

The role of context in the formation of *hejab* ‘veiling’ metaphors in *hejab* billboards and posters in Iran

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Proper *hejab* observance has long been an important issue to political-religious conservatives in Iran who, in recent years, have relied on metaphorical language to persuade Iranian women to dress modestly in public. The present paper, based on Kövecses’s (2015) account of metaphor in context, explores the role of contextual factors involved in the formation of *hejab* linguistic metaphors used in 56 pro-*hejab* billboards and posters. Data analysis indicates that the moral and social status of women are depicted as being determined by, or correlated with, their degree of veiling. On that basis, properly covered up women are shown to be the recipients of very positive metaphorical conceptualizations (as PEARLS, FLOWERS, and ANGELS), whereas immodestly dressed women are negatively pictured as being subject to sexual objectification (as UNWRAPPED EDIBLES). Moreover, the HEJAB IS A PROTECTIVE COVER is shown to be the metaphor instantiated in many of the billboards and posters. The protective function of *hejab* is highlighted by conceptualizing corrupt men as FLIES and DEVILS. Finally, the metaphorical patterns represent the contextual role of political and religious ideology, key cultural concepts, and show entrenched conventional conceptual metaphors and metonymies in the production of novel metaphors.

Keywords: *hejab*, conceptual metaphor, conceptual metonymy, context, Iranian culture

1. Introduction

The law of *hejab* in Iran requires women to cover up their hair and body (Nakanishi, 1998). Since 1981, when the first written law was passed to make *hejab* ‘veiling’ mandatory (Vakili, 2011, p. 69), attempts have been made to fully enforce the laws for proper *hejab* by setting up police units to ensure the proper observance of

hejab in the form of the “Hijab and Chastity Plan” (www.iranhumanrights.org, 27/07/2015).

One major issue regarding the state-mandated *hejab* in Iran is the emergence of a category of Iranian women who are referred to as *badhejab* ‘having an improper *hejab*/immodestly dressed’. Such women represent the westernized, middle-class Iranian women who flout the state-sanctioned dress codes in order to display resistance to the compulsory *hejab* (Naghibi, 1999, p. 569). However, “misveiling [having an improper *hejab*] is not evidently or necessarily rooted in a rebellion against religion or even against the state” (Gould, 2014, p. 233). The *hejab* campaign mainly addresses the *badhejab* category of women through a comparison with properly covered up women.

State-mandated veiling in Muslim countries (in Iran and Saudi Arabia) and coercive unveiling in secular democracies or other ruling systems (e.g., the ban on the use of religious emblems in state schools in France, or mandatory unveiling in Iran in 1936 during Reza Shah Pahlavi’s reign) have been deployed to the ends of women’s emancipation, autonomy, and empowerment in public space (Naghibi, 1999; Gould, 2014). In contrast to the polarized views for and against the veil is the feminist perspective which holds that coercive veiling in Iran and unveiling in France both ignore the agency and freedom of women in choosing what they wish to wear; in both Iran and France, the female body is commodified within the capitalist world-system, and both forms of coercion reinforce male authority (Gould, 2014, p. 233).

The *hejab* billboards put up in Tehran and many other big cities and *hejab* posters published online represent a continuing effort by political-religious conservatives¹ to attract more women to the voluntary observance of *hejab* and to persuade *badhejab* women to observe *effat e omumi* ‘public chastity’ through pictorial and linguistic metaphors. *Hejab* billboards and posters, as part of the National *Hejab* and Chastity Plan, reflect the viewpoints of, and are fully funded by, conservatives in power (www.fararu.com, 25/04/2010). It should be noted that the current government of President Hasan Rohani does not support the strict enforcement of veiling (www.hamshahrionline.ir, 03/12/2013).

The newly adopted strategy of maintaining a dialogue with the *hejab* violators relies heavily on metaphoric language. Some of the metaphorical ideas used in the *hejab* billboards and posters have raised criticisms in Iran. Ghahramani (2016) argues that contrary to what the promoters of *hejab* discourse have sought to achieve, i.e. promoting the moral and social status of women, the posters present

1. The term ‘conservative’ (*mohâfezehkâr* in Persian) refers to members of one of the two major political parties in Iran close in political-religious ideology to Ayatollah Khamenei, the supreme leader of Iran.

a reductionist, sexual image of women by comparing women to edibles (sweets and fruits) or pieces of furniture (chairs), contributing to the reproduction and establishment of a very offensive social image.

The notion of veiling in Muslim and Western societies has been extensively researched from different perspectives (Ahmed, 1992; Farahani, 2002; Gould, 2014; Hessini, 1994; Hoodfar, 2003; Khir Allah, 2015; Milani, 1992; Mir Hosseini, 2007; Naghibi, 1999; Rahmath et al., 2016; Sedghi, 2007; Williams & Vashi, 2007). This paper, however, aims to shed light on the role of conceptual metaphors in the characterization of the HEJAB concept in the statements on 56 pro-*hejab* billboards and posters in Iran. In addition to the conceptual metaphors abstracted from the linguistic instantiations, I would like to examine the role of contextual factors in the metaphorical conceptualization of *hejab*. My analysis of the construction of metaphorical meaning in context relies on Kövecses's (2015) account of metaphor in context.²

A large body of research has focused on the persuasiveness potential and the affordances of metaphor in reflecting alternative ideological perspectives. (Charteris-Black, 2004, 2007; Chilton & Lakoff, 1995; Deignan, 2005; Goatly, 2007; Lakoff, 1996; Zinken, 2003). The common finding of most of the research adopting a metaphor-based approach to ideology is that each conceptual metaphor used imposes its own particular perspective through the metaphorical linguistic expressions chosen. The persuasive effect of *hejab* metaphors, as the analysis will demonstrate, is pursued by recruiting ideas from the domains of RELIGION, CULTURE, and POLITICS.

In what follows, I will first introduce the conceptual frame of HEJAB as it is perceived in Iranian society. Next, the interaction of metaphor with context will be examined. The main section of the paper will offer an analysis of *hejab* metaphors and the way they are produced through interaction with contextual factors.

2. Framing HEJAB³

The Persian word for the veil is *hejab*. In Persian dictionaries (www.vajehyab.com), *hejab*, originally an Arabic word, is defined as (a) a curtain, cover or partition used for concealing, or separating two things, as in *hejab e bein e ensan va khoda* 'the partition between God and humans', (b) (as a generic term) pieces of clothing functioning to cover the hair and the body, such as the *chador* 'a black outfit that

2. I have tried to be as objective as possible throughout and not present a personal pro-*hejab* or con-*hejab* opinion.

3. Small capitals represent concepts, frames, domains, conceptual metaphors and metonymies.

covers up the whole body from head to toe, *rusari/maghnae* ‘headscarf’ or *neghâb* ‘face veil’, as in *hejab ro az saresh bardasht* ‘she unveiled/she took off her *hejab* (the *chador*[*rusari/maghnae*])’ and (c) a set of moral principles (*effat va pakdamani* ‘chastity and sexual self-control or purity’) or behavioral guidelines that women must adhere to, realized in different pieces of dress.

Based on the dictionary meanings, *hejab* in Persian can be defined as a set of clothing items used by women for covering their body on the basis of a set of moral and religious principles. To put it simply, religious principles such as *efaf va pakdamani* ‘chastity and moral purity’ are manifested in *hejab*, as a generic term, which is realized in various pieces of dress. Therefore, what exactly is meant by *hejab* is contextually specified through GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymy. Alternative interpretations of the Quran have turned *hejab* into a non-specified term within and across Muslim cultures (Milani, 1992). Nonetheless, this generic term has visually been specified as the *chador* in the *hejab* billboards and posters in Iran, which clarifies the definition of proper veiling by the political-religious conservatives.

Veiling is a contested notion. Some scholars argue that in “none of the verses [of the Quran] is the word ‘hijab’ understood as a piece of clothing covering the head and entire body” and the command seems to have addressed prophets’ wives only (Sardar, 2011, p. 329). Furthermore, the Quran “does not command any specific styles nor specifically mention hijab, making room for much local variations [sic]” (Nanda & Warms, 2013, p. 211). Also, they suggest that the veil and chastity/modesty are not identical, meaning that “covering does not preclude immoral behavior, and modesty is a judgement that must be made on the basis of more than what is worn” (Sardar, *ibid.*, p. 334). The other side of the debate relying on *hadiths* ‘religious sayings of the prophet and Imams’ presents a different construal of the verses. Religious decrees (*fatvâs*) issued by some religious authorities in Iran such as Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi and a few other countries render veiling obligatory for all women, and deliberate unveiling is *harâm* ‘forbidden’ (www.makarem.ir/main.aspx?lid=0&typeinfo=21&catid=880). According to this view, women must cover up their hair and the entire body except for the face and hands (Milani, 1992, p. 21). Furthermore, the veil is believed to be suggestive of *efâf* ‘chastity’.

In order to know how the concept of HEJAB is generally interpreted or framed by religious and nonreligious people in Iran, we need to know what elements constitute the conceptual category of HEJAB. By elements of a frame⁴ I mean a “set of objects and predicates which can function as attributes and values within frames” (Kövecses, 2006). Peculiar to the HEJAB conceptual category is a set of interrelated

4. Throughout the paper, the word ‘frame’, in its nominal form, is used interchangeably with ‘concept’, ‘conceptual category’, or ‘Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM)’. *Frame*, as a verb, however, refers to the process of applying a particular construal to the situation.

key cultural concepts that greatly influence the emergent metaphorical meanings. The frame of HEJAB roughly contains the following prototypical elements, though it certainly cannot be limited to these alone.

2.1 *Mahram vs. nâmahram*

“A *mahram* is an unmarried kin with whom sexual intercourse would be incestuous, a punishable taboo. The current use of the term covers a wide range of people and mostly deals with the dress code practice of *hijab*” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahram>).

Mahrams, according to the definition, are those men in whose presence a woman does not need to observe *hejab*. In other words, those men who are *mahram* to a woman can see her hair, since it is assumed that they will not have sexual feelings for her (except her husband). *Mahramiat* ‘the state of being *mahram* to someone’ in Islam has been specified for both men and women. In other words, *mahramiat* is a mutual relationship between a man and a woman, i.e., when a man is *mahram* to a woman, the woman is also necessarily *mahram* to him. The long list of people who are considered *mahram* to a woman can be summarized as follows:

her father, brother, uncle, grandfather, husband, son, nephew, father-in-law, son-in-law, grandson.

And for a man the following are considered *mahram*:

his mother, aunt, sister, wife, grandmother, niece, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, granddaughter.

For a woman, those men who are left outside the list are called *non-mahram*, and she is required to cover up her hair and body in their presence. The same holds true for a man except for the covering up issue. Men are expected instead to lower their gaze while talking to a *non-mahram*. Figuratively, *mahram* means a confidant and *non-mahram* in its figurative usage evokes certain negative properties of a person such as lack of trustworthiness, alienation, and emotional distance.

2.2 *Effat* ‘chastity’⁵

Efâf ‘the state of observing or demonstrating chastity’ is one of the main lexical collocates of *hejab* (*hejab va efâf* ‘*hejab* and chastity’) in Persian. Refraining

5. *Effat* and *efâf* are both translated as chastity though they profile relatively different aspects of the frame. *Effat* denotes a moral feature and *efâf* refers to the state of observing or demonstrating *effat*.

from *harâm* ‘forbidden’, piety, being covered up, and self-control are the meanings provided for *effat* ‘chastity’ in Persian dictionaries (www.vajehyab.com). *EFFAT* is the larger category of which *HEJAB* is a representative member, and it defines what is socially and religiously expected of women, mainly in relation to men. *Hejab* is one of the manifestations of *effat*. In other words, veiling can be a criterion for identifying the existence of *effat* ‘chastity’ in a woman.

Effat, as a key concept and a defining feature of women in Iranian culture, constitutes an important part of the identity of Iranian women (Voss, 2011). The sufficiency of *effat* in women is estimated by monitoring their conduct when encountering non-*mahram* men (men in whose presence a woman should cover up her hair and body): women are not supposed to arouse the sexual feelings of non-*mahram* men intentionally (i.e. by controlling their gaze), use heavy make-up, go out with and touch non-*mahram* men, or talk and laugh provocatively, and they have to observe *hejab* (www.rasekhoon.net, 20/04/2015). This set of properties can form a prototype for an *afif* ‘chaste’ woman. A *hejab* poster (Example (1)) metaphorically shows how *hejab* can be indicative of *efâf*:

- (1) *Hejab buye khosh e efâf va pakdamanist.*
‘Hejab is the pleasant smell of chastity and purity.’

The phrase *buye khosh* ‘pleasant smell’ and the visual representation of flowers set up the metaphors *EFAT IS A FLOWER* (chastity as the source of the pleasant smell) and *HEJAB IS THE FRAGRANCE OF A FLOWER*. The inseparability of *hejab* and chastity is the central idea conveyed by the metaphor. A further interpretation might be that chastity and sexual self-control are properties mostly found in modestly dressed women. *Pâkdâmani* ‘moral purity’, which collocates with *efâf*, is a moral virtue attributed to women who do not give in to illegitimate sexual temptations, and restrict their relationships with non-*mahram* men.

Another poster (Example (2)) touches upon the relationship between *hejab* and *efâf* through poetic metaphors:

- (2) *Vaghti morvarid e zibaihayat ra dar sadaf e hejab va effaf misepari,*
khodavand tora abi mikonad, anghadr abi ke aseman be to rashk mibarad.
‘When you put the pearl of your beauties in the shell of hejab and efâf, God
will dye you blue, so blue that even the sky will envy you.’

The *BEAUTY AND ATTRACTION ARE OBJECTS*, *HEJAB AND EFÂF ARE PROTECTIVE CONTAINERS*, *THE SKY IS A HUMAN BEING*, and *MORAL PURITY IS BLUE* metaphors underlie the above sentence. *THE SKY IS A HUMAN BEING* and *MORAL PURITY IS BLUE* metaphors could be integrated to give *A MORAL PERSON IS A BLUE SKY*. The metaphors hyperbolically elevate modestly dressed women to the highest level of spiritual purity, which is symbolized as blue. This purity is assumed to be achieved

by remaining *afif* ‘chaste’ through veiling, a main indication of the existence of *effat* in women.

2.3 Clothes

From the point of view of Islam, the function of clothing is not to display the body, but to conceal it and to reduce sexual enticement (Milani, 1992, p. 21). This category includes the *chador*, the *manteau* and a variety of head scarves (*shâl*, *rusari*, *maghnaeh*). These pieces of clothing are ways of observing *hejab*, though they do not hide hair and body parts in the same way. A *chador* is a black outfit that covers up the whole body from head to toe. The advantage of this garment is that it completely conceals the hair and sexually provocative parts of the woman’s body, such as her breasts and hips, while still revealing her whole face. The *chador* is the favorite garment of religious women (Hume, 2013, p. 70) and is officially recommended – though not enforced – by the Islamic Republic as “the superior form of dress” (Shirazi, 2000, p. 125 cited in Hume, 2013, p. 70). In many governmental organizations, women are required to wear a *chador*. *Chador* wearers are stereotypically considered chaste and virtuous. More specifically, a *chador*-wearing woman maintains her dignity by controlling illegitimate lust and sexual desire. A billboard (Example (3)) highlights the prominent features of the *chador* by making an allusion to Zorro and Batman, the fictional superheroes:

- (3) Ta hala didi zoro ya batman shekast bokhorand? Na! chon hejabeshan kamel ast. Pas khaharam hejabat ra kamel kon.
‘Have you ever seen Batman or Zorro getting defeated? No! because their *hejab* is complete [proper]. So, you too complete your *hejab*, sister.’

The statement metaphorically compares *chador*-wearing women to fictional superheroes (Batman and Zorro). In the target domain, the idea is that the *chador* empowers women by providing protection against sexually charged looks and sexual abuse committed by corrupt men. This level of security/power is achieved once a woman conceals her beauty and attraction by wearing a *chador*. In the source domain, Zorro and Batman wear black clothes, very similar to the *chador* in color and shape. Moreover, it is assumed that what makes these two fictional characters undefeatable is that they cannot be identified because of their (appropriate) clothes.

The minimum level of covering up tolerated by the Iranian government is trousers, a head scarf and a *manteau* (www.theguardian.com, 19/12/2013). A *manteau*, originally a French word, is a tunic or thin overcoat and is the preferred dress of a large number of young girls and women, since it provides more freedom and a better way to show physical beauty. Wearing a *manteau*, they are able

to loosen their headscarves and leave their hair out at the front and in the back. Girls stopped by *gasht e amniat e akhlâghi* ‘moral security patrol’⁶ belong predominantly to this category. There is another category of clothing which includes a *manteau* and a type of headscarf called *maghnae* which has much more of a covering up function. It typically covers up the hair and extends to the chest. Under the *maghnae*, the hair cannot be seen. Moreover, it hides the breasts. The members of the latter category of *manteau* wearers are usually seen at schools, universities and many of the government offices. In relation to the *manteau*, two main characteristics should be taken into consideration: tightness and length. Girls dressed in tight and short (above-the-knee) *manteaus* are stopped and reprimanded by the morality police (<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com>, 25/05/2010). On the other hand, girls dressed in rather loose and under-the-knee *manteaus* are expected to feel more secure, and hence they are neither stopped by the police, nor gazed at by men. A tight, short *manteau* makes the sexually attractive parts of a woman’s body (breasts, hips) stand out.

2.4 Make-up

The use of heavy make-up by women who do not dress modestly is referred to in some of the billboards and posters (the use of heavy make-up is depicted as a feature of immodestly dressed women) and hence can be seen an element in the overall evaluation of the *hejab* status of women by billboard and poster designers. Basically, the amount of make-up used by a woman is placed on a gradient ranging from no make-up to heavy make-up. This gradient is inversely correlated with chastity and virtuosity in the eyes of society. The heavier the make-up worn, the more insecure the woman is thought to be.

Lipsticks have visually been represented as bullets in one poster in the dataset and linguistically referred to as bombs in another one, in order to highlight the allegedly destructive, social consequences of wearing make-up namely arousing illegitimate sexual feelings in men and providing the grounds for sexual crimes. Furthermore, using make-up is depicted as a global issue threatening all societies:

- (4) Bombe saniyei. Har saniye, 22 bomb. Dar donya, dar har saniye 22 rozhe lab be forush miresad.
 ‘A bomb exploded every second. Every second, 22 bombs. Every second, 22 lipsticks are sold in the world’.

6. *Gasht e amniat e akhlâghi* ‘moral security patrol’ is the official name for the branch of police in Iran which is in charge of enforcing Islamic dress codes by stopping immodestly dressed women on the streets. In Western media, it is conventionally referred to as the “morality police” (www.telegraph.co.uk, 13/11/2013).

2.5 Color

Color also has a particular status in the conceptualization of *hejab*. Colors such as black, gray, dark blue, and brown constitute a category called *ranghaye sangin* ‘modest colors’. It is believed that these colors are suitable for women mainly because they reflect less light than those of the opposite category, which in Persian are called *ranghaye zanandeh* ‘immodest colors’, including red, pink, yellow, and orange. In the folk theory of *hejab*, the latter are regarded as ‘improper colors’ for a Muslim woman in public. ‘Immodest/improper colors’ refer to those colors which emit or reflect more light and can catch the attention of men.

2.6 Sex, desire, and love

The HEJAB frame includes the crucially important concept of SEX, in which the SEXUAL AROUSAL OF MEN is undoubtedly the most prominent aspect. The restrictions on women’s dressing in public aim to block all possible ways through which men’s sexual feelings (outside of marriage) might be aroused.

To understand how LOVE and SEX are construed in Iranian culture, one needs to take the concept of MARRIAGE as the conceptual background against which these concepts are comprehended. Outside the MARRIAGE conceptual category, love and sex are both frowned upon by some religious people, since they constitute sinful behavior and reduce one’s desire to get married. Moreover, as far as women are concerned, extramarital relationships are, first and foremost, detrimental; a woman could only be a means of meeting a man’s sexual needs in such a relationship. On that basis, love and sex outside married life are readily categorized as components of an ‘aimless relationship’. Marriage is the only context with respect to which sexual desire has positive overtones, since it is legitimately met, and serves the purpose of reproduction.

The negative view toward illegitimate sexual desire is explicitly referred to in the billboards:

- (5) Hejab yani man mojahaz be antivirus e havas va vavaseh hastam.
 ‘Hejab means I’m equipped with the antivirus protection against lust and temptation.’

The LUST IS A VIRUS metaphor introduces illegitimate lust as a troublesome entity that endangers human health and disrupts its normal functioning. The metaphor might invite the interpretation that *hejab* acts to obliterate women’s illegitimate sexual feelings. However, it seems that the immunity to lust and temptation provided by veiling (the HEJAB IS ANTIVIRUS PROTECTION) centers the virus (lust) outside the female body and identifies corrupt men as the carrier of the virus via

CORRUPT MEN ARE VIRUS CARRIERS. Revealing one's beauty to men may activate and transmit the viruses into the woman's body, which may then further spread through the whole community of women. Therefore, *hejab* is conceived of as the only possible medicine prescribed by Islam. In Islamic laws, although men are strongly recommended to lower their gaze and restrict their social interaction with non-*mahram* females (Wahid Khorasani, 2014, p. 396), the folk theory of *hejab* identifies women and their behavior as the main cause of men's sexual arousal. Nevertheless, the metaphor attempts to challenge this established idea by providing a negative image of corrupt men and blaming them more for the spread of the lust virus in society. Hence, women's only responsibility would be to take preventive measures to protect themselves against the disease by wearing a *chador*.

The collocational expression *havas va vasvaseh* 'lust and temptation' contributes to augmenting the negative overtones of the LUST concept and creating a hard-to-handle image of it. Moreover, the personal pronoun *man* 'I' affects the level of persuasion of the discourse since it implies that the comfort and immunity that a woman feels by wearing a *chador* is expressed by a woman and is not dictated. Using this linguistic strategy (shifting the discourse narrator from third person masculine to first person feminine) assists in defocusing the authoritative role of men in determining the dress codes for women, and pictures the *chador* as an essential aspect of women's lives demanded by women themselves.

In one of the billboards (Example (6)), the *chador* metaphorically plays the role of an attractor, and a matchmaker:

- (6) *Yâdam bâshad! Chadore man râ be kesi ke dust daram va dustam dârad miresâad.*
 'I should keep remembering that my chador will take me to the one who loves me and whom I love.'

In Persian, the idiom *be kesi resîdan* [literally 'to reach someone'] means 'to marry someone', a linguistic realization of the LOVE IS JOURNEY metaphor. The verb *resândan* in the sentence literally means 'to transport someone or something to a place' and in this context means 'to provide the means for two people to meet and get married.' This role is figuratively attributed to the *chador*. The *chador* is personified as a matchmaker whose duty is to spark everlasting love between two people. *Vâsete kheir shodan* 'matchmaking' is religiously considered as a pleasant act, and Muslims are recommended to arrange marriages among single young people in order to be blessed by God (www.farsnews.com, 20/08/2013).

The interaction of the concepts constituting the HEJAB frame gives rise to a tripartite classification of women on the basis of which their *hejab* status is evaluated:

1. *Bâhejab* ‘modestly dressed / properly covered up’ refers to women who mostly fit in with the IDEAL WOMAN frame as conceived of by religious conservatives (Nakanishi, 1998, p. 86). *Bâhejab* is a compound adjective composed of the preposition *bâ* ‘with or possessing’ and the noun *hejab*. The MODESTLY DRESSED WOMEN category prototypically consists of
 - a. Women who wear a black *chador* with no hair seen (see <http://www.rajanews.com/news/153481> for a close illustration of the definition).
 - b. Women who wear a rather long loose modest-color *manteau* with different kinds of head scarves such as the *maghnae*, *shâl* or *rusari* (see <http://shikpars.com/islamic-model-shawl>).
2. *Badhejab* ‘having a bad or improper *hejab*’: those girls or women who wear a short tight immodest-color *manteau*, leave part of their hair out of the headscarf and wear heavy make-up (see <http://arshnews.ir/vdcewv8n.jh8wvi9bbj.html>). *Badhejab* is a compound adjective consisting of the adjective *bad* ‘bad’ and the noun *hejab*.
3. *Bihejab* ‘lacking *hejab*’: those girls and women who do not believe in veiling and hence do not care about covering their hair. *Bi* ‘without or lacking’ is a preposition and a constituent element of the compound adjective *Bihejab*. This category cannot be seen in public. Such women usually unveil themselves at parties and in private locations even in the presence of non-*mahrams*.

Women with a proper *hejab* are complimented and praised by the government, and are given flowers on the streets by the morality police as a sign of appreciation (www.asrehamoon.ir/prtguz9q.ak9zy4prra.html). On the other hand, immodestly dressed women are stopped by the morality police; they are typically warned and advised to cover up their hair. If they do not follow the advice, or if their clothes and make-up radically deviate from the prescribed dress codes, they are taken to the police station and asked to sign a letter promising not to appear in those immodest clothes anymore (www.thecommentator.com, [27/06/2012](http://www.thecommentator.com)). Praising modestly dressed women and fining immodestly dressed ones are the implementations of a Sharia law (canonical law of Islam) called *amr e be maruf va nahye az monkar* ‘promotion of virtue and prevention of vice’, which “calls for all Muslims to protect Islamic values by encouraging each other to do good and prevent each other from committing sins” (www.farsi.khamenei.ir, 24/09/2014).

3. Metaphor and context

Kövecses (2015) relying on Van Dijk (2008) revisits the issue of context by taking the context model as the principal factor which primes the construction of

metaphorical meaning in discourse. The central point in Kövecses's approach to metaphorical meaning is that metaphor does not simply arise from systematic correspondences between two domains on the basis of correlations in experience or resemblance, but rather from the joint operation of a set of contextual factors (Kövecses, 2015, p. 1). This point is clearly supported by the study of the *hejab* metaphors.

Kövecses's account of metaphor in context is perfectly adapted to the analysis of the HEJAB concept as it gives weight to both local and global aspects of context, i.e. to more immediate features of the situation as well as elements of relative stability such as cultural norms and values. This, however, does not mean that all the factors are equally relevant to the construction of a given metaphoric meaning. He divides the contextual factors that influence the construction of metaphors in discourse into four major groups, which are introduced below.

3.1 Situational context

The situational context is the physical, social, and cultural situation in which metaphorical conceptualization takes place. The physical setting includes the physical circumstances, the viewing arrangement and the salient properties of the environment. The elements of the physical context do not, according to my analysis, have any immediate effect on the formation of the metaphors used.

The social situation includes role relationships such as husband vs. wife, and power relations. In the HEJAB domain, the legitimate physical and emotional intimacy between men and women as delimited by the religious authorities (in the form of *mahram* vs. non-*mahram*) seems to be a major and relevant feature of the social context influencing the figurative conceptualization of *hejab*. Moreover, the concept of EFAF 'chastity' is what specifies women's role in relation to men in society.

The cultural situation comprises the dominant values and characteristics of the members of a group, key concepts governing their lives and the various products of a culture such as TV shows and films (Kövecses, 2015, p. 59). A large part of the conceptual structure of *hejab* seems to be under the influence of the cultural context and its constituent elements.

3.2 Discourse context

The discourse context includes the co-text that surrounds a particular metaphor used and knowledge about the main elements of the discourse (the speaker, hearer, and topic).

3.3 Cognitive-conceptual context

The experiential knowledge represented by frames, as a major part of the conceptual system, acts as a contextual factor in metaphor production. Kövecses suggests that the conventionalized figurative part of the conceptual system (metaphor and metonymy) can play the role of contextual factors through motivating the use of particular linguistic metaphors and metonymies (2015, p. 196). For example, the metaphorical relationship between *hejab* and *efâf* ‘chastity’ in ‘*hejab* is the pleasant smell of chastity’ is influenced by the conventional conceptual metonymy HEJAB FOR CHASTITY or the metaphorical conceptualization of the *chador* as angel’s wings is motivated by the already existing metaphor SPIRITUAL LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

According to Kövecses, the other types of conceptual knowledge that are used as context in the creation of metaphors are the following: previous discourses related to the topic of the ongoing discourse, ideology, dominant forms of discourse in a society, past events and states, and participants’ interests and concerns (ibid, pp. 53–56). My analysis of the *hejab* billboards and posters will demonstrate that the above mentioned elements play a role in the conceptualization of *hejab*.

3.4 Bodily context

The body is involved not only in the formation of conceptual metaphors by providing a large number of source domains, but it can also influence the choice of metaphors locally, i.e. in the ongoing discourse (ibid, p. 184). Kövecses shows how Emily Dickinson’s optical illness could have an effect on the emergence of metaphors in her poems (ibid, pp. 121–122). However, the bodily context in the *hejab* metaphors seems to demonstrate its effect by employing body part terms and their properties (eyes and sexually charged looks) and ‘local body’ is not a relevant factor in the analysis.

Kövecses’s formulation of the contextual factors that work to form context models includes some more general or global factors. He suggests that even the shared frames across a culture are omnipresent in each and every communicative exchange (culture functioning as global context), in addition to the immediate (local) relevant features of the situation though with varying degrees of activation (p. 95). In the case of the HEJAB concept, key cultural concepts, and political/religious ideology are shown to be the ever-present contextual factors in the production of the *hejab* metaphors in the present dataset.

In addition to the factors suggested by Kövecses, which I find plausible and relevant to the meaning of *hejab* in context, I would like to add ‘enactment of conceptualization’ as a further element in shaping metaphorical meaning in discourse. This simply means concrete actions taken on the basis of particular

conceptualizations and particular ways of talking about concepts. Applying this further dimension to the analysis of *hejab*, it can be argued that morality police actions (fining or detaining offenders) and unveiling despite Islamic laws, while representing particular forms of thinking and speaking about *hejab*, can, in turn, influence the pre-established or dominant conceptualizations and/or statements about veiling. Resisting police action by insisting on wearing a loose *hejab* is a major concrete action which affects the language used to persuade women to dress modestly. I take ‘enactment’ to be a concrete contextual factor, which together with other relevant features of the situation, affects the formation of the *hejab* metaphors.

4. Data and methodology

The *hejab* billboards are put up in high traffic areas especially on main squares. They can also be found along highways. They can be seen from far away and attract the attention of passing vehicles and pedestrians.

The data in the research consisted of 10 billboards and 46 *hejab* posters. The billboards were collected through googling ‘*hejab* billboards in Iran’ and the *hejab* posters were gathered from www.hijab-poster.blogfa.com. This website is administered by a team of poster designers called *goruhe saiberi e tarvije hejab va efaf* ‘The Cyber Group Promoting *Hejab* and Chasity’ (www.iranwire.com, 12/04/2014). The data were collected over a period of approximately three years (from 07/2012 to 05/2015). Only those billboards or posters which include a *hejab*-encouraging statement have been recorded.

Criteria for identifying linguistic metaphors in this study are (a) a contrast between the contextual meaning of a word or phrase and its basic meaning, which is more concrete and physical and (b) understanding the contextual meaning based on a comparison with its basic meaning (Charteris-Black, 2004; Deignan, 2005; Pragglez, 2007). The linguistic instances were grouped according to the major target meanings of the conceptualizations (see Table 1). Then, statements in each group were examined to find linguistic metaphors. The identified metaphors were analyzed in terms of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Determining the level of specificity of both source and target meanings was a difficult task given the sensitivity of the topic and the risk of unintentional manipulation of the intended meanings. For instance, in ‘humans set a password on their valuable things’, I have chosen VALUABLE THINGS as the source domain of WOMEN ARE VALUABLE THINGS rather than THINGS, or in ‘If there wasn’t any protection for the flower, it wouldn’t remain refreshing and beautiful’, I have chosen FLOWER rather than PLANTS as the source label (in WOMEN ARE FLOWERS), since shifting to

a more general concept would have changed the positive connotations of the lexical items and might have turned them into anti-woman mottos, especially when interpreted by a non-Iranian readership. As for the target domains, the major challenge was to identify the relevant target domains especially in cases where concepts of MEN and WOMEN were assumed to be the target meanings. For instance, deciding whether such source domains as FLIES or DEVILS are applied to men in general or a category of men (corrupt men). In order to resolve the problem, I resorted to the broader cultural-religious context within which these statements are constructed and interpreted. Given the ideal image of a Muslim Iranian man as depicted by religious conservatives (see Section 2), a Muslim man is assumed to be a person who does not gaze at non-*mahram* women, and avoids extramarital relationships. Based on these criteria, men outside this category (lacking these features) are assumed to be corrupt, that is, they do not see extramarital relationships or gazing at non-*mahram* women as a sin, and those assumed to possess the features are excluded from what the metaphor refers to. Therefore, it seems that the poster designers have considered the category of corrupt men as the target meaning of the negative conceptualizations.

When identifying metaphorical expressions, I did not use a second coder. However, I reanalyzed the metaphor candidates at least three times within a few months, which resulted in modifying the conceptual labels of many of the identified metaphors. The more accurate assessment of the examples was facilitated by involving broader cultural and religious contexts in cases where the immediate context did not give sufficient clues.

5. Results

Hejab slogans extracted from the data (both metaphoric and non-metaphoric) were classified into seven categories based on the major target meanings of the conceptualizations. Table 1 summarizes the categories, the frequency of statements within each category, and the frequency of linguistic metaphors identified in each group:

Table 2 provides a list of frequently occurred conceptual metaphors. The following list only includes conceptual metaphors abstracted from the linguistic statements. The list excludes the WOMEN ARE EDIBLES (instantiated in 4 posters) and LIP STICKS ARE DESTRUCTIVE WEAPONS (instantiated in 2 posters) metaphors which have visually been represented.

Table 1. Categories of *hejab* slogans

Category of <i>hejab</i> slogans	Frequency of statements in each category	Frequency of linguistic metaphors in each category
1. Protective role of <i>hejab</i>	16	12
2. <i>Hejab</i> and family life	10	5
3. <i>Hejab</i> and spiritual life	7	5
4. National and political significance of <i>hejab</i>	6	3
5. The eyes and sexually charged looks	4	4
6. <i>Hejab</i> slogans to refute anti- <i>hejab</i> arguments	4	2
7. <i>Hejab</i> and <i>efâf</i> 'chastity' relationship	3	2
Total	50	33

Table 2. Frequency of conceptual metaphors in the data

Conceptual metaphors	Frequency of occurrence in linguistic statements
HEJAB IS A PROTECTIVE COVER	12
NATION IS A FAMILY	6
CORRUPT MEN ARE DEVILS	4
SPIRITUAL LIFE IS JOURNEY	3
MEN'S GAZE IS A POISONOUS ENTITY	2
HEJAB IS A WEAPON	2
MORAL PURITY IS COLOR	2
HEJAB IS FIGHTING	2
WOMEN ARE VALUABLE THINGS	2
MODESTLY DRESSED WOMEN ARE ANGELS	2

6. *Hejab* metaphors

6.1 Metaphors representing *hejab* as a protective cover

Metaphors in this category constitute the largest group in the data. These metaphors are further grouped on the basis of the target meanings.

6.1.1 *Metaphors representing the social significance of 'hejab'*

In a group of posters, the protective function of *hejab* is emphasized by a number of visually represented foodstuffs which metaphorically refer to women and sexual attraction. One billboard portrays, on the one hand, an unwrapped sweet with a lot of flies flying around it, and on the other side, a wrapped one with no flies around. Such an image gives rise to the CORRUPT MEN ARE FLIES and WOMEN ARE SWEETS/BEAUTY AND SEXUAL ATTRACTION ARE SWEETS metaphors. The metaphors find and offer *hejab* as a protective cover and as the only possible solution for such issues as rape, abuse, and sexual harassment.

In other posters, such fruits as apples and pomegranates have been pictorially represented perhaps to conceptualize women's moral integrity and sexual attraction, which can be jeopardized by improper dressing (visually represented as a bitten apple or a peeled pomegranate with visible seeds), but protected or concealed by proper *hejab* (pictorially realized as a complete apple or an unpeeled pomegranate).

Poster (7) visually represents a number of hard-shell nuts (almonds, walnuts, and pistachios) combined with the following piece of advice:

- (7) *dokhtaram* in yek ghanun ast: Chizhaye baarzeshtar pooshesh e mohkamtari darand.

'My daughter! This is a rule: More valuable things have stronger coverings.'

The address form *dokhtaram* 'my daughter' instantiates the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphor whereby the power relationship between political rulers and Iranian women takes the form of a kind father advising his daughter to observe *hejab* so as to remain valuable. The noun phrases *chizhaye baarzesht* 'valuable things' and *poosheshhaye mohkamtar* 'stronger coverings' stand in a metaphoric relationship with WOMEN and MODEST FORMS OF HEJAB respectively, giving rise to the WOMEN ARE VALUABLE THINGS and MODEST FORMS OF HEJAB ARE OBJECTS WITH STRONG COVERINGS metaphors. A main entailment of the metaphor is that individual and social values of women are determined by their level of *hejab*. HAVING STRONG COVERINGS seems to be the salient feature motivating the choice of hard-shell nuts as the visual source domain.

6.1.2 *Metaphors representing the political-religious significance of 'hejab'*

The WAR domain is utilized to provide a negative characterization of Western culture and media, as poster (8) may indicate:

- (8) Khâharam! Dar in bombbârânâ e farhangi, barâye inke tarkeshi be shomâ esâbat nakonad châdorât râ mohkam va seft begir.

'Sister! In the cultural bombardments, if you do not want to be hit by the shrapnel, hold your *chador* firmly.'

In (8), women are attacked by an assumed enemy. The expression ‘cultural bombardment’ seems to refer to the effect of Western lifestyle and media on Iranians, particularly their dress codes. Cultural bombardment might be an entailment of the idea of *tahâjom e farhangi* ‘cultural invasion’ emphasized by the supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei (Hovsepian-Bearce, 2015, p. 338). The WESTERN CULTURE AND MEDIA AS A WEAPON AGAINST IRANIANS magnifies the threat of cultural metamorphosis according to which women are targets to be shot. What can save women from the shrapnel of the bombs is wearing a protective cover (THE CHADOR IS A PROTECTIVE COVER). The alleged characteristic feature of this cover is that, it can fully protect women against any Western cultural impact.

In poster (9), wearing the *chador* and exercising *taqvâ* ‘piety and God-consciousness’, as salient features of a Muslim woman, are conceptualized as lethal defensive weapons with which women can fight against the presumed enemy:

- (9) Khâharam! Shomâ bâ chador e siâh va taghvâyetân doshman râ mikoshid.
 ‘Sister! You can kill the enemy with your black chador and taqvâ.’⁷

Wearing the *chador* and adopting *taqvâ* (being obedient to God’s commands) lead to disappointing the enemy who tries to make women abandon their Islamic lifestyle and unveil. The eventual disappointment is hyperbolically seen as killing the enemy. The mental association between the black color (of the *chador*) and fear may also contribute to exaggerating the effect of wearing the *chador* on the presumed enemy.

The referent of the word ‘enemy’ is vague in this context. It might refer to either corrupt men who want to take sexual advantage of women, or to western culture and media. What may turn Western culture into an enemy is the sharp contrast between western and Islamic lifestyles, that is, the version of Islamic lifestyle advocated by religious conservatives, and the supposed fact that westerners attempt to make Iranian women abandon their religious beliefs by means of Western cultural products and lifestyles (www.leader.ir, 15/12/2013).

Taqvâ acts as the appropriate weapon to fight the presumed enemy by the resistance that it presumably creates in Muslim women against accepting Western dress codes or, alternatively, against the illegitimate desires of corrupt men.

- (10) Hejab e to sangar e tost. To az dâkhel e hejab doshman râ mibini va doshman to râ nemibinad.
 ‘Your hejab is your trench. You can see the enemy from within it while he cannot see you.’

7. *Taqvâ* is an Islamic term that denotes God-consciousness, mindfulness and piety. Its basic meaning is to put a barrier between yourself and the wrath of Allah (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taqva>).

In poster (10), the metaphor HEJAB IS A TRENCH encourages women to cover up their whole body except for their face by wearing a *chador*. The source domain of TRENCH and its properties, such as protecting soldiers, or leaving only a small hole through which to see the enemy, contribute to imagining the *chador* as the physical manifestation or the intended form of *hejab*. The domain of WAR reinforces the argumentation for a strict dress code for women. This metaphor, furthermore, metaphorically entails that any negligence in proper camouflage results in being identified and shot. Covering up the body with a *chador* provides maximum security, as well as defeating the intentions of the enemy.

The word *doshman* ‘enemy’ may evoke the already existing metaphors WESTERN CULTURES AND MEDIA ARE OPPONENTS OF CORRUPT MEN ARE OPPONENTS. The WESTERN CULTURE AND MEDIA ARE OPPONENTS metaphor seems to originate from the idea of *tahâjom e farhangi* ‘cultural invasion’ emphasized by the leader in his speeches (www.leader.ir, 15/12/2013).

6.1.3 *Metaphors praising women and ‘hejab’*

Metaphors in this group provide a positive evaluation of both women and *hejab*. In poster (11), a thoroughly gentle and upgraded image of women is offered by the metaphor WOMEN ARE PEARLS, whereby women are thought of as precious beings:

- (11) Hejab: sadafi baraye morvarid
 ‘Hejab: A shell for a pearl.’

This metaphor does not have any aggressive overtones, and the shell embracing women (HEJAB IS A SHELL/WOMEN ARE PEARLS) is considered as a natural cover for them. The success of the metaphor in gently advertising the *chador* is due to the conceptual associations between THE PEARL and THE SHELL in the source domain and the interpretations (the metaphorical/non-metaphorical entailments) that it provides; a woman needs to be cared for/taken care of due to being delicate and valuable. In other words, the metaphor excludes the interpretation that *hejab* might have been externally imposed or dictated. The precious being continues to live so long as it is protected whereas unveiling equals losing one’s value in social life. The features of the source domain exploited in the conceptualization turn the metaphor into a peaceful, pro-woman, ideological tool.

In addition to the aforementioned properties, the white color of shells is also used to highlight the moral purity attributed to properly dressed women (pictorially represented), giving rise to the MORAL PURITY IS WHITE metaphor:

- (12) Be rang e sadaf
 ‘Same as the color of shells.’

In poster (12), pictorial representation of a *chador*-wearing woman functions as the object of comparison (the target meaning), which is linguistically missing in the slogan. The preposition *be* 'same as/like' provides a metaphorical resemblance between a stereotypical property of modestly dressed women (moral purity) and the color of shells. Similar to Example (2), here, the association between moral purity and *hejab* can be inferred by virtue of what the source domain provides, i.e., the inseparable link between the shell and its white color.

The positive conceptualization of women is seen in other metaphors as well, where the protective function of *hejab* is represented by a different source domain (poster 13):

- (13) Agar hefâzi barâye gol nabud chenin bâtarâvat va zibâ nemimând.
 'If there wasn't any protection for the flower, it wouldn't remain refreshing and beautiful.'

The WOMEN ARE FLOWERS metaphor underlying this expression provides a highly positive image of women by bringing the salient features associated with flowers, namely, BEAUTY AND SENSITIVITY/TENDERNESS, into correspondence with the target domain of HEJAB. As a result, the social-religious pressures exerted on women to dress modestly in accordance with Islamic guidelines is replaced by women's inherent physical and psychological traits as the reasons for doing so. Using FLOWER as a source concept conceals any traces of religious motivation for pro-*hejab* language. Having attributed such features to women through the metaphor, the need arises to protect this tender and beautiful being against threats. This metaphor presents the *chador* as a protective garment which keeps away annoying gazes and sexual abuse.

6.1.4 Metaphors representing the significance of 'hejab' in family life

Some of the *hejab* statements in the data begin with *khâharam* 'my sister', which is a positive, polite, and free-from-sexual-feeling form of address. This form of address provokes feelings of security and trust in women while talking to men. Moreover, it gently reshapes the ideological goals and turns them into within-family pieces of advice.

The generic NATION IS A FAMILY metaphor underlies the figurative conceptualization of females as SISTERS. However, in Persian language and culture, the metaphor highlights the role of the brother in the frame. The reason is that in Iranian culture, the boys in the family are traditionally considered as the main protectors of their mother and sisters. They make sure that nobody will tease or molest them, and they react to such situations, in at least some cases, by physically fighting with threateners/disturbers. The figurative brothers of Iranian women generalize the family role relationships to the whole community by the ANY IRANIAN GIRL IS A

SISTER metaphor. Apart from *hejab*-related expressions, addressing a woman as such by any Iranian men, in order to offer help or make a request, communicates a sense of respect and security to the woman.

Poster (14) focuses on the significance of *hejab* in the context of married life:

- (14) Adamizad ruye chizhaye bâarzesh ramz migozarad. Hagh bede ke to ra ba chador bepasandam azizam.
 ‘Humans set a password on their valuable things. So, darling! You will agree with me why I like you with a *chador*.’

The noun phrase *chizhâye bâ arzesh* ‘valuable things’ metaphorically refers to women in married life (WOMEN ARE VALUABLE THINGS). In this statement, a husband addresses his wife. The protective function of the chador is emphasized by employing PASSWORD as the metaphorical source concept (THE CHADOR IS A PASSWORD). The metaphor shows the significance of a woman’s way of dressing for conveying the sense of love and loyalty to her husband i.e. the beauty and attraction of a woman should be concealed from others and only the husband should have access to it. The metaphor may also indicate, though less conspicuously, the extent to which a certain group of Iranian men can have authority over their wives by setting limits on the way they dress. Farahani (2002, p. 103) observes that considering women’s bodies as men’s private property demonstrates the privatization function of *hejab*.

In poster (15), observing *hejab* is represented as a fundamental characteristic of women through a novel conceptualization:

- (15) Zan e bedune hejab hamchon sandali ist bâ se pâyê.
 ‘A woman without *hejab* is like a chair with three legs.’

Since the concepts of WOMAN and CHAIR are constructed in the context as belonging to two distinct domains, the comparison between them involves a cross-domain mapping. Hence, this simile is analyzed as a “direct metaphor” (Steen et al., 2010). This conceptualization looks novel with respect to the source domain employed. The conceptual correspondence between the FURNITURE domain and the category of IRANIAN WOMEN is motivated by the representative properties of the IRANIAN WOMEN category functioning as the target domain. Such a conception of women may be considered as a motivating factor for the CHAIR concept and some of its constituting elements, i.e. its four legs. The DEFINING FEATURES OF A WOMAN ARE LEGS OF A CHAIR metaphor is involved in the conceptualization of an idealized Iranian woman in the poster. Although each leg of a chair has more or less the same function in making a chair what it is – maintaining balance – the defining features of the IRANIAN WOMAN category do not represent such an equal functioning. In other words, the metaphor transforms the functions of the chair legs to be

able to assign more significance to one of the legs (observing *hejab*). The role of the other legs of the chair (and other defining features of a woman) is defocused. Instead, the target domain is structured in a way that only the HEJAB concept is foregrounded. A major interpretation of such a conceptualization is that women who do not observe *hejab* are unreliable and unsafe to be with.

6.2 Metaphors related to men's gaze

In Iranian culture, men's gazing at women for the purpose of sexual pleasure is socially condemned and is considered to be a negative attribute of men as well as insulting for women. The social condemnation of men's staring at women is represented in the language through the lexical item '*hiz*' which refers to a man who habitually watches girls and zooms in on their sexually attractive parts. For Iranians, a prototypical feature of a nice man is having 'pure eyes.' A *cheshm pak* 'pure-eyed' man, in Persian, means a man who is not *hiz* and typically lowers or controls his gaze. The association of the look with purity or impurity derives from the PROPERTY FOR CATEGORY metonymy by means of which positive properties of men such as trustworthiness, not being *hiz*, stand for the person. The property of having pure eyes is extensively employed in social relationships. In order to qualify as a trustworthy person who can join a family or work in a place where women also work, this property is an important requirement.

In poster (16), veiling has been conceptualized as an umbrella which protects women from men's sexually charged gaze.

- (16) Dar in bârân e negâhhâye masmus, chatr e hejâb râ bâ khod bardâr.
 'In this rain of poisonous gazes take the umbrella of *hejab* with you.'

The HEJAB IS A PROTECTIVE COVER interacts with MEN'S GAZE IS A POISONOUS SUBSTANCE. It follows that veiling is the only effective antidote and protection against the poison of men's gaze. The RAIN DROPS ARE POISONOUS SUBSTANCES, EYES ARE CONTAINERS FOR POISONOUS SUBSTANCES, THE INTENSITY OF POISON IS THE INTENSITY OF RAIN, THE CHADOR IS AN UMBRELLA metaphors together contribute to forming a picture in which eyes containing poisonous substances fall on chador-wearing women with an umbrella in their hands. Furthermore, the rain is perceived as incessant. What can be inferred from the salience of the word *bârân* in the conceptualization of *hejab* is that a woman will never feel secure unless she covers up her hair and body. The prominence of men's gaze in the HEJAB domain is shown in another poster (Example (17)):

- (17) Hejab mahdudiat ast! Baraye cheshmhaye sheitani
 'Hejab is a restriction for devilish eyes.'

The statement implies that *hejab* is by no means a restriction for women, but rather, a restriction placed on the likelihood of getting sexual pleasure from women by looking (motivated by the BODY PART FOR PERSON, CATEGORY FOR PROPERTY metonymies and the CORRUPT MEN ARE DEVILS metaphor). Some Iranian women, however, consider *hejab* as a restriction (www.haftingtonpost.com, 05/12/2014) and this statement seems to be a response to those who argue against compulsory *hejab*.

6.3 *Hejab* and spiritual life

Metaphors of this category highlight the role of *hejab* in achieving high levels of spirituality (reaching God and heaven) and in demonstrating servitude to God.

- (18) Par bezan! Châdorat to râ bâl ast va bedân to râ mibarad bâlâ.
 ‘Flap your wings! Your chador is your wings and will take you up.’

In poster (18), the visual representation of a *chador*-wearing, angel-like woman soaring to the sky plus metonymic reference to angels in the sentence, through a salient feature of angels (having wings), form the CHADOR-WEARING WOMEN ARE ANGELS metaphor. The preposition *bâlâ* ‘up’ metaphorically makes reference to God (GOD IS UP) and also evokes the SPIRITUAL LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. Here the *chador* stands for pious and pure women who, like angels, deserve to live in proximity to God. An entailment of the metaphors might be that the capability of reaching a high level of spirituality or being a true servant of God is exclusive to women wearing a *chador*.

In poster (19), *hejab* is considered as a prominent sign of showing one’s servitude to the Creator as a Muslim woman:

- (19) Hejab taj e bandegist
 ‘Hejab is the crown of servitude.’

Bandegi ‘servitude’ means showing absolute obedience to God and His commands by living an Islamic life. Out of all behavioral signs which are held to demonstrate one’s commitment to Islamic teachings, such as praying regularly, fasting, and reading the Quran, *hejab* stands out as the most prominent, metaphorically represented as a crown. The other motivating element for the employment of the source concept CROWN might be that both *hejab* and crowns are placed on the head.

6.4 *Hejab* as a national and political symbol

The language of metaphor, however, can be replaced with more conspicuous forms of expression for directly reflecting the conservatives' viewpoint about the proper clothes for women, as a billboard (Example (20)) in the data indicates:

- (20) Chador: *hejab e bartar*
 'Chador: The Superior/ preferred form of *hejab*.'

The official stance of the government excludes other possible ways of covering up, that is, wearing a manteau and a head scarf, which is the only alternative to the *chador*. Although using the comparative adjective leaves space for the existence of alternative forms of covering up, the official statement of certain organizations, schools, and universities about accepting only *chador* wearers (www.roozonline.com, 01/05/2011, 17/09/2012) cancels out the implications of the above statement. A *hejab* poster (Example (21)) demonstrates the official position of the government by quoting Ayatollah Khamenei, the supreme leader:

- (21) Chador behtarin no'e *hejab va neshan e meli e mast*.
 'The *chador* is the best form of *hejab*, and it is our national symbol.'

In poster (22), *hejab* is seen as a means of supporting the leadership of Ayatollah Khamenei:

- (22) Hejab: jahâd dar hemayat az harim e velayat.
 'Hejab: fighting in support of the territory of *velâyat*.'

The word *velâyat* 'guardianship' is the shorter term for *velâyat e faghih* 'guardianship of the jurist', the cornerstone of the Islamic Republic. *Velâyat* refers to the leadership of Ayatollah Khamenei and *hejab* is seen as a symbol of showing obedience and support to the *vali* 'guardian' of Iranian Muslims. The word *jahâd* 'fighting for the sake of God' sets up the HEJAB IS FIGHTING metaphor and the word *harim* 'a holy or important space/territory which must be protected' (www.vejehyab.com) provides a metaphorical understanding of *velâyat* 'guardianship' (VELAYAT IS A BOUNDED HOLY SPACE).

6.5 *Hejab* statements to refute anti-*hejab* arguments

A number of *hejab*-related statements attempt to respond to anti-*hejab* arguments in Iranian society, though these complaints are not reflected in the media. The *hejab* posters reflect three major criticisms leveled at compulsory *hejab*. These criticisms or arguments revolve around concerns about physical appearance, restrictions on performing daily activities and the complaints on the mandatory *hejab*

in Iran. As an example, the slogan '*hejab*: my life, my right, my choice' on a poster presents *hejab* as a voluntarily adopted form of dress, which is a response to those who see *hejab* as being imposed and a tool of oppression.

In poster (23), the assumed negative effect of *hejab* on appearance is negated by giving prominence to an allegedly key function of *hejab*, i.e. protecting women from moral corruption, relying on the MORAL CORRUPTION IS ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION metaphor:

- (23) Hejab mara zesht nemikonad faghat az aludegi hefz mikonad.
'*Hejab* does not make me look ugly. It only keeps me from pollution.'

7. *Hejab* metaphors in context

While veiling in Western countries is stereotypically seen as a static cultural practice, a constraining form of dress, and a tool of oppressing women within patriarchal cultures (Ahmed, 1992; Hoodfar, 2003; Watson, 1994), it is viewed by some Muslim women in at least some Muslim countries (Egypt, Morocco) and Western societies (the U.S, Britain, and Canada) as a tool of empowerment, liberation, and of resisting the impact of western culture, or resisting cultural integration. Furthermore, Muslim women wear the veil to assert their Muslim identity, preserve their modesty, and feel protected (Ahmed, 1992; Farahani, 2002; Hessini, 1994; Khir Allah, 2015; Rahmath et al., 2016; Williams & Vashi, 2007). The *hejab* metaphors analyzed in this study highlight and present themes (by seeing *hejab* as a protective cover, a tool of demonstrating chastity, and a means of resisting the impact of Western culture) that are generally shared with some of the aforementioned motives of Muslim women in other social contexts. Some feminists argue that both veiled and fashionably dressed, *badhejab* 'improperly dressed' women in Iran are products of patriarchy and demonstrate the capitalist commodification of the female body (Gould, 2014, p. 232; Naghibi, 1999, p. 569). Nonetheless, the *hejab* slogans seem to introduce *hejab* not as a law requiring women to observe it, but as a cultural-religious value that is strongly recommended to be preserved and is consciously and voluntarily chosen.

A major finding of this study is that the moral purity, chastity and social value of women are depicted as being determined by, or correlated with, their degree of veiling. The ideas conveyed by the MORAL PURITY IS COLOR, EFAF IS A FLOWER, HEJAB IS THE FRAGRANCE OF A FLOWER, and MODEST FORMS OF HEJAB ARE OBJECTS WITH STRONG COVERINGS metaphors provide evidence for this argument.

The poster designers illustrate the role of *hejab* in creating a secure, private realm for women in public. According to this particular framing of *hejab*, proper

veiling as a “portable barrier” (Farahani, 2002, p. 101) can protect women’s bodies against social threats such as male gaze and sexual harassment. The conceptual metaphor HEJAB IS A PROTECTIVE COVER is extensively applied to stress this function.

Hejab metaphors in the data unanimously introduce and advertise the *chador* as the accepted and preferred garment for Iranian women. The conceptual metonymy HEJAB FOR THE CHADOR is instantiated in many of the *hejab* slogans. Pictorial representation of the *chador* in almost all the posters, and occurrences of such metaphors as the CHADOR-WEARING WOMEN ARE ANGELS and THE CHADOR IS A PROTECTIVE COVER demonstrate the significance of the *chador* in the *Hejab* and Chastity Plan.

Chador-wearing women are shown to be the recipients of very positive conceptualizations, whereas immodestly dressed women are pictured as being subject to moral corruption and sexual objectification, and in many cases, responsible for disrupting social equilibrium and arousing illegitimate sexual feelings in men. Whether *hejab* prevents or causes the sexual objectification of women is a disputed matter and is one of the points which distinguishes advocates and critics of *hejab* (Farahani, 2002; Milani, 1992).

Hejab metaphors fulfill their persuasive function by negative conceptualizations of corrupt men as FLIES, DEVILS, and OPPONENTS, and of improperly dressed women or women lacking *hejab* as UNWRAPPED OR DYSFUNCTIONAL OBJECTS. Also, emotionally loaded concepts such as FLOWER, PEARL, and ANGEL are used as source domains perhaps to influence a wider category of Iranian women.

The analysis of *hejab* metaphors reveals how conceptual metaphors serve to represent the dominant ideology in discourse which aims to persuade Iranian women to dress modestly. Political ideology, as an important aspect of the context, provides a tripartite value system of *hejab* (modestly dressed/ immodestly dressed/ women lacking *hejab*), on the basis of which various metaphorical concepts are formed. Iranian culture (composed of various stereotypical interpretations of people and events, customs and social practices) is found to be feeding the dominant political ideology which has its own specific properties, that is, specific political attitudes toward women. The political ideology manifests itself in discourse on *hejab* as the brother and father of all Iranian women, a brother whose responsibility is to protect Iranian women against any sexual harassment or disturbance, and a father who advises his daughters to protect their social value based on the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphor.

Veiling as a general Muslim practice has taken on political significance and is closely associated with movements against Western colonialism and imperialism, which attempted to secularize and liberate women (Ahmed, 1992, p. 130; Watson, 1994, p. 138). Some of the metaphors exhibit the national and political significance of *hejab*. Through such metaphors, *hejab* seems to turn into a symbol of

resisting the impact of Western culture and of showing support to the leadership of the supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei. The metaphors HEJAB IS FIGHTING, HEJAB IS A WEAPON, and HEJAB IS A TRENCH (in one of the readings of the word 'enemy') present Western culture and media as a threat to the Muslim identity of Iranian women.

Hejab metaphors are shown to be the product of the interaction of a variety of contextual elements as discussed below.

7.1 Situational context

The restricted social relationship between men and women (*mahram* vs. non-*mahram*), conceiving of women as men's properties (WOMEN ARE VALUABLE THINGS), key cultural concepts (MAHRAM vs. NON-MAHRAM, EFAF 'chastity'), social condemnation of men's gaze (MEN'S GAZE IS A POISONOUS SUBSTANCE) all motivate the production of *hejab* metaphors.

The *mahram*/ non-*mahram* distinction as a fundamental religious value physically distances men from women and is the basis for the "segregative function of *hejab*" (Farahani, 2002, p. 101), whereas the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphor attempts to bind Iranian men and women together socially and emotionally, licensing every Iranian to praise virtue and prevent vice. The HIJAB IS A PROTECTIVE COVER metaphor is motivated by the cultural-religious conceptualization of the proper social distance between men and women. Religion assigns responsibility to Iranian men to monitor the *hejab* status of their family members in order to protect them from social threats. Advising women by addressing them as sisters and daughters in the posters fulfills these responsibilities.

7.2 Discourse context

The co-textual elements that surround *hejab* metaphors influence the construction of the metaphorical meanings. Using particular collocations ('lust and temptation') to reinforce the negative image of illegitimate sexual arousal (LUST IS A VIRUS), particular forms of address in discourse in which women are addressed as sisters and daughters (NATION IS FAMILY), and shifting the discourse narrator to a first person female (in THE CHADOR IS A MATCHMAKER) constitute the major linguistic contexts for the *hejab* metaphors. For example, when the discourse narrator is shifted to a first person female, the issue of *hejab* is pictured as a serious concern for Iranian women and not as an externally dictated matter.

The analysis of *hejab* metaphors explicitly demonstrates the influential role of the preceding discourse in motivating the source domains of some of the metaphors. It also indicates how the conventional conceptual metaphors WESTERN

CULTURES ARE OPPONENTS/CORRUPT MEN ARE OPPONENTS, which are associated with preceding discourse, are recycled in the ongoing discourse and create intertextual coherence (Kövecses, 2014, p. 27). The idea of cultural invasion emphasized by the supreme leader seems to be applied in choosing the source domains of some of the metaphors such as HEJAB IS FIGHTING and HEJAB IS A WEAPON.

7.3 Conceptual-cognitive context

The conventional conceptual metaphors (WESTERN CULTURES AND MEDIA ARE OPPONENTS, CORRUPT MEN ARE OPPONENTS) which are inferable from preceding discourses, give rise to the formation of novel *hejab* metaphors such as THE CHADOR IS AN UMBRELLA and THE CHADOR IS A TRENCH.

Conceptual metonymy and categorization are also among the major construal operations involved in structuring the HEJAB concept. Conceptual metonymy facilitates the generalizations made within the *hejab*-related conceptual categories. Moreover, many of the features associated with these concepts are inferred via the application of metonymy. The conceptual metonymies HEJAB FOR THE CHADOR, HEJAB FOR EFAF, and the *chador* for moral purity and modesty contribute to linking elements of the frame and highlighting the key components of the viewpoint of *hejab* protagonists in Iran.

Categorization also assigns Iranian women into conceptual groups on the basis of their *hejab* status. The concept of THE IDEAL IRANIAN WOMAN is represented through the application of this cognitive operation; OBSERVING HEJAB is the representative property of the category. Categorization paves the way for the application of *hejab* metaphors. The *hejab* metaphors are mainly targeted at the chador-wearing and immodestly dressed women by praising and encouraging the first category and degrading the second.

7.4 Bodily context

The eye is the main body part used as a source domain in some metaphors. The eye is seen as an important source of sinful behavior in Islamic laws (Milani, 1992). Social condemnation of men's gaze is manifested in the MEN'S GAZE IS A POISONOUS SUBSTANCE and CORRUPT MEN ARE DEVILS metaphors. In a different sense, the role of the body is significantly highlighted when all these conceptualizations are seen as resulting from a certain attitude to women's bodies. The ideology represented in *hejab* discourse seeks to place the woman's body at the center of attention, and the metaphorical conceptualizations reflect a serious concern about the threat of corrupt men and western dress codes to the female body by merging women's beauty, sex appeal, and social value.

8. Conclusion

In this paper, I have introduced the complex concept of HEJAB as it is conceived by political-religious conservatives in Iran. The frame analysis of *hejab* provided a background for understanding the social-cultural properties of a specific category of Iranian women addressed by *hejab* slogans. Moreover, I have attempted to show how *hejab* metaphors used in pro-*hejab* billboards and posters recruit a variety of source domains to persuade Iranian women to dress modestly in public. Political relationships, key cultural concepts, and Islamic laws were found to be the main motivating elements in the selection of the metaphorical source domains.

Hejab metaphors provide significant evidence to support the context-based theory of metaphor. The metaphors examined in this paper were shown to be jointly produced by the influential, monitoring role of the contextual factors that constitute the context model of the situation. The context model that seems to be involved in the construction of *hejab* metaphors in Persian has shown socio-cultural elements (global contextual factors) as the omnipresent constituents of context in each instance of conceptualization, which supports Kövecses's (2015) account of metaphor in context. By and large, the discourse on *hejab* overwhelmingly utilizes metaphor to deal with extramarital sexual attraction and sexual arousal as the basis of individual and social corruption as well as a threat of cultural metamorphosis due to the influence of western lifestyles.

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