

## CONCEPTUALISATIONS AND SEMANTIC EXTENSIONS OF SAR 'HEAD' IN BALOCHI: A CULTURAL LINGUISTICS PERSPECTIVE

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### Abstract

*This study explores the cultural conceptualisations of sar 'head' in the Balochi language, highlighting its central role as a salient body part in meaning construction. Drawing on the framework of Cultural Linguistics, the analysis demonstrates that sar functions as a productive source domain for expressing a wide range of abstract and culturally embedded concepts. It is metaphorically and metonymically employed to conceptualise notions such as leadership, authority, and mental states, reflecting its prominence as the most visible and symbolically loaded part of the human body. The findings further reveal that sar is understood as a container of cognitive capacities, including reasoning, understanding, and memory, aligning with broader embodiment patterns observed across languages. Additionally, the study shows that sar is culturally associated with honour and integrity, functioning metonymically as an index of personal and social value. Beyond its figurative uses, sar also operates in grammatical and functional domains, serving as a prepositional marker indicating spatial relations and as a symbolic unit of measurement. Overall, the research underscores the multifaceted role of sar in Balochi, demonstrating how language encodes cultural knowledge and embodied experience through body-part expressions. The study contributes to the theoretical development of Cultural Linguistics by extending its application to the underexplored Balochi language and by demonstrating how embodied experiences are culturally constructed and interpreted through shared cultural conceptualisations and cultural cognition.*

**Key Words:** Cultural Conceptualisations, Cultural Linguistics, Balochi, Embodiment, Head

### 1. INTRODUCTION

How people conceptualize the body to express emotions, feelings, desires, and other aspects of life is a fundamental question for researchers in linguistics, cognitive linguistics, cognitive science, and cultural linguistics. Human thinking is basically metaphorical in nature and originates in the body (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The link between mind and body in terms of conceptualization was explored through the "embodiment hypothesis," (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999; Johnson, 1987). Consequently, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) was created within the framework of this hypothesis. The CMT states that "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphoric in nature" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3). To put it another way, "embodied (conceptual) metaphors" form the foundation of our mental framework (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Conceptual metaphors arise from cross-domain correspondences within our conceptual system and influence how we perceive almost every abstract idea in life. Kövecses (2002) argues that "metaphor has the power to create reality for us; it is the major way in which the human cognitive system produces nonphysical reality, that is, the social, political, psychological, emotional, etc. world." For example, we describe emotions using terms of force, and disputes in terms of war.

Kövecses (2005) addresses the issue of the relation between universal and cultural aspects of metaphor. He further says that while general metaphors like TIME IS SPACE and EMOTIONS ARE FORCES are likely used worldwide, the way these metaphors appear in each language often depends on the culture. Kövecses explores a crucial question in cognitive linguistics: Can we comprehend abstract concepts such as time, love, or life without employing metaphors? Kövecses suggests that these abstract ideas are always expressed through metaphors, and shared metaphors can be explored through cultural perspectives.

All humans have the same body parts, and these are the first objects humans experience. So, embodied cognition is influenced by the environment in which they live (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ochieng & Kóczy, 2024). A rich body of research on body part terms reveals that the human body frequently serves as a domain source to be applied in numerous human activities, including abstract concepts (Kövecses, 2000; Sharifian et al., 2008). In addition, the body part terms not only form profound linguistic expressions for theoretical research on cognitive processes such as metaphor and metonymy, but also serve as a major source of conceptualisations in cross-linguistic studies (Kraska-Szlenk, 2019). The human experience with the body is shaped by the cultural conceptualisations deeply rooted in cultural traditions, such as folk medicines or religion, and these conceptualisations shape embodied cognition. (Sharifian, 2017b).

While the figurative use of body parts has received considerable attention from scholars of cognitive and cultural linguistics in recent years (e.g., Maalej & Yu, 2011; Sharifian et al., 2008; Yu, 2011; Baranyiné Kóczy, 2022; Baranyiné Kóczy & Sipőcz, 2023; Tjuka et al., 2024; Fatima et al., 2025). All these studies have focused on body parts such heart, eyes, face, head, etc. in well-known languages such as English, Chinese, Persian, and others. As per the current literature is concerned, there is not systematic investigation done on the conceptualisations of the head through the lens of Cultural Linguistics. The current study is aimed at filling this gap by exploring the cultural conceptualizations of the head in Balochi by employing Cultural Linguistics as a Theoretical and analytical framework (Sharifian, 2017b).

## 1.2 The Balochi Language

The focus of the study is the Balochi language (ISO 639-3: bal), which belongs to the north-western branch of the Iranian group of the Indo-European language family. It is spoken by the Baloch people across a wide geographical region (Spooner, 2012). According to ISO 639-3 classification, the code bal represents Balochi, while its major dialects are classified separately as **bcc** Southern Balochi, **bgp** Eastern Balochi, and **bgn** Western Balochi (Ahmadi et al., 2023). It is spoken by an estimated eight to ten million speakers, primarily across the province of Balochistan in Pakistan, but also in Sindh and Punjab, as well as in Sistan and Balochistan Province in southeastern Iran, southwestern Afghanistan, and dispersion communities in the Gulf states such as Oman and the United Arab Emirates (Nourzaei, 2025).

Southern Balochistan has three main dialects, Makurani, Kohi Sulemani and Rakshani. Makurani Balochi, spoken by people living near the coast, has its own words and sounds because of the influence of the sea. Kohi Sulemani Balochi, from the mountains, sounds different because of the terrain and its connections with Pashto-speaking people. Rakshani Balochi mixes features from both Eastern and Western because it's in the middle of those areas (Jahani, 2013).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Balochi has a strong oral tradition rich in folklore, poetry, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions and these idiomatic expressions are often used in daily conversations to enrich the language's beauty. The Baloch society often uses the body organ names metaphorically, symbolizing them with various abstract concepts that are culturally construed. This study explored the cultural conceptualizations of body parts in Balochi by analyzing different linguistic expressions. Using body part metaphors and metonymies in

conversation brings a real taste of the language and enhances its linguistic beauty. Body organs such as the heart, head, hand, eye, and hands are commonly employed figuratively to represent various abstract ideas in Baloch society. These metaphors are not arbitrary; they are culturally created and influenced by the Baloch people's shared values, beliefs, and experiences. To properly comprehend these metaphorical phrases, it is necessary to investigate the literal meanings of the words and the cultural concepts, values and beliefs that define the Balochi language

### 1.3. Research Questions

The current work aims to answer the following questions:

1. What semantic extensions and figurative uses of *head* are found in Balochi linguistic expressions?
2. How do cultural metaphors, schemas, and categories, along with embodied cultural cognition, shape the semantic extensions and figurative uses of *head* in Balochi?
3. How does head function in the conceptualisation of emotions, cognition, authority, honour, identity etc. in Balochi?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Embodiment via Body Parts

Embodiment is the concept that cognitive functions are embedded in the body's sensory and motor systems, which serve as the major channel for interacting with and making sense of the world (Sharifian, 2017). Embodiment is specifically relevant in cultural linguistics since it connects body experiences to conceptual metaphors, idioms, and cultural schemas (Szlenk, 2023). The body's embodied experiences become central to understanding how speakers of a language think about their world.

Several studies were done on Embodiment into body parts by Maalej and Yu (2011), Sharifian et al. (2008), Brenzinger and Kraska-Szlenk (2014), and Kraska-Szlenk (2019, 2020) and many more that contributed to a new perspective of knowledge of Embodiment theory. These studies explain that embodiment is a shared human experience in the sense that all humans rely on their bodies as sources of understanding and conceptualizing abstract entities, how body parts are used metaphorically is different across cultures (Baş & Kraska-Szlenk, 2021). Cross-linguistic analysis of metaphors of the body, like the hand, heart, head, face, or eyes, shows that the human body offers a common framework, yet culturally and linguistically conditioned meanings and associations to different body parts evolve. For instance, the heart can symbolize emotion and love across numerous cultures, while it may be considered the home of memory or moral courage in other cultures. It can be significantly different based on cultural context; how emotions and personality are conceptualized in idiomatic language is particularly determined by cultural body part conceptualizations (Aladel, 2023).

Body part terms carry metonymic and metaphorical meanings that symbolize underlying emotions in different cultures, beyond the physical meaning. Language, culture, and emotion are inextricably linked, as illustrated by the close association between body parts and emotional expression in certain cultural contexts (Al-Bahrani, 2025). Embodiments act as windows to show how speakers connect their bodily experiences with abstract concepts, and how the connections differ from culture to culture (Lakoff & Johnson, 2020).

This is like the broader concept of embodiment in that mental metaphors are based on lived experiences. Cultural models then provide individuals with common frames of world understanding and allow them to represent their emotions in terms consistent with their shared knowledge. The phrase "My heart falls out" expresses sadness; it could also describe a culturally embedded way of feeling and experiencing emotion physically (Allawama et

al.,2025). These expressions, drawn from shared cultural meaning, evoke emotion and relatedness through embodiment is a universal occurrence; its realization varies widely between cultural contexts, as illustrated in the differing conceptualizations of the body and its role in language among different cultures (Zhou et al., 2022).

Embodiment is a fundamental aspect of human cognition; case studies from over 15 languages reveal how various cultures perceive and convey body experiences (Nguyen, 2014), showing that their expressions are very different. The way individuals think and speak about their experiences is governed by the type of embodiment in language, which is closely connected to cultural conceptualization. This diversity of linguistic embodiment illustrates the way our sense of language is deeply rooted in physical and cultural realities (Pelkey, 2023).

## 2.2 Head

Several studies have focused on the semantic extensions of body parts, particularly the head, across various cultures and languages. It has been well-defined by previous research that head is a polysemantic term; that has more definitions from the physical to the abstract considerations (Maalej & Yu, 2011). Studies on languages like Basque, Chinese, English, German, Polish, Turkish and Tunisian Arabic bring up the fact that some metaphorical uses of the head only exist in specific cultural models. (Kraska Szlenk, 2019). There are more cross-linguistic patterns. These results underscore the universal and culturally specific ways through which the head concept is grounded in human thought and language.

The head is frequently an idea container in a language, filled with emotions, thoughts and knowledge. As an example of this assertion, one can bring up the common phrase: "put the idea in his head", which clearly expresses the notion that the head is a reservoir that contains thoughts (Akkök, 2024b). The commonplace image schema associated with this is the containment schema, reflecting ideas of fullness and emptiness. For instance, to say that "my head is swimming in data" means an overflow of information; "make my head explode with joy" represents the head as encompassing strong emotions. Such metaphorical use develops the ability of people to convey their cognitive and emotional conditions by relating them to physical conditions (Sirait et al., 2022).

The conceptualization of the head (*sar*) in the Persian language shows a solid connection between language, culture and cognition. A research study was done on 305 idioms and proverbs of the Persian language, which found that the head stands for a lot more than the meaning of the body part itself (Ahangari, 2023a). It indicates cognitive functions like thinking, intelligence and decision-making. Along with that, the head is also linked with emotional states; mental and emotional experiences go together with it. Moreover, it is also utilized to illustrate a person's characteristics, status in society, or leadership, focusing on its symbolic function of authority within Persians (Bakhtiar, 2024).

In the Russian and Chinese languages, the metaphor of the head represents leadership and authority, but each culture adds its nuance. Consequently, Russian speakers symbolize the head to authority and power (Baranova, 2022). which are more deeply cultural aspects that emphasize hierarchy and respect for leaders, as evidenced by expressions such as "head of the family" or "head of the department." In Chinese, the metaphor of the head again represents leadership but is more closely tied to wisdom and prudence. Such phrases as "head of the household" or "head of the class" reinforce the role of knowledge as the embodiment of leadership (Ogochukwu & Chiemezie, 2024). Chinese culture has considered it a symbol of leadership. However, for Russians, authority is emphasized, for the Chinese, it is wisdom. This similarity reflects the cultural aspects of each society (Zheng, 2020).

A comparative study investigated the conceptualizations of the head in English and Serbian, including metaphors such as "the head is a container", "the head is an object" and "the head

stands for the person". They concluded no conceptual differences but due to linguistic variation influenced by cultural factors (Radić & Silaški, 2012),

The cultural conceptualization of head in the idioms of English and Vietnamese reveals that both languages link it to intelligence, authority and decision-making. The idioms "head of the class" and headstrong feature determination leadership and ideation in the usage, whereas Vietnamese expressions such as "đầu óc" literally "head brain" center on intellect. A common aspect is that Vietnamese idioms often utilize symbolic pairs that reflect an importance placed on duality and balance, as is less so in English. These idioms provide not only evidence of a culture's values but also direct evidence of the idiosyncratic patterns of thinking within each language (Vu et al., 2020).

In Tunisian Arabic, a researcher has worked on head metaphors, which illustrated that the head symbolizes knowledge, reasoning and intelligence through the containment schema. However, it represents cultural values such as stubbornness and hospitality. Furthermore, the research also brought out the part-for-whole metonymy where the head stands for the whole person head metaphor that in Tunisian Arabic is represented with traits like stubbornness and intellect, besides social values of honor and authority. Shows a more significant division of labor among body parts in cultural conceptualization (Maalej, 2014).

The head bears more extended interpretations of character traits, mental faculties, cultural values, and emotions through metonymic metaphors in Jordanian Arabic and explains myriad everyday experiences. Despite the similarity in the two dialects, the head is much more productive in Jordanian Arabic when it comes to profiling character traits and emotions. These are attributed to a cultural filter in the shared Arab cultural background and different experiential emphases among the dialects (Zibin et al., 2024).

The figurative use of the head and eye in German and Indonesian posits that both languages use body parts to think up comparable domains, such as character traits but a telling difference between the two languages was brought about by the frequency and emphasis. Indonesians underlined the location and aspect of the head and the eyes. (Siahaan, 2011b).

In Russian idioms, the head is often filled with thoughts, knowledge, or emotion, again evoking the idea of a headspace for cognitive activity (Alieva & Ibraeva, 2024). The head is conceptualized differently in many languages and cultures, reflecting a variety of metaphorical and cognitive frameworks. Numerous studies examine the representation of the head in figurative language, shedding light on its complex connotations and cultural significance (Baeva, 2019).

Similar flexibilities should be anticipated in the Balochi language, though the sources of the target domains are likely to be the same as in most languages, that is, parts of the body. And it is not simply arbitrary but is physically determined as well as culturally determined (Hendrokumoro et al., 2024). The 'head' is a general source for the metonymy as well as metaphor cross-culturally (Ahangari, 2023; Bisilki, 2022; Zibin et al., 2024). In the conceptualizations of 'head' (liyil) were explained through grammaticalization and conceptual metaphor theories, which showed how 'head' were used in different semantic domains (Bisilki, 2022); in Persian literature, we can see various figurative expressions and proverbs that emphasize the way Cultural Conceptualization Models, such as Sharifian's model, illustrate these mappings (Ahangari, 2023). Like that, Jordanian and Tunisian Arabic also show the employment of 'head' metonymically to spotlight various traits, faculties, and values of characters (Zibin et al., 2024). Thus, there has been a solid precedent for conduct studies of language imagination in Balochi.

### 2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Cultural Linguistics is comparatively new field of study that explores the relationships among language, cognition and conceptualisation (Sharifian, 2017). Drawing on cognitive linguistics,

cultural anthropology, and cognitive psychology, investigates how language encodes culturally constructed conceptualizations anchored in the collective cognition of speech communities. Its core notion, cultural cognition, is a complex adaptive system emerging from community interactions across time and space. Within this framework, cultural conceptualizations include the overarching term “*cultural conceptualisations*” which encompasses cultural schemas, cultural category and cultural metaphor. (Sharifian, 2011, 2017)

Cultural schemas are shared pools of knowledge comprising ideas, conventions, rules, expectations, and values that encode substantial meaning in language. And Cultural categories consist of culture-specific groupings (e.g., colours, ages, emotions, foods, events, kinship) while Cultural metaphors are cross-domain mappings rooted in cultural traditions (e.g., medicine, worldview, religion) that structure reasoning. They serve as foundational frameworks for organising ideas grounded in popular belief systems, such as religion, philosophy, or science (e.g., Kövecses, 2000; Sharifian et al., 2008; Yu, 2015b).

The approach emphasizes that cognition and metaphor are both embodied and culturally situated. Heart-related concepts exemplify this: their meanings across societies reflect shared beliefs, religious/philosophical traditions, and cognitive mechanisms (categorization, imagery, affect, figurative language). Prior work spans Conceptual Metaphor Theory, cultural embodiment, and Cultural Linguistics.

This study applies Cultural Linguistics to the underexplored Balochi language, analysing head-related figurative expressions to show how Balochi cultural cognition and embodied experience shape language-specific conceptualizations.

### **3. METHODS**

#### **3.1 Data Collection**

The data were drawn from various sources including online sources, and interactions with native speakers on daily based conversations. The bulk of expressions were taken from the *Dictionary, Sayed Ganj*. Moreover, for further data and clarification of the meanings of expressions, the researcher conducted open-ended interviews up to of five Brahui elderly native speakers from Balochistan which can better represent the cultural cognition of the speech community. The purposive sampling was used in the study as it gave freedom to the researcher to select participants at their ease and availability.

#### **3.2 Data Analysis**

The study explores the cultural model of HEAD as represented in the Balochi language with respect to internal (person-bound) and external (Entities outside human mind and body) domains. It primarily investigates the person-bound abstract domains that are mapped onto the head, and how the heart is metaphorical extended to external domains such as places, things, etc. The data was analysed qualitatively through cultural-conceptual analysis to obtain deep information about the contextual data. The study uses Cultural Linguistics, a multidisciplinary field that explores the interplay of language, cognition and culture (Sharifian, 2011, 2017b) as its theoretical framework

### **1. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1. Physical and Anatomical Conceptualizations of sar (head).**

The head is the uppermost part of the body, which combines with many sensory organs to function. Structurally, it contains the brain, hair, eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, ear, neck and face, which all organs that make up the head. Anatomically, the head is not only the part of the skull that protects the brain and is covered by hair, but is also supported by the neck, whose basic job is to hold the head and connect it with the rest of the body. Its size, shape, and features vary among individuals, which allows them to be different from each other and is known to shape one's appearance. The head is the most symbolic organ of the body, used figuratively around the world to reflect each cultural conception.

In Baloch society, the sar (head) is not only the physical part of the body, but it carries deep symbolic meanings and various cultural beliefs and expressions. Culturally, the head is conceptualized as the seat of pride, honor, dignity and reasoning. The head is considered the reflection of identity and social status. Moreover, the movement of the head conveys an unlimited, unspoken message. The nodding of the head indicates a positive meaning, answering yes, while shaking the head expresses no, and the bowing symbolizes respect, while raising it denotes pride or challenges. These deep-rooted cultural beliefs of the head have been inherited from generation to generation, being an essential part of Baloch tradition, and are embodied in linguistic practice.

In Balochi and many other cultures, the concept of sar (head) is metonymically and metaphorically used to explore deep abstract concepts like mentality, identity, social roles, honor and emotional state.

#### 4.2.1. Head as Representative of Character Traits

The head, as the body's main organ beyond its anatomical functions, acts as a metonymical representation of the whole individual. It is symbolically used to describe someone's attributes, such as ability, authority, responsibility and presence. Signifying a person's self entirely through one single organ of the head. In the Balochi language, the term sar (head) functions as a metonymical device to describe the whole part of something. This metonymy of the head is commonly used in languages to comprehend the multifaceted abstract meaning.

#### 4.2.2 The Head-for-Life Metonymy

The sar (head), as the commanding center of the body, is conceptualized as the central role of life. In the Balochi language, the extension of sar is used to indicate the identity and existence of a person. The term sar is highly used in the language to refer to someone's worth, as head metonymically symbolizes both dignity and life, as seen in expressions like sar jahala kutag (lowering my head), which means causing me embarrassment. and sar qurban (sacrificing the head, giving one's life). This parallels Arabic uses, where Jordanian ra'su rah (his head is gone) denotes the loss of life, and Tunisian 'andu rās (he has a head) conveys individuality and social worth (Zibin, Altakhaineh, & Musmar, 2024). It shows that across these languages, the head not only embodies life itself but also functions as a metaphor for honor and identity. There are numerous expressions in the Balochi language based on the head (sar), to reflect someone's life or character.

- a. Sar salamat baat.  
Head stay safe

(Indicating the wish of someone being saved and protected).

- b. Sar qurban pa Allah ha.  
Head sacrifice for Allah

(Showing someone's inner emotion who is even ready to sacrifice their life for Allah).

- c. Zalim ha eshi sar gaar kut.  
Cruel people, her head lost has

(The cruel people had ruined her life (here sar is indicating her whole life).

- d. Man, nazani wti sara kuja darahi.

I don't know own head where appears.

I don't know where to go. (The head is indicating her whole existence with frustration or exhaustion)

These expressions clearly show the head is a metonymic indication of life and existence. The expression a, 'sar salamat baat', may the head be saved and protected, symbolizes someone's life, who may stay alive and be saved. This expression is the type of good wish that the speaker uses to pray for their beloved's safety. Here, the safety of the head indicates life. The expression b, 'sar qurban pa Allah ha, head is sacrifice for Allah, means all life is a sacrifice for Allah.

Here head also indicates life, which is more than anything. Conversely, the expression c, 'zalim ha eshi sar gaar kut' means the cruel people have ruined her life. Word gaar means disappear, but in some contexts, it is used metaphorically to symbolize someone's harsh and troubled conditions, while the head considers life, which means someone did actions that led their life to become miserable. Moreover, the expressions d, 'man nazani wti sara kuja dara en' it's means I don't know where to appear my head, and in figuratively the speaker is fed up from her life due to such serious circumstances, so the speaker is elaborating her situation that she has no any option to go where she gets inner peace or get rid up from the hardships of life. Here the sar is indicating that her all life has been overloaded with problems.

In these expressions, the head is used as a metonymy that stands for life and existence. The Baloch people usually use metonymy to bring uniqueness in meaning and conversations

#### 4.2.3 The Head-for-Leader Metonymy

The head, the uppermost part of the ruling body, culturally and linguistically represents the authority and leadership. In Balochi, the sar (head) is metaphorically understood as the seat of leadership, responsibility, and control, where the burden of guiding others and carrying liability is placed on one's head. This conception aligns with Russian (Ahangari, 2023b), where the head symbolizes authority and hierarchical power, reflected in expressions such as (head of the family), or (head of the department), underscoring respect for leadership and social order. Likewise, in Chinese, the head represents leadership tied more closely to wisdom and prudence, as in phrases like (head of the household) or (head of the class" where knowledge legitimizes authority (Ogochukwu & Chiemezie, 2024). Together, these examples show that across cultures the head serves as a metonym for leadership, but in Balochi it particularly emphasizes the personal capacity to bear responsibility and maintain control, rooting authority in the individual's ability to shoulder communal burdens.

- a. Eh wti elaqa e sarbara e.  
He owns area head is  
(He is the head of his area. (Indicating his leadership).
- b. Mardumana k sar naboot, goda haal e anchosh bith en  
People's heads if they have not be so conditions is like this be  
(If people have no leader, their conditions will be bad like this).
- c. Eh drowaen be sara.  
They all are without head

(Indicating those people who don't have a leader, without a head, means without a leader).

These expressions are metonymical representations of the head, which are used to determine one's ability to lead something. The expression A, 'wti elaqa e sarbara' expresses that he/she is their area's head, the sarbara derived from the term sar, which indicates the leading person. Similarly, the expression b also gives the same connotations to point out the head for a person, 'mardumana k sar naboot goda haal e anchosh bith en', elaborating that without having a leader, the group fails to find its direction and cause to wander pointlessly. Moreover, the C' 'e droha 'be sara 'is used to symbolize those people who have no proper leader. The phrase, 'be sar' literally translates to be headless; it doesn't anatomically refer to the absence of a head, but rather metaphorically defines a group that has no leader.

These expressions justified that the head metonymically stands for life, leadership. Besides this, the Baloch people use the term head to signify the hair. As hair is on the skull, so they indicate hair with the head.

- a. Man, wti Sara shoodi.  
I own a head wash  
I wash my head; head represents the hair.
- b. Tai sar sakk chill hen

Your head very dirty is  
(Your head is very dirty, indicating the hair).

These expressions demonstrate that the head is a metonymical depiction of human life, hair and the ability of leadership, which are commonly used in language to give figurative meanings.

#### 4.2.4 Head as Marker of Burden and Responsibility

In the Balochi language, the head is often allegorically used to show someone's mental and emotional state. When people become overloaded with responsibility, work, or tension, it causes a serious mental burden; As they consider the head a burden bearer and carrying all the load so they use the head as a symbolic metonymy to describe someone's mental and physical state, this view turns the head into a metaphoric container of pressure, symbolizing the character traits such as responsibility, perseverance and endurance.

- a. Man, baar o sar o.  
I am loaded and head.  
(I am overloaded (a metaphorical use of sar 'head' to indicate the overload of tensions).
- b. Eh droha tai sara heer ha.  
These all your head keep  
(All responsibilities are on your head (metonymically signifying sar 'head' 'holder of responsibility)
- c. Mani sara bekap.  
My head befall  
(Leave me; telling someone not to bother me).

The mentioned expressions show that the head is conceptualized as the carrier of tension and responsibility. The expression a, 'man baar o sar o' speaker saying her head is overloaded with tolerance and tensions, now it's too much to handle or carry. The speaker is expressing her mental burden and exhaustion, symbolizing the head as the part of the person who bears all the issues and stress. This expression is being used metonymically and metaphorically because the 'sar' (head) is conceptualized as an entity that is filled with tolerance and tensions, a metaphoric use of it, while on the other hand, it is a metonymic representation of the mind or one's inner emotional state. Alternatively, the expression b, 'eh droha tai sara heer' literary translates to all the burden or responsibility is kept on your head is used metaphorically and metonymically to symbolize the responsibility of work with the head and is also a metonymy to define one's traits through the head. Conversely, the expression c, 'mani sara bekap', means that, don't bother me, the speaker is showing that she is fed up with someone who is mentally or physically disturbing her. Here, the head is a metonymic representative of one's mental state, which is disturbed and fed up.

#### 4.2.5 Head as the Seat of Mental Faculties

The sar (head), beyond its physical positions atop the body, the head in Balochi is conceptualized as the center of intellect and rationality, functioning as the seat of thinking, reasoning, and remembering, and thus metaphorically signifying the foundation of all cognitive activities and human understanding. Similarly, in Turkish, proverbs often portray the head as an idea container filled with thoughts, emotions, and knowledge, as in the phrase (put the idea in his head), which clearly reflects its role as a reservoir of mental functions (Akkök, 2024a). These cultural beliefs are extremely rooted in Balochi language construction, which are figuratively used to explain one's mental ability of gaining knowledge, understanding and remembering. The following expressions rationalize that the head is a container of mental processes.

- a. Mani sar eh chizza per nabi.  
My head these things not be

- (I can't understand these things. (Head indicating a mental ability or comprehension).  
b. Eshia arches bgosh, e sar pad nabi.  
Him whatever says, he head not be.

Whatever say to him, he does not understand. The word sarpad signifies understanding. These expressions point to the head as the center of cognitive processes that enable individuals to understand things. The expression A, 'mani sar e chizza per nabi' literary translates to, I don't understand the things. Here, the 'sar' (head) specifies the ability to understand. Similarly, the expressions b, 'eshra arches bgosh, he sarpad nabite' mean whatever they say to him, he doesn't understand, metaphorically symbolizing the head with understanding. The word 'sarpad' is derived from the head, which is metaphorically used to symbolize the mental processes of gaining and understanding things.

Besides the ability to understand, the head is also metonymically and metaphorically used to symbolize memory. The head is linked to the mental functions of remembering and forgetting. The expression below represents the head as a storage of memory.

- c. Mani sar a osh shotag.  
My head's memory went  
(I can't remember things; the head indicates memory of the mind).

The above expression 'mani sar a osh shotag' means my head has lost memory, and I forget things. This expression has a dual meaning and is used in different contexts to define the mental ability that is weak, unable to judge and interpret things based on circumstances, implying the head as a functioning device that is not operating well and also act as a storage of memory, which stores, retains and recalls all knowledge, ideas, and information.

Taking this notion further, the head is known to be the main source of intellect and mental capacity. This connotation is highly ingrained in linguistic expressions that metaphorically represent a person's level of intelligence and wisdom. Such expressions are practiced in communications to describe someone's inner capacity for wisdom.

- d. Eh ushke sarag hy.  
He empty head is.  
(He has an empty head (indicating his foolishness).  
e. E sara vsh nae.  
He good head does not.  
(He is mentally not okay (representing someone's mental issues).

Such a form of expression is used in communication to define someone who is extremely stupid and lacking in intellectual ability. It reveals the head as a container of wisdom, while the absence of thoughtful content signifies the emptiness of thought and knowledge that lead him to foolishness.

#### 4.2.6 Head as a Symbol of Honor

The head is not merely a container of cognition but is symbolically perceived as a bearer of honor and dignity. It is conceptualized as a figurative representation of social status and moral integrity. In Baloch society, the head is linked with izzat (honor) and sharam or ajalati (shame) act as metaphors to represent someone's moral identity and social values. The head is metaphorically used in everyday language to indicate honor, dignity, and shame and metonymically associated with one's self-integrity and loss of honor.

- a. Eshi mani sar jahla kutag  
She my head down  
(Her actions made me feel ashamed (head down represents shame).  
b. Ajalati ha che eshi sar chest nabite.  
Shamelessly, her head can't rise

(She cannot raise her head, due to the loss of honor (head not being raised indicates shame).

c. Man, pakre goma wti sara chest kani

(I pride with own head raise).

(I raise my head with pride (raising the head symbolizes pride).

These expressions justify that the head is the holder of honor and dignity. People having honor, raising their head with pride, while lowering of head indicates a loss of honor. The expression a, 'eshi mani sar jahla kutag' translates, due to her socially unacceptable actions, made the speaker feel ashamed. Similarly, the expression b, 'ajalati ha che eshi sar chest nabite' means that because of being ashamed, she cannot raise her head. Moreover, the expression c, 'man pakre goma wti sara chest kani' means that she raised her head with pride. These expressions reflect the cultural beliefs of Baloch, concerning honor with the head, that raising the head indicates integrity while lowering of head shows a lack of honor.

In Baloch society, the extension of the sar (head) is richly conceptualized with abstract concepts that embody mental faculty, character traits and moral worth. Apart from these, whose symbolic meaning extends beyond human attributes to objects and places, which show the centrality and positions of something.

#### 4.2.7 Symbolic Extensions of Head in Non-Human Context

The term sar (head) has more symbolic connotations that are limited to not only human contexts but also extended metonymically and metaphorically to point out the positions, directions, and height of something. This emblematic extension shows the notions of the head as the topmost and dynamic part of the body, which shapes people's insights about organizing non-physical realms.

##### 4.2.7.1 Grammaticalization of Sar Head

The Baloch people have the perception that the head is the most visible and important part of the body, carrying this perception metaphorically to lingering non-human objects. where the most important and starting point of the entity is referred to as sar (head). This shows how the bodily experiences form the conceptual understanding in Baloch's thoughts. The term sar is so common that people use it to indicate the starting point of water, up the mountains, places, or any entity where it acts as a preposition referring to the specific position. Influenced by the thoughts, some specific areas in Makran are named by the term Sar to relate a place with its demography, such as Apsar, Danesar Singani Sar, and Kahne Sar. These areas are the symbolic representation of the word Sar, which also indicates the position of these places.

a. Kohe sara lekapag grane.

Mountain head climbing is hard.

(Climbing up the mountains is hard (here the sar is representing the preposition of up).

b. Zemistan ha aas hy sara nendag vshe.

Winter is fire head sitting calm.

(In winter, sitting near the fire is a blessing (here, sar indicating the preposition of near).

c. Peshi drachke sara hein.

The cat tree head is.

(The cat is on the tree; sar is acting as a preposition of on).

d. Horr a sara magard.

Rain's head doesn't walk.

(Don't walk while it's raining; here the word horr a sar indicates the preposition while).

The above expression justifies that the term sar (head) is most commonly used as a preposition, showing the position of the head in various aspects, which are directly used in day-to-day balochi conversation.

##### 4.2.7.2 Head as a Unit of Measurement

In the past, the Baloch people had limited resources that they used, but they were knowledgeable in crafting every possible tool to make their work easier. The organ head also acted as a tool for measuring, especially when digging a well. It is still used for measuring the length while digging, as the level of depth is measured with one's height, covering head to toe. The length of one person is measured as one sar; sar indicates the length of the body. These cultural practices are ingrained with language, which, as a result, is used in expressions to indicate the measurement of some particular things.

- a. Chaha 20 sara tak janag basse.  
Well, twenty far digging is enough  
(To dig the well for twenty head is enough, sar here indicating one's height that acts a measurement).

This expression clearly shows that in Baloch society, sar (Head). Here, the sar is the metonymic representation of one's height, which works as a unit of measurement; through the size of one's height, the length is being checked.

To conclude, the sar (head) is the most visible and important part of the body, which is figuratively used in Balochi language to explore multifaceted meanings that are culturally rooted. It is employed through metaphor and metonymy to characterize the nonconcrete concepts, such as leadership, authority, and mental state. Furthermore, the sar (head) serves as a vessel that carries the mental capacities such as understanding, reasoning, and memory. Moreover, it is culturally conceptualized that the head is metonymically the marker of honor and integrity of oneself. Apart from the figurative use of sar for human attributes, it also functions as a preposition to show the position of something. Moreover, it also symbolically acts as a unit of measurement to measure the length of something. Overall, the sar symbolically used in the language plays a significant role in its culture and linguistics.

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