

A Socio-dialectological Study to Revitalize Kurdish Culture: A Case Study on Kurdish Calendars based on Conceptual Metaphor

Mohammad Aliakbari¹  Khadijeh Mohammadi² 

¹ Professor, English Language Department, Ilam University, Ilam, Iran.
(Corresponding Author) E-mail: m.aliakbari@ilam.ac.ir

² Assistant Professor, English Language Department, Ilam University, Ilam, Iran E-mail: mohamadi.kh2017@yahoo.com

Article Info

Article type:

Research article

Article history:

Received: 21 Aug. 2024

Accepted: 7 Oct. 2024

Keywords:

cognitive approach,
conceptual metaphor,
calendar,
revitalization,
Kurdish language

ABSTRACT

In a multicultural and multilingual country like Iran, where minority languages have undergone a degree of assimilation into Persian, certain cultural aspects of these minority languages, such as the Kurdish calendar for Kurdish people, have been ignored. This descriptive study tends to revitalize the overlooked calendars of Central (Sorani) and Southern (Kalhori, Feyli, Laki) Kurdish dialects by investigating the conceptual metaphors utilized in these dialect-specific calendars. To do so, the calendars of these Kurdish dialects have been sourced from reliable references. Subsequently, the names of the Kurdish months are analyzed using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor model. The findings reveal that these Kurdish calendars exhibit ontological, structural, and orientational metaphors that conceptualize abstract time as a concrete entity through "physical experiences," including rituals and road blockages; "natural events"; and "spatial orientation," represented by the vertical movement of Kurdish people and leaves as well as the horizontal displacement between the months.

Cite this article: Aliakbari, M., Mohammadi, Kh. (2024). "A Socio-dialectological Study to Revitalize Kurdish Culture: A Case Study on Kurdish Calendars based on Conceptual Metaphor". *Journal of Linguistic Studies: Theory and Practice*, 3(3.), 87-104



© The Author(s).

Publisher: University of Kurdistan.

DOI: [10.22034/jls.2024.141938.1145](https://doi.org/10.22034/jls.2024.141938.1145)

1. Introduction

Kurdish, the language of the Kurds, is one of the most prominent languages worldwide. Over time, its number of speakers has declined; however, it is currently estimated that there are between 36.4 and 45.6 million speakers (2017 estimate of Kurdish Institute of Paris). It is spoken predominantly in countries such as Iran, Iraq, and Turkey (Haig & Matras, 2002; Hassanpour et al. 2012). In Iran, the Kurds make up approximately 10 percent of the population (McDowall, 2004; Stansfield, 2014) and are scattered throughout the northwest to southwest regions of the country (Windfuhr, 2009). Despite being a dialect-rich language (Shahsavari, 2010; Matras & Akin, 2012), Kurdish is considered a minority language in Iran with no political or social function (Hassanpour, 1992; McDowall, 2004). However, the Kurds are making efforts to develop strategies to ensure the vitality of their language. Some of these strategies include the development of writing systems, advocating for the inclusion of Kurdish in university studies (which has been realized in a few universities due to the limited availability of Kurdish materials) (Gheithury et al. 2010), publishing nonpolitical materials such as Kurdish poems or novels (Ahmadzadeh, 2007; Dorleijn & Leezenberg, 2015), establishing Kurdish radio stations (Cabi, 2020), creating local mass media (Hassanpour, 1991; Blau, 2000), and selecting Kurdish names for their children (Albarany et al. 2011; Eslami-Rasekh et al. 2015). Another important strategy which has received little attention from scholars, is the revitalization of various Kurdish calendars.

The Kurdish language, influenced by regional and geographical dispersion as well as the ethnic identity of its speakers, consists of multiple dialects and sub-dialects that are somewhat "mutual unintelligible" since their pronunciation and their semantic and syntactic structures are widely dispersed (Gasser, 2006; Hassani & Medjedovic, 2016). These dialects can be broadly categorized into three main groups: 1) Northern dialect (i.e., Kurmanji, spoken in north Iranian cities such as Khorasan, Orumiyeh, and Khoy); 2) Central dialect (i.e., Sorani, the dialect of western cities of Iran like Sanandaj); and 3) Southern dialect (including Kermanshahi, Kalhuri, Feyli, and Laki, mostly spoken in Kermanshah and Ilam) (Windfuhr, 1989; Fattah, 2000; Gunter, 2010; Zolfaqari, 2010). While these dialects may share the same alphabet for writing, the meanings and concepts used in each dialect may not be intelligible to speakers of other dialects. In fact, the social nature of each Kurdish dialect group, along with regional variations, influences their meaning-making processes and the development of intergroup codes. Therefore, our socio-dialectical study aims to analyze the meaning of dialect-specific names of months that may be unintelligible to outsiders, demonstrating how meaning emerges within the social activities of various Kurdish groups.

Despite its long history and political significance, there is a scarcity of published materials related to the Kurdish calendar. While there have been some efforts to study the Kurdish language (Öpengin, 2013b), Kurdish syntax (Haig, 2002; Karimi-Doostan, 2005), Sorani's structure (Öpengin, 2013a; Danesh Pazhouh et al. 2013 & 2015), sub-dialectical aspects of Sorani (Malmasi, 2016), and to compare Sorani and Kurmanji (Esmaili & Salavati, 2013), there are very few, if any, published

scientific articles that explain the Kurdish calendar or the similarities and differences of dialect-specific Kurdish calendars. Therefore, this study, through the following questions, aims to analyze the content of Southern and Central Kurdish calendars in order to investigate how each dialect uses conceptual metaphor to represent the Kurdish months.

- 1) How are the Kurdish calendars metaphorically represented in southern and central dialects?
- 2) Do the Kurdish names of the months conform to Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor model?

2. Solidarity via Calendar

Although Iran is a multilingual and multicultural country comprising diverse ethnic groups (Cabi, 2021), the Persian language, due to language policy, has a claim to sovereignty over local languages (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2011). Consequently, the Persian calendar marginalizes the local calendars in Iran. The Persian or official Iranian calendar is a solar calendar known as Jalali or Khayyami (AlModarresi & White, 2004). This calendar, designed by Omar-e Khayyam under the order of King Jalal-o-Din, begins with the arrival of the spring or Nowruz coinciding with March 21st in the Gregorian calendar (Mohamadi & Weisi, 2023).

In such an objectionable condition, Kurds in Iran are worried about the decline of the Kurdish language and culture. So, they strive not only to use the Kurdish language as communicative tool but also to revitalize its symbolic functions. As Bourdieu (2008) discussed, "every group tend to set up the means of perpetuating itself beyond the finite individuals in whom it is incarnated.... In order to do so, it establishes a whole set-of mechanisms, such as delegation, representation and symbolization, which confer ubiquity and eternity" (p.72). The Kurdish calendar with Kurdish-named months is an example of such symbolic strategies to not only linguistically, culturally, and historically survive Kurdish ethnic groups but also to politically serve Kurds to resist marginalization and cultural domination (Strohmaier & Krewani, 2017; Cabi, 2021). Kurdish name is a strategic coinage that promotes non-Persian culture (Soleimani & Mohammadpur, 2019) by associating ethnic qualities, nature, geographical location, historical characters, and physical features (Eslami-Rasekh et al. 2015).

Although Kurdish dialect groups in Iran consider themselves a unified ethnic group, each group seeks to survive their own calendars. In this case, each dialect metaphorically conceptualizes the months' names on the basis of its own social and cultural heritage. Strohmaier and Krewani (2017), consider such Kurdish calendars political tools since they begin on the same day as the Persian calendar. Other scholars regard the Kurdish calendars and Kurdish-name months as "literacy activity in the liberated province" (Edmonds, 1971, p. 99). Meanwhile, Gezik (2019) believes that the Kurdish month names are inspired by changes in nature, weather, natural events, local needs, and the lifestyles of Kurdish people in specific Kurdish-speaking regions.

3. Central and Southern Kurdish Calendars

Sorani is widely recognized as the most abundant Kurdish dialect in terms of published material (Hassanpour, 1992). It is spoken in Iranian provinces including Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and West Azerbaijan (Aziz, 2011). The Sorani calendar is officially utilized in Kurdistan province of Iran alongside the Persian calendar (Kirmanj, 2014). The first month of the Sorani calendar is 'Khakelêwe' (see Table 1) which commences on the first day of the spring or March 21st.

On the other hand, southern Kurdish receives less attention and is not well documented (Azin & Ahmadi, 2021). Some researchers have mapped the continuum of southern dialects from Qorve county (Kurdistan province of Iran) to the Kermanshah province, Abadan and Dehloran counties (Ilam province), and Tuyserkan county in Hamedan province, as well as some Iraqi region along the Iran-Iraq border (Belelli, 2019). Although there is still no consensus on classifying southern Kurdish dialects, some classifications have been provided as follows: Bijari, Kalhori, Kolyai, Kermanshahi Malekshahi/Feyli, Badrei, Kordali, and Howrami (Eppler & Benedikt, 2017); Kermanshahi, Garrusi, Laki, Feyli, and Kalhori (Sheyholislami, 2015); and Bijari, Garrusi, Kolyai, Laki, Kalhori, Malekshahi, Badrei, Kordali (Fattah, 2000). There are some other typologies in the literature of southern Kurdish, but the current study focuses on the dialects that have obtained the consent of most of the previous researchers to be considered dialects of southern Kurdish in Iran, such as Kalhori, Feyli, and Laki. Consequently, the calendars of these southern dialects are discussed in this article. Laki is spoken in Lurestan province (Hartner, 1985), Ilam, Kermanshah, Hamedan, and some neighboring Iraqi regions (Yousefvand, 2018). There is a continuous debate over whether Laki should be perceived as a Kurdish or Lurish dialect as both the Lurs and Kurds speak Laki in Iran. Amanolahy (1988) argues that Laki is a Lurish dialect. While other scholars such as Hamzehee (2015), Mann (1910) Anonby (2003) and Minorsky (2012) believe that Laki's linguistic features are more similar to Kurdish, therefore the Laks can be considered a subgroup of the Kurds and consequently Laki is a dialect of the Kurdish language. Like other Kurdish dialects, Laki has a dialect-specific calendar that begins with the "Pan jah" (the first month) at the spring equinox.

The Kalhori dialect, represented in Table 2, is mainly spoken in Kermanshah province and its counties, including Eslamabad, Gilan-e Garb, as well as Ilam province, particularly in its Eyvan County (Arjomand, 1988; Potts, 2014). Kalhori speakers have also developed a dialect-specific calendar that begins with the 'Ja Zhnan' at the spring equinox.

The Feyli dialect is another southern dialect that is currently being studied. According to Bozorgmehr (2020), Feyli is spoken by the Kurdish groups in Pahlā, Dehloran, Abadan, and Dareh Shahr counties of Ilam province. The Feyli calendar differs significantly from other Kurdish calendars examined in this study. Although its first month is named 'Wahar (meaning spring), unlike other Kurdish Calendars, it starts on the Bahman or January 22nd. Another notable difference is the order of the seasons. While other discussed Kurdish calendars have the order of spring-summer-fall-winter, the Feyli calendar has the order of Kurdish Spring (Wahar-Kurdi)- Kurdish fall (Paez-

Kurdi)- Kurdish summer (Sardawa Kurdish)- Kurdish winter (Zemsan-Kurdi). Although these Kurdish calendars all have 12 months, there are a few day interval discrepancies among them, and none of them starts with the spring equinox. Therefore, Tables 1 and 2 provides these calendars based on the first months of each calendar.

Table 1. Gregorian, Persian and Sorani (Central Kurdish) calendars

Feature	Gregorian	Persian	Sorani
1	January	Farvardin	Khakelewe
2	February	Ordibehesht	Gulan
3	March	Khordad	Jozerdan
4	April	Tir	Puşper
5	May	Mordad	Gelawezh
6	June	Shahrivar	Khermanan
7	July	Mehr	Rezber
8	August	Aban	Khazele-war
9	September	Azar	Sermawez
10	October	Dey	Berfanbar
11	November	Bahman	Rebandan
12	December	Esfand	Resheme

Table 2. Kalhori, Feyli and Laki (Southern Kurdish) calendars

Feature	Kalhori	Feyli	Laki
1	Ja-Zhnan	Mang-e aval-e vahar (Gia-khizan)	Pan-jah
2	Gulan	Mang-e wasat-e vahar (Mange-Nowruz)	Mirian
3	Zardan	Mang-e akher-e vahar (Gol-e-zarde)	Ga-kor
4	Par-par	Mang-e aval-e payez (Koker)	Agrani
5	Gelawezh	Mang-e wasat-e payez (Gakor)	Merdar
6	Now-khashan	Mang-e akher-e payez (Shert-shwan)	Malezhir
7	Behran	Mang-e aval-e sardwa (Wa-heilan)	Malezhir-
domayne			
8	Khazan	Mang-e wasat-e sardwa (Sardwa)	Toil-taken
9	Saran	Mang-e akher-e sarswa (Wa-lengerizhan)	Mong-e-siye
10	Befran	Mang-e aval-e zemsan (Hamsaw-hat)	Now-Ruzh
11	Bendan	Mang-e wasat-e zemsan (Mange-sieh)	Khak-lye
12	Remashan	Mang-e akher-e zemsan (Khakelêwe)	Mong-Ed

4. Theoretical Framework

The Lakoff and Johnson's (1980a) conceptual metaphor model has been employed in this study to investigate the conceptualization of Kurdish months in southern and central Kurdish dialects (Tables 1&2). It is important to note that metaphor extends beyond mere linguistic function (Lakoff, 1993) and should not be confined to poetic discourse (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980a). Furthermore, Lakoff and Johnson (1980a) assert that "our conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 454), and realized through linguistic expressions (Lakoff, 2006). Consequently, our ideas and experiences of reality are articulated using concrete concepts.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980a), Conceptual metaphor has three types: Structural, Physical/Ontological, and Orientational. The Structural metaphor uses the cross-domain mapping system to create relationships between abstract entities and concrete phenomena (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980a). Besides, Kövecses (2002) explains cross-domain as using a concrete concept to clarify the meaning of an abstract concept or target domain. In this way, the unknown entity converts into a known concept (Charteris-Black, 2004). The Physical or Ontological metaphor utilizes physical concepts to construct cultural concepts. Lakoff and Johnson (1980b) further point out that this metaphor uses physical experiences to provide a basis for future understanding. The last type, Orientational metaphor, does not introduce or understand one concept through another but rather considers a concept as a whole and gives it a spatial orientation such as up-down, in-out, or front-back (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980b).

Then Kövecses (2003) emphasized that the construction of a conceptual metaphor requires a deliberate choice of the target domain and source domain, mapping, inference-making, and establishing a relationship between these two domains. This conceptual metaphor is then expressed through linguistic metaphor, which draws upon nonlinguistic social and cultural conventions. Consequently, the nonlinguistic experiences of the world play a vital role in the creation and comprehension of conceptual metaphors (Forceville, 2009).

Furthermore, according to Kövecses (2005), the metaphor serves as a cognitive-cultural phenomenon that allows for the representation of a concept from various cultural and ideological perspectives. In this particular case, the analysis of linguistic choices is crucial in determining the users' worldview, as well as their cultural and ideological orientation (Halliday, 1978; Foley, 1997; Al-Zumor, 2009; Johnstone, 2017). Similarly, Hart (2008) pointed out that conceptual metaphor goes beyond conceptualizing people's experiences, as described by Halliday's experiential metafunction, and instead functions as a means of conveying people's ideologies. Therefore, metaphor becomes a tool for the ideological production and reproduction of social discourse (Fairclough, 2013). It is worth mentioning that ideological discourse is not restricted to maintaining unequal power relationships but is used to establish integrity among members of a specific community (Fairclough, 1989). Accordingly, the choice of linguistic terms is a way to produce and reproduce the boundaries between "self" and "others" (Wei, 2000) and show loyalty to a specific ethnic group.

5. Method

Since this descriptive study analyzed various Kurdish calendars, it includes the Sorani calendar derived from Izady's (2015) handbook, the Kalhori calendar from Afshar's (1992) book, and the Laki calendar from Karami's (2022) publication. The Feyli calendars were also obtained from various websites, then a unified Feyli calendar has been developed, which is generally validated through interviews with knowledgeable Ilami citizens. The collected data is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Qualitative description and comparison were then carried out using the Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor model to address the research questions and investigate the conceptual metaphor in these calendars.

6. Metaphorical conceptualization of Kurdish months

In this section, we aim to address the first and second research questions. Therefore, using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980a) model, an in-depth analysis is conducted on the conceptual metaphors that shape the Kurdish calendars' months.

In the western Kurdish provinces of Iran, such as Ilam and Kermanshah, the weather turns warm toward the end of Bahman, around February 14th. Therefore, these Kurdish regions adhere to the Soltani Tropical calendar, considering the middle or final days of Bahman as the true Kurdish Spring. However, with the exception of the Feyli calendar, which aligns its written form with the local or Soltani calendar by commencing the first month of the year in the middle of Bahman with "mang awal wahar" (the first month of spring), the written versions of all other Kurdish calendars listed in Tables 1 and 2 follow the official Iranian (Persian) calendar, commencing their months with the Persian spring on Farvardin 1st/ March 21st. Generally, these Kurdish tribes consider both the solar system in which the Earth orbits the Sun, and the weather conditions they have experienced at specific times of the year when determining their months. This projection of Kurdish months based on previous experiences of natural changes represents a physical or ontological metaphor in Kurdish calendars, where the physical events they have experienced provide a mental map for future understanding. This conceptual map enables the Kurdish people to better understand and, be prepared for natural changes, and make informed plans for the upcoming year.

On the other hand, the Kurdish calendars presented in Tables 1 and 2 conceptualize periods of time through dialect-specific figurative or metaphorical expressions. Some of these metaphors are particular to certain dialects and may be unintelligible to the speakers of other dialects. Examples include "Now Khasan" and "Remashan" in the Kalhori calendar; "Khazel Var" and "Resheme" in the Sorani calendar; "Mirian" in the Laki calendar, and "Waheilan" in the Feyli calendar. However, there are some dialect-specific concepts, such as "Gela Wej", that may be intelligible across all Kurdish dialects despite variations in pronunciation. The meanings of these dialect-specific concept are provided as follows:

6.1. The First Month of the Spring

Kalhori calendar: "Ja-Zhnan" (means celebration) refers to the celebration of the first day of the New

Year ("Now ruz") occurring on Farvardin 1st/ March 21st.

The Sorani calendar uses the term "Khakelewe" (insanity of the earth) to characterize the unpredictable weather patterns during this time. This term reflects the frequent and sudden transitions from rainfall to sunshine. "Khak" symbolizes "soil", representing the earth, while "e" serves as a conjunct article in the Kurdish language, and "lewe" signifies "insanity".

Laki calendar: "Panjah" ("Panj" means "five") refers to a period of five days which marks the first five days of the spring or the Iranian New Year. According to the religious beliefs of the Laks, these five days are regarded as a gift from the revered Prophet Mohamad (PBUH) to his daughter, Saint Fatimah (AS). It is noteworthy that both the Persian and Kurdish calendars recognize these five days as official holidays.

Feyli calendar: "Gia-Khizan" ("Gia" means "plant", and "Khizan" signifies "germinate") denotes the period when plants germinate throughout the year. It ranges from the middle of Bahman to the middle of Esfand (February- March).

6.2. The Second Month of the Spring

The term "Gulan" in the Kalhori calendar signifies "flowers" as the mountains and prairies in Kalhori-speaking regions flourish with vibrant blooms during this time of the year. In the Sorani calendar, "Gulan" holds the same meaning as in the Kalhori calendar.

The term "Mirian" in the Laki calendar resembles the word "mehriye" in Laki pronunciation (which denotes dowry or remuneration). This month is named Mirian because during this time Laki farmers shear the fleece of sheep in warmer weather conditions and subsequently pay the shepherds their annual wages.

In Feyli calendar, this month spans from mid-Esfand to mid-Farvardin, hence it is referred to as "Mange Nowruz" ("Mang" means "month", "e" is schwa to connect two words, and "Nowruz" means New Year) reflecting the presence of the Iranian New Year in this month.

6.3. The Third Month of the Spring

Kalhori calendar: "Zardan" (means yellow) refers to the time when fields of wheat and barley turn yellow, indicating that they are ready for harvesting.

Sorani calendar: "Jozerdan" ("Jo" refers to "barley" and "zerdan" means "yellowing") indicates that the harvest time is approaching.

Laki calendar: "Ga-kor" ("Ga" means "cow" and "kor" means congregation and mooing) refers to the time when cows, due to hot weather, moo and gather together to seek shade of other cows and get rid of annoying insects.

Feyli calendar: "Gol-e Zarde" ("GOL" means "flower", "e" is a schwa to connect two words, and "Zarde" means yellow) is a sign of growing yellow flowers in the mountains and pastures this month (Farvardin-Ordibehesht).

6.4. The First Month of the Summer

The month of "Par-Par" (flutter), in Kalhori calendar, is so named because during this time, the

weather starts to warm up, causing the grass and plants to dry up. As a result, the dried plants flutter and scatter everywhere in the sky.

"Pushper" in Sorani calendar derives from "Pûş" (means "dried weeds or straw") and "per" (means 'to flutter or scatter'). This term conveys a similar meaning to "Par-Par" in the Kalhori calendar. For the Kurdish people, who are primarily engaged in agriculture, understanding when the dried straw will scatter in the sky is crucial. It indicates the presence of suitable winds for separating straw from barley after the harvest. These winds begin this month and continue until the last month of summer. "Agrani", in the Laki calendar, refers to a star that appears in the sky over the Laki regions during this time of year. Agrani (also means "fire") symbolizes the hot weather characteristic of this month. "Koker" in the Feyli calendar refers to when "Kok" (partridge) is "ker" (means lays her eggs and incubates them). This name helps aviculturists in determining the incubation period (Ordibehesht-Khordad).

6.5. The Second Month of Summer

"Gelawezh", in the Kalhori and Sorani calendars, derived from the discovery of a specific star known as "Gelawezh", which appears in the sky above the western Kurdish-speaking provinces at this time of year. Albeit Gelawezh in the Sorani calendar has different pronunciations.

In the Laki calendar, "Merdar" (dead animals), the warmest month of the year, is associated with a rise in animal mortality.

In the Feyli calendar, "Gakor" holds the same meaning as "Gakor" in the Laki calendar (Khordad-Tir).

6.6. The Third Month of the Summer:

"Now-Khashan" in the Kalhori calendar derives from "now" (meaning new) and "Khashan" (meaning benefit), symbolizing the renewed productivity of agriculture, particularly the harvesting of wheat and barley clusters, as well as livestock benefits.

In the Sorani calendar, "Khermanan" signifies the stacks of harvested barley meticulously compiled in a field.

The Laki calendar incorporates the term "Male-zhir" ("Mal" meaning "house", "e" serving as an article connecting the parts of speech, and "zhir" meaning "below or lower" geographical locations), which represents the time when a group of nomadic or semi-nomadic Laks migrates from the mountains and summer highland pastures to settle in villages, marking the onset of cold weather.

In the Feyli calendar, "Shert-Shwan" ("Shert" implies "contract" and "Shwan" means "shepherd") alludes to the responsibilities of farmers during the last month of summer (Tir- Mordad). "Shert-Shwan" denotes the time when shepherds receive their annual payments and establish new agreements with farmers.

6.7. The First Month of Autumn:

The month of "Behran" in the Kalhori calendar derives its name from the word "benefit" or crop productivity, as this is when certain crops or fruits are harvested.

In the Sorani calendar, the month of "Rezber" ("Rez" meaning "grape" and "ber" meaning "crop" or "production") signifies the ripening of grapes, one of Kurdistan's main agricultural products. Therefore, knowing the optimal time for grape harvesting is of utmost importance during this month. In the Laki calendar; "Malezhir-Domayne" ("Malezhir" corresponds to the third month of the Laki calendar, along with an additional term, "Domayne", signifying the "second or rear group") referring to the second group of seminomadic Laks who move from summer highland pastures to the villages. This expression indicates that the weather is getting colder.

The month of "Wa-Heilan" in the Feyli calendar is named so due to the occurrence of strong winds or "Wa" accompanied by small pieces of grit, dust or "Heilan" (Mordad-Shahrivar).

6.8. The Second Month of Autumn:

"Xazan" (meaning yellowing) in the Kalhori calendar, is a sign of autumn when the leaves' color turns yellow.

In the Sorani calendar, "Khazele-war" ("Khazele" means "dead or dried leaves", and "war" means "falling") refers to the "falling of dead leaves". This month is also known as "Gelarizh" ("Gela" means leaf, and "rizh" means falling).

The term "Toil-taken" in the Laki calendar ("Toil" means saplings or branches of trees and "taken" means shaking), describes the process of harvesting fruit trees in which the gardeners use thin wooden rods or thin branches of trees (Toil) to shake (taken) the branches laden with fruit. It is also said that "Toil-taken" refers to the shaking of saplings by the wind.

In the Feyli calendar, the term "Sardwa" ("Sard" means cold and "wa" means wind) symbolizes the onset of cold wind blowing (Shahrivar- Mehr).

6.9. The Third Month of Autumn:

In the Kalhori calendar, "Saran" is the plural form of "Sar" (a specific species of bird or starling). Due to the colder weather experienced in Kalhori-speaking regions during this time of year, starlings migrate from these areas. Consequently, their migration serves as an indication of the onset of cold weather. Starlings play a crucial role in agriculture as they act as natural pesticides, feeding on harmful insects that can damage crops. Given that the majority of Kurdish tribes historically relied on farming as their livelihood, this bird has garnered significant attention.

In the Sorani calendar, "Sermawez" ("Serma" means "cold weather" and "wez" means "blowing") refers to the blowing cold wind.

In the Laki calendar, "Mong-e-Siye" ("Mong" means "month", "e" is an article, and "Siye" means black) or black month, refers to the icy cold weather that can freeze the bones and make them appear black.

In the Feyli calendar, "Wa-Lengerizhan" ("Wa" means "wind", "Lenge" means "leaf", and "rizhan" means "falling") represents the last month of the Kurdish autumn, during which the trees shed their leaves as a result of the wind (Mehr-Aban).

6.10. The First Month of Winter:

In the Kalhori calendar, "Befran" refers to snowfall ("Befr" means "snow" and "ran" signifies the plural form, indicating multiple snowfalls). Befran is recognized as the coldest month of the year, characterized by heavy snowfall.

In the Sorani calendar, "Befranbar" (meaning snowfalls) conveys the same concept as "Befran" in the Kalhori calendar albeit "bar" means "fall".

In the Laki calendar, "Now-Ruzh" (translates to "new day", where "Now" means new, and "Ruzh" means day) is derived from Zoroastrian tradition, which associates the onset of winter with the sun's birthday, as the days begin to lengthen thereafter. The Laki people celebrate the first day of winter with a fire festival.

The Feyli calendar, includes the term "Hamsaw-Hat" ("Hamsaw" means neighbor and "Hat" means coming). This marks the first month of winter, when temperatures drop, prompting migrating Feyli-speaking Kurds to relocate to their winter pastures or villages to reside near their old neighbors (Aban-Azar).

6.11. The Second Month of Winter:

"Bendan" (blockage) in the Kalhori calendar refers to the blockage caused by heavy snowfall. This month is designated as Bendan because it begins with intense snowfalls that obstruct roads, preventing people from leaving their homes or villages and potentially leading to food shortages.

In the Sorani calendar, "Rebendan" (comprises the prefix "Re" which refers to "road", and "Bendan" meaning "blockage". Therefore, Rebendan signifies the obstruction of roads due to heavy snowfall.

In the Laki calendar, "Khak-lye" combines "Khak" meaning "soil or earth" and "lye" meaning "eruption". This term refers to the eruption of soil for plant germination.

In the Feyli calendar, "Mange-Sieh" holds the same meaning as "Mang-Siye" in the Laki calendar, although the pronunciations differ (Azar-Dey).

6.12. The Third Month of Winter:

"Remashan" in the Kalhori calendar means "road display". It comprises two components: "Re" which signifies "road" and "mashan" which means "display". In the third month of winter, temperatures rise, leading to the melting of snow, thereby making previously snow-covered roads visible.

In the Sorani calendar, "Resheme" (is made up of two elements: "Reshe" meaning black and "mê" meaning fog) translates to black fog. During this month, dark clouds (resembling black fog) cover the sky. Additionally, the white snow melts away, exposing the black earth beneath.

In the Laki calendar, "Mong-Ed" ("Mong" meaning month and "Ed" meaning New Year) denotes the month of "Eid" or "celebration of the New Year". As it coincides with the Iranian New Year/Eid, all Iranian provinces partake in the celebrations.

In the Feyli calendar, "Khakelewe" holds the same meaning as "Khak-lye" in the Laki calendar (Dey-Bahman).

In addition to its formulaic expressions, the Feyli calendar employs a metaphorical formula to conceptualize the notion of time. This formula consists of three components: mang+aval/wasat/akher+ Kurdish seasons. In this formula "Mang" represents "month", "awal" signifies "first", "wasat" denotes "middle" (representing the midpoint between 'first' and 'third' which is 'second'), and "akher" means 'last'. The Kurdish seasons included in this framework "Vahar" (spring), "Payez" (summer), "Sardwa" (autumn), and "Zemsan" (winter). Additional information is available in Table 2.

As evidenced by the Kurdish calendars examined in this study, natural events, changes in nature (such as weather, plants, and soil), and sociocultural activities function as source domains for understanding the target domain of time. Therefore, Kurds describe the abstract concept of time in terms of the concrete contextual aspects of their lives, including social, cultural, and natural experiences within a specific timeframe. These experiences are shared among speakers of a particular Kurdish dialect, rendering them concrete concepts within that group. Thus, each Kurdish dialect conceptualizes time through its conventions, which are systematically reflected in their Kurdish calendars (see Tables 1& 2). Confirming Lakoff and Johnson's (1980b) model of conceptual metaphor, the results of our analysis demonstrate that all Kurdish calendars presented in Tables 1 and 2 exhibit structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors as follows:

In Kurdish calendars, the spatial orientation of months is utilized to delineate the internal relationships within a season or a year as a whole, drawing upon the orientational metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980a). Furthermore, specific Kurdish names within the calendars utilize vertical orientation to represent the orientational metaphor within individual months, which will be explored in detail below.

The Feyli calendar operationalizes the orientational metaphor by employing the spatial relationships (aval, wasat, akher) among various months. This approach not only represents the formulaic spatial relationships among different months within a season, but also elucidates the relationship between distinct seasons. Consequently, in each month, "aval" (first) signifies the onset of the new season while conceptualizing the termination of the preceding month; "wasat" represents the relationship among different months within a specific season; and "akher" (last) marks the conclusion of the current month and signals the imminent arrival of the next season.

Moreover, months' names in the Feyli calendar, such as "Gia-Khizan", "Wa-Lengerizhan", "Khazele-war", or "Gelarizh" in the Sorani calendar, and "Male-zhir" or "Malezhir-Domayne" in the Laki calendars are all examples of orientational metaphors. The term "Khizan" in "Gia-Khizan" meaning "germination", conceptualizes the upward growth of plants and symbolizes the New Year. Similarly, terms such as "rizhan" in "Wa-Lengerizhan", "War" in "Khazele-war", and "rizh" in "Gelarizh", denote the 'falling' or 'downward' movement of leaves, signifying autumn. Thus, the descending movement of leaves conceptualizes autumn in the Feyli and Sorani calendars. Furthermore, "zhir" (indicating lower geographical locations) in "Male-zhir" which signifies the

downward movement of a group of people in the Laki context, and "Domayne" (referring to the second or rear group), illustrate the spatial or interval space between two groups that are moving downward towards the villages located at the peripheral sides of mountains are good instances of orientational metaphors. "Male-zhir" alerts the Laks to colder weather while the addition of "Domayne" to "Male-zhir" indicates even colder conditions, as the second group is the last to leave the summer highland pasture and move to the lower areas due to freezing temperatures in the summer pasture.

On the other hand, by affirming the ontological metaphor that posits physical experiences as the foundational for categorizing entities and enhancing future understanding, the Kurdish calendars presented in Tables 1 and 2 utilize the physical experiences of Kurds to metaphorically classify Kurdish months for better future understanding. The physical experiences identified in this study encompass various types of changes in nature, including "Gulan", "Zardan", "Par-Par", "Gelawezh", "Now-Khashan", "Behran", "Khazan", "Berfan", and "Remashan" in the Kalhori calendar; "Khakelewe", "Gulan", "Jozerdan", "Pushper", "Gelawezh", "Rezber", "Khaze-Lewar", "Sermawez", "Befranbar", and "Resheme" in the Sorani calendar; Agranî, "Now-Ruzh", and "Khak-lye" in the Laki calendar; and "Gia-Khizan", "Nowruz", "Gol-e Zarde", "Wa-Heilan", "Sardwa", "Wa-Lengerizhan", and "Khakelewe" in the Feyli calendar. Furthermore, each of these Kurdish calendars employs physical experiences relevant to their respective communities within specific Kurdish contexts to create a conceptual mind map or schema for upcoming years and future generations. Examples of ontological metaphor and the conceptualization of experiences accumulated by Kurds at various times of the year include "Ja-Zhnan, Saran, and Bendan" in the Kalhori calendar; "Khermanan and Rebendan" in the Sorani calendar; "Kowker, Ga-kor, and Mange-Sieh" in the Feyli calendar; and "Ga-kor, Merdar, Mong-e Siye, Now-Ruzh, and Mong-Ed" in the Laki calendar. These changes in nature encompassing weather, plant life, and soil conditions along with the physical experiences of Kurds in their daily lives serve as reference points for future comprehension regarding the characteristics of different months in the upcoming years.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980a) pointed out that structural metaphors facilitate the comprehension of abstract concepts by structuring them in terms of concrete concepts. In this study, the Kurdish calendars have exemplified abstract concept of time through their tangible natural, cultural, and social experiences. These calendars, in order to structure the abstract notion of time, also incorporate concrete social concepts and conventional sociocultural activities, including "Ja-Zhnan", "Khermanan", "Shert-Shwan", "Hamsaw-Hat", "Mirian", "Male-zhir", and "Malezhir-domayne". They also encompass religious concepts like "Pan-jah", and traditional concepts such as "Nowruz" and "Mong Ed" which are widely recognized and valued within their community.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the Kurdish conceptual metaphors utilized in the calendars of the Sorani, Kalhori, Feyli, and Laki dialects. The Kurdish names for the months in these dialects were collected

and analyzed using the Lakoff and Johnson's (1980a) model of conceptual metaphor. The results of our analysis reveal that the Kurdish names of the months, which are derived from natural events, changes in nature (such as weather, plants, and soil), and sociocultural activities, encompass Structural, Physical/Ontological, and Orientational metaphors. All Kurdish calendars under investigation utilize structural metaphors, whereby natural experiences and cultural events serve as sources for a more profound understanding of the passage of time, which is abstract in nature. These calendars affirm the ontological metaphor by illustrating the physical experiences encountered by the Kurdish people during changes in nature through the Kurdish names of the months. The orientational metaphor in these calendars is represented through vertical movements (upward or downward) or using falling. In the case of the Feyli calendar, this is characterized by the horizontal movements between months in terms of "first," "second," and "third." Although this study highlights the significance of Kurdish calendars in Kurdish culture and language revitalization, further experimental studies are required to renew and remind the Kurdish names of the months.

References

- کرمی، یاسر (۲۰۲۲). تقویم زراعی لکی. لرستان: انتشارات پیشوک.
- دانش پژوه، فاطمه؛ کریمی دوستان، غلامحسین؛ محمد ابراهیمی، زینب، و روشن، بلقیس (۱۳۹۲). ماهیت نمود واژگانی فعل و رابطه آن با تکواژ ستاک ساز غیرمعلوم Rā- در کردی سورانی. *زبان‌شناسی و گویش های خراسان*، ۵(۸)، ۵۳-۸۰.
- دانش پژوه، فاطمه؛ کریمی دوستان، غلامحسین؛ محمد ابراهیمی، زینب، و روشن، بلقیس (۱۳۹۴). نقش معنایی و نحوی تکواژ-Rā در کردی سورانی. *جستارهای زبانی*، ۶(۱)، ۵۷-۸۵.
- Afshar, S. I. (1992). Kermanshah and its ancient civilization. Tehran: Zarrin Publications.
- Ahmazadeh, H. (2007). In search of a Kurdish novel that tells us who the Kurds are. *Iranian Studies*, 40(5), 579-592.
- Albarany, L., Albamarni, A., & Shareef, D. (2011). Kurdish Personal Names in Kurdistan of Iraq: A Sociolinguistic Perspective. *Journal of University of Duhok*, 14(2), 29-40.
- AlModarresi, S. M. T., & White, N. M. (2004). Calendar conversion for real-time systems. *Advances in Engineering Software*, 35(8-9), 511-516.
- Al-Zumor, A. W. Q. G. (2009). A socio-cultural and linguistic analysis of Yemeni Arabic personal names. *Online Journal of Language Studies*, 9(2), 15-27.
- Amanolahy, S. (1988). Research about geographical dispersion and Lure ethnic affinity. Tehran: Aghah Press.
- Anonby, E. J. (2003). Update on Luri: How many languages? *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 13(2), 171-197.
- Arjomand, S. A. (1988). The turban for the crown: The Islamic revolution in Iran. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Azin, Z., & Ahmadi, S. (2021). Creating an Electronic Lexicon for the Under-resourced Southern

- Varieties of Kurdish Language. Electronic lexicography in the 21st century. Post-editing lexicography, 83.
- Aziz, M. A. (2011). *The Kurds of Iraq: Ethnonationalism and national identity in Iraqi Kurdistan* (Vol. 100). London: IB Tauris.
- Belelli, S. (2019). Towards a dialectology of Southern Kurdish: Where to begin. *Current Issues in Kurdish Linguistics*, 1, 73.
- Blau, J. (2000). *Méthode de Kurde: Sorani*. France: Editions L'Harmattan.
- Bourdieu, P. (2008 [1979]). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Bozorgmehr, M. (2020). Past Perfect Tense: from Old Iranian to Feyli Dialects. *Specialty Journal of Language Studies and Literature*, 4(2), 14-20.
- Cabi, M. (2020). The roots and the consequences of the 1979 Iranian revolution: A Kurdish perspective. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 56(3), 339-358.
- Cabi, M. (2021). The duality of 'official' and 'local' in modern Iran: historical and intellectual foundations. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 57(5), 777-792.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2004). *Corpus approaches to critical metaphor analysis*. Germany: Springer.
- Daneshpazhouh, F., Karimi-Dustan, G., Mohammad Ebrahimi, Z. and Roshan, B. (2013). The Nature of Verb Lexical Aspect and Its Relation to *rā/rē* Non-Active Morpheme in Sorani Kurdish. *Journal of Linguistics and Khorasan Dialects*, 5(8), 53-80. [In Persian]
doi: 10.22067/lj.v5i8.34486
- Danesh Pazhouh, F., Karimi Dustan, G. H., Mohamad Ebrahimi, Z., Karimi Dustan, G. H., Rovshan, B. & Rovshan, B. (2015). Semantic and Syntactic Role of the *RÄ* Morpheme in Sorani Kurdish. *Language Related Research*, 6(1), 57-85. [In Persian]
- Dorleijn, M., & Leezenberg, M. (2015). The sociolinguistics of Kurdish. In M. Kohlberger & A. Kloekhorst (Eds.), *Book of Abstracts*. Netherlands: Societas Linguistica Europaea.
- Dowall, D. (2021). *A modern history of the Kurds*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Edmonds, C. J. (1971). Kurdish Nationalism. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 6(1), 87-107.
- Eppler, E., & Benedikt, J. (2017). A perceptual dialectological approach to linguistic variation and spatial analysis of Kurdish varieties. *Journal of Linguistic Geography*, 5(2), 109-130.
- Eslami-Rasekh, A., & Ahmadvand, M. (2015). Name-giving variations in Kurdistan Province of Iran: An ethnic identity marker categorized. dspace.khazar.org.
- Esmaili, K. S., & Salavati, S. (2013). Sorani Kurdish versus Kurmanji Kurdish: An empirical comparison. In *Proceedings of the 51st Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, 2, 300-305.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. London: Routledge.
- Fattah, I. K. (2000). *Les Dialectes Kurdes Méridionaux: Etude linguistique et dialectologique*.

Louvain: Peeters.

- Foley, W. A. (1997). *Anthropological Linguistics: An Introduction*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Forceville, C. (2009). Non-verbal and multimodal metaphor in a cognitivist framework: Agendas for research. *Multimodal metaphor*, 2, 19-35.
- Gasser, M. (2006). How language works. Online document, 25. Retrieved from <http://www.indiana.edu/~hlw/Introduction/pf.html>.
- Gezik, E. (2019). *Kurdish Alevis and the Case of Dersim*. USA: Lexington Books.
- Gheytury, A., Yasami, H., & Kazzazi, K. (2010). A note on Kalhori kinship terms. *Iranian Studies*, 43(4), 533-547.
- Gunter, M. M. (2010). *Historical dictionary of the Kurds* (Vol. 8). Maryland: Scarecrow Press.
- Haig, G. (2002). Noun-plus-verb complex predicates in Kurmanji Kurdish: Argument sharing, argument incorporation, or what? *STUF-Language Typology and Universals*, 55(1), 15-48.
- Haig, G., & Matras, Y. (2002). Kurdish linguistics: a brief overview. *STUF-Language Typology and Universals*, 55(1), 3-14.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as Social Semiotics*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hamzehee, M. R. (2015). "Lak Tribe". *Iranica Online*. Retrieved 25 May 2019.
- Hart, C. (2008). Critical discourse analysis and metaphor: Toward a theoretical framework. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 5(2), 91-106.
- Hartner, W. (1985). Old Iranian Calendars. *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 2, 714-792.
- Hassani, H., & Medjedovic, D. (2016). Automatic Kurdish dialects identification. *Computer Science & Information Technology*, 6(2), 61-78.
- Hassanpour, A. (1991). State policy on the Kurdish language: The politics of status planning. *The International Journal of Kurdish Studies*, 4(1/2), 42.
- Hassanpour, A. (1992). *Nationalism and language in Kurdistan*. San Francisco: Mellon Research University Press.
- Hassanpour, A., Sheyholislami, J., & Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2012). Introduction. Kurdish: Linguicide, resistance and hope. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, (217), 1-18.
- Izady, M. (2015). *Kurds: A concise handbook*. UK: Taylor & Francis.
- Johnstone, B. (2017). *Discourse analysis*. NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Karimi-Doostan, G. (2005). Light verbs and structural case. *Lingua*, 115(12), 1737-1756.
- Karami, Y. (2022). *The Lakī Agricultural Calendar*. Lorestan: Pishouk Publications. [In Persian]
- Kirmanj, S. (2014). Kurdish history textbooks: Building a nation-state within a nation-state. *The Middle East Journal*, 68(3), 367-384.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. UK: Oxford university press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2003). Language, figurative thought, and cross-cultural comparison. *Metaphor and symbol*, 18(4), 311-320.

- Kövecses, Z. (2005). *Metaphor in culture: Universality and variation*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G. (1993). *The contemporary theory of metaphor*. California: Berkeley University.
- Lakoff, G. (2006). Conceptual metaphor. *Cognitive Linguistics: Basic Readings*. Berlin, 185-239.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980a). Conceptual metaphor in everyday language. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 7(8), 453-486.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980b). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: Chicago press.
- Malmasi, S. (2016, December). Subdialectal differences in sorani kurdish. In *Proceedings of the third workshop on NLP for similar languages, varieties and dialects (vardial3)* (pp. 89-96).
- Mann, O. (1910). *Die Mundarten der Lur-Stämme im südwestlichen Persien*. Germany: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.
- Matras, Y., & Akin, S. (2012). A Survey of the Kurdish Dialect Continuum. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Kurdish Studies*.
- McDowall, D. (2004). *A Modern History of The Kurds*. London: I.B. Tauris Publishing.
- Minorsky, V. (2012). "Lak". *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd edition). Netherlands: Brill Publishers.
- Mohamadi, K., Weisi, H. (2023). Semiotic manipulation strategies employed in Iranian printed advertisements. *Pragmatics & Society*, 14(1), 71-93.
- Öpengin, E. (2013a). Adpositions and argument indexing in the Mukri variety of Central Kurdish: Focus on ditransitive constructions. *Orientalia Suecana*, 61, 187-198.
- Öpengin, E. (2013b). Topicalisation in Central Kurdish: additive enclitic and other means. *Information Structure in Spoken Language Corpora (ISSLaC)*, Bielefeld, Germany.
- Potts, D. T. (2014). *Nomadism in Iran: from antiquity to the modern era*. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Shahsavari, F. (2010). Laki and Kurdish. *Iran and the Caucasus*, 14(1), 79-82.
- Sheyholislami, J. (2015). The language varieties of the Kurds. *The Kurds: History, Religion, Language, Politics*, 30-51.
- Soleimani, K., & Mohammadpour, A. (2019). Can non-Persians speak? The sovereign's narration of "Iranian identity". *Ethnicities*, 19(5), 925-947.
- Stansfield, G. (2014). Kurds, persian nationalism, and Shi'i rule: surviving dominant nationhood in Iran. In *Conflict, democratization, and the Kurds in the Middle East* (pp. 59-84). NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Strohmaier, A., & Krewani, A. (2021). Media and mapping practices in the Middle East and North Africa: Producing space (p. 325). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Tavazde, G. (2019). Spreading of the Kurdish language dialects and writing systems used in the Middle East. *Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci*, 13(1).
- Tavakoli-Targhi, M. (2011). *Refashioning Iran Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Wei, L. (Ed.). (2000). *The bilingualism reader* (Vol. 11). London: Routledge.
- Windfuhr, G. L. (1989). *Western Iranian Dialect*. In R. Schmitt (ed.), *Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum*. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Windfuhr, G. (2009). *The Iranian Languages* (p. 418). London: Routledge.
- Yousefvand, R. (2018). *Chronology and Short History of Iranian Laks (Case Study Laki People In Lorestan Province Of Iran)*. Вісник Національної академії керівних кадрів культури і мистецтв, (1).
- Zolfaqari, A. (2010). The Avromani-speaking area in Iran. *Iran and the Caucasus*, 14(2):323-329

