

## **Metaphorical Perceptions of the Students in the Department of Translation and Interpretation in Relation to their English and French Language Instructors at Kafkas University**

Gencer Elkılıç<sup>1</sup>, Kadir Bayrakçı<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Kafkas University Faculty of Science and Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, Kars, Turkey*

<sup>2</sup>*Kafkas University Faculty of Science and Letters, Department of Translation and Interpretation, Kars, Turkey*

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**ABSTRACT:** *The aim of this study was to determine the type of metaphors created by the students about their English and French language instructors in the department of Translation and Interpretation at Kafkas University in Turkey and to categorize them under common headings. In order to collect data both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were utilized, by requesting the translation and interpretation students to fill in the forms containing prompts “English language instructors are like....., because they.....” and “French language instructors are like....., because they.....”. As a result of the data collected from 68 students, 60 valid metaphors were determined for English language instructors and 58 for French language instructors, and 7 conceptual categories were determined for both instructors. According to the findings, mostly used metaphors for English language instructors are friend (f=7), father (f=3), book (f=3), wise man (f=3), moon (f=3), f lower (f=3), author (f=3), robot (f=3), ant (f=3), and an egoist person (f=3), respectively. As for French language instructors, mostly used metaphors in this group are book(f=3), encyclopedia(f=3), bee(f=3), and an egoist person(f=3), respectively.*

**Keywords:** *English Language instructors, English Language instructors, metaphor, translation and interpretation students, conceptual category.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Metaphors have been the main focus of numerous researchers during the last three decades. The reason why they are so important is that they are one of the most important tools in depicting abstract notions with concrete objects. Aristotle, as the first thinker to elaborate a theory of metaphor, considered metaphorical language both a powerful means of persuasion and decorative linguistic tool adding no additional information to the discourse [1, p.74]. The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another [2, p.5].

On the other hand, it is maintained that metaphor is a comparison between two dissimilar notions where one notion is to be understood in terms of the other notion[3, p.313]. When producing metaphor, the creator draws upon his/her own experience, culture, and context to shape the implied comparison between the dissimilar entities. In this way, students are free to choose any metaphoric comparisons and can produce rich, creative, and unique images [4, p. 105]. Thus, metaphor offers new perceptions of reality, ultimately the means to communicate beyond the literalness of experience [5, p.27]. Similarly, it is asserted that metaphors exert powerful influences on processes of analyzing and planning in education [6, p.966] and thus, it is proposed that three hypotheses to account the power of metaphor: (1) that metaphor provides a compact way of representing chunks of information; (2) that metaphor enables us to talk about experiences which cannot be literally explained effectively; and (3) that imagery, metaphor provides a vivid and memorable account that satisfies both reason and the emotions [7, p.309].

What we teach and how we teach it are closely linked to metaphor and emphasize the need to understand it to comprehend our actions [8, p.235]. One of the most important aspects of a metaphor is the roles it creates for the self and others. Thus, if I am a shepherd, my students must be sheep. If I am a gardener, my students are plants [9, p.111]. Conversely, in another study it is maintained that teaching is creating metaphor functions as a superordinate metonym for the following linguistic manifestations: Teaching is like sculpting/composing music/carving wood; The teacher is like a sculptor; Learners are like flower buds/unexplored territory [10, p. 477].

There has been some research in Turkey and other countries in relation metaphors. For example, in a study on 49 university students in relation to what kind of metaphors they use for the term “student” and 35 metaphors were determined and they were categorized under four conceptual headings as, 1) animal (%37), 2) object (%29), 3) people (%26) and 4) action (%8) [11].

In a study on prospective teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning, 64 valid personal metaphors were determined and 10 main conceptual themes were identified: (1) the Sun, (2) sculptor, (3) parent, (4) compass, (5) lighthouse, (6) gardener, (7) candle, (8) tree/fruit tree, (9) painter, and (10) tour guide [12].

In a study carried out on 150 EFL Turkish learners in relation to their perceptions of English language course books and it was found out that most of the participants likened language course books to a planet, a foreign country, a secret garden, and space, which indicates the uncertainty and enigma experienced by the learners [13].

Another study on 2847 prospective teachers, investigating the metaphorical conceptualizations of the learners revealed that 98 valid metaphors were created and the metaphorical concepts were categorized under 12 conceptual themes [14]. In another study involving 169 teacher candidates at Kastamonu University, Faculty of Education, it was found out that teacher candidates created 53 metaphors about teacher and 62 metaphors about teaching profession [15].

In another study on 55 the students of Department of Fine Arts Education at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University it was determined that participants produced 74 metaphors for Traditional Turkish Art Music and out of these metaphors 7 conceptual categories were created [16]. In a study done on 120 Turkish university EFL instructors, 98 metaphors were determined in relation to the students and these were grouped in 5 conceptual categories [17].

On the other hand, in a study where the participants were supposed to write six weekly journals about the teaching and learning processes from each class, the metaphors collected were based on four categories: 1) social order 2) cultural transmission 3) learner-centered growth 4) social reform. The results show a variety of metaphors (teacher as manufacturer, conduit, nurturer, acceptor, entertainer, and learning partner) describing language teachers and how language teaching methods are related to these four philosophical viewpoints [18].

A study was conducted on 50 experienced teachers on their metaphorical conceptions of learning based reflections. The aim was to categorize the metaphors into three main dimensions of the learning space: behavioristic/empiricist, cognitive/constructive and situative/socio-historic perspective [6]. In another study collecting data from 142 U.S. students attending both four-year and two-year higher education institutions in relation to their effective/ineffective learning experiences, three categories were determined as Connection/Disconnection, Empowerment / Disempowerment, and Engagement/Disengagement. [4]. In a study on 40 EFL student teachers, 8 conceptual categories were formed in relation to teachers [19].

### **1.1. Problem**

How students perceive university instructors is important for their classroom interactions as it is also related to the methods teachers use in classrooms, yet, in Turkey there have been only limited number of studies on them.

### **1.2. Rationale**

The purpose of the study is to determine the metaphorical perceptions of Turkish translation and interpretation students in relation to their French and English instructors and to form categorizations accordingly. In the study, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What are the metaphors used by Turkish translation and interpretation students in relation to their English /French language instructors?
2. How many conceptual categories can be determined in accordance with the metaphors created by Turkish translation and interpretation students in relation to their English/French language instructors?

## **II. METHODS**

### **2.1 Research Design**

In the study, both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were utilized, by requesting the translation and interpretation students to fill in forms containing prompts "English language instructors are like....., because they....." and "French language instructors are like....., because they....."

### **2.2 Participants**

The participants in this study were 68 Turkish students, 22 male and 46 female, in the Department of Translation and Interpretation, Faculty of Science and Letters at Kafkas University, Turkey.

### **2.3 Instrument**

Forms containing prompts such as "English language instructors are like....., because they....." and "French language instructors are like....., because they....." were used as data collection instruments. The students were requested to fill in the forms in relation to the metaphors which best described their French and English instructors.

### **2.4 Procedure**

The data were collected during the first weeks of the 2016-2017 academic year. Sixty eight Translation and Interpretation students were distributed the forms eliciting information on metaphors describing their teachers and were requested to fill in them during the class hours. Yet, only 65 of them completed and gave in the forms properly.

### 2.5 Data Analysis

The metaphors determined were analyzed in four steps: 1) Coding and selecting, 2) Categorizing, 3) Reliability, 4) Using SPSS for qualitative data analysis.

Coding and selecting: the metaphors of the participants were transferred to an Excel program in line with alphabetical orders. Forms having improper descriptions were eliminated and the remaining 62 metaphors were accepted as valid.

Categorizing: 62 metaphors written by the participants were examined in accordance with subject matter, source, and the subject matter-source relationship. 2 metaphors for English instructors and 4 metaphors for French instructors were eliminated at this stage, as they could not be put into any conceptual category and, thus, 60 metaphors were accepted as valid for English Language instructors and 58 for French language instructors. Accordingly, seven different conceptual categories were determined.

Reliability: In order to ensure reliability, a consistency study was carried out. The researchers studied on the conceptual categorization and sorting out the data. One expert on the field was given the alphabetical list and the conceptual categorizations of the researchers and was requested to match the list and the categorization. Based on the reliability formula of Miles and Huberman [20], the reliability of the study was calculated ( $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{agreement}}{\text{agreement} + \text{disagreement}} * 100$ ). The expert put 3 metaphors for English instructors into a different category and 5 metaphors for French instructors from the researchers, so the reliability was calculated as 0,95 for English instructors and 0,92 for French instructors.

Using SPSS for qualitative data analysis: The data collected, metaphors, and conceptual categories were transferred to the SPSS 20 program and the frequencies and percentages of 60 metaphors for English instructors and 58 metaphors for French instructors were computed and given in tables.

## III. FINDINGS

As a result of the data collected from 68 students, 60 valid metaphors were determined for English language instructors and 58 for French language instructors, and 7 conceptual categories were determined for both instructors. According to the findings, mostly used metaphors for English language instructors are friend ( $f=7$ ), father ( $f=3$ ), book ( $f=3$ ), wise man ( $f=3$ ), moon ( $f=3$ ), flower ( $f=3$ ), author ( $f=3$ ), robot ( $f=3$ ), ant ( $f=3$ ), and an egoist person ( $f=3$ ), respectively.

As for French language instructors, mostly used metaphors in this group are book ( $f=3$ ), encyclopedia ( $f=3$ ), bee ( $f=3$ ), and an egoist person ( $f=3$ ), respectively.

As for the conceptual categories, they are as follows: 1) English/French language instructor as a significant other, 2) English/French language instructor a source of information or guide, 3) English/French language instructor as a plant, 4) English/French language instructor as somebody caring or shaping, 5) English/French language instructor as an animal, 6) English/French language instructor as somebody disliked, 7a) English language instructor as a monotonous object/person and 7b) French language instructor as constantly changing condition /unclear condition.

On the other hand, six conceptual categories were determined to be the same for both English/French language instructors however, one metaphor was given under a different conceptual category for English (7a) and French language instructors (7b).

### 3.1. English /French Language Instructor as a Significant Other

**Table.1.** English /French Language Instructor as a Significant Other

| English Instructor as a significant other |           |      | French Instructor as a significant other |           |      |
|---|-----------|------|--|-----------|------|
| Metaphor                                  | Frequency | %    | Metaphor                                 | Frequency | %    |
| Friend                                    | 7         | 50,0 | Parents                                  | 2         | 25,0 |
| Father                                    | 3         | 21,4 | Family Member                            | 2         | 25,0 |
| A beloved person                          | 2         | 14,3 | Father                                   | 2         | 25,0 |
| Parents                                   | 2         | 14,3 | Friend                                   | 2         | 14,3 |
| Total                                     | 14        | 100  | Total                                    | 8         | 100  |

As seen in **Table 1**, there are 4 metaphors for English language instructors and 4 for French Language instructors under “English /French Language Instructor as a Significant Other” category. The most common metaphor under this category are ”friend” ( $f=7$ , 50%) and “father” ( $f=3$ , 21,4%).

Examples of metaphor definitions are as follows:

An English language instructor is like a friend because he/she is with us when we need him/her.

English language instructors are like our parents. They educate and teach us like their children.

A French language instructor is like our family. He/she always supports us.

### 3.2. English /French Language Instructor as a Source of Information or Guide

**Table 2.** English /French Language Instructor as a Source of Information or Guide

| English Instructor as a source of information or guide |           |      | French Instructor as a source of information or guide |           |      |
|--|-----------|------|---|-----------|------|
| Metaphor   | Frequency | %    | Metaphor  | Frequency | %    |
| Book   | 3         | 17,6 | Book  | 3         | 16,6 |
| Wiseman  | 3         | 17,6 | Encyclopedia  | 3         | 16,6 |
| Moon   | 3         | 17,6 | Light   | 2         | 11,1 |
| Navigator  | 2         | 11,8 | Moon  | 2         | 11,1 |
| Guide  | 2         | 11,8 | Computer  | 2         | 11,1 |
| Light  | 2         | 11,8 | Lighthouse  | 2         | 11,1 |
| Director   | 2         | 11,8 | Sun   | 2         | 11,1 |
|  |           |      | Scientist   | 1         | 05,6 |
|  |           |      | Dictionary  | 1         | 05,6 |
| Total  | 17        | 100  | Total   | 18        | 100  |

In **Table 2** we can understand that, there are 7 metaphors for English language instructors and 9 for French Language instructors under “English /French Language Instructor as a Source of Information or Guide” category. The most common metaphors for English Language instructors under this category are: ”book” (f=3, 17,6%) “wise man” (f=3, 17,6%), and “moon” (f=3, 17,6%). As for French language instructors: “book” (f=3, 16,6%) and encyclopedia (f=3,16,6%).

Examples of metaphor definitions are as follows:

An English language instructor is like a book because he/she is full of information.

A French language instructor is like a book, because he/she is equipped with information.

A French language instructor is like an encyclopedia, because he/she is equipped with information from A to Z.

A French language instructor is like the sun, because he/she enlightens us.

### 3.3. English /French Language Instructor as a Plant

**Table 3.** English /French Language Instructor as a Plant

| English Instructor as a plant |           |      | French Instructor as a plant |           |      |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------|------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Metaphor                      | Frequency | %    | Metaphor                     | Frequency | %    |
| Flower                        | 3         | 42,8 | Hot pepper                   | 2         | 25,0 |
| Clover                        | 2         | 28,6 | Stinging nettle              | 2         | 25,0 |
| Tree                          | 2         | 28,6 | Huge Plane tree              | 2         | 25,0 |
|                               |           |      | An unpleasent flower         | 1         | 12,5 |
|                               |           |      | Oasis                        | 1         | 12,5 |
| Total                         | 7         | 100  | Total                        | 8         | 100  |

It is obvious from **Table 3** that there are 3 metaphors for English Language instructors under “English /French Language Instructor as a Plant” category and 5 for French language instructors. The most common metaphors for English language instructors under this category are as follows: ”flower” (f=3, 42,8%) “tree”(f=2, 28,6%), and clover (f=2, 28,6%), and for French Language instructors: “hot pepper” (f=2, 25,0%), “stinging nettle”, and “huge plane tree”, respectively.

Examples of metaphor definitions are as follows:

An English language instructor is like a flower because as students we are like bees and we need flowers.

An English language instructor is like a flower because he/she is delicate.

A French language instructor is like a hot pepper because he/she hurts us, but we cannot live without him/her.

### 3.4. English /French Language Instructor as Somebody Caring or Shaping

**Table 4.** English /French Instructor as Somebody Caring or Shaping

| English Instructor as Caring or shaping |           |      | French Instructor as Caring or shaping |           |      |
|---|-----------|------|--|-----------|------|
| Metaphor                                | Frequency | %    | Metaphor                               | Frequency | %    |
| Author                                  | 3         | 42,8 | Gardener                               | 2         | 33,3 |
| Gardener                                | 2         | 28,6 | Farmer                                 | 2         | 33,3 |
| Cook                                    | 2         | 28,6 | Baker                                  | 2         | 33,3 |
| Total                                   | 7         | 100  | Total                                  | 6         | 100  |

In **Table 4** it is obvious that there are 3 metaphors for English Language instructors under “English /French Language Instructor as Somebody Caring or Shaping” category and 3 for French language instructors. The most common metaphors for English language instructors under this category are as follows:”author” (f=3, 42,8%) “gardener”(f=2, 28,6%), and “cook” (f=2, 28,6%), and for French Language instructors: “gardener” (f=2, 33,3%), “farmer” (f=2, 33,3%), and “baker” (f=2, 33,3%), respectively.

Examples of metaphor are as follows:

An English language instructor is like an author. He/she transmits us his/her thoughts during the class time.

An English language instructor is like gardener. As the gardener looks after the garden, an English language instructor helps us in every respect.

A French language instructor is like a farmer. Because as a farmer sows seeds and looks after them to get yield, a French language instructor, should be patient to see his/her students' improving.

A French language instructor is like a baker. Because he/she always gives us shape.

### 3.5. French Language Instructor as Constantly Changing Condition /Unclear Condition

**Table 5.** French Language Instructor as Constantly Changing Condition /Unclear Condition

| Metaphor                          | Frequency | %    |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------|
| The USA                           | 2         | 25   |
| Changing weather                  | 2         | 25   |
| Unstable condition                | 2         | 25   |
| A thick Wall in the rich's garden | 1         | 12,5 |
| A foggy mountain                  | 1         | 12,5 |
| Total                             | 8         | 100  |

In **Table 5** it is quite clear that there are 5 metaphors for French Language instructors under “French Language Instructor as Constantly Changing Condition /Unclear Condition” category and the most common metaphors are as follows: ”The USA” (f=2, 25,0%) “changing weather”( f=2, 25,0%), and “unstable condition” ( f=2, 25,0%).

A French language instructor is like the USA. He/she promises, but never does.

A French language instructor is like changing weather. He/she is sometimes friendly, sometimes not.

### 3.6. English Language Instructor as Monotonous Object/Person

**Table 6.**English Language Instructor as Monotonous Object/Person

| Metaphor | Frequency | %   |
|----------|-----------|-----|
| Robot    | 3         | 60  |
| Drum     | 2         | 40  |
| Total    | 5         | 100 |

In **Table 6** it is quite clear that there are 2 metaphors for English Language instructors under “English Language Instructor as Monotonous Object/Person” category and the most common metaphors are as follows: ”robot” (f=3, 60,0%) and “drum”( f=2, 40,0%).

An English language instructor is like a robot because he/she teaches English monotonously.

An English language instructor is like a robot because he/she teaches and leaves the class.

An English language instructor is like a drum because he/she makes too much noise.

### 3.7. English /French Language Instructor as an Animal

**Table 7.** English /French Language Instructor as an Animal

| English Instructor as an Animal |           |     | French Instructor as an Animal |           |     |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----|--------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| Metaphor                        | Frequency | %   | Metaphor                       | Frequency | %   |
| Ant                             | 3         | 60  | Bee                            | 3         | 60  |
| Migratory Bird                  | 2         | 40  | Lion                           | 2         | 40  |
| Total                           | 5         | 100 | Total                          | 5         | 100 |

**Table 7** reveals that there are 2 metaphors for English Language instructors under “English /French Language Instructor as an Animal” category and 2 for French language instructors. The most common metaphors for English language instructors are ”ant” (f=3, 60,%) and “migratory bird”(f=2, 40,0%), and for French Language instructors: “bee” (f=3, 60,%) and “lion” (f=2, 40,0%).

An English language instructor is like an ant. He/she collaborates with his/her colleagues.

An English language instructor is like a migratory bird because he/she should teach language travelling from one class to another one.

A French language instructor is like a bee because he/she works very hard to help his/her students.

A French language instructor is like a lion because he/she makes students nervous and stressed.

**3.8. Table. English /French Language Instructor as Somebody Disliked**

**Table 8.** English /French Language Instructor as Somebody Disliked

| English Instructor as somebody disliked |           | French Instructor as somebody disliked |                  |           |     |
|---|-----------|--|------------------|-----------|-----|
| Metaphor                                | Frequency | %                                      | Metaphor         | Frequency | %   |
| An egoist person                        | 3         | 60                                     | An egoist person | 3         | 60  |
| A glitzy person                         | 2         | 40                                     | A glitzy person  | 2         | 40  |
| Total                                   | 5         | 100                                    | Total            | 5         | 100 |

**Table 8** indicates that there are 2 metaphors for English Language instructors under “English /French Language Instructor as Somebody Disliked” category and 2 for French language instructors. The most common metaphors for English language instructors are ”an egoist person” (f=3, 60,%) and “a glitzy person”(f=2, 40,0%), and for French Language instructors: an egoist person” (f=3, 60,%) and “a glitzy person”(f=2, 40,0%).

An English language instructor is like an egoist person. He/she always think about himself/herself.

French language instructor is like an egoist person. Because he/she thinks that he/she is superior to students.

French language instructor is like glitzy person. Because he/she only struggles for showing off.

**IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

**Research Question 1:** What are the metaphors used by Turkish translation and interpretation students in relation to their English /French language instructors?

In a study on 600 primary school students, 203 teachers and 51 administrators, it was found out that the metaphor of a teacher a friend, a guide and a person enlightening his environment has been accepted mostly by all the students and participants, but completely agreed by teachers and administrators. In the same study , the metaphor of a teacher as a source of knowledge, a distributor and a mother/a father is completely agreed by students, teachers and all the participants, but mostly agreed by administrators [21 ].

Karadağ and Gültekin], in their study on 567 elementary school students determined 83 valid metaphors and they categorized them under 6 conceptual headings[12].

In our study, 60 valid metaphors were determined for English language instructors and 58 for French language instructors and according to the findings, mostly used metaphors for English language instructors are friend v(f=7), father (f=3), book (f=3), wise man (f=3), moon (f=3),flower (f=3), author (f=3), robot (f=3), ant (f=3), and an egoist person (f=3), respectively. And for French language instructors, mostly used metaphors in are book(f=3), encyclopedia (f=3), bee(f=3), and an egoist person(f=3), respectively.

**Research Question 2:** How many conceptual categories can be determined in accordance with the metaphors created by Turkish translation and interpretation students in relation to their English /French language instructors?

Saban, Koçbeker and Saban analyzed 64 valid metaphors and identified 10 conceptual themes [22].

In their study, Saban, Koçbeker and Saban examined metaphors produced by 1222 education students in a Turkish university and 111 valid metaphors were identified in relation to the concept of “teacher”. Conceptual categories were as follows: (1) the Sun, (2) sculptor, (3) parent, (4) compass, (5) lighthouse, (6) gardener, (7) candle, (8)tree/fruit tree, (9) painter, and (10) tour guide[23].

Another study on 2847 prospective teachers, investigating the metaphorical conceptualizations of the learner, 98 valid metaphors were determined and the metaphorical concepts were categorized under 12 conceptual themes [14 ].

As for our study , seven conceptual categories have been determined as follows: 1) English/French language instructor as a significant other, 2) English/French language instructor a source of information or guide , 3) English/French language instructor as a plant,4) English/French language instructor as somebody caring or shaping, 5) English/French language instructor as an animal, 6) English/French language instructor as somebody disliked, 7a) English language instructor as a monotonous object/person and 7b) French language instructor as constantly changing condition /unclear condition.

On the other hand, six conceptual categories were determined to be the same for both English/French language instructors however, one metaphor was given under a different conceptual category for English (7a) and French language instructors (7b).

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