

A Cognitive Semantic Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Selected English Food Proverbs

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Abstract

According to cognitive semantics, language is part of a broader human cognitive ability and can thus only explain the world as individuals see it. The researcher will concentrate on conceptual metaphor theory, which is one of the major theories of cognitive semantics. The current study's concern is that learners struggle to represent and comprehend perfect conceptual senses of English proverbs, such as food proverbs. It seeks to identify the function of metaphorical terms in the interpretation of various English food proverbs. It is suggested that structural metaphors take precedence over other types of conceptual metaphors. It is confined to analyzing (10) selected English food proverbs from the dictionary of Margulis and Kholodnaya (2000). It has been discovered that conceptual metaphors can be understood based on the context in which they are used. It has also been discovered that structural metaphors are frequently used in the data in question.

Keywords: metaphor, cognitive, proverb, food, meaning

1. Literature Review

In this section, related concepts are explained. Such concepts are: cognition, conceptual metaphor theory and types of conceptual metaphors.

1.1 Concept of Cognition

Individuals' cognition can be defined as mental fabrications in their minds. It refers to the many mental processes involved in thinking, remembering, perceiving, identifying, classifying, and so on. In other words, it is concerned with mental processes and the representation of knowledge in the mind. Many cognitive psychologists work under an information processing paradigm, which assumes that the mind is a symbol-processing system and that when different processes act on these symbols, they transform into other symbols (Richards and Schmidt, 2010:89).

According to Fauconnier (1997:10), cognition represents the actions that generate grammar, conceptualization, and thought. He (ibid) underlines the close relationship that exists between language and thought. According to Evans (2007: vi), cognitive linguistics is a method for studying language, mind, and embodied experience. Its primary goal is to investigate the link between language, mind, and socio-physical experience.

According to Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007: 198), conceptual integration can be defined as the combining of selected conceptual information from two or more independent sources. It can be viewed as a prevalent phenomenon in human mind. One that has a consistent impact on everyday language.

1.1.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

To begin with, Richard and Schmidt (2010: 362) argue that metaphors are more than just poetic or rhetorical flourishes, but are a fundamental aspect of ordinary communication. The concept of conceptual metaphor refers to the understanding of one set of concepts (the target domain) in terms of another (the source domain), such as understanding time in terms of space (in the days ahead of us, the coming month, as we approach the end of the year), the life is a journey metaphor (with a destination, paths chosen and not chosen, obstacles to overcome), or the argument-is-waiver metaphor. A version of the question of whether such metaphors genuinely alter the ways in which we perceive, think, and act.

Furthermore, Koveceses (2004:4) states that metaphor can be defined as knowing one conceptual domain (A) in terms of another conceptual domain (B). The fact that conceptual domain (A) is conceptual domain (B) that is viewed as conceptual metaphor, in which the domain (B) from which one draws metaphorical expression to understand the conceptual domain (A) that is called the source domain, while the domain(B) is the understanding in the way that is called the target domain.

Evans (2007:130) proposes that the correlation between entities is known as mapping, and that it is inherent in areas of the conceptual system. Mapping determines how portions of an attention pattern are mapped onto portions of the scene described by a verbal utterance.

It is worth noting that meaning in cognitive semantics is based on conventionalized conceptual structure; thus, mental categories formed by people's experiences with the external world are reflected by a cognitive domain that contains the semantic structure (Saeed, 2016:342).

In this regard, Stranzy (2005: 282) claims that metaphors can be used in cognitive semantics to conceptualize emotions. Proverbs, idioms, and collocations represent emotional concepts, such as You make my blood boil or He's simply blowing off steam. Such expressions

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demonstrate that 'heat of fluid in a container' is the key metaphor for fury. Metaphorical expressions of various emotions demonstrate that the human body is commonly viewed as a container for emotions, as in, She was filled with As for principles of conceptual metaphor theory, they are:

Conceptual structure emerges from human sensory experience; image schemas and motor schemas distinguish conceptual structure.

The structure of conceptions includes prototypes of various types, such as typical examples, ideal cases, stereotyped cases, and so on. Each type of prototype employs a distinct mode of reasoning.

Reason is imaginative in the sense that metaphor maps corporeal inference forms onto abstract modalities of inference.

Conceptual systems can be described as pluralistic rather than homogeneous. Typically, abstract concepts are described by several conceptual metaphors, which are frequently in conflict with one another (Arcimaviéiené, 2007: 12).

1.1.2 Types of Conceptual Metaphors

Various types of conceptual metaphor are provided by many authors. For the purpose of the current study, the researcher will adopt Kövecses (2010: 37)'s typology in terms of cognitive aspect which is elaborated as follows:

1.1.2.1 Structural Metaphors

The source domain provides a relatively extensive knowledge structure for the target idea in this case. In other words, the cognitive function of these metaphors is to allow speakers to understand target a through the structure of source b. This comprehension is achieved by conceptual mappings between elements of a and elements of b. For example, the concept of time is organized according to motion and space. Given the time as motion metaphor, time may be understood in terms of some fundamental elements: physical objects, their positions, and their motion (Kövecses, 2010: 37). (Arcimaviéiené, 2007: 12) They are frequently contradictory.

There is a background condition that applies to this style of thinking about time: the present time is in the same location as a canonical observer. Given the essential elements

and the background condition, the following mappings result: Times are important. Motion is the passage of time. Future times are in front of the observer, while previous times are behind them. One object is moving, and one thing is immovable; the immobile thing is the deictic center. This set of mappings clearly structures our understanding of time. In English, the time is motion conceptual metaphor appears in two special cases: time passing is motion of an item and time passing is motion of an observer over a landscape (ibid).

1.1.2.2 Orientational Metaphors

They are the metaphorical use of a word with their semantic concepts 'directionality' and 'specialization' where this type organizes metaphors of many concepts, one with the other, in the form of the concepts that indicate the place, as in the following examples:

- Try to cram more information into fewer words.
- Don't force your meanings into inappropriate terms.
- Can you get coherent concepts from that prose?

The phrases used to signify directionality and specialization are borrowed here in the abstract expressions of the language that have nothing to do with the place at all. All of these terms are incorporated in the conceptual framework (Reddy, 1998: 199).

1.1.2.3 Ontological Metaphors

They are the metaphorical use of words that indicate abstract and intangible things such as intellectual activities, feelings, and ideas, and consider them only as entities and concrete, in order to make them more tangible for the human mind, as in the following example:

- We must tackle inflation.

In this context, inflation is considered as an undetectable act, a separate creature that must be combated (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 25).

Thus, Kövecses (2010: 37)'s classification of conceptual metaphor has been adopted in this study as diagrammed in the following figure:

Conceptual Metaphor

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Figure (1) Model of Analysis

2. Data Analysis and Discussion

According to Hurford et al. (2007: 17), a proverb is a poly-semantic unit in the sense that it has two forms of meaning: literal and figurative. For example, "Like father, like son" has a literal reading because "father and son are alike," whereas the proverb "Blood is thicker than water" has a figurative meaning that can be interpreted differently than its literal meaning depending on the social context. The figurative meaning of this adage is that members of the same family have stronger bonds with one another than with others. However, the following food proverbs will be examined using conceptual metaphor theory.

Food Proverb (1)

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away!"

It has been observed that the current food proverb has structural metaphor due to the target concept's extensive knowledge structure. In certain cases, this adage suggests that if children refuse to eat their fruits, their parents can tell them, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away!" in order to persuade them that if they eat their fruits, they will not need to see a doctor. In other cases, the speaker may imply this broadly in the sense that if you consume nutritious meals and take care of yourself, you will not have any health problems or need to see a doctor.

Food Proverb (2)

"Don't put all your eggs in one basket!"

In terms of the previous proverb, it is observed that it has an orientational metaphor because the word "eggs" is metaphorically used in a certain location, which is the "basket." It implies that even if one fails, the others will still be there. That is, if you have the means to invest in something or are willing to take a risk, it is tempting to trust what you see. However, you never know what is excellent and what will succeed, so this is a risky move. If you are talking about investing or stocks, it may also imply that you should not put all of your money into one investment. Furthermore, if you are discussing **Food Proverb (3)**

"One man's meat is another man's poison!"

In relation to the previous adage, such a proverb incorporates ontological metaphor because it indicates abstract as well as intellectual feelings when viewed as a concrete. Someone who enjoys eating meat may take a pal to his favorite steakhouse just to discover that he or she is vegetarian! Even if he or she looked at the identical meal, they would have very different perspectives on what it is. One might think the steak looks extremely great and cannot wait to try it. However, it has the potential to completely eliminate the other

Food Proverb (4)

"You can't have your cake and eat it too!"

Because it contains a deep knowledge structure for the target topic, the current food proverb features structural metaphor. So, if you can acquire your favorite cake flavor and eat it, you're getting the best of all worlds. Everything is falling into place for you, but it is impossible. As a result, the contemporary saying warns that you cannot get all you desire. Instead, only a few things will work for you, and you will have to choose whether you want one or the other but not both. **Food Proverb (5)**

"Fine words butter no parsnips!"

Again, the type of proverb in question is structural metaphor because it includes a deep knowledge structure for the target notion. For example, if one meets someone who continually tells others what they want to hear but never delivers on what they promise, he or she can moralize them by saying. This means that nice words, such as empty pledges and charming laudations, will not help to address any difficulties. If the present proverb is employed, it might be asked of the person taking action and halting only to inform on something.

A Cognitive Semantic Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Selected English Food Proverbs

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Food Proverb (6)

A hungry man is an angry man!

Concerning the previous proverb, it is remarked that it contains orientational metaphor because the term "hungry" is metaphorically utilized within a specific condition "angry." It is about a hungry human, whether he is grown or not, who is inclined to be angry. When someone uses this proverb, he or she means that a person who is hungry and does not have some needs addressed (whether it is specifically related to food or not) is more likely to be emotional. Individuals are primarily aware of themselves and can make difficult judgments if their needs are addressed.

Food Proverb (7)

Eat to live but do not live to eat!

In terms of the prior adage, it employs orientational metaphor. That is, it cautions people who may go too far. Rather of pursuing "greater purposes" for their lives, such as teaching children or helping the destitute, they feel that their goals are to consume more. If you hear such a proverb, it means you shouldn't place too much emphasis on food. Rather, he or she should eat enough to sustain life, but not spend too much time worrying about food.

Food Proverb (8)

"It's no use crying over spilt milk!"

With regard to the preceding proverb, it has ontological metaphor since it indicates abstract as well as intellectual feelings when viewed as a concrete. This adage advises people "not to cry over spilt milk" - or not to cry over something that has already happened. Because there is no way to change the past, what has happened has happened. Rather, one should endeavor to solve the difficulties and then move on, or simply forget about them. **Food Proverb (9)**

Too many cooks spoils the broth!

Because it has a deep knowledge structure for the target notion, the food proverb in question belongs to structural metaphor. It is often more productive labor when people are working on challenges or problems. When the majority of individuals work on anything, they are more interested with finding outstanding answers. However, it is possible that most people try to collaborate in order to create more difficulties than they solve. Rather of coming to quick conclusions, it appears to lead to slower development or more discussions. As a result, some

people may feel that others will address such problems, and they may refuse to accept responsibility. **Food Proverb (10)**

We never miss water until the well runs dry!

Because it includes a deep knowledge structure for the target notion, this contemporary proverb is related to structural metaphor. Metaphorically, when one receives everything he or she desires, it is difficult to appreciate everything because enjoyment is dependent on anticipations. However, it is all too easy to take things for granted. Rather, it is the appreciation of things that one has while he or she has them, such as the affection of one's family members, money, or safe places to reside. He/she misses these things merely because he/she no longer possesses them. **3. Results**

It has been discovered that there are many metaphorical expressions in food proverbs. It has been utilized several sorts of cognition-related metaphors, which can be structural metaphor, orientational metaphor, and ontological metaphor. Thus, ordinary language is used to provide a specific description of certain experiences, feelings, and ideas, as well as to generate a unique sense by grasping one thing in terms of another. Furthermore, mental analogies are used unconsciously. As a result, such metaphors found in food proverbs are significantly influenced by context, as well as people' physical and cultural experiences. Finally, it has been discovered that structural metaphor takes precedence over other categories. It scores (5) with the percentage of (50%) which comprises the highest degree among other types of conceptual metaphor. As for orientational metaphor, it occupies the second rank since it amounts (3) with the percentage of (30%) whereas ontological metaphor runs out only (2) with the percentage of (20%) which regards the least percentage among others. Consider the following figure.

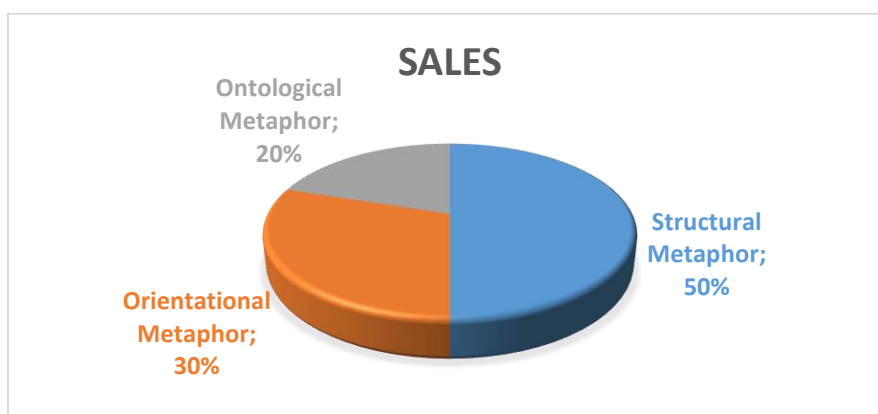


Figure (2) Frequencies and Percentages of Conceptual Metaphor in English Selected Food Proverbs

A Cognitive Semantic Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Selected English Food Proverbs

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Conclusion

The following points are concluded:

- 1. Cognition can be defined as mental fabrications in persons' minds. It refers to the many mental processes involved in thinking, remembering, perceiving, identifying, classifying, and so on.
- 2. The concept of conceptual metaphor relates to the comprehension of one set of concepts (the target domain) in terms of another (the source domain).
- 3. Different types of metaphors can be distinguished:
 - The presence of structural metaphors suggests that the source domain contains a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target notion.

1. • **Orientational metaphors are the metaphorical use of a word with their semantic concepts 'directionality' and 'specialization', where this type organizes metaphors of many concepts, one with the other, in the form of the concepts that indicate the place.**
2. • **Ontological metaphors are the metaphorical use of words that symbolize abstract and intangible things such as intellectual processes, feelings, and ideas, and view them solely as entities and concrete, in order to make them more palpable for the human mind.**
3. 3. Conceptual metaphors are used without any conscious knowledge. As a result, such metaphors found in food proverbs are significantly influenced by context, as well as people' physical and cultural experiences. The hypothesis of the current study is verified, i.e. the structural metaphor overrides other types.

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