa* reversed psychology methods guarantees the understanding of *ḥamāsa* verses as "intimidating" praise. The knowledge about stereotypical fillers of FEs seems to play equally significant role in frame-flouting-induced blends. On the other hand, the conceptual integration triggered by frame flouting heavily employs the cultural schema. The constructed mental spaces are structured by culture specific frames, and the vital relations holding between them derive from cultural models.

Consequently, all described blends are highly culture specific and can be described as cultural conceptualizations.

Furthermore, I argue that the existence of such frame flouting-bound cultural conceptualizations could play a crucial role in the transmission of cultural knowledge. It could be especially important in the case of cultures that in the transmission depend on poetry – such was the case of the culture(s) of pre- and early Islamic Arabians. As noted by Stetkevych (2010: 212), vivid imagery abundant in EAP could actually serve as another formulaic form of oral transmission of poetic texts. It seems conceivable that the transmission of such verses, as (1), (2), and (3), could help preserve not only the lexical content and related semantic frames but also the cultural knowledge needed for the proper interpretation of those verses. This must have included the frames needed for both frame flouting and consequent blending. The knowledge preserved through such verses was eventually handed down to medieval Arabic philologists, who recorded it as commentary to poems that were already detached from their original cultural milieu (examples include al-Anbārī and al-Naḥḥās).

My study presents an argument that BT is a useful tool for the exploration of the relationship between language and culture. When supplemented with concepts such as frame flouting, which account more accurately for contextual factors involved in meaning construal, it can be a tool for describing cultural conceptualizations afforded by factors other than simple, literal frame evocation. Such supplementation is especially important for studying such languages and cultures as Classical Arabic and the culture of pre- and early Islamic Arabians, which are deeply rooted in poetic traditions.

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Streszczenie: W artykule omawiane są złożone konstrukcje znaczeniowe występujące w wybranych wersach poezji staroarabskiej. Autorka ukazuje, w jaki sposób wiedza kulturowa, aktywowana przez czynniki leksykalne i pragmatyczne, umożliwia właściwą interpretację zamierzonego sensu komunikowanego w analizowanych przykładach. W opisie konstrukcji znaczeniowych wykorzystywana jest semantyka ram (*Frame Semantics*) oraz teoria integracji pojęciowej (*Conceptual Integration Theory*). W artykule podejmowane są również kwestie roli czynników kontekstowych w konstruowaniu znaczenia z wykorzystaniem w opisie modelu mechanizmu naruszania ramy (*frame flouting*). Wyniki badania pokazują, iż analizowane konstrukcje znaczeniowe można wyjaśnić jako amalgamaty powstałe w wyniku naruszenia oczekiwań wywołanych u odbiorców poezji przez konwencję gatunkową danego utworu. Autorka omawia też potencjał teorii integracji pojęciowej w badaniach nad związkami między kulturą a językiem, zwłaszcza w odniesieniu do języków zakorzenionych w tradycjach poetyckich, takich jak klasyczny język arabski. Przedstawia ponadto hipotezę dotyczącą roli kontekstowo uwarunkowanych złożonych konstrukcji znaczeniowych w przekazywaniu wiedzy kulturowej.

Słowa kluczowe: poezja staroarabska; klasyczny język arabski; językoznawstwo kulturowe; semantyka ramowa; amalgamaty; integracja pojęciowa; mechanizm naruszenia ramy