

Symbolism and Domain of Numbers in English and Persian Metaphorical Expressions in the Light of Al-Hasnawi's Cognitive Model

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Abstract: Cognitive linguistics views language in terms of concepts, either universal or culture specific. Language is both embodied and situated in a specific environment; in this connection, metaphorical expressions (hereafter MEs) such as idioms, proverbs, and slang are pervasive and interesting to study. Numbers are widely used to form such MEs as 'a cat has nine lives', 'third time is charm' and 'to be scattered to the four winds'. The present study investigates MENs in English and Persian within Al-Hasnawi's three-scheme cognitive model (2007). The aims are twofold: (i) to identify the extent of culture-specificity in English and Persian metaphorical expressions of numbers (hereafter MENs); (ii) to see how symbolic meaning of numbers is a determining factor in the construction of metaphorical expressions. The findings show that, although a small number of ideas in domain of numbers are shared between Persian and English, the majority of them are culture-bound and are thus filtered by symbolism, value and belief system of their host community.

Key words: Metaphorical Expressions of Numbers; Number symbolism; Cognitive Linguistics; Mapping Condition

1. Introduction

Humans have the ability to count and form numbers. Different peoples have over time employed many number systems. Number words are a way to speak about numbers in speech. Any language has a set of number words for a finite set of numbers (Allen et al., 2000).

Viewed symbolically, numbers represent more than quantities; they also have qualities (Zhang, 2007). As numbers are an integral constituent of language, they are widely used to form metaphorical expressions such as 'at sixes and sevens', 'To be in seventh heaven' and 'a stitch in time saves nine' in English and 'hæšteš geruje noheše' (his eight is pawned for his nine; used when someone's income is not equal to his expenditure), 'je sær dare vâ hezâr sodâ' (he has a head and one thousand; used when referring to a person who is so busy) in Persian. The main feature that characterizes in these expressions is that the words are used metaphorically. During this process, numbers lose their surface meaning under the influence of cultural and social factors.

Broadly speaking, metaphoricity is the main feature of all human language. In fact, any form of language is nonexistent without metaphorical traits (Goatly, 1997). Arguably, metaphoric expressions have a relativistic nature and are culture bound. New conceptions and mental structures are reflected in the creation of metaphors (Keranen, 2006).

Despite abundant studies on metaphoric expressions, it seems that idiomatic MENs have been left unexplored in many languages, including Persian. Focusing on the use of numbers in the construction of metaphorical expressions, this paper sets out to scrutinize the role of symbolism in the construction of MEs and examine the differences between MENs in English and Persian in the light of Al-Hasnawi's cognitive Model (2007). The main aim of the current study is to identify the extent of culture-specificity in metaphorical mapping condition between English and Persian MENs, as well as how the analysis of these MEs can contribute to the numerical symbolism.

2. Al-Hasnawi's Cognitive Model

According to Kovecses (2005) and Al-Hasnawi (2007), in the study of metaphorical expressions a researcher should

consider two aspects, namely, mapping conditions and lexical implementations. Al-Hasnawi (2007) distinguishes between three schematic models:

- (i) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexicalizations;
- (ii) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexicalizations;
- (iii) Metaphors of different mapping conditions and different lexicalizations.

The first set includes the universal ones which are shared by human experiences in the SL and TL culture. The second set comprises those which are lexically different because of the cultural system in the languages concerned, but here the SL metaphor and TL metaphor belong to the same conceptual domain. The last one includes culture-bound metaphors whose mapping conditions and their lexical implementations are totally different.

3. Methodology and Data

The present study is a qualitative study in that the research questions have been answered through comparing and contrasting MENs in English and Persian. In order to collect a body of data, the following English dictionaries were examined: NTC's American Idiom Dictionary (Richard A. Spears, 2000), *Idiom Dictionary* (Laura Jeffcoat, 2009), and McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs (Spears, 2006). Persian dictionaries such as Farhang-e-Estelahat-e-Aamiyaneh (Glossary of Colloquial Expressions: Najafi, 2010), *Amsal-o-Hekam-e-Dehkhoda* (Idioms and Proverbs: Dehkhoda, 1999) were also consulted. To investigate the cultural background underlying expressions, *Rishehaay-e-Taarikhiy-e-Amsaal-o-Hekam* (Historical Roots of Dehkhoda's Idioms and Proverbs: Partivi Amolli, 1996) and *Jaygaah-e-Adaad dar Farhang-e Mardom-e Iran* (The Significance of Numbers in Iran's Modern Culture: Hassanzadeh, 2008) were used. It is worth mentioned to say that the intuitions of native speakers were consulted. Some of the idioms had been constructed around symbolic meanings of numbers; therefore, number symbolism was also investigated.

The data include MENs, both cardinal and ordinal, used by English and Persian speakers. Persian numbers include *jek*(one), *ævæ*(first), *do*(two), *dovom*(second), *se*(three), *čâhâr*(four), *pændž*(five), *pændžom*(fifth), *šeš*(six), *hæft*(seven), *hæšt*(eight), *noh*(nine), *dæh*(ten), *jâzdæh*(eleven), *dævâzdæh*(twelve), *čâhârdæh*(four-teen), *bist*(twenty), *čehel*(forty), *hæftâd*(seventy), *nævæd*(ninety), *sæd*(one hundred), *sisædo šæsto pændž* (three hundred and sixty five) and *hezâr*(one thousand). Most of the IENs in English had been constructed around these numbers: zero, one, first, two, four, five, fifth, six, seven, seventh, eight, nine, ten, eleventh, nineteen, twenty two, forty, and a million.

3.1. Procedure

As the first phase of the study, the MENs in the aforementioned dictionaries and research works were picked out manually. Given the fact that numbers play an important role in the construction of metaphorical expressions, we categorized our data thus: English MENs and their Persian numerical counterparts (hereafter E+Num vs. P+Num); English MENs and their Persian non-numerical counterparts (hereafter E+Num. vs. P- Num.); English MENs with no Persian idiomatic counterparts (hereafter E+Num. vs. Zero P); Persian IENs and their English numerical counterparts (hereafter P+Num vs. E+Num); Persian MENs and their English non-numerical counterparts (hereafter P+Num. vs. E-Num.); and finally Persian MENs with no English idiomatic counterparts (hereafter P+Num. vs. Zero E). (See the Tables in appendices).

Next, the numbers were examined symbolically and the cultural backgrounds underlying their metaphoric significance were. Finally they were examined in the light of Al-Hasnawi's Cognitive Model (2007). It is worth while to note that this model was applied to analyze the diversity in cognitive mappings and lexical implementations. Each Persian idiomatic expression together with its English phonetic transcription (PT hereafter) and its English literal translation (LT hereafter) were put in order (See Parvaresh, Tavangar and Eslami Rasekh, 2012 for phonetic transcription symbols in Persian).

3.2. Analysis

3.2.1. Classification of Data

Metaphoric expressions are the prime vehicle of communication in many cultures. They are the reflection of a particular way of thinking and behaving and also associated with nation's history and culture (Li, 2007; Parvaresh, Ghafel and Eslami Rasekh, forthcoming). In line with this observation, in what follows we will cross-tabulate the data and explain the

characteristics of each language that are manifested metaphoricity.

3.2.1.1. E+Num .vs. P+Num.

Numerical symbolism involves figurative suggestions emerging from the use of numbers. A symbol may have more than one meaning and differ from metaphor in that it does not contain a comparison, but by virtue of association represent something more than itself (Perrine, 1974). As our data shows, symbolism has a major role in the construction of metaphoric expressions in each culture (Table 1). Number *one* is *to be the best*. 'One' also symbolizes the *oneness* and *uniqueness* (look after number one). Two is the number of *discord* and *conflict* such as 'sær e do râhi mândæn', (to stay at junction; used for a person who hesitates to decide about saying or doing something). Metaphoric expressions like 'Two cats and a mouse, two wives in one house, two dogs and a bone, never agree in one' in English and 'xâneje râ ke do kædbânust xâk tâ zânust' (when there are two ladies in a house, your knees are in dust; used to show disagreement and lack of unity between the two)Persian highlight conflict and lack of unity between. Number *three* combines numbers one and two and signifies *life and experience* (John, 2008). It is *birth, life and death; mind, body and soul, past, present and future*; it represent *completeness* in both English and Persian. There is a belief in Aryan mythology that events are pending in number one and two and should be followed up by number three to be completed (Nooraghie,2008). It seems that Persian expression like 'tâ se næše bâzi næše' (it does not play up to three) and English idiom 'third time is charm' are constructed around the symbolic meaning of three. *Four* is the number of square; the four elements are *earth, fire, water, and air*. It is associated with the Earth and *completeness*. In Zoroastrian mythology of ancient Iran, four is the sign of *strength* and *coordination* (www.ariaadib.com) and has influenced the formation of expressions such as 'čâr sotune bædæn sâlem budæn'(all the four pillars of your body are healthy). Four denotes stability, physical limitations, hard labor and earthly things, as in the *four corners of the earth* or the *four elements* (earth, wind, fire and water) in English According to Bible; God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. *Six* represents *balance, love, health* and also *luck*. According to Jalaloddin Kazaazi (www.ariyaadib.com) "all the universe phenomena are hexangular." In this context, 'ræfiqe şeš dâng budæn', (To have all the six parts of a tune friendship) and 'šeš gušeje del râzi budæn', (to be satisfied with six corners of heart ; used when someone wants to be sure about complete agreement of the other party)are some examples. *Seven* is a sacred number; it represents the *union of divinity* (number three) and *earth* (number four). Each phase of the moon lasts seven days and there are seven days in a week. In Persian astrology, number seven is the symbol of *moral orientations, kindness, brightness, self-sacrificing, spiritual insight, and power*. It is in the harmony with life movement and is the cause of wisdom victory (Nooraghaie, 2008). For example, 'dær hæft âsemân jek setâreh hæm nædâræd',(he does not have a star in seven heavens) epitomizes a person who is extremely poor; metaphorically, 'gorbe hæft d3ân dâræd', (a cat has seven lives) is used when referring to a person who is so firmly standing against deadly situations; hæft qælæm ârâješ kærdæn (To put on seven kinds of cosmetics) expresses excessive make up; hæft xâne rostæm gozæštæn (To pass Rostam's¹seven burdens), from mythological origin in Shaahnameh's², connotes a complicated and mind-boggling situation that one has to conquer; 'hæftâ kæfæn pusândæn',(to spoil seven shrouds) conceptualizes a person who is dead for many years; and 'hæft pâdešâh râ be xâb didæn', (to dream about seven kings) is used for a person who is fast asleep. *Nine* is a sacred number both in English (e.g. I am on cloud nine). In Christian countries, especially North America, *thirteen* is an *unlucky* number because there were thirteen people at the Last Supper. Stephan King wrote in his book "when I am reading, I will not stop on page 94, page 193, page 382, et al. The digit of these numbers add up to 13 (13 An Unlucky Number, 2005).It is unlucky in Persian too and people seek to avoid it. The metaphorical expression such as, "næhsije sizdæh gerefteš", (unlucky thirteen struck him; used when something bad happens for a person), highlights the point in Persian. Additionally, in the streets and alleys of Iran you can see 12+1 as an alternative for house plaques because its residents want to stay away from the unlucky thirteen. According to this folk belief, some airlines such as Iran Air do not have any row numbered thirteen between.

All these usage indicate the influence of culture effect on the uses of language, and because of these differences, the metaphorical images invoked in the metaphors are bound to be different. The following table shows some of these metaphorical expressions.

Table 1: E+Num. versus P+Num Metaphorical Expressions

1	A cat has nine lives	PT:gorbe hæft d3ân dâræd LT: a cat has seven lives	A person who is so firm standing against deadly situations
2	A chance in a million	PT:ehemâle jek dær hezâr	Something which is happened rarely

		LT: one in a thousand	
3	A fox is not taken twice in the same snare	PT: âdæme âgel æz je surâx do bâr gæzide nemiše LT: a wise man is not bitten twice from the same hole	it is unwise to commit the same mistake twice
4	A man can only die once	PT: mærg jek bâr šivæn jek bâr LT: once death, once grief	Refer to the fact that dying can only be experienced

3.2.1.2. E+Num. vs P-Num.

People's experiences in their daily life may expedite the formation of metaphoric concepts. Some of these idiomatic expressions imply the same meanings in the two cultures compared, but each culture may choose a different source domain different to conceptualize the same concept. As Table 2 shows, there are cases in which English uses domain of numbers in the construction of idioms whereas Persian uses other domains to imply the same meanings.

Table 2: E+Num. versus P-Num Metaphorical Expressions

1	A stitch in time saves nine	PT: čo be moqe zæni bæxije(.)ze pâregi ned3ât dehi bæqije LT: if you stitch in time, you save the rest to be tore	Making small repair now is better than making large repairs later.
2	Behind the eight ball	PT: tu hæçæel oftdæn LT: to fall in difficulties	A difficult position from which it is unlikely one can escape.
3	In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is a king	PT: mæh dær šabe tire âftab æst LT: in a dark night moon is like sunshine	A situation where a person who knows nothing is getting advice and help from another person who knows almost nothing.
4	One-horse town	PT: šâhre mordeh LT: the city of dead bodies	A small, boring town where nothing much ever happens.

3.2.1.3. Culture-Specific E.

Considering culture-specificity, Table 3 represents MENs in English that seem to not have any metaphoric equivalents in Persian. Some experiences about things and environment around us are culture-specific. For instance, in the west the use of intoxicated drinking is common (whereas in Iran using intoxicated drinking is against the law). As a consequence, the idiomatic expression 'one over the eight' is constructed around the activity of drinking beer because, in the west-as opposed to a country such as Iran, a man can safely drink eight glasses of beer.

Being in line with the above-mentioned descriptions, in unrelated cultures (English and Persian in our study) where symbols, life conditions and models of representation are different, there are culture-bounding idiomatic expressions in one culture that do not have idiomatic equivalents in the other. They are called "zero equivalents" (Gouws, 2002).

Table 3: E+Num. versus Zero Persian Metaphorical Expressions

1	Dressed up to nine	To wear very smart or glamorous clothes.
2	Three sheets to the wind	Refers to a person who is roaring drunk.
3	To be in seventh heaven	To be extremely happy.
4	To be scattered on the four wind	To go or to be sent to different places which are far away from each other?
5	To feel like a million dollars	To feel extremely good.

As an example, "Dressed up to nine" is based on according to Albert Jack (2007), in the precious metal industry, the finest gold and silver are never classified as 100 percent pure, but 99.99 percent; hence the finest metals are known as "the nines". It is the beginning of 'being dressed up in your nines' that means wearing your finest jewelry. Further evidence to support the emergence of this idiomatic expression lies in the archive of Royal Gloucester, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regimental Museum in Salisbury. Queen Victoria's favorite regiment was the Wiltshire (Duke of Edinburgh's) 99th Foot. Stationed at Aldershot, they were always chosen to guard the Royal Pavilion in Brighton, consequently becoming known as "the Queen's pet." The officer dress-code included an unusual amount of gold lace on their uniforms; hence

they were regarded as *'being dressed up in their nines'* for their Royal duty (Jack, 2007).

Another interesting one is *three sheets to the wind*. It has a nautical origin. The sails of a tall ship were controlled by rope (the rigging) and these ropes were – and still are – called 'sheets'. Two sheets controlled each sail and the story is that if one of the sheets wasn't properly handled, then the other three (of the two sails) would be 'to the wind'. The boat would then be blown about from side to side and not under full control, much like a drunk trying to navigate his way home (Jack, 2007).

Considering the abovementioned explanation, the formation of idioms of numbers is affected by different culture-bound factors including symbolism, History, traditions, national events and people's experiences. In other words, the implied meaning of idioms can be seen as motivated and not as arbitrary

3.2.1.4. P+Num. vs. E+Num.

Table 4 features Persian MENs with their English counterparts. Human beings share experiences like embodiment, death, and so on. It is therefore common to have idiomatic expressions that are close to each other cognitively. Considering death, for example, Persian speakers use 'mærg jek bâr (.)šivæn jek bâr', (once death, once grief; used) and English ones use *a man can only die once*.

Table 4: P+Num. versus E+Num Metaphorical Expression

1	PT:gorbe hæft d3ân dâæd LT: a cat has seven lives	A cat has nine lives	A person who is so firm standing against deadly situations
2	PT: mærg jek bâr šivæn jek bâr LT: once death, once grief	A man can only die once	Refer to the fact that dying can only be experienced once.
3	PT: jek dæst sedâ nædâære LT: one hand does not make any sound	One hand washes the other hand and together they wash the face	You need each other to accomplish things; Cooperation leads to accomplishment

3.2.1.5. P+Num. vs. E-Num.

Table 5 presents Persian MENs with their non-numerical English counterparts. As it was mentioned before, People's daily experience can be a source for the formation of idiomatic concepts. Having different living environments, social customs, religious beliefs and historical allusions, English and Persian idiomatic expressions are loaded with the same meanings in the two cultures, but each culture chooses a source domain different from the other one to conceptualize the same concept. As is shown in Table 5, there are cases in which Persian uses numbers in the construction of idioms whereas English uses other domains to imply the same meaning

Table 5: P+Num. versus E-Num Metaphorical Expressions

1	PT: ægær hæft doxtære kur dæšte bâšæd(.)jek sâ?te hæme râ šohær midehæd LT: if he has seven blind girls, he will give them in marriage within one hour	Box clever	To be so smart
2	PT:dâr hæft âsemân(.) jek setâre nædâæred LT: he does not have a star in all seven heaven	As poor as a church mouse ;He does not have a penny to bless himself with	Extremely poor
3	PT: šeš dânge hævâs râ d3æm? Kærdæn LT:To act according to all six parts of the brain	Keep your eyes peeled; wake up and smell the coffee	To stay alert or watchful

3.2.1.6. Culture-Specific P

Looking at Table 6, one could establish that most of the data are constructed around some stories that happened in ancient Persia. For instance, 'hæmiše do gorto nimeš bâgist' (To demand two gulps and a half more than others) refers to Solomon, who asked God to give him all the power in the world. God accepted his request. Then he said God "I want to feed all the creatures in the world for one meal." God tried to stop him and said "I am responsible for the creatures' food", but Solomon insisted on his request and God accepted finally. God sent Solomon's invitation to all his creatures and they gathered for Solomon's party. There was a huge fish among the creatures: "I have heard that you have a party. So give

me my food" he said to Solomon. "There are a lot of foods here and you can eat whatever you need" said Solomon. Suddenly the fish rushed to the foods and gulped all of them and said again "I am hungry. I need food." Solomon wondered and asked "how much is your daily portion for food? You eat all the prepared food for the creatures. Are you still hungry!?" "God give me, daily, three meals and in each meal a gallop of food" the monstrous fish said hungrily. "Today in your party, I just eat half a gallop and two gallops and half are remained. You cannot feed a creature like me, how can you feed all the creatures in the world?" he added. Solomon passed out and bowed down in front of God after his recovery (Partovi Amoli, 1996). Today this expression lost its story and is used for those who are guilty but instead of presenting their excuse, they expect others to take care of and cuddle them.

Table 6: P+Num. versus Zero English Metaphorical Expressions

Culture-Specific P		Metaphorical Meaning
1	PT: bæ?d æz si sâl no ruz oftâd be šænbeh LT: after thirty years New Year came to Saturday	Refers to a situation when someone asks the other party to do something for him/her but he refuse they reject the request although he can respond to the request.
2	PT: hæmiše do gorto nimeš bâgist LT: to remind two gulps and half	Refers to a person who expects others to respect him more than usual and he is not thankful.
3	PT: ræfiqe šeš dâng budæn LT: To be a sixth share friend	To be so friendly.
4	PT: šeš mâhe be donjâ âmædæn LT: to be born in six months	To be so impatient.
5	PT: næhsije sizdæh gerefteš LT: Unlucky thirteen struck him	Used when something bad happens for a person

3.2.2. Examining in Al-Hasnawi's Model

In linguistics, metaphorical expressions are motivated by conceptual structures that exist independently of language. In other words, they are not arbitrarily combined strings of words but the products of our embedded encyclopedic knowledge in our conceptual system (Kovecses, 2002). In this alignment, idioms are mostly metaphorical terms because they are the product of our conceptual system.

In keeping the above mentioned discussion, idioms, proverbs and similes that have metaphoric and metonymic motivations can be categorized under the individual level of metaphor. Hence, in the current study, the researchers have applied Al-Hasnawi's Cognitive Model as a basic tool to examine the similarity or difference in their mapping conditions.

3.2.2.1. Metaphors of Similar Mapping Conditions and Similar Lexical Implementations

According to Emanatian (1995) "similarities in mapping conditions across diverse cultures could be labeled as pancultural metaphorical expression which diverse from panhuman shareness of basic experience" (Emanatian, 1995, as cited in Al-Hasnawi, 2007). The number of instances in this group is very few, since real-world experience is common to most individual cultures. Each culture represents symbols, life conditions and models of experiences, priorities, and assumptions differently. The following table shows English MENs in this group:

Table 7: Similar Mapping Conditions and Similar Lexical Implementations

1	Back to square one	PT: bærgæšt sære xuneje ævæl LT: Back to the first square	To start from the beginning again.
2	Two-faced	PT: do ru budæn LT: to be a two-faced person	To be hypocritical; someone who is not sincere, saying unpleasant things about you to other people while seeming to be pleasant when they are with you.

3.2.2.2. Metaphors of Similar Mapping Conditions but Different Lexical Implementations

Although the English metaphoric expressions and their Persian counterparts in Table 8 are related to the domain of numerical concepts, the ethical system in Persian led to differences in lexical choice. For example, English speakers use

'a cat has nine lives' to connote a person who is so firm standing in against deadly situations whereas Persian speakers use 'seven' instead of 'nine' and say 'gorbe hæft d3ân dâraed', (a cat has seven lives) to convey the same meaning .

Table 8: Similar Mapping Conditions but different Lexical Implementations

1	A cat has nine lives	PT:gorbe hæft d3ân dâraed LT: a cat has seven lives	A person who is so firm standing against deadly situations.
2	One swallow does not make a Summer	PT:bâ jek gol bæhâr nemiše LT: one flower does not make Spring	Advising someone to err on the side of caution.
3	Three -ring circus	PT: se pælæšt âjædo zæn zâjædo mehmâne æziz âjæd LT: three people come; lady delivers the child ; and dear guest come	A situation characterized by confusing, engrossing, or amusing activity.
4	Two cats and a mouse, two wives in one house, two dogs and a bone , never agree in one	PT: xâneji râ ke do kædbânust(.).xâk tâ zânust LT: when there are two ladies in a house, your knees are in dust	When two people are responsible to do the same job they never agree with each other.

3.2.2.3. Metaphors of Different Mapping Conditions and Different Lexical Implementations

A rather different perception of the world has led to the absence of equivalent terms and language differences in terms and lexical gaps. For example, in number 4, 'talk nineteen to the dozen', which means acting very quickly, dates back to the 18th century coal-fire in which that steam-driven pumps were used to clear water out of Cornish tin and copper mines. Hand-powered pumps were slow and ineffective but at full power the steam version could clear 19,000 gallons of water for every dozen bushels of coal burned (Jack, 2007). That is how the expression became used, but today it also refers to speaking very quickly. In this case, Persian speakers used machine gun 'mesle mosælsæl hærf zædæn', (to talk as like as machine gun) to conceptualize the speaker's quickness in speech. A machine gunner fires continuously (see Table 9).

Table 9: Different Mapping Conditions and different Lexical Implementations (English)

1	Behind the eight ball	PT: tu hæçæl oftådæn LT: to fall in difficulties	A difficult position from which it is unlikely one can escape.
2	In the country of the blind, the one -eyed man is a king	PT:mæh dær šabe tire âftab æst LT: in a dark night moon is like sunshine	A situation where a person who knows nothing is getting advice and help from another person who knows almost nothing.
3	One -horse town	PT: šâhre mordeh LT: the city of daed	A small, boring town where nothing much ever happens.
4	Talk nineteen to the dozen	PT: mesle mosælsæl hærf mizæne LT: to talk as like as machine gun	To speak very quickly.

Put differently, some Persian concepts in general have lexical implementations which are distinct from their English counterparts but imply the same idea in both languages (see Table 10). Different perception of the world has led to the absence of equivalent terms in these two categories. Some of them refer to special events that took place in an individual culture. Some are constructed around historical or religious events that were identified in a special community of speakers.

Table 10: Different Mapping Conditions and different Lexical Implementations (Persian)

1	PT:hæmiše hæšteš gerove noheše LT:his eight is pawned for his nine	Feel the pinch	To be poor; to have low income
2	PT: jek dænde budæn LT: to have just one gear	To be as stubborn as a mule	Mulish person

3	PT: dâr hæft âsemân(.) jek setâre nædâræd LT: he does not have a star in all seven heaven	As poor as a church mouse; He does not have a penny to bless himself with	Extremely poor
4	PT: šeš dânge hævâs râ d3æm? Kærdæn LT: To act according to all six parts of the brain	Keep your eyes peeled; wake up and smell the coffee	To be careful and certain about people or things

Examples in Tables 9 and 10 confirm Wierzbicka's claim (cited in Al-Hasnawi, 2007) that "it is through the vocabulary of human languages that we can discover and identify the culture specific conceptual characteristics of different people of the world." The socio-cultural beliefs and attitudes of a specific culture can be observed in these categories (English and Persian data), clearly. For instance in number 3, 'dær hæft âsemân jek setâre nædâræd', (he does not have a star in seven heavens) emerged from a religious belief. According to Muslims, there are seven heavens, each of which relating to one of the seven planets ruling the universe (Jack, 2007). This metaphoric expression is used to describe a poverty-stricken person. Its metaphoric equivalence in English first appeared in the 17th century. Originally it was "hungry as a church mouse" because a mouse that was so unluckily to live in church would find no food there. Churches in the 1600s had no kitchens to cook meals and no pantries to store food. A smart mouse would take up residence in the cellar of a house, restaurant or grocery store. As years went by, 'hungry' was changed to 'poor' and the idiom became popular in many countries (www.dictionary.reference.com).

The comparison between English and Persian idiomatic expressions of numbers revealed that the construction of idiomatic expressions of numbers obey a psycholinguistic process during which the speaker refers to his/her experiences, social beliefs, and cultural knowledge and attitudes, and transforms them to linguistic manifestations. As the data show, this manifestation is more culture-oriented rather than universal.

4. Conclusion

The relation between culture and language is quite entwined, the latter being an important feature of the former, and each affects the other one. Metaphoric expressions are colorful language used to communicate one's thoughts and feelings, to give life and richness to language by taking the existing words, combining them in a new sense and creating new meanings, just like a work of art (Lenung, 2008).

Numbers, both in English and Persian, have formed a large part of metaphorical expressions. In different cultural backgrounds (English and Persian in our study), they are endowed with different cultural connotations. According to Keranen (2006) "new conceptions and mental structures of the world are reflected in the creation of metaphorical expressions". The pattern of language usage in Persian is different to a large extent from English and vice versa. This observation seems to support Jandt's proposal "that language provides the conceptual categories that influence how its speakers' perceptions are encoded and stored" (Jandt, 2004, as quoted in Lee, 2005).

From analyzing MENs, both in English and Persian, and their metaphoric counterparts in the languages concerned, the researchers came to realize that the metaphorical expressions that are related to numbers echo specific beliefs held by a particular culture. They are connected with traditions, customs, beliefs and events belonging to a culture. Each culture is more oriented toward using its ethical system in the construction of idioms of numbers.

Considering cognitive mapping conditions; the data indicate that cultural cognition about the numbers within different cultures plays a key role in cross-cultural variations.

Given the widespread role of idiomatic expressions in successful communication, whether in listening, speaking, reading or writing, an increasing familiarity with this cultural distinction enhances researchers, translators and second language learners' understanding that, despite their universal characters, numbers can have a different value in different cultures.

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Notes:

1. Rostam is the symbol of power, bravery, and resistance in *Shaahnaameh*.
2. *Shaahnaameh* is a famous Persian epic book.

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Appendices

Table 1: Similar Mapping Condition and Different Lexical Implementation

E+Num.		P+Num.	Metaphorical Meaning
1	A cat has nine lives	PT:gorbe hæft d3ân dâræd LT: a cat has seven lives	A person who is so firm standing against deadly situations.
2	A chance in a million	PT:ehtemåle jek dær hezâr LT: one in a thousand	Something which is happened rarely.
3	A man can only die once	PT: mærg jek bâr šivæn jek bâr LT: once death, once grief	Refer to the fact that dying can only be experienced.
4	Back to square one	PT:bærgæšt sære xuneje ævæl LT: to return to the first square	To start from the beginning again.
5	He does not have a penny to bless himself with	PT:dâr hæft âsemân(.) jek setåre nêdâræd LT: he does not have a star in seven heaven	Poverty.
6	In two minds	PT: do del budæen LT: In two hearts	You have difficulty deciding what to do.
7	Nine times out of ten	PT:såli sisædo šæsto pænd3 ruz LT: to happen each year and three hundred and five days	Absolutely always.
8	On all four	PT: çåhâr dæsto pâ LT: four hands and feet	To be down on hands and knees.
9	One hand washes the other hand and together they wash the face	PT: jek dæst sedå nêdåre LT: one hand does not make any sound	You need each other to accomplish things; Cooperation leads to accomplishment
10	One swallow does not	PT:bå jek gol bæhâr nemiše	Advising someone to err on the side of

	make a Summer	LT: one flower does not make Spring	caution.
11	Three -ring circus	PT: se pælæst ãjædo zæn zãjædo mehmãne æziz ãjæd LT: three people come; lady delivers the child ; and dear guest comes	A situation characterized by confusing, engrossing, or amusing activity.
12	Two cats and a mouse, two wives in one house, two dogs and a bone , never agree in one	PT: xãneji rã ke do kædbãnust(.)xãk tã zãnust LT: when there are two ladies in a house, your knees are in dust	When two people are responsible to do the same job they never agree with each other.
13	Two -faced	PT: do ru budæn LT: to be a two-faced person	To be hypocritical; someone who is not sincere, saying unpleasant things about you to other people while seeming to be pleasant when they are with you.
14	Third time is charm	PT: tã se næše(.)bãzi næše LT: It does not play up to three	This is used when the third time one tries something, one achieves a successful outcome.
15	Never in a million years	PT:tã sæd sale dige hæm nemifæhmi LT: to not understand till one hundred years	Absolutely never.

Table 2: Different Mapping Condition and Different Lexical Implementation

E+Num.	P-Num.	Metaphorical Meaning
1	A stitch in time saves nine PT:čo be moqe zæni bæxije(.)ze pâregi ned3ât dehi bæqije LT: if you stitch in time, you save the rest to be tore	making small repair now is better than making large repairs later.
2	Behind the eight ball PT: tu hæçæl oftdæn LT: to fall in difficulties	A difficult position from which it is unlikely one can escape.
3	In the country of the blind, the one -eyed man is a king PT:mæh dær šabe tire âftab æst LT: in a dark night moon is like sunshine	A situation where a person who knows nothing is getting advice and help from another person who knows almost nothing.
4	One -horse town PT: šãhre mordeh LT: the city of dead	A small, boring town where nothing much ever happens.
5	Talk nineteen to the dozen PT: mesle mosæsæl hærf mizæne LT: to talk as like as machine gun	To speak very quickly.
6	To be on cloud nine PT: az xošhãli bãl dærãværdæn LT: Gladly he grows wings	To be very happy because something wonderful has happened.
7	Two left feet PT: dæsto pâ dær hæm piçidæn LT: twisting the hand and leg	To be clumsy or awkward in movements.

Table 3: Culture Specific English Idiomatic Expressions with Numbers

Culture-Specific E	Metaphorical Meaning
1	Four –square behind To give a person a full support.
2	At sixes and sevens To be in a state of confusion or not very well organized.
3	Catch twenty-two A frustrating situation where people need to do one thing before doing the second, and they cannot do the second before the first..
4	Dressed up to nine To wear very smart or glamorous clothes.
5	It takes two tango Difficult situation or argument cannot be the fault of one person alone.
6	One over the eight Slightly drunk.
7	Three sheets to the wind Refers to a person who is roaring drunk.
8	To be in seventh heaven To be extremely happy.
9	To be scattered on the four wind To go or to be sent to different places which are far from each other.
10	To feel like a million dollars To feel extremely good.

Table 4: Similar Mapping Condition but Different Lexical Implementation

P+Num.		E+Num	Metaphorical Meaning
1	PT: ehtemåle jek dær hezår LT: one in a thousand	A chance in a million	Something which is happened rarely
2	PT: bâ jek gol bæhår nemiše LT: one flower does not make Spring	One swallow does not make a Summer	Advising someone to err on the side of caution.
3	PT: bærgæštæn sære xuneje ævæl LT: To back to the first square	Back to square one	To start something from the beginning again
4	PT: tâ se næše bâzi næše LT: It does not play up to three	Third time is charm	This is used when the third time one tries something, one achieves a successful outcome
5	PT: tâ sæd sale dige hæm nemifæhmi LT: to not understand till one hundred years	Never in a million years	Absolutely never
6	PT: çâhâr dæsto pâ LT: four hands and feet	On all four	On hands and knees.
7	PT: xâneji râ ke do kædbânust(.)xâk tâ zânust LT: when there are two ladies in a house, your knees are in dust	Two cats and a mouse, two wives in one house, two dogs and a bone, never agree in one	When two people are responsible to do the same job they never agree with each other.
8	PT: dâr hæft âsemân(.) jek setâre nædâræd LT: he does not have a star in seven heavens	He does not have a penny to bless himself with	He is poor
9	PT: do del budæn LT: In two hearts	In two minds	You have difficulty deciding what to do
10	PT: do ru budæn LT: to be a two-faced person	Two -faced	To be hypocritical; someone who is not sincere, saying unpleasant things about you to other people while seeming to be pleasant when they are with you
11	PT: se pælæšt âjæd o zæn zâjæd o mehmâne æziz âjæd LT: three person come; lady delivers the child; and dear guest comes	Three -ring circus	A situation characterized by confusing, engrossing, or amusing activity.
12	PT: gorbe hæft d3ân dâræd LT: a cat has seven lives	A cat has nine lives	A person who is so firm standing against deadly situations
13	PT: mærg jek bâr šivæn jek bâr LT: once death, once grief	A man can only die once	Refer to the fact that dying can only be experienced once.
14	PT: jek dæst sedâ nædâre LT: one hand does not make any sound	One hand washes the other hand and together they wash the face	You need each other to accomplish things; Cooperation leads to accomplishment

Table 5: Different mapping Condition and Different Lexical Implementation

P+Num.		E-Num.	Metaphorical Meaning
1	PT: âšpæz ke do tâ šod âš jâ šur miše jâ bi næmæk LT: two chefs make the pottage sour or insipid	Too many cooks spoil the broth	Too many people who try to take charge at a task, the end product might be ruined
2	PT: ægær hæft doxtære kur dæšte bâšæd(.) jek sâ?te hæme râ šohær midehæd LT: if he has seven blind girls, he will give them in marriage within one hour	Box clever	To be so smart
3	PT: dâr hæft âsemân(.) jek setâre nædâræd LT: he does not have a star in all seven heaven	As poor as a church mouse ;He does not have a penny to bless himself with	Extremely poor
4	PT: šeš dänge hævâs râ d3æm? Kærdæn LT: To act according to all six parts of the brain	Keep your eyes peeled; wake up and smell the coffee	To be careful and certain about people or things

5	PT: sæd tâ čâqu besâze(.)jekiš dæste nædâre LT: if he makes one hundred knives, one won't has a handle	All talk and no trousers	A person who is not trustworthy; a person who talks about doing big, important thing, but does not tack any action
6	PT: kæsi râ be čâhâr mix kešidæn LT: to nail someone on four nails	Pin someone down	to get specific information from someone
7	PT: hæft xæt budæn LT: to be a seven-lined person	Crooked as a dog's hind leg	A deceitful person; very dishonest
8	PT: hæmiše hæšteš gerove noheše LT: his eight is pawned for his nine	Feel the pinch	To be poor ; to have low income
9	PT: jek dænde budæn LT: to have just one gear	To be as stubborn as a mule	Mulish person
10	PT: jek be do kærdæn LT: To argue over one and two	At each other's throats	Attacking each other; disagreeing aggressively

Table 6: Culture-specific Persian Idiomatic Expressions with Numbers

Culture-Specific P		Metaphorical Meaning
1	PT: bæ?d æz si sâl no ruz oftâd be šænbeh LT: after thirty years New Year came to Saturday	Refers to a situation when someone asks the other party to do something for him/her but he refuse they reject the request although he can respond to the request.
2	PT: hæmiše do gorto nimeš bâgist LT: to remind two gulps and half	Refers to a person who expects others to respect him more than usual and he is not thankful.
3	PT: ræfiqe šeš dâng budæn LT: To be a sixth share friend	To be so friendly.
4	PT: šeš mâhe be donjâ âmædæn LT: to be born in six months	To be so impatient.
5	PT: šælvâre mærd ke do tâ šod(.) be fekre zæne dovom mioftæd LT: if man has two pants, he will be thinking about marriage for the second time	Used when someone becomes wealthier and decided to change things to better ones
6	PT: gave noh mæn šir deh LT: a cow with nine pounds of milk	A person who wastes his good performances with a wrong action.
7	PT: mâhe šæbe čâhârdæh budæn LT: to be the moon of fourteenth night (full moon)	To be so beautiful (used for women).
8	PT: masnavije hæftâd mæn kâqæz æst LT: A book with seventy pounds of paper	A piece of writing which is so long.
9	PT: morq mæn jek pâ dâre LT: my chicken has one leg	To insist on a matter without changing opinion.
10	PT: hæft tâ kæfæn pusândæn LT: to spoil seven shrouds	Refers to the death of someone for many years ago metaphorically.
11	PT: hæft xâne rostæm râ tej kærdæn LT: To pass seven Rostam's burdens	To reach to the goal by solving complicated problems and conquer difficulties
12	PT: hæft qælæm ârâješ kærdæn LT: To put on seven cosmetics	To use a lot of make-up
13	PT: jek sib râ ke bâlâ bendâzi hezâr čærx mixore LT: if you throw up one apple , it will spin thousand times	Our life conditions always change
14	PT: jek mæviz o čel gælændær LT: one raisin and forty dervish	Small amount of things or money that must be used for a lot of people