

# The Use of Metaphorical Connotation of Inanimate Objects to Describe People by Speakers of Jordanian Arabic: A Pragmatic Study

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## Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the use of connotations of inanimate objects to describe people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic. Its main goal is to analyze the positive and negative connotative meanings of inanimate object used to describe people in Jordan. Besides, the contribution of gender in making connotative meanings. The study provides a metaphorical principle to suit most of the metaphorical utterances in Jordanian Arabic dialect. This qualitative research includes 8 participants doing their postgraduate program in English language and literature at the Department of English Language and Literature at Mu'tah University for the academic year 2015/2016. The sample of the study were selected randomly. The researcher used two research instruments: textual analysis and semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using descriptive analysis of the text and by looking at themes that emerge in the interview. The findings of this research showed that speakers of Jordanian Arabic are very much likely to use positive connotations more than negative ones to describe people. This study recommends that more research be conducted in this area in order to take connotative meanings into consideration to overcome cultural chock.

**Keywords:** Metaphor, Connotation, Inanimate Object, Arabic, Positive, Negative, Gender.

## 1. Introduction

Pragmatic researchers do not pay more attention to the metaphorical connotation of objects in describing people (Al-Adaileh 2012; Allan 2006; Allan & Burrige 2006; Jay & Janschewitz 2008). Researchers tend to tackle the issue of simile and metaphor much more than the connotation that holds object and human together, although this area of linguistics is very important (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; O'Donoghue, 2009; Carston and Wearing, 2014). Thus, investigating the positive and negative connotations that occur between humans and inanimate objects in Jordan is one of the interesting topics that you could ever read. Such study is expected to enrich the knowledge of a foreigner about some aspects of Jordanian culture.

Kirvalidze (2014) offers three disciplines of similes: pragmatics, semantics, and syntax. The paper tackles the cognitive use of analogy in literary work in light of the differences between metaphor and simile. Kirvalidze argues that there are four different types that determine semantic simile. Similarly, the simile that is discussed in accordance with syntactic structure is categorized into seven types. This field goes hand in hand with describing people by using objects in the way of how to use simile in light of pragmatic linguistic theories.

Carston and Wearing (2014) discuss the process involved in comprehending pragmatic cognitive effects of metaphor, supporting their ideas with metaphorical theories. Furthermore, the researchers single out the difference between metaphor, simile, and hyperbole. We could claim that the connotation of inanimate object in describing people needs more investigation in light of pragmatic perspectives. It is mentioned in holy Quran several times, which gives it the creditably in which the human object relation is popular and used among ancient speakers of Arabic language. Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah And Allah is not unaware of what you do (AL- Bagara: 74). The holy verse indicates that the heart of disbelievers is like a stone.

Moreover, Shakespeare in his Sonnet 18 describes his beloved by inanimate object which is summer's day" shall I compare thee to a summer's day (Zinman, 2009). William words worth as being one of the most famous poets describes himself as a cloud in his famous poem I wandered lonely as a cloud (Abrams et al, 1986: 541). Therefore, the phenomenon of using objects to describe human has been written very long time ago. The subsidiary associative meaning of an expression or lexicon is known as the connotative meaning. Leech (1981) recognizes two major categories: conceptual meaning which is the essential meaning that words convey and essential part in the communicative medium and associative meaning which has been defined as subsidiary meaning. For instance, the use of the word "sand" in the following examples indicate the metaphoric connotation usage of inanimate object by some speakers of English Language.

- i. Do not play with the sand.
- ii. we were all created by the sand.

The use of the word "sand " in the first example depicts the conceptual meaning of the "sand " that the listener/reader might directly think of. But the use of the word " sand " in the second example denotes the

meaning of modesty as a reminder of the human's origin which subsequently shifts the entire lexical meaning into another associative meaning.

Culturally speaking, the metaphorical connotation of object that is used to describe people in Jordan may be viewed positively in which some object-associative meanings can be accepted by the majority of speakers of Jordanian Arabic (SJA). However, other connotations may not be welcomed by the society in Jordan and subsequently may be viewed negatively.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Speakers of Jordanian Arabic (SJA; hereafter) use a very loaded figurative language. In which, they use positive and negative connotative meanings (Al Adaileh, 2012). Thus, people who use Jordanian Arabic (JA) might fall in a huge misunderstanding when dealing with positive and negative connotations and may encounter cultural shock and difficulties understanding the metaphoric expressions of inanimate objects. Some connotations move through time from positive to negative perspectives or vice versa. Connotative meaning, in comparison with conceptual meaning, is relatively unstable and may vary according to culture, historical period, and the experience of the individual (Al Adaileh, 2012). As a result, this paper is an attempt to explore the pragmatic difficulties that might face people in understanding the connotations of inanimate objects when used to describe people by SJA.

## **3. The Significance of the Study**

The significance of the present paper lies in providing a clear view about the connotations of inanimate objects in the Jordan context. This study helps people understand the connotative meaning beside the denotational meaning. Studies like this make people aware of the conceptual and associative meanings that are common among SJA when dealing with objects. Also, this multi-disciplined research discusses the positive and negative connotations. Furthermore, it discusses the contribution of gender on the connotative meaning of inanimate object in describing people. This pragmatic notion has not received the attention it deserves from scholars in the area although it is very significant issue when discussing social interactions and cultural differences.

## **4. Research Objectives**

This study attempts to achieve the following research objectives:

- i. To investigate the relationship between people and inanimate objects.
- ii. To examine the contribution of negative connotation in describing people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic.
- iii. To examine the contribution of positive connotation in describing people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic.
- v. To find out the contribution of gender in connotation making meaning in using inanimate object used in describing people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic.

## **5. Research Questions**

This research addresses the following research questions:

- Q1. What is the relationship between people and inanimate objects?
- Q2. To what extent negative connotations contribute in describing people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic?
- Q3. To what extent positive connotations contribute in describing people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic?
- Q4. What is the contribution of gender in connotation making meaning in using inanimate object used in describing people by speakers of Jordanian Arabic?

## **6. Literature Review**

Pragmatic researchers have conducted many papers investigating the effect and influence of the connotation in general (Alan and Burrige 2006; Al-Adaileh 2012; Allan 2006). Simile and metaphor have been fully investigated for many years ago. Fishelov (2007) published an article titled Shall I compare thee? Simile understanding and semantic categories to show some results belong to simile comprehension by tackling three components: Tenor, Vehicle, and Predicate. The researcher uses a questionnaire consisting of lists of sixteen similes, which covers the eight kinds of simile. The researcher finds out that informants understand the list of simile that was provided. Also, O'Donoghue (2009) investigates the difference between metaphor and simile providing close examination of the examples that tested to figure out the difference. The researcher finds out that simile and metaphor are different in emotional perspective, logic, and effect.

Likewise, Al-Adaileh (2012) adopts the euphemistic and dysphemistic variations of color expressions in Jordanian and Arabic contexts, he investigates the usage of metaphor in describing basic colors, his assessment is based on the positive, or negative use of color expressions. He concludes that negative usage of connotations of the color is more common than positive ones. In another study, Feng et al (2013) conducts a study about understanding connotative words from sentiment meaning beyond some words like intelligence, human, and cheesecake. Based on different linguistic perspectives (semantic prosody, semantic parallelism of coordination,

distributional similarity). Similarly, Hermagustiana (2012) conducts a research focusing on the significance of cultural aspects in EFL classroom for the purpose of selecting appropriate materials for appropriate level of students, color names have been also taken into consideration. As mentioned in the outset, non of these studies attempted to find out the relationship between human and inanimate object in particular.

## 7. Data collection

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, the researcher used a combination of research methods. This includes Checklist and semi-structured interview. The data were elicited through conducting meetings with the participants in a normal classroom session after obtaining a permission from the classroom lecturer and the head of the English Language and Literature Department. Participants were randomly selected being very careful about their geographical distribution. They were 8 postgraduate students (4 women and 4 men) at the Department of English Language and Literature at Mu'tah University. They came from different places in Jordan. The researcher distributed a checklist consisting of 43 metaphorical expressions to the informants. They were requested to provide a meaning-based answers for a list of expressions as interpreted in their social context. Collecting data from various people in society helps the researcher to evaluate the study as being pragmatic social-based research. A semi-structured interview, might be socially acceptable in providing sense of reality more than questionnaires. The study describes the human connotations of objects that are popular among Jordanian people. Punch (2005: p172) states that "ethnographic interview" has been shown as being more reliable source of obtaining information from informants. Asking participants, in a friendly-based manner, inside the university campus enables them to honestly provide the researcher with the necessary details about positive and negative secondary metaphorical connotative meanings. The data are merely idiomatic Jordanian expressions that are loaded with object connotative meanings. The researcher picked up different informants from different parts of Jordan for three reasons: first, to be fully aware of the multiple perspectives of people toward object connotations in Jordan. Second, to find out if there are similarities or differences of the answers that have been obtained from the informants. Third, to figure out a real data of positive and negative connotations of inanimate objects.

## 8. Discussion

In this section, positive and negative connotative meanings of objects are discussed in light of metaphorical principle. The connotations of a language expression are pragmatic effects that arise from encyclopedic knowledge about its denotation (or reference) and also from experiences, beliefs, and prejudices about the contexts in which the expression is typically used (Allan, 2006). Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the metaphorical connotation of object in describing people. Metaphors link positive effect to brightness and negative effect to darkness (Meier et al, 2007). Besides, this section would also provide a brief discussion on the contribution of gender in connotation making meaning by speakers of Jordanian Arabic.

The metaphor that is used to clarify the human-object relationship could be composed based on three categories: "Targeted", "Target" and "Tool". Generally, people would say **someone is like/as something**. The sentence in bold consists of "someone" "human" which is considered as "Targeted". Targeted is the human sense at the initial part of the descriptive process. Like/as...etc are tools used in this principle are called "Tool", and the last element "something" which is the inanimate object characteristic called "Target". One of the universal ways of the world perception is the comparison of one object with another aiming to point out their common and differential features that leads to further penetration into the essence of the TO (target object) enabling it to be viewed from new angle (Kirvalidze, 2014). Moreover, metaphorical utterances can be detailed much more based on the previous categories, in which we could predict a Metaphorical Whole/Part principle:

### 8.1. Metaphor Whole/Part Principle:

#### 8.1.1. Dependent Metaphor

Dependent metaphor is the metaphor that consists of a tool in the process of description. The Dependent Skeleton:

##### 8.1.1.1. Targeted is /are Tool Target.

Whole<sup>1</sup> is /are like/ as Whole.

This person is like a sword

#### 8.1.2. Independent Metaphor

It is the metaphor that conveys a comprehensive meaning without "Tools" ( e.g. like, as, as adjective as ...etc). This type is the most rhetorical metaphor in Arabic language " the rhetorical metaphor is the one in which the tool is deleted " (Abbas, 2000: 17). The independent Skeleton:

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<sup>1</sup> The word **Whole** under the word **targeted** means the person (human) as whole not part of him/her.  
The word **Whole** under the word **target** means the object as whole not part of it .

### 8.1.2.1. Targeted is/are Target.

Whole is/are Whole.  
The man is wall

### 8.1.3. Partial Metaphor

This is Part-based metaphor. Subsequently, it depends heavily on the metaphorical usage of some part of either human or object. The Partial Skeleton:

#### 8.1.3.1 Targeted is/are (Tool) Target

Part<sup>2</sup> is/are Whole.  
Your brain is a computer

#### 8.1.3.2 Targeted is/are (Tool) Target

Whole is/are Part.  
This man is like a table's leg

#### 8.1.3.3 Targeted is/are (Tool) Target

Part is/are part<sup>3</sup>.  
Your face is like a loaf of bread

Here are some rules that govern the metaphorical principle:

1. The description that the speaker provides must be used among people within one society.
2. Target that is used in the metaphorical principle must be culturally well-known (i.e. you cannot describe such targeted with in animated object like a fruit that is not popular in such society).
3. Target must be an object or part of it.
4. Targeted must be a human or part of it.

Generally, metaphor is used for several reasons, we would clarify four major reasons in which they are used interchangeably with speech acts (Jay and Janschewitz 2008; Mcleod 2011).

1. Resemblance: people may use the metaphorical principle for a relatively close description.
2. Pejorative: it occurs when a person is described with something culturally negative.
3. Complimenting: people generally like compliments, so when someone does a great job or invent something etc, he/she must be rewarded. (you do not expect a punishment after doing something good).
4. Flattering: people flatter each other by using metaphor, this is a gender-based characteristic. (e.g. Wives always want to be flattered by their husband as a sign of love).

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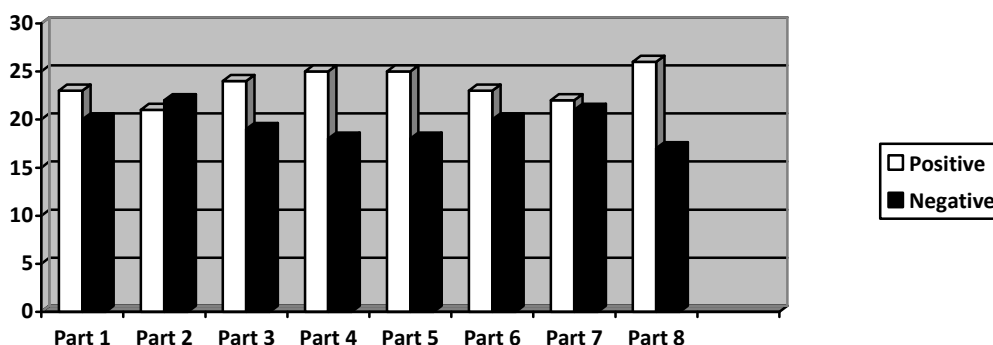
<sup>2</sup> The word **part** under the word **targeted** means part of the human body.

<sup>3</sup> The word **part** under the word **target** means part of the object.

**Table (1) :** The participants' Answers to the Checklist

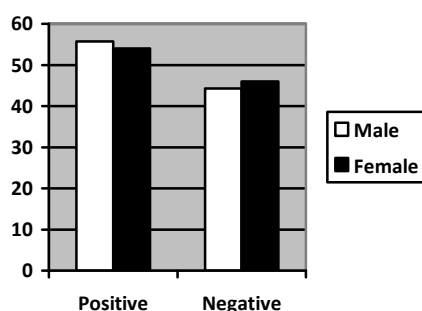
<b>Participants Male/Female Expressions</b>	<b>Part 1 F</b>	<b>Part 2 F</b>	<b>Part 3 F</b>	<b>Part 4 F</b>	<b>Part 5 M</b>	<b>Part 6 M</b>	<b>Part 7 M</b>	<b>Part 8 M</b>
1. haða al wjalad saroux	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
2. haðehe al bent Saroux	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
3. mox <sup>h</sup> ak computer	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
4. al rajuol ðaid	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5. al xetiær makeeneh	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
6. walad meðel al ðzebnaħ	P	P	P	P	P	N	P	N
7. wiððhak rafeef x <sup>h</sup> obiz	P	N	P	P	P	P	P	P
8. al rajuol looħ	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	P
9. řagli muř daftar	N	N	N	N	N	P	N	N
10. řamři meðel al sařah	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
11. leesanak meðel al řasal	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
12. aħladřet sadree	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
13. Bent Meðel allauz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
14. xdoudak meðel Altofaħa	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
15. Bent meðel al gamar	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
16. haða al řax řalam	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
17. Bent louřbeh	P	P	P	P	P	N	P	P
18. meðel al saif	P	P	P	P	N	P	P	P
19. eidouħ mahadeħ	P	N	P	P	P	P	N	P
20. meðel al lambah	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N
21. haða al řax ðahab	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
22. snaanak meðel al lo? lo?	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
23. haða al řadřuol ketab mařtouħ	P	N	P	P	P	P	N	P
24. galbak sandoug	P	P	P	P	N	P	N	P
25. haða al rajuol ðřabal	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
26. meðel al zounbarak	N	N	N	P	P	N	P	P
27. haða al rajuol reðřel dawleh	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
28. al walad řasaieħ	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
29. haða al walad d <sup>h</sup> abl / sad <sup>h</sup> el	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
30. meðel al xatem	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
31. wiððhak meðel al bandourah	N	N	P	P	P	N	P	N
32. rasak meðel al badeexah	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
33. ðřeldak meðel al kawřhook	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
34. meðel al lařřah	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	P
35. al walad radio	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
36. haða al řax řabounah	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N
37. řaarouħ x <sup>h</sup> arees	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
38. řeklouħ zebaleħ	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
39. řamoud kahraba	N	P	N	N	P	P	N	P
40. haða al řax zeřt	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
41. Galbouħ İadřar	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	P
42. Meðel al wardah	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
43. Meðel al řoukah	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Likewise, Figure (1) below displays the negative and positive distinction of the expressions among the participants.



**Figure (1):** Negative and Positive Distinction of the Expressions among the Participants

As displayed in Figure (2) above participants (Part) 1, and 6 agree that 23 expressions are positive when using them in their daily life, while 20 out of 43 expressions are negative. Participants 4, and 5 admit that they use 25 expressions as positive and only 18 as negative. However, participant 2 use 21 expressions as positive and 22 expressions as negative. Participant 3 confirms that 24 expressions are positive and only 19 expressions are negative, in which participant 7 uses 22 expressions as positive and 21 as negative. Whereas participant 8, who uses more positive expressions, confirms that 26 expressions are positive while only 17 expressions are negative. Figure 2 explains the contrast of positive and negative expressions between males and females participants.



**Figure (2):** The Percentage of Positive, Negative Contrast of Using Connotation for each Gender.

According to Figure (2) Males admit that 55.75% of the overall expressions is positive while they use 44.25% as negative. On the other hand, females counterpart admit that 54% of the expressions is positive whilst 46% of the expressions is negative. This proves that Jordanians are very much likely to use positive connotations more than negative ones. By the way of concluding and comparing males and females answers, we find out that males use 55.25% of the expressions positively while females' percentage is 54%. However, males use 44.25% negatively while females use 46% .

## 8.2 Positive and Negative Connotation

In Jordan, the word board/slate (looh) is used euphemistically and dysphemistically. Participant 8 (from Zarga, North of Jordan) used expression 8. This man is slate (al rajool looh) euphemistically, participant 8 believes it is a sign of "body strength". Whereas the rest of participants interpret it as a clue of stupidity, and intransigent. Moreover, expressions No. 6. 7. 9. 17. 18. 19. 20. 23. 24. 26. 31. 34. 36. 39. 41 are used positively in some parts of Jordan and negatively in other parts, 18. This person is like a sword (mehel al saif), the sword as being sharp stands for seriousness, this descriptive sentence is considered as a "compliment" dependent metaphor that depends on a tool. People in Jordan use some phrases when describing the personality of such person, they usually say: 23. This man is an open book (haða al rajool ketab maftouh) which means that "this person has no secrets" and frankly reveals his emotions and feelings. Contrary to the previous description, when someone says: 24. Your heart is a box (galbak sandoug) indicates that this person is mysterious, which is a description of some part of the human body. In Jordan, being mysterious is not a negative connotation rather it shows that this person is highly respected and not talkative. Language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behavior (Hermagustiana, 2012).

An expression 9. my brain is not a notebook (ðagli muð daftar ) is mostly negatively used (except participant 6), when someone's cognitive ability get worse. 17. The girl is like a doll (Bent louðbeh) indicates positively that the girl is very pretty. While participant 6 believe that it negatively means that the girl has multi-

irregular relations with males. 36. This person is soap ( haða al faxs sabounah) is an expression which means that the intended person is very quibbling which implicit a negative attitude, but participant 5 uses it positively when dealing with a very clever. While 19. His/ her hand is like a big hammer (eidouh mahadeh), 20. Someone is like lamp (meðel al lambah),and 41. Your heart is a stone (Galbouh haðzar) are almost used euphemistically to denote strength (e.g. exp 19, 41), and beauty(e.g. exp 20). 26. You seem like spring (meðel al zounbarak) is considered by three female participants as negative, considering it as a sign of cunning. Similarly, three male participants believe that it carries a positive connotative meaning as being active not cunning. 39. You are like electric bollard (Şamoud kahraba) has positive connotation if it means that this person is handsome because he is tall, and it would be negative if it has a sarcastic view as being very tall. 34. This person is plaster ( haða al faxs lazga) might denotes that people do not want to have friendship -with the indented person, because he is very pesky, and overset. There are also negative and positive connotations that describe some part of the human body; when some one gets embarrassed, people would say: 31. Your face is like a tomato (widžhak meðel al bandourah) You could hear someone says: 7. Your face is like a loaf of bread (widžhak rafeef x<sup>h</sup> obiz) which is a sign of a healthy person.

### 8.3 Positive Connotation

All participants( i.e. from different parts of Jordan) agreed that expressions No. 1. 2. 3. 5. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 21. 22. 25. 42 are used only for positive connotative meanings. The metaphorical connotative expressions has different connotative meanings like when people in Jordan say: 5. The old man is a machine (al xetiar makeeneh). The old man as it is popular is not as active as a machine, this expression is uttered just in case people encounter a very active old man. An expression like: 10. The mission walks as a clock (jamfī meðel al safah) symbolizes the accuracy in which clock is the apparatus used to manage your time and as a result manage your life. The speaker's intention and the environment of the speech decide which one is meant. Some other expressions are used for complimenting and praising people like: 16. This person is a flag ( haða al faxs Şalam) which means that this person is very popular as being politician, well-known professor, president ...etc. Also, when somebody in Jordan says: 21. This person is gold (haða al faxs ðahab) which almost means that this person is highly moral, polite, and easy going. 14. Your cheek is like an apple (xdoudak meðel Al tofaħa), 15. Girl is like a moon (Bent meðel al gamar), and 42. You are like a flower (Meðel al wardah) are positively used for flattering, whilst (14) is sometimes interpreted as someone who is embarrassed, so it reflects shyness, curtsy.

Moreover, there are other inanimate expressions that do not refer to the human or the object as whole, rather they refer to some parts of the object or the human as what we mentioned above as partial metaphor. when people are surprised by someone's intelligence, they would address him/her by saying: 3. Your mind is a computer (mox<sup>h</sup> ak computer). When a person gives compliments to someone he would say: 11. Your tongue is honey/sugar ( leesanak meðel al Şasal) which means that the intended person talks very gently and harm no one verbally. Also, 22. Your teeth is a pearl (snaanak meðel al lo? lo?) is a sign of beauty and immaculacy.

### 8.4 Negative Connotation

Negative connotative expressions are used among SJA for several reasons; joking, swearing, and some times complimenting( i.e. as mentioned in the metaphorical principle) . In this section, we would explain how SJA employ these expressions (Alan and Burrige 2006; Jay and Janschewitz 2008; Mcleod 2011; Ford and Ferguson 2004).

Participants believe that No. 4. 27.28. 29. 30. 32. 33. 35. 37. 38 40. 43 are expressions that have negative connotative meanings. There are words that are negatively used broadly and extensively among speakers of Jordanian Arabic such as: tar (zeft), and garbage (zebaleh). These words are used with bad connotations: 40. This person is tar (Haða al faxs zeft) and 38. His/her appearance is rubbish (jeklough zebaleh). There are popular expressions like: 29. This boy is drum/ pail/ haid (haða al walad d<sup>h</sup>abl / sad<sup>h</sup>el ) connotes that this boy is numskull and useless. Also, 28.This boy is as thin as stick (al walad Şasaieh) is a conceptual expression that indicates healthlessness. 35. The boy is like a radio (al walad radio) describes the very talkative, and pesky boy. In Jordan, when some one verbally controls another, he would say: 30. This person is like a ring in my finger (meðel al xatem). On the other hand, if someone can not be controlled, people would say: 43. This person is like a fork (Meðel alfoukah). There are also negative connotations that describe part of the human body or part of the object. When some one has coarse complexion people would say: 32. Your complexion is like a tyre robber (ðzeldak meðel al kawshook). Moreover, 27. This person is a table's leg (haða al rajual redžel tawleh) is a comparison between the intended person and the leg of the table, in which people use it with worthless, and useless person.

### 8.5 Gender Contributions

In this section, some gender expressions, that are used in Jordan, would be discussed. In which some expressions could address male rather than female or used for both gender with some variations. People would say: 25. This

man is a mountain (haḍa al rajuol dʒabal) is a popular expression among SJA, it is almost used to indicate that the intended man is as consistent and strong as the mountain. However, people do not say this woman is a mountain because the mountain has a masculine description which is not legibly used for women. Moreover, the word “rocket” is used with male and female in different connotative perspectives. When you hear an expression like: 1. This boy is a rocket (haḍa al wjalad saroux) this means that this is a very high-speed boy. But when SJA say: 2. This girl is a rocket (haḍehe al bent Saroux) it does not mean that it is high-speed girl; rather it means that the girl is very pretty and the girl’s body is sexy. Thus, people may misunderstand the un-interchangeably usage of the word “rocket” for both genders. Understanding the connotation of words plays an important role in interpreting subtle shades of sentiment beyond denotative or surface meaning of text.(song et al. 2013). Allan (2006) clarified that the connotative usage of expressions related mainly to the community: ‘connotative meanings are related to Speaker’s real-world experience, they will vary from community to community to a greater extent than denotative meanings’. 13. Girl like an almond (Bent meḥel allauz) When people abuse a boy they would say: 6. This boy is like a cheese (walad meḥel al dʒebnah) it has negative attitudes indicating that the man has lack of masculinity and cannot be reliable. But This girl is like a cheese means positively that she is very white and suave.

## 9. Conclusion

This research is an attempt to investigate the positive and negative metaphorical connotations that are used to describe people in Jordan, by testing 43 expressions that are frequently used among SJA. Metaphorical principle has been used as an infrastructure for any metaphorical sentence that functions as an object- human description. In Jordan, people use many expressions that carry metaphorical connotative meanings about the human-object relationship in their every day life. The research proves that people in Jordan use positive metaphorical connotations more often than negative metaphorical connotations.

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