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RESEARCH PAPER

Role of Cultural Metaphors in Teaching: A Survey

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
	The present research explores through metaphors the mental images of secondary school students which they use while expressing feelings in Second language .The researcher asks each participant student to fill in the sentence ".…. (any feeling) is something like …… (metaphor) because ..." and to express his ideas by using this sentence and focusing on a single metaphor. Data were analyzed by qualitative (content analysis) as well as quantitative techniques. In the light of the data collected the researcher finds that the participants produced 63 valid metaphors for expressing feeling. These metaphors are collected under 5 different conceptual categories as to their common features. Conceptual categories showed significant difference in terms of gender and class level of the students. This situation put forward that metaphors can be used as a research tool for understanding, revealing and explaining the mental images of the students regarding the feeling expressions

Introduction

Metaphor usage is thinking and viewing style that pervades general comprehension of the individual. They allow start of a cognitive process in the reader or listener. Developed cognitive process creates affective influences on the individual. Cognitive and affective processes interact and feed one another. This points out the power of metaphors on the individual. Individuals benefit from metaphors while defining their or others' feelings and ideas. In this context metaphors indicate the ways individuals perceive the world and themselves (Girmen, 2007).

The research explores howthe students at graduate and post-graduate levels use metaphors or mental images while expressing their feelings in second language; as well as under which conceptual categories the metaphors produced by the students

in second language can be gathered in term of their common features. It also explores how much these metaphors differ by gender level of the students.

Literature Review

The methodologies and pedagogies of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have been broadly discussed in non-English speaking countries for a long time. For SLA teachers, seeking the best teaching methods is a difficult issue. In particular, SLA teachers in Pakistan have approached these issues in terms of providing SLA students with effective English language learning approach. Some researchers suggest that second languages should be taught on the basis of meaningful contexts in the learners' social reality. Many of the concepts used in the foreign language classroom were developed during the World War II when linguists were asked to work with native speakers of the target language developing courses for the Foreign Language Institute in Monterrey, California. These methods were based on teaching linguistic forms. Students were subjected to intensive language training based on moving from passive to active control of language structures. Since then many foreign languages textbook authors have used this approach to SLA. With the advent of the Second Generation of Cognitive Linguistics Lakoff, 1987), traditional methods of language teaching have been transformed. Cognitive linguists have come to realize that most of language learning is analogical. According to Marzano (1992), "A highly interactive process of constructing personal meaning from the information available in a learning situation and then integrating that information with what we already know to create new knowledge," is important. To SLA students, this is a worthy perspective and can be employed by the SLA instructor in the course of dealing with some crucial SLA learning problems. The formal study of the English language including vocabulary, parts of speech, sentence structure, and grammar is necessary but not sufficient form of language learning. The student must also learn to think metaphorically. The student is already doing so in his native language and his challenge is to learn how to do it in a foreign language. Hence, in addition to formally learning a language, a student must also conceptually learn the metaphorical world that constitutes that language. Hemust understand those expressions and meanings which are characteristic of the metaphorical world of English speakers. If he does not learn to think metaphorically in English, he will not fully understand what that language means. The approach used in this investigation differs substantially from the aforementioned traditional approaches to language teaching. St. Clair (2002), for example, has argued that metaphors can be used to define different cultures. He has shown, for example, that European cultures are defined by certain metaphors that have emerged from their own social history over time and these clusters of metaphors form a cultural profile. These are the metaphors of growth, the metaphors of games, the metaphors of semiotic form, the metaphors of the machine, the metaphors of the stage (dramaturgical metaphor), and metaphors of time and space. St. Clair (2002) also pointed out that when one learns an Indo-European language such as English, these cultural metaphors are assumed to be a part of the zeitgeist of that language. Metaphors are embedded into the very being of how people think in that language.

The reason for this deep connection between metaphor and thought has to do with the argument made by Lakoff (1987) that thought is metaphorical. Metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue, are used to create linguistic categories. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) have further articulated this new approach to cognitive linguistics by demonstrating how conceptual blending takes place in metaphorical thought. Consider, for example, the metaphor "The surgeon is a butcher." The inputs, information, to this metaphor are the concepts of surgeon and butcher. When these inputs are merged, they produce a new concept: the surgeon who performs like a butcher.

For two millennia the role of metaphor as an instrument of linguistic creativity was disparaged by philosophers and scientists. Recent work in the field of the cognitive sciences has demonstrated that metaphor is not only an intrinsic part of human creativity, but also that it plays a significant role in linguistic creativity and in linguistic change. The following discussion with St. Clair (lecture notes, seminar on Cultural Metaphors) addressed the nature of this change. It is argued that metaphor is central to analogical reasoning. Another trope that has been recently revived is metonymy. It will be demonstrated how both of these tropes developed out of cognitive models of categorization, and schema theory. In addition, it can be demonstrated that most linguistic change is metaphorical. Both lexical items and grammatical constructions undergo metaphorical change. These concepts will be discussed under the rubric of grammaticalization, the creation of new grammatical constructions that are created by metaphorical extension of existing structures. Finally, this discussion will address the concept of linguistic borrowing and translation theory and it is argued that most borrowed forms are essentially new forms that undergo metaphorical shifts and reanalysis when imported into another linguistic system. Similarly, translation theory involves the ingenious use of human creativity, as literal translations are impossible. An Old Italian adage is traduttore è traiditore, a translator is a traitor. Now this can be restated, "the translator is a creative genius." (St. Clair 2002).

The disparagement of metaphor is now a thing of the past. Recently, linguists have turned their energies into reinvestigating the use of tropes in language (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; and Lakoff, 1987). Lakoff was aware of the changes taking place in the cognitive sciences and knew that the field was being reconceptualized. Not only were cognitive scientists interested in analogical reasoning but were also interested in how visual thinking was used to create schemas, frames, and scenarios in language. Gibbs (1994) demonstrated that the dichotomy between figurative and literal language could not be sustained. Many literal terms are metaphorical in nature.Golden & Lanza (2013) explored the cultural metaphors in migrants' narrative discourse.

Later, cognitive scientists noted how analogical language is used to create mental spaces and metaphorical blends. Gilles Fauconnier (1994) created a model of mental spaces and demonstrated how categories are used to move from a source to a target space in the creation of metaphor. In arguing, "The surgeon is a butcher" one

chooses the butcheras the source concept and uses it to create a target, the surgeon. The metaphor is created in a blended space that uses short-term memory, long-term memory, and the structure of the radial networks associated with the items butcher and surgeon. He referred to his model as mental spaces, the place where concepts and categories combine in working memory. Recently, scholars working within the field of grammaticalization (Hopper and Traugott, 1993)had demonstrated that not only lexical metaphors dominate language, but also grammatical metaphors. They provide numerous examples of new grammatical constructions that have emerged through the metaphorical construction of linguistic patterns. What they demonstrate has been widely known in the field of historical linguistics. New grammatical categories are continuously created and re-created in language metaphorically. For example, in many language systems a new form of the future was created and modeled on verbs of motion.

Metaphors provide a learning approach that efficiently structures the understanding when they are used in educational area. In this approach student should comprehend the similarities between the pre-learned knowledge and new knowledge. Then s/he should define the differences between the learned information and its metaphoric presentation.

Metaphors are highly practical tools for development of learning. If we want to investigate a new thing first we have to imagine it. Metaphors can also provide a creative and exploratory learning; because they are tools in order to form clear ideas in our vision instead of indefinite concepts. Metaphors have the power to change our conceptual systems and alter the viewpoints of the students (Sanchez et al, 2000).

Foreign language teaching methods, related activities and means that are used in Turkey recently, are all developed in western countries. Language teaching process does not mean any method, definite rule to be followed blindly by teachers or a stable process depending on procedures. Contrarily, it is a dynamic, creative process that is shaped as to the characteristics of student groups. In other words, one of the basic principles of this process is to teach language according to certain positions and needs (Acat, 2009.)

Metaphors can be used for stating more comprehensible some of the concepts, perceptions and attitudes or incoherent, complicated subjects in education. From this point of view we can say that the facts, concepts, perceptions and attitudes in different cultures and societies will be transferred and learned more easily through metaphors in our country where English is thought as a second language. Therefore, purpose of this study is to reveal through *metaphors* the mental images of secondary school students which they use while stating *feelings* in a foreign language (English).

Theoretical Framework

The researcher has used Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) postulated in their book titled "Metaphors We Live By". In this theory,

metaphor is defined as an action realized in mind before language. From cognitive aspect metaphor must be considered in whole together with various components. Kovecses (2003) lists these parts as follows:

- Experiential basis
- Target domain
- Source domain
- Relationship between the target and the source
- Metaphoric linguistic expressions
- Mappings
- Entailments
- Blends
- Non-linguistic realization
- Cultural models

Metaphor is understanding of a target area through a source area. In a form where A is B, A represents the target area whereas B represents the source area. For the relation between target and source area that enables metaphor, Conceptual Metaphor Theory addresses the experience basis. Target area of the metaphor generally describes the abstract concepts such as success, love, happiness. Making inference regarding theses abstract concepts, source areas that are used for visualization are all affective areas. Whereas the conceptual metaphors that are based on culture related evaluations, constitute the group which is open to differentiation to the utmost. Because, experiences, directing the social life, are efficient in formation of such metaphors. For example, in Western literature "human is a pig." metaphor is related with dirtiness and ambition whereas in China it is used to describe humankind like foolish lover in our culture (Ungererve Schmid, 2006).

Material and Methods

95 students from graduate and post-graduate classes constitute the limited universe and sampling. 47 of the participant students are female (49.5 %) and 48 of them are male (51.5%) as well as their participation is based on voluntariness. Cross-sectional data has been collected from the students belonging to graduate and post-graduate classes from various government and private colleges of the Gujranwala city.

In this study, data is analyzed through qualitative (content analysis) and quantitative (chi-square) data analysis techniques.

The participants are asked to complete the sentence **"..... (any feeling) is** something like …… (metaphor) because **..."** and to express their feelings by using this statement and focusing on only one metaphor. A period of 15 minutes is given to the participants in order to realize this task. In the researches where metaphors are employed as a research tool, the term "like" is generally used to recall the link between the subject and source of metaphor even more clearly (Saban, 2004). In this

study also the term "because" is used in order to enable participants to provide a justification or reasonable basis for their own metaphors. The sentences/paragraphs written by the participants form the basic data source of this study.

Metaphors developed by the participants in English are analyzed in five stages: (1) coding and selecting, (2) sample metaphor image collecting, (3) category development, (4) providing validity and reliability and (5) transferring data to Chi Square program for quantitative analysis.

After eliminating the papers that do not involve metaphor images, 63 valid metaphors in total are obtained. A "sample metaphor list" is formed by collecting metaphor images that are assumed as best representing each of these 63 metaphors. Then they are analyzed as to the subject, source and relation between the subject and source of metaphor. Each metaphor image is associated with the themes "anger, sadness, fear, love, pleasure, expectation inspiring feelings" in terms of the perspective it has for the feeling statement and 5 different conceptual categories (animal, object, nature, action, idiom) are established. For reliability of the study expert opinion is consulted in order to determine whether if the metaphor images listed under these conceptual categories represent the said conceptual category. All data is processed in Chi-Square and the results are analyzed and interpreted.

Results and Discussion

In this part, primarily 5 conceptual categories that are developed for feeling statements are introduced. Then, these conceptual categories are compared as to gender and class level of the participant students.

Table 1
Conceptual categories for metaphors

Category	Frequency
Nature metaphors	30 (Male 15,Female 15)
Object metaphors	42 (M 19, F 23)
Animal metaphors	2 (M 1,F 1)
Idiom metaphors	6 (M 2,F 1)
Action metaphors	3 (M 1,F 5)

Table 2
General Review

Category	Themes	Common Metaphors	Total Number of Metaphors Produced
Nature metaphors	Expectation, Love	River,sea,weather,tree ,sunshine,stars,heave n,flower,etc.	30
Object metaphors	Love, Anger	Apple,mobile,light,ch emical,,chain,train,etc.	42

Animal metaphors	Love	Dragon,ant.	2
Action metaphors	Shame	Shining,race,jumping	3
Idiom metaphors	Love	Bed of thorns,bed of roses,comedy to think,valley of tears.	6

1. Nature Metaphors: This category is represented by 30 students (47.6%). "River" and "sea" are the most used metaphors by the students for stating expectation (Life) and love (love, friendship, trust) inspiring feelings.weather, tree, sunshine, stars, heaven and flower are other metaphors.

2. Object Metaphors: This category is represented by 42 students (66.6%). River, sea, weather, tree, sunshine, stars, heaven, flower, etc. are the most used metaphors by the students for stating love (love, friendship, life and anger.

3. Animal Metaphors: This category is represented by 2 students (3.1%) and 2 metaphors in total. "Dragon and ant" are the most used metaphors by the students for stating life.

4. Action Metaphors: This category is represented by 3 students (4.7%) and 3 metaphors in total were produced. The produced Shining, race and jumping.

5. Idiom Metaphors: This category is represented by 6 students (9.5 %) and 4 metaphors in total. The produced metaphors are; bed of thorns, bed of roses, comedy to think, and valley of tears.

When these conceptual categories are compared by applying independent Pearson χ2 test in terms of genders and class levels of the students, differences in the following points are found: Male and Female students produced metaphors representing *"Nature"* and *"animal"* categories in equal whereas female students ranked first at *"object"and "idiom"*metaphors.

Table 4
Comparison of 5 conceptual categories as to gender

	Male (n=38)		Female (n=45)		Total (n=63)	
Category	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*
Nature metaphor	15	39.4%	15	33.3%	30	47.6%
Object metaphor	19	50%	23	51.1%	42	66.6%
Animal metaphor	1	2.6%	1	2.2%	2	3.1%
Action metaphor	2	5.2%	1	4.4%	3	4.7%
Idiom metaphor	1	2.6%	5	2.2%	6	9.5%

Conclusion

The findings obtained from this study that is intended to reveal through *metaphors* the mental images of graduate and post-graduate students which they use while stating *feelings* in a foreign language (English), draw attention to a few important points.

Firstly, as emphasized by Yob (2003) basically metaphor is only the symbol of the fact it explains, therefore several metaphors are required in order to explain the *feeling statements* concept. For example, feelings can be defined as "primitive" and "complex" as well as *"anger"*, *"affliction"*, *"fear"*, *"love"*, *"pleasure"*, *"share"* or *"expectation"* inspiring feelings. In this case, it is clear that feeling concept cannot be fully explained with a single metaphor.

Secondly, when the mental images of graduate and post-graduate students which they use while stating *feelings* in a foreign language is considered, it is seen that the popular conceptual categories by class levels are "object *metaphors"* (66.6%).

So, it can be said that as far as the students' level raises, they produce more concrete metaphors. Thirdly, we can say that gender variation also influences mental images of graduate and post-graduate students which they use while stating *feelings* in a foreign language. Male students produced images representing "nature metaphors"(39.45),*"object metaphors"* (50%) *"animal metaphors"* (2.6%) and *"idiom metaphors"* (2.6%) categories highly more than female students. Likewise, female students produced images representing *"action metaphors"* (5.2%) category highly more than male students. In a comparable study carried out by Saban, Koçbekerve Saban (2006), 111 valid metaphors produced by teacher candidates were collected under 10 different conceptual category. Male students appreciated *"shaper/formative"*, *"instructive/directive"* and *"collaborative/democratic leader"* roles whereas female students *"information provider"*, *"individual development supporter"* and *"character guidance"* roles of teachers in higher rates than the other. Accordingly, it seems obvious that there are substantial differences between male and female students regarding perception and statement of concepts.

Consequently, metaphors can be used as a *powerful research tool* for understanding, revealing and explaining the mental images of the students regarding the *feeling statements* in a foreign language (English). In this context, students can be asked to produce metaphors for different abstract concepts and facts, then to share these with others. After they analyze their own metaphor images and recognize the alternative conceptualizations provided by these images for certain facts; the metaphor images that bring new perspectives to different abstract concepts can be introduced to the students.

So we are in need of enabling the individuals learning foreign language to produce language products by using basic language skills and therefore, establishing

the environments where they can display their creativity. Considering the suggestion for preparing such environments for learners, it can be said that a new approach is required to be appreciated in Pakistan for foreign language learning/ teaching.

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