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Presented at the DLSU Research Congress 2019
De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines
June 19 to 21, 2019

A discourse analysis of the preservice teachers' metaphors of cooperating teachers

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Abstract: This study is a discourse analysis of the conceptual metaphors (CMs) of cooperating teachers as reflected in the narrative reports (NRs) of the preservice teachers (PTs) in Central Luzon State University. Using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Kövecses' (2010) Source Domains for Conceptual Metaphors, a content analysis of 503 narratives written by preservice teachers from 2006 to 2014 was conducted in order to answer the question "What metaphors for cooperating teachers are embedded in the narrative reports of preservice teachers". A total of 1,008 metaphorical linguistic expressions were drawn generating 12 conceptual metaphors for cooperating teachers (CTs). Findings reveal that PTs' conceptual metaphors for CTs are picture, character, guide, role model, kin, power, best friend, key, light, angel, and hero. For CT-PT relationship, a new target domain, the conceptual metaphor used was journey. Aided by Kövecses (2010) list of Source Domains, four domains emerged, namely, Movement and Direction, Force, Machine and Tools, and Light and Darkness. One important finding in this study is the emergence of two new domains, -Social Role and Values and Attributes. These CMs under various Source Domains assert that metaphorical linguistic expressions generated from the narratives are based on cognitive and social experiences of preservice teachers framed on their beliefs, values, and ideals regarding their cooperating teachers.

Key Words: conceptual metaphors; preservice teachers; discourse analysis; narrative reports; content analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' use of metaphorical language to describe and explain their beliefs about students, their roles, and their profession is widespread (Munby, 1987; Tobin, 1990; Alger, 2008). In fact, Hamilton (2016) posit that metaphors are often used

to help prospective teachers articulate their ideas and knowledge about teachers and teaching, to which Kramsch (2003) agreed that student-teachers construct representations of themselves and their experiences through metaphors. Accordingly, in this study, the conceptual metaphors that bare the accounts of experiences preservice teachers go



through are assumed to construct their diverse concepts of cooperating teachers.

The construction of conceptual metaphors of cooperating teachers were drawn from Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT, hereafter). CMT proposes that the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. Its primary goal is to uncover the metaphorical relations or mappings between source and target domains and how they have guided human reasoning and behavior, and uncover deeply embedded conceptual relations in mind. A close analysis of systems of metaphors provide insight into individual cognitive processes (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) as well as social and cultural systems of belief (Lakoff, 1996; Kövecses, 2010). In determining how preservice teachers' metaphors represent their concepts of CTs, Kövecses' (2010) list of Source Domains was used.

According to CMT, concepts [like practice teaching] are best understood with the use of metaphor, and that metaphor is part of everyday phenomenon. Ungerer and Schmid (1996) also added that language is rife with metaphorical expressions, and metaphor plays an important part both in spoken and written discourses, in various areas, specific in education.

Jensen (2006) claimed that with the rise of researchers' interest on everyday realities of classroom and educational practice, metaphorical analysis began to gain validity as a research tool. In order to elicit the use of metaphors, various studies employed open-ended survey questionnaires and prompts in order to generate metaphors (see Alger, 2008; Font, Bolite, & Acevedo, 2010; and de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). However, this study used pre-existing written and authentic data for metaphor analysis, addressing the gap on data collection. This paper determined how the metaphors in the narrative reports of preservice teachers represent their concepts of their cooperating teachers.

2. METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from the narrative reports titled "*The Narrative Report on Off-Campus Teaching Experiences at (cooperating school)*" of preservice teachers starting from 2006 to 2014. These narrative reports were submitted as final requirement in the course BSEd 399 (Student

Teaching) after undergoing 14 weeks of student teaching internship.

Content analysis of the metaphorical linguistic expressions (LEs, hereafter) extracted from the narrative reports was done. Using Kövecses' (2010) list, the LEs with similar ideas were clustered under the source domains and presented in order of frequency of occurrences. The categories revealed the source domain from which the preservice teachers had drawn their ideas. The underlying conceptual metaphors were then constructed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After subjecting the preservice teachers' 503 narratives to a content analysis, a total of 1,008 metaphorical linguistic expressions were drawn generating 12 conceptual metaphors for CTs. The conceptual metaphors used for CTs are as follows: picture, character, guide, role model, kin, power, best friend, key, light, angel, and hero. For CT-PT relationship, a new target domain, the conceptual metaphor used was journey. Using Kövecses (2010) list of Source Domains, four domains emerged, namely, Movement and Direction, Force, Machine and Tools, and Light and Darkness. One important finding in this study is the emergence of two new domains, -Social Role and Values and Attributes.

Table 1
 Conceptual Metaphors for the Target Domain CT

Conceptual Metaphors	Frequency	%	Source Domain
CT is a picture	229	22.7	V & A**
CT is a character	221	20.94	Social Role**
CT is a guide	128	12.70	M & D*
CT is a role model	114	11.21	Social Role
CT is a kin.	106	10.52	Social Role
CT is power	48	4.76	Force*
CT is a best friend	39	3.87	Social Role



CT is a key	34	3.37	M & T*
CT is light	29	2.88	L & D*
CT is an angel	13	1.29	Social Role
CT is a hero	13	1.29	Force
CT-PT relationship is a journey	45	4.46	M & D
TOTAL	1,008		

**New Domains: *Social Roles (483); Values & Attributes (229)*

*Source Domains by Kövecses (2010) *M&D-Movement and Direction (73); Force (61); M&T-Machine and Tools (34); L&D-Light and Darkness (29)*

As revealed in Table 1, the CM “*CT is a picture*” is the most prevailing CM that emerged from the data. It was generated from a total of 229 or 22.72% LEs describing the CTs. The LEs are adjectives illustrating a picture of how the PTs described their CTs. The picture depicts a CT who was endowed with physical, behavioral, and cognitive attributes, as illustrated in various LEs such as *pretty and handsome, humble and meticulous, smart and expert*. A picture (n) is a portrait, an image, or an impression of something formed from a description. A picture depicts various images, such as beautiful or its opposite or concrete or abstract. The CT, illustrated in various ways, justifies the CM “*CT is a picture*”. Accordingly, 20.94% LEs ushered the production of the CM “*CT is a character*”. As a character, the CT was described to be a character playing various roles such as *mentor, adviser, critic, supervisor, etc.* Interestingly, the CMs “*CT is a picture*” and “*CT is a character*” are similar illustrations implying a diversity within a distinct person-the CT. While ‘picture’ and ‘character’ emerged as the most prevailing metaphors for CT, the CMs “*CT is an angel*” and “*CT is a hero*”, both at 1.29%, recorded the least frequent LEs to represent CTs. The LEs “CTs as *commanders (NR 60, 226)* and a *person who stood by them up to the last fight (NR 26)* serving as *protector (NR 501) alliance, defender, (NRs 39, 143, 301)*, and one who is always there to *rescue (NR18, 32)*” produced the CM “*CT is a hero*”

where the attributes of a CT are likened to that of a hero. In the context of this investigation, CTs are there to fight ignorance. When mapped, the LEs “*god-sent, angel, blessing*” to convey immense gratitude revealed the CM “*CT is an angel*”.

The data further revealed that the CMs produced are similar and interrelated, implying that PTs had an agreeable opinion of their CTs. Notably, this result may have been yielded because people normally describe the role, the status, the behavior, and the looks of a person whenever they are casually asked to provide information about a person.

Moreover, an emerging Target Domain-CT-PT Relationship was recorded. This category was unveiled because the LEs focused on the relationship that existed between the CT and the PT, instead of conceptualizing CT. 45 LEs illustrated the idea of journey as expressions describing or conceptualizing CT-PT relationship. Thus, the CM *CT-PT relationship is a journey* was produced.

The table further reveals the source domains from which the conceptual metaphors were categorized. Using Kövecses (2010) list of Source Domains, four domains emerged, namely, *Movement and Direction, Force, Machine and Tools, and Light and Darkness*. One important finding in this study is the emergence of two new domains, *-Social Role and Values and Attributes*, which recorded the highest number of LEs.

The domain of *Social Role* was manifested in the CMs *CT is a character, CT is a role model, CT is a kin, CT is a best friend, and CT is an angel*. CTs were also conceptualized from the domain of *Values and Attributes* as reflected in the sample LEs such as *sympathetic, considerate, compassionate, serious, disciplinarian, and meticulous* which aided in the production of CM *CT is a picture*. CTs were also conceptualized from the domain of *Force* as shown in the CM *CT is power, CT is a hero*. Moreover, the domain *Movement and Direction* also served as source of conceptualization of CTs as seen in the CMs *CT is a guide and CT-PT relationship is a journey*. The CM *CT is a key* is representative of the source domain *Machine and Tools*. The least used source



domain was Light and Darkness **from where the CM *CT is light*** was drawn.

The use of Social Roles and Values and Attributes as most popular descriptions of CT maybe attributed to the norm of supplying basic information such as the status and behavior of a person in an attempt to introduce or describe an individual. The new source domains that emerged challenged Kövecses' list of source domains as incomplete when used in the field of education.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. 1). Linguistic expressions are platforms where we can draw conceptual metaphors. Preservice teachers' narratives are academic papers that are rich sources of metaphors; this is because of the nature of narratives – subjective, free-flowing, and experience-based. Through these narratives, preservice teachers construct definitions of their CT based on daily images of life that are influenced by their cultural background and formal training. LEs and CMs are therefore forms of scholarly language that are reliable and valid using the lens of preservice teachers understanding of their experiences. 2). The emergence of new source domains such as Social Role and Values and Attributes proves that Kövecses' (2010) list of source domains is not absolute and encompassing in the area of education. However, other source domains by Kövecses, such as Force, Movement and Direction, Light and Darkness, are useful domains from which preservice teachers drew their conceptualizations of cooperating teacher. 3). This study confirms that metaphor is not only linguistic in nature but also a cognitive process. The metaphors developed from the LEs in the narratives of preservice teachers represent their beliefs and ideals of cooperating teachers as contributory to cognitive and behavioral development. The metaphors are expressions of the ideals and visual images of their daily lives. These metaphors are relevant in understanding how they perceive the teachers and the nature of their profession. The beliefs expressed in the forms of metaphors will have an influence on them in carrying out their roles in the future.

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