

ANALYSIS OF THE INTERFACE BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AND CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Abstract: *The article seeks to explore the interface between language competence requirements as set by EMT and analyzed by PACTE and conceptual metaphor studies. The research strives to provide an assessment of an experiment conducted with three groups of translators – two non-professional ones, e.g. students of English philology in their 4th year with some translation practice and one group comprised of professional translators and university lecturers. Systematic knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is privy to only one of the groups of non-professional translators. The experiment includes a translation of an article from the Economist by all groups. A number of metaphoric units (words and phrases) have been identified in the article on the basis of MIP procedures. The objective of the research is to gauge the importance of metaphoric competence for performing a successful translation. The results obtained from the current study, though not conclusive show that metaphoric competence plays a significant role in translators' competencies. Metaphoric awareness may not be directly linked with Conceptual Metaphor Theory, but it proves vital to the quality of translation.*

Keywords: *metaphor translation, metaphorical competence, translation competence*

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Introduction

The phenomenon of metaphor

In recent times there have been proposed several major theories explaining metaphor intricacies. Drawing upon Aristotle's treatment of the term and following Richards' ideas (Richards, 1981) of metaphoric structure, modern scholars have tried to explain metaphor by putting forward the substitution theory, the comparison theory, the interaction theory, the conceptual metaphor theory, etc. There are two distinct views on which most theories on metaphor have been developed. On the one hand, there is the traditional view in which metaphor functions only at the level of language. The second view, advanced over the last thirty years or so, holds that metaphor is a conceptual device relating to thought and has an elaborate relationship with language.

The cognitive perspective

To understand the cognitive perspective, we should first establish its place in the realm of language and thought. The radical break from the purely linguistic understanding of metaphor is associated with the appearance of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, as well as with the more discursive and culturally oriented translation theories proposed over the last thirty years. Ever since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) stormed the linguistic and philosophical community with their book *Metaphors We Live By*, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has undergone several phases, but in essence, its main tenets have not changed. According to CMT, metaphor is a cognitive device that allows us to understand and experience a relatively abstract subject matter in terms of a more concrete one.

Such a bold view has triggered much controversy and opposition. Perhaps the main issue of criticism which still seems to be relevant is as Cuccio (2018) expresses it, whether conceptual metaphors are part of individual people's conceptual apparatuses and whether they are always used as online processing mechanisms.

As for the dichotomy of "dead" or "alive" metaphors, Müller (2008) argues, that metaphors operate on the level of language use and not on the one of language system. Accordingly, metaphoricity is a dynamic part of a cognitive activation process in an individual person at a given moment in time. Her claims are substantiated by empirical studies of multimodal metaphors that unite language, gestures, pictures, etc.

With a view to metaphor typology, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) first proposed three types of metaphor – orientational, ontological and structural. Orientational metaphors are those in which concepts are spatially related to each other, as in

“HAPPY IS UP”/“SAD IS DOWN” (e.g., “I’m feeling up”). This latter type of metaphor is grounded in our physical experience. Structural metaphors are those in which one concept is expressed in terms of a different structured, sharply defined concept, as is the case with the ‘ARGUMENT IS WAR’ mapping. Later Lakoff and Turner (1989) added image metaphors and redefined the ontological ones in terms of a folk model about nature called the Great Chain of Being, which specifies physical and behavioural attributes of human beings, animals, plants, natural objects, and artifacts. Examples of such metaphors are ‘PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS’ (e.g., “Achilles is a lion”), and ‘PEOPLE ARE PLANTS’ (e.g., “She is a tender rose”). Image metaphors map images onto images, which means that they do not map concepts into concepts, but only the structure and visual attributes (e.g., colour, shape, texture) of a conceptual domain onto the structure and visual attributes of another domain.

Translatability of metaphor: The cognitive stance

There are several major models which study the process of metaphor translation from a cognitive perspective. These are Mandelblit’s (1995), Schäffner’s (2004), Kövecses’ (2005) and Maalej’s (2008).

Mandelblit (1995) proposed the Cognitive Translation Hypothesis, positing that metaphoric expressions take more time and are more difficult to translate if they exploit a different cognitive domain than the target language equivalent expressions because the search for another conceptual mapping (another cognitive domain) causes delay, uncertainty and difficulty in the translation of different domain metaphors. On this basis, Mandelblit puts forward two schemes for the translation of metaphors:

1. Similar mapping conditions (SMC will obtain if both languages use the same domain)
2. Different mapping conditions (DMC will obtain if the two languages use different domains to express the topic of communication) (Mandelblit, 1995, p. 485).

If the first option occurs, Mandelblit believes that a translator should simply choose an equivalent target metaphor, but in the second case, the translator should render the ST¹ metaphor by choosing a TL simile, or by a paraphrase, a footnote, an explanation or omission (Mandelblit, 1995). Kövecses (2005) addresses the ways conceptual metaphors are expressed linguistically in different languages and by comparing the linguistic expression of a particular conceptual metaphor in two languages, different kinds of patterns emerge:

1. Metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexical realization

1. ST – source text; SL – source language; TL – target language; TT – target text; STR - Structural metaphor; ORI – Orientational metaphor; ONT – Ontological metaphor.

2. Metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexical realisation
3. Metaphors of different mapping conditions but similar lexical realisation
4. Metaphors of different mapping conditions and different lexical realisation

Maalej's (2008) view on mapping conditions is very similar to Kövecses', although the former follows Hiraga (1991), who first came with the four schemes. Maalej argues that there is more to translation "than simply pairing or mapping parameters from an SL to a TL" and that metaphor translation is knowledge-based, involving culture-specific repacking or re-expression. Schaffner identifies five cases of translation procedures (Schaffner, 2004, p. 1267):

1. A conceptual metaphor is identical in ST and TT at the macro level without each individual manifestation having been accounted for at the micro-level.
2. Structural components of the base conceptual schema in the ST are replaced in the TT by expressions that make entailments explicit.
3. A metaphor is more elaborate in the TT.
4. ST and TT employ different metaphoric expressions which can be combined under a more abstract conceptual metaphor.
5. The expression in the TT reflects a different aspect of the conceptual metaphor.

As can be seen from above only the second and the third points of Schaffner's cases are different from Kövecses's (2005) scheme, as the former account for loss of metaphor (the second point) and metaphor complexity (the third point), while her other proposed cases are similar to Kövecses's (2005). No matter how many schemes are employed it is obvious that all of them are firmly dependent on two aspects of metaphors; namely, mapping conditions and lexical realization.

Translation Competence

Until the 1990s, theorists have largely viewed the translation of metaphor as a purely linguistic phenomenon, neglecting the role of the translator and their competence. Nevertheless, the latter is at the very heart of applying the principle of dynamic equivalence, as it reflects the pragmatic aspect of the latter in a way that directly corresponds to the quality of a translated text. As PACTE (2017) and Albir et al. (2020) suggested, it is predominantly about "expert knowledge" being at the core of successful translation activity. The division of this knowledge type, when analyzing its working mechanisms into two major components e.g., "declarative" and "procedural" knowledge, and the proposed model clearly delineates the boundaries of translation competence and offers a methodology for achieving the latter. What, perhaps, is not taken into account in PACTE's model is 'metaphoric' competence, the knowledge of which, as Andersen (2000) points out, lies first in the understanding of linguistic metaphors and

secondly in translating them “[a]ccording to a macro-strategy”. Andersen (ibid.) refers to metaphoric competence as “a whole range of competencies including translation competence with regard to metaphors”. This may imply that such a kind of competence is a different type of subcompetence in the PACTE’s model (2000, 2003, 2005, 2017; Beeby et al., 2009; Albir et al., 2020) as it does not exactly fit any of the subcompetences proposed by the group, but rather lies at the cross-section of them all.

Aims of the study

We are aiming to explore the interface between language competence requirements as set by The European Master’s in Translation (EMT, 2017) and analyzed by PACTE (2000, 2003, 2005, 2017; Beeby et al., 2009; Albir et al., 2020) and conceptual metaphor studies. Our main goal, based on the theoretical mechanism we have devised, is to prove or disprove the practical importance CMT may have on the translation process and translation training and, if it is possible, to find any relation between the quality of translation and knowledge of conceptual metaphor, that may be an indicator for a possible shift in translation teaching.

Methodology

Setup of the study

The study is based on an experiment, involving three groups of respondents – a control group, an experimental group, and a third one serving as tertium comparationis. Each group consisted of 14 respondents. The efficacy of this research design has been proven by a similar study involving two groups of professional and non-professional translators and a group of students carried out by Jensen (2005, pp. 183-209).

We gave all the groups an article, entitled “The APEC Summit and the Pacific Rim” from *The Economist* to translate at home, with a time limit of 90 minutes for all participants with kinds of reference tools of their choosing. As this assignment was not grade-bound, we relied on the students’ integrity and honesty in adhering to the required task conditions. The first group, which we dubbed for convenience “non-competent (group)” (NCG), included students of English philology in their fourth and final year at university and were not acquainted with CMT. The second group, dubbed “competent (group)” (CG), also consisted of students of English philology in their fourth year but acquainted with CMT in a special elective course on cognitive linguistics. The third group, which served as both a control group and as tertium comparationis, was dubbed “professionals” or “PROs”, and comprised professional translators and lecturers at the Department of English Philology, all of whom had some knowledge of

CMT. The professional translators, all of them well-established in the field of written translation, were used as a yardstick of quality, with the major caveat that we did not ascribe to their translations the mark of perfection. CMT was not gauged as a factor with the PROs, as knowledge of the theory in Bulgaria spread over the last ten years and was not part of the latter graduate curriculum. The presence of the PROs in the study is of crucial importance for another reason, as they stand for a certain representative norm of the translation community in the country and thus can be used to gauge professionalism as far as the students' groups are concerned.

Metaphor identification

We have identified 45 conceptual metaphors – both conventional and deliberate, the latter in the sense of Steen's understanding as “[i]nviting or forcing language users to attend to both source and target domain to adopt a different perspective as they are processing the sentences of the text.” (Steen, 2010, p. 93). We used the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (Group, 2007) to find and identify metaphors. In simple terms, we looked up each metaphor candidate in several dictionaries for discrepancies between the primary meaning of the word and the figurative use of the same item in the text, accounting for cotext and context (Kövecses, 2015, 2020).

We gathered and kept in our final list a few items that were arguably cases of metonymy rather than metaphor. It is sometimes impossible to decide whether or not a particular item should confidently be categorized as a metaphor (Cameron, 1999), and the distinction between metaphor and metonymy has been found to be particularly blurred (Barnden, 2010). However, our qualitative analysis of the students' responses at times allowed us to tell whether they were interpreting expressions as metaphor or metonymy.

Analysis of metaphor translation

To analyze the translations of the identified metaphors we used as the first approximation of Kövecses' (2005) division of metaphor translation into four options, but we changed it following our theoretical frame, elaborating on lexical expression. So, we have laid out four criteria, viz.

1. Same mapping condition and same lexical representation
2. Same mapping condition but different lexical representation
3. Different mapping conditions in SL and TL
4. Loss of metaphor in TL

We are going to elaborate on the first three criteria in the Results and Discussion section in more detail, as they do not necessitate any clarification here. As for

the loss of metaphor (LM) criteria, we have to lay out the subcriteria we used in their investigation. We also present a brief analysis of metaphor typology, which requires a separate study to account for all the complexities of each excerpted item, including image schema, blend structure, embodiment, etc.

Although most identified metaphors are compound ones and a great part of the idiomatic phrases are blends, we adhere to the division of metaphors into ontological, orientational and structural ones (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 25-33), as it proved more convenient for the translation analysis. We have identified them based on the most powerful conceptual metaphor underlying each case, e.g. First step ('LIFE IS A JOURNEY'); Diffusing the tensions ('CONCENTRATION IS FORCE'); the rise of China and America's relative decline ('UP IS MORE').

Presenting the data

We have tried to come up with a unified approach in presenting the data in the Results part, however, that proved enormously challenging as the different criteria necessitate different approaches. Nevertheless, we have elaborated on some all-embracing parameters as "most used", and "least used" procedures. We have also shown a breakdown of the percentage of the results for each criterion. Each one of the latter has its unique characteristics and they have duly been deliberated on.

We have provided some explanation for the various parameters of the study (e.g. metaphor typology) in the Discussion section, which is separated for convenience. We have also used italics for the excerpted words and phrases and abbreviations for the types of metaphors, which are clarified in a footnote.

Results

The choice of mapping condition in translation

We concur with Kövecses's view (2005) that the choice of mapping conditions depends on the diversity of cultural conceptualisation of identical objects or worlds in both communities whose languages are involved in translation.

The use of same or different mapping conditions is contingent on the distance that separates the cultural background of the source text and target audience in terms of time and place, the entrenched linguistic expressions in the language and the subjective choice of the translator. Therefore, the group of professional translators serves to measure the normal, the most adequate rendition of the metaphor in the target language, considering the cultural and linguistic distance between the two languages.

Same mapping condition, similar wording (SMCSW)**Table 1.** *Representation of the use of Same Mapping Condition Similar Wording by the three groups*

	NCG	CG	PROs	Total Mean for all
SMC				
Similar wording	283 (46.9%)	248 (41%)	218 (36.1%)	749 (42.55%)

Of the 45 analyzed metaphors and their translations, 36.1% of the professionals have translated the metaphors using SMC, compared to 46.9% of the translators without metaphoric competence and 41% of the translators with metaphoric competence.

As can be seen from the table, the percentage associated with SMC accounts for almost half of the cases for the NCG, while for the PROs it is one-third. This may be due to the fact that the PROs and the CG are more aware of cultural differences and achieve equivalence by changing mapping conditions. Professional translators seem less inclined to pick the easiest choice and preserve the same mapping, probably due to their greater cultural knowledge. We may conclude that students with metaphoric competence are less prone to preserve the mapping than students without metaphoric competence. Literal translation rarely yields the same effect, though due to similarities in worldviews, close to one-third of all metaphors are translated not only with similar mapping but with the same wording, as well. It is illuminating to analyze those metaphors, translated predominantly by applying SMCSW by all groups and the opposite type as well, lacking in such a translation approach.

Metaphors rendered exclusively by SMCSW:

1. Similar conceptualisation in the target language – universal knowledge. In these cases, we observe root conceptual metaphors with a powerful experiential basis. These are universal conceptual metaphors that are expressed through the same wording in most languages. Any deviation of the translation from the same wording is unreasonable.

- (1) *Bridge over troubled water* (LIFE IS A JOURNEY)
- (2) *Influential actors in world trade* (LIFE IS A PLAY)
- (3) *Rise of China and A's relative decline* (UP IS MORE)
- (4) *Balance of power* (POWER IS WEIGHT)
- (5) *Cradle of so many ... hopes* (IDEAS ARE PEOPLE)
- (6) *First step* (LIFE IS A JOURNEY)

2. Similar expression in the target language (language match) – co-text explicated:

- (1) *His body open towards* (CAMERAS ARE WEAPONS)
- (2) *All your dreams are on their way* (TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT)
- (3) *Signalled* (INFORMATION IS A SIGN)

A vertical analysis of the cases in which the different groups prefer the use of SMCSW shows the following:

1. The NCG group has chosen SMCSW in more cases than the other two groups in the expressions such as: *diffusing the tensions, undermining the communist party, drove Myanmar towards the West, at its peril, cradle of so many hopes.*
2. The CG group chose SMCSW in more cases than the other two groups in the following cases: *the smallest details of summit choreography, signalled, torpor, in league with, America's lake or China's, satellites of America, it fed Chinese paranoia, own clubs.*
3. The group of PROs has chosen SMCSW in more cases than the other two groups in the following example: *summit, overtake, uphold the security of, contain it, foment, all your dreams are on their way.*
4. Certain translations of metaphors have been almost unanimous: *the first step, the balance of power.* This can be accounted for by the fact that the words *steps* and *balance* exist in the Bulgarian language and they are activated immediately so the translators see no reason in substituting them for a synonym, different wording, or, let alone, different mapping.

Metaphors with the least frequent application of SMCSW:

1. Conceptual difference plus gloss: This is necessary in cases when, due to terminology, domain-related polysemy, or merely cultural or linguistic differences between the languages:
 - (1) Pacific rim
 - (2) High-handedness
 - (3) Pivoting
2. Culture-specific:
 - (1) Great power jockeying
3. Language inadequacy – cultural mismatch:
 - (1) *As if paying tribute*: the corresponding same mapping has the implication of “paying one’s dues” and should therefore be avoided at all costs
 - (2) *On the face of it*: “face” is conceptualised differently in the TL culture which requires loss of metaphor rather than SMC

(3) *China's armed forces would be no match for America's*- are not equal to in the TL is meant on a positive scale – are far beyond – quite the opposite of the meaning this phrase has in English.

(4) *Entrench*

The second-easiest choice when translating metaphoric expressions is SMCDW. These cases are commented on in greater detail in the section on SMCDW below.

As for the cases with great differences between the groups, we present Table 2.

Table 2. *Cases of translation using SMCSW by groups*

Partici- pants	Examples translated 100% with SMCSW (not counting the mistakes)	Examples translated 0% with SMCSW (not count- ing the mistakes)
All groups	<p><i>Bridge over troubled water</i> – STR¹</p> <p><i>His body <u>open</u> towards</i> – STR</p> <p><i>Signalled</i> – STR</p> <p><i>First step</i> – STR</p> <p><i>rise of China and A's relative decline</i> – ORI</p> <p><i>I'm sailing right behind – in a gunboat</i> – STR</p> <p><i>Balance of power</i> – ORI</p> <p><i>Undermine the communist party</i> – STR</p> <p><i>It fed Chinese paranoia</i> – ONT</p> <p><i>at its peril</i> – STR</p> <p><i>All your dreams are on their way</i> – STR</p> <p><i>Cradle of so many ... hopes</i> – STR</p> <p>The majority of conceptual metaphors that yield themselves to SMCSW translation are structural</p>	<p><i>Pacific Rim</i> – ONT</p> <p><i>As if paying tribute</i> – ONT</p> <p><i>On the face of it</i> – ONT</p> <p><i>No match for America's</i> – ONT</p> <p><i>High-handedness</i> – ORI</p> <p><i>Pivoting</i> – STR</p> <p><i>Great power jockeying</i> – STR</p> <p>Ontological metaphors are least frequently translated with SMCSW</p>
NCG	<p><i>Bridge over troubled water</i></p> <p><i>His body open towards summit choreography</i></p> <p><i>First step</i></p> <p><i>rise of China and A's relative decline</i></p> <p><i>I'm sailing right behind – in a gunboat</i></p> <p><i>Balance of power</i></p> <p><i>Undermine the communist party</i></p> <p><i>Entrench</i></p>	<p><i>Trumps everything</i></p> <p><i>Aligned</i></p>

Partici- pants	Examples translated 100% with SMCSW (not counting the mistakes)	Examples translated 0% with SMCSW (not count- ing the mistakes)
CG	<i>Summit choreography</i> <i>I'm sailing right behind – in a gunboat</i> <i>Meeting of minds</i> <i>Fed Chinese paranoia</i> <i>Entrench</i>	<i>Contain it</i> <i>Foot-dragging</i> <i>Absorb</i>
PROs		Foot-dragging absorb

Same mapping condition, different wording (SMCDW)

Table 3. Representation of the use of the Same Mapping Condition in Different Wording by the three groups

	NCG	CG	PROs	Total Mean for all
SMCDW	82 (13.6%)	84 (14.1%)	103 (17.1%)	270 (15.3%)

Finding the appropriate lexical choice in the target language requires deep linguistic mastery, knowledge and experience and is definitely more difficult than just using similar words. That is why, only in three cases this option prevails, while using SMCSW as the option of choice abounds in twelve cases. It is interesting to pinpoint the cases where the professional translators used different wording, as that shows their greater experience and skills. In several cases, the professionals opted for SMCDW, while the other two groups did not:

- (1) *The smallest details of summit choreography* – STR
- (2) *Diffusing the tensions* – STR
- (3) *I'm sailing right behind – in a gunboat* – STR
- (4) *Influential actors in world trade* – STR
- (5) *Seething with rivalry* – STR
- (6) *Contain it* – ONT

What is illuminating is that almost all of these metaphors are structural. Most of them constitute universal knowledge and have their Bulgarian equivalent translations. They belong to the same domain but are best translated having in mind the entrenched target language expression. Obviously, the professionals' greater experience, mother tongue mastery and universal knowledge are crucial in their rendering.

As far as this criterion is concerned both groups of students fared equally, with a very slight prevalence of the CG (as seen from Table 3). Using different wording for *torpor* was the preferred choice for the “non-competent” group of students, while *overtake* and *in league with* were rendered in this way mostly by the CG. Both groups chose SMCDW as their preferred choice for *head-on war*, *foment* and *foot-dragging* – while the PROs translated these with a loss of metaphor. Even in English, these metaphoric expressions are not common, while other more common expressions exist to convey the same meaning and are usually used in everyday language. Therefore, the loss of metaphor is a form of generalization; substitution of a more commonly used expression for a fancier one, which professional translators prefer to make the text more straightforward. *Influential actors* – on the other hand, was translated by using SMCDW mostly by the PROs and the CG.

Concerning the three above-mentioned options where all respondents used SMCDW as their first choice, these metaphors are:

- (1) *As if paying tribute* – ONT
- (2) *On the face of it* – ONT
- (3) *Pivoting* – STR

The first two of these items have exactly what Al-Hasnawi (2007) has in mind – these metaphors are conceptualized in the same domain in both English and Bulgarian, but the well-entrenched language expression is different in either language. *Pivoting* in its use as a verb has a domain matrix which has no exact match in Bulgarian, which is why, although it is rendered preserving the mapping (TURNING TO IS THINKING ALIKE is a conceptual metaphor common to both cultures), the lexical expression in Bulgarian has to be done differently.

There are eight cases of all 45 identified metaphors where none of the groups used SMCDW at all. In almost all cases such as these, the respondents used similar wording, as the metaphoric conceptualizations are very similar to their Bulgarian equivalents.

- (1) *Pacific rim* – ONT
- (2) *His body open towards* – STR
- (3) *First step* – STR
- (4) *rise of China and A's relative decline* – ORI
- (5) *China's armed forces would be no match for America's* – ORI
- (6) *At arm's length* – ONT
- (7) *Undermine the communist party* – STR
- (8) *Entrench* – ORI

As can be seen, no specific type of conceptual metaphor stands out. In general, the same mapping is often manifested through a variety of ways, yet the mappings do fit a single overarching category. The same mapping is due to cultural universality, but though it may be the same, it is often manifested through different wording in the target language, which obviously the PROs are more sensitive to, being more experienced. Greater competence is evinced in the ability to master the initial urge to translate literally, to be more proficient in the recipient language collocability and co-text adequacy, and thus more sensitive to the expressions entrenched in the TL.

Different mapping condition (DMC)

Table 4. Representation of the use of Different Mapping Condition (DMC) by the three groups

	<i>NCG</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>PROs</i>	<i>Total mean for all</i>
DMC	49 (8.1%)	61 (10.1%)	87 (14.4%)	197 (11.2%)

As conceptual differences between languages certainly exist, they require different mappings. Translating by changing the domain is probably the most challenging one and demands the greatest cultural awareness. Every metaphor emphasizes some features of similarity between the source domain and the target domain and hides others. Therefore, DMC may only be applied when the language and culture override the loss incurred when changing the mapping/domain. From this point of view, it is very obvious that the group of professional translators, being more sensitive than the other two groups to differences in the conceptual domains between the two cultures, thus having greater “language and culture-specific knowledge”, will use different mapping conditions the most. Different mapping is a manifestation of greater cultural and linguistic mastery, which is confirmed by our results.

Table 5. *Use of DMC by different criteria*

DMC – used the most	DMC – used extensively by all groups	DMS – used by one group only	DMC – least or no use
<i>Entrench</i> – ORI	<i>The rivalry between China and America trumps everything</i> – ONT <i>Foot-dragging</i> – STR <i>Great power jockeying</i> – STR	<i>Pacific Rim</i> ONT – PROs	<i>summit</i> ORI
		<i>Bridge over troubled water</i> STR – CG	<i>First step</i> STR
		<i>Signalled</i> STR – PROs	<i>meeting of minds</i> ONT
		<i>torpor</i> STR – CG	<i>A head-on war</i> ONT
		<i>diffusing the tensions</i> STR – PROs	<i>To... uphold the security of</i> ONT
		<i>rise of China and A's relative decline</i> ORI – PROs	<i>Influential actors in world trade</i> STR
		<i>I'm sailing right behind – in a gunboat</i> STR – PROs	<i>Balance of power</i> ORI
		<i>Those days are now at an end</i> STR – PROs	<i>Contain it</i> ONT
		<i>Overtake</i> STR – NCG	<i>It fed Chinese paranoia</i> ONT
		<i>In league with</i> STR – PROs	<i>Own clubs</i> STR
<i>America's lake or China's</i> STR – PROs	<i>All your dreams are on their way</i> STR		

The percentage of the PROs using DMC is much higher than that of both student groups. The professional translators used DMC with varying degrees in translating 28 out of all 45 metaphors, while the “non-competent” group of students in 16 and the “competent” ones in 23 instances. As can be seen from Table 5 above, the overall use of DMC is almost twice for the group of PROs while compared with the NCG of students and 25% more than the CG.

Metaphors such as *trumps*, *American Lake or China's*, *plunged*, *entrench* are translated by the PROs almost exclusively by using DMC. *Great power jockeying*, being translated mostly by DMC by all three groups, is still topped in terms of exclusive rendering in this way by the PROs. What strikes as a tendency is that in almost all cases where DMC is involved, the greatest scores belong to this group.

A noticeable difference exists between the two student groups, which comes to show that awareness of conceptual metaphor has made the CG more sensitive than the other student group to the need for change in the mapping conditions of the linguistic expressions used in the translation to achieve greater equivalence. This can no doubt be attributed to their greater sensitivity to metaphoricity.

All in all, using DMC as an option of choice is rarest in all groups and non-existent in eleven translations of metaphor. One possible explanation can be viewed not only in terms of preference but also with regard to the conceptual and cultural proximity of the two languages. If we analyze the types of metaphoric items, we will find out that those examples in need of DMC type of translation are mostly culture-specific ones and a fine example is *great power jockeying*, which is not present as realia in the Bulgarian culture. Finding similar realia in the Bulgarian culture, which must also be co-text adequate, is not a simple act and demands both universal and culture-specific knowledge and experience.

As far as the different types of metaphors are involved, what is worthy of note is that most instances involving DMC in translation are originally structural metaphors. The latter are of the type X is Y (e.g., diffusing the tension, ‘CONCENTRATION IS FORCE’ while the instances where DMC was applied the least or not applied at all incorporate a significant number of ontological metaphors (e.g., contain it ‘CONTAINMENT’– For a further discussion of metaphor type – see Discussion).

Loss of metaphor

Table 6. Representation of the cases of Loss of Metaphor by the three groups

	NCG	CG	PROs	Total Mean for all
Loss of metaphor	122 (20.2%)	106 (17.5%)	128 (21.2%)	356 (20.2%)

Is the loss of metaphor in translation a good thing or not? That is the question! Which translation is better – the one that preserves the metaphor, or the one that does away with it? By applying our analysis, we try to provide some answers to the final question.

Table 7. Breakdown of results of Loss of Metaphor usage by type

LM – applied the most	LM – applied extensively by all groups	LM – applied by one group only	LM – not applied by any group
Pacific Rim – ONT	Diffusing the tensions – STR	The smallest details of summit choreography	Bridge over troubled water – STR
aligned – STR	In league with – STR	ONT – PROs	His body open towards – STR
China’s armed forces would be no match for America’s – ORI	A head-on war – ONT	On the face of it	As if paying tribute – ONT
	At arm’s length – ONT	ONT – CG	
	Own clubs – STR	Those days are now at an end	I’m sailing right behind –in a gun-boat – STR
High-handedness – ORI	Sell it – STR	STR – PROs	
	Foot-dragging – STR	Balance of power	overtake – STR
Absorb – ONT	Great power jockeying – STR	ORI – PROs	
		Undermine the communist party	Influential actors in world trade – STR
		STR – PROs	
		Foment STR – NCG	

First, in view of the process leading to LM, we defined several reasons for “losing” metaphor:

1. Entrenched metaphoric collocation in SL, which does not have an equally entrenched collocation in TL, leading to non-metaphoric explication – *own clubs, foot-dragging, head-on war*;
2. Lack of TL equivalent due to unstable TL collocation – *Pacific Rim*
3. No conceptual metaphoric equivalence, to avoid error translators resort to loss of metaphor – *high-handedness, foot-dragging, aligned, great power jockeying, no match for, sell it*;
4. Entrenched TL equivalent with a more concrete meaning which does not cover the intended SL interpretation/ meaning – borrowed item exists in TL with a different concrete meaning – *at arm’s length, entrenched, absorb*.

Of course, these criteria are created ad hoc, they are intended to highlight an effort to analyze the reasons for the lack of metaphor in the TL and they definitely overlap. For example, low-frequency entrenchment in the target language means instability of a collocation, which makes potential translation equivalence problematic.

As far as the product (outcome) is involved, we discovered two major types:

1. Lexical explication – use of non-metaphoric word
2. Syntactic explication – use of non-metaphoric phrase or syntactic unit.

In the final analysis of this criterion, if we judge from the translations of the PROs, it is often more appropriate to lose the metaphor than to keep it at all costs. In 20.2% of the cases, the metaphor was lost. This raises the question: Does one have to be familiar with CMT to be able to tell when to sacrifice a metaphor? The group of professional translators (not familiar with CMT) have killed the metaphor in more cases than any of the student groups, yet the CG has tried hard to preserve the metaphor more than any of the other groups, resulting in some cases of translation awkwardness, bordering on the tolerable. Overtranslating metaphor is therefore a potential risk among those who have become too enthusiastic about CMT and metaphor in general.

The NCG has resorted to the literal transfer of the meaning, rather than keeping the form. Explication is a frequent practice, and compared to the metaphor-aware group, highly sensitive to metaphor, the group of students lacking metaphoric competence do not feel the urge to preserve the metaphor at all.

Strange as it may seem, professional translators are more prone to killing metaphors than the students' groups. A likely reason for this may be their greater commitment to the content than to the form.

Discussion

One thing grabs the attention when we analyze the overall performance of all groups – the group of professional translators stands out among the other two in most respects as has been expected. We may convincingly assert that the professionals translated the text with a view to its equivalence and in the final analysis, quality in the target language. The mere fact that this group resorted to translation modes highlighting metaphor importance comes to suggest the importance of metaphoric competence, which does not necessarily spell out as knowledge of CMT.

The fact that professional translators made use of DMC more frequently than the other groups shows their greater proficiency in the target language. They did not shy from abandoning the search for an adequate metaphoric rendition when the mere preservation of metaphor distorted the meaning and that is obvious in their choice of explicating the meaning of a given metaphor without preserving its linguistic form – the number of instances of Loss of metaphor is the greatest in this group.

It is obvious from the data that when the other two groups played it safe by using SMCSW, which in some cases was inappropriate, the PROs “lost” the metaphor in their translation variants on account of a lexical gap or cultural mismatch in the target language. All this, however, does not diminish the power of metaphor or the importance of recognizing the principles of CMT.

If we look at the results more closely, we will find out that “a better translation”, or a greater degree of translation equivalence, if we accept the role of the group of professional translators as our yardstick, by the latter standards, means achieving ‘greater metaphoricity’. In our opinion, the professional translators adhered to the major tenets of CMT *per se*, even without being fully aware of them explicitly.

In the case of the CG of students, certain aspects also loom large. Although quality of translation is not the primary focal point of this study and irrespective of the relatively small number of the respondents, we may conclude that this group has fared better than the other group of students in light of the former results being closer to the group of professional translators. We may also confirm the role of the knowledge of CMT as important, given the fact that the CG choices follow the professionals’ translation choices more closely in the criterion DMC, which requires greater awareness of metaphoric use both in the source and target languages.

Finally, it is incumbent on us to throw some light on the translation of metaphor based on typology. What we mean is that certain types of metaphors caused greater effort to translate and were more often interpreted using SMCSW. On the whole, ontological metaphors fall into that category, while the respondents found less difficulty with structural ones. If we look closely at the type of ontological metaphor, we will discover that the ones translated using the abovementioned criterion are well-entrenched in the source language. It is also ontological metaphors which “lost” consistently their metaphoric status in the target language in the translations of all groups. In principle, ontological metaphors reflect the language’s own ways of conceptualisation and are deeply embedded in the conceptual makeup of the specific culture. In terms of divergence, structural metaphors are the ones that are rendered most differently by the three groups. The “non-competent” group differs more broadly from the PRO’s than the competent group, which attests to the idea that this type of metaphor is more culturally bound.

Although there is abundant research on Conceptual Metaphor involvement in Translation Studies, we have found only Jensen’s paper (Jensen, 2005) to be of relevance. As stated above, she analysed the translation output of three groups – non-professional translators, young professional ones (students of Translation Studies) and expert translators. Although her research design slightly differs from ours (she uses three texts from newspapers) her findings corroborate to a great extent ours. She has found that the non-professional group processed metaphors at the surface level; source text metaphors were translated by target text metaphors “when an immediate match could be found” (Jensen, 2005, p. 204). This aligns with our findings regarding the NCG and their use of SMCSW. As far as the other two groups in Jensen’s study, she asserts that

the more experience translators acquire, the fewer problems they encounter with metaphorical transfer, especially the one that requires more “associative processing”, or “an attempt of finding a different metaphor” (ibid.).

Conclusion

The main aim of this paper is to attempt to analyse the practical importance Conceptual Metaphor Theory may exert on the translation process and thus influence and transform translation training. We have endeavoured to find out if knowledge of CMT would have any impact on translation quality which would necessitate changes to translation teaching regarding immersion into cross-cultural knowledge and the development of an awareness of the pragmatic, semantic and textual function of metaphor.

Although the evidence deduced from the current study is by no means conclusive, we assuredly state that metaphoric (sub)competence does play a role in translators’ competencies. Such (sub)competencies may not be exclusively associated with Conceptual Metaphor Theory, nonetheless, they are inherently central to the quality of translation. All in all, metaphoric awareness cuts across linguistic, culture-specific and universal knowledge and thus is conducive to a successful translation process.

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