METAPHORIC COMPETENCE OF TURKISH BA STUDENTS MAJORING IN ELT*

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLİĞİ LİSANS EĞİTİMİ ALAN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN MECAZ KULLANIM YETERLİLİKLERİ

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Abstract

There is still a common misconception that metaphors and metaphoric expressions are basically components of literary or ornamental language. However, metaphor has a conceptual nature which triggers mental processing between the known and unknown, the less understandable and the more understandable and finally the abstract and the concrete. In fact, metaphor has been discussed through several perspectives such as philosophical, linguistic, sociological, psychological and educational. These different disciplines have strengthened the fundamental argument that metaphor is 'not just a matter of language, but of thought and reason'. Relevant literature has been supported by

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many research studies indicating the pervasive role of metaphoric use in daily life and its educational potential at different levels. Nevertheless, research is still needed to unearth   the significant role of metaphors in different areas, particularly language learning and teaching. Especially at different cultural backgrounds, metaphoric investigations are promising but still inadequate.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the metaphoric competence of Turkish university level students majoring English language teaching through diversely proceeded instruments.

The research procedure consists of a computer-based test aiming at measuring metaphor production. In Delphi computer program, subjects' performances in computer laboratory were monitored and saved into a database in terms of both choices and time elapsed. The subjects are 90 Turkish university students between 18-20 years old at the ELT department at upper-intermediate level. The subjects were asked to score from (1) to (5) the sentences presenting the metaphoric and anomaly expressions which appeared on the computer screen throughout the test. The metaphors had been pre-selected from an article by Katz et. al. (1988) in which 464 metaphors were normatively rated on 10 scales by 634 raters. Participants were emphasized that they would just decide whether there was a relationship between the two items of the sentence not to judge the quality of that relationship.

Results show that performance of the Turkish students in terms of finding meaning and tolerating the metaphoric sense in foreign language is close the performance in native language but not higher. The percentage of the highest rate which indicates the well understood metaphoric comprehension was %40.29, and the second highest score (4) occupied %19.47 regarding the whole. Those two figures of data within different languages may suggest that present situation in terms of comprehensibility and semantic relatedness of the Turkish students is statistically related and nearly half of the participants showed a higher level of comprehension in L1 compared to L2 achievement. As for the time elapsed that participants found meaningful relationship among the metaphoric expressions, the subjects are found to be more successful and faster than in L2, as saved in the computer program.

Culture-specific metaphor based research is needed to better understand the realm of metaphors in languages and thought. Besides, metaphor deserves attention in order to be able to open new perspectives and minimize learning and teaching related problems (e.g. comprehension, fluency and communication), metaphoric use may be employed and revisited by the language policy makers, researchers, practitioners, curriculum and material designers.

Key Words: Metaphor, tertiary education, language learning, language teaching

Öz

Mecazlar ve mecazi ifadelerin temelde edebi veya ağdalı dil bileşenleri olduğu şeklinde hala yaygın bir yanlış kanaat var. Ancak, mecazın bilinenle bilinmeyen, anlaşılması zor olanla kolay olan ve soyutla somut arasındaki zihinsel işlemi tetikleyen kavramsal bir doğası var. Aslında, felsefi, dilbilimsel, sosyolojik, psikolojik ve eğitimsel olmak üzere pek çok bakış açılarından tartışılmıştır. Bu farklı disiplinler mecazın 'sadece bir dil değil, aynı zamanda düşünce ve muhakeme meselesi' olduğu temel savını güçlendirmiştir. İlgili literatür mecazın gündelik yaşamdaki yaygın rolü ve farklı düzeylerdeki eğitim ile ilgili potansiyelini işaret eden bir çok araştırma tarafından desteklenmektedir. Bununla birlikte, mecazın özellikle dil öğrenimi ve öğretimi olmak üzere farklı alanlardaki rolünün gün ışığına çıkarılmasına hala ihtiyaç var. Özellikle farklı kültürel ortamlarda yürütülmüş mecaz çalışmaları geleceğe dönük yeni fikirler verse de hala bu çalışmaların sayısı yetersizdir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı çeşitli süreçler kullanarak üniversite düzeyindeki İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümündeki Türk öğrencilerin mecaz kullanım yeterliliklerini araştırmaktır.

Araştırmanın yordamı mecaz üretimini ölçme amacıyla oluşturulmuş bilgisayar tabanlı testten oluşmaktadır. Delphi bilgisayar programında, katılımcıların bilgisayar laboratuarındaki mecaz üretme ve mecazi ilişkiyi görme performansları yaptıkları seçimler ve seçim yaparken harcadıkları zaman bakımından izlenip kaydedilmiştir. Çalışmaya Türkiye'deki bir üniversitenin İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümünden İngilizce düzeyi ortanın üstü olan 18-20 yaşları arasındaki 90 Türk öğrenci katılmıştır. Katılımcılardan test boyunca ekranda gördükleri cümleleri ne derecede mecazi veya anormal bulduklarına bağlı olarak 1 ile 5 arasında değer vermesi istenmiştir. Çalışmadaki mecazlar, Katz ve diğer. (1988) çalışmasından 464 notlandırıcının 1 ile 10 arasında değer verdiği 464 mecaz arasından seçilmiştir. Çalışmadaki katılımcılara, onlardan istenenin gördükleri cümlelerde mecazi bir ilişki görüp görmedikleri konusunda puan vermeleri olduğu, bu ilişkinin niteliğine puan vermelerinin istenmediği vurgulanmıştır.

Çalışma bulguları, üniversite düzeyindeki, İngilizce eğitimi alan Türk öğrencilerin yabancı bir dildeki mecazi anlamı bulma ve anlama performanslarının anadildeki performanslarna yakın olmakla beraber daha yüksek bir başarı göstermedikleri sonucunu vermiştir. En yüksek yüzdeliğe sahip ifadeyi iyi anlama yüzdesi(5) %40.29 lık bir paya sahip olup, ikinci en yüksek puanlama(4) %19.47'lik bir paya sahiptir. İki dilin ölçüldüğü her iki şekil, Türk öğrencilerin anlaşılırlık ve anlamsal ilişki değerlerinin istatistiksel olarak ikinci dile oranla kendi dillerinde daha yüksek oranda bir performans değeri göstermektedir. Anlamsal ilişkiyi bulma süresi boyunca geçen zaman için ise, katılımcıların kendi dillerinde verilen mecazi ilişkiyi ikinci dile oranla daha hızlı buldukları görülmüştür.

Dil ve düşünce eksenindeki mecaz kullanımların daha iyi anlayabilmek için kültür özellikli mecaz araştırmalarına ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, düşünce ekseninde yeni bakış açıları keşfedebilmek ve özellikle dil öğrenim ve öğretim süreçlerindeki çeşitli sorunları (anlama, akıcılık, iletişim vb.) en aza indirmek için mecaz kullanım dil politikaları yapıcıları, araştırmacılar, uygulayıcılar ve müfredat ve materyal tasarlayıcıları tarafından göz önünde bulundurulmalı ve mecaz kavramı yeniden gözden geçirilmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mecaz, yüksek öğretim, dil öğrenimi, dil öğretimi

Introduction

Although the start of the scholarly studies of metaphor dates back to 2500 years ago (Yağız & Yiğiter, 2007), the traditional view held the misguided assumption that metaphoric use is a figure of speech exclusively confined to poetics and rhetorics but not a property of ordinary language, a deviant means of expression of secondary importance compared to the literal meaning. The natural consequence of the trivial and peripheral role attributed to its existence in language was reflected in the little amount of attention in a foreign language context (Andreou& Galantomos, 2008). However, in recent years, applied linguists have directed their attention to metaphorical language. This focus will help second language learners and teachers who find metaphorical language demanding. That is why new and comprehensive studies should be conducted and brought under discussion in diverse human disciplines; particularly, language, thought and language learning.

Literature review

From the mid-seventies onwards cognitive linguistic perspective has highlighted that metaphor is a ubiquitous property of not only language but also the conceptual system. Seeking empirical evidence for the linguistic manifestations of conceptual metaphors in English language, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that metaphor pervades our conceptual system on which our thoughts and actions are created.

Metaphor is "understanding one thing in terms of another with which it has a relation of (partial) similarity"(van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 123). Enabling "us to see one thing in terms of another", the peculiar ability to metaphorise is at the center of "human intellectual inventiveness, creativity, and imagination" (Egan, 2010, p. 138). Metaphor is one of the frequently used forms of figurative language, which "uses concrete and common ideas to describe abstract concepts and relationships" (Zwiers, 2008, p. 27). Metaphors are "among the most relevant (and most studied) figures of speech" (Marinelli, 2008, p. 1410). "The source meaning has some frame or domain structure that is iconically replicated in the target domain." This approach is in line with the traditional cognitive metaphor theory as advocated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), "the conception of metaphor as an iconic relationship is in line with traditional accounts of metaphor in that it relies on some notion of similarity between source and

target." Not a necessary condition for metaphors that the source domain and the target domain be disjunct (Panther, p. 162).

Nominal figurative statements in metaphor form "seem stronger and deeper" than those in simile form (Zharikov and Gentner, 2002, p. 976). The consequent comparison is an implied one and constructed between two different conceptial domains which are not literally applicable. The complex and abstract, less delineated, hard to grasp or unknown concepts are understood, deexperienced in terms of concepts which are more familiar, clearer, and more concrete through creation of links between these two distinct conceptual domains however highlighting the partial similarities overlap the two sharing partial similarities with each other. Through the mediation of the unknown, less familiar, abstract, or particular in terms of the known, more familiar, concrete or general, metaphor conceptualisation facilitates the target language difficulties associated with the complex nature of language. Meaning is mediated in terms of form with creative interplays mutually linking the former and the latter. Thus, long term retention is aimed to be achieved.

Not trigerred automatically, these covert and subconcious mechanisms should be motivated by metaphor awareness teaching (Yang and Hsieh, 2010). Indispensible of all skills if the aim is advanced level, figurative instruction can be enhanced "organizing metaphors and idioms according to their underlying conceptual domains and raising students' awareness of such a systematicity can enhance L2 figurative instruction" (Andreou and Galantomos, 2008, p. 75). Retention of unfamiliar figurative expressions can be facilitated with lexical organization along such metaphoric themes or source domains (Boers, 2000). Littlemore and Low (2006, p. 272) state that systematically drawing students' attention to "the source domains of linguistic metaphors and of vocabulary involving metaphor" can improve significantly their acquisition and retention of depth of knowledge for that language. Ortony (1975, 2001) mentions three characteristics of metaphor where metaphor contributes to learning, that is, compactness, vividness, and inexplicability of arguments and strongly claimed that the use of metaphor can enhance learning.

Nevertheless, despite its ubiquity and importance highlighted in the recent developments of cognitive linguistics, its central importance to all areas of communicative competences, and relevance to all stages of language learning, teaching and learning, "the ability of second language learners to use metaphors is often still not seen as a core ability" (Littlemore and Low, 2006, p. 268). There is also the problem of intercultural dimension neglected in the field. Kövecses (2010) states that there are culture-specific and culture-indenpendent conceptual metaphors can have linguistic manifestations. Near-universals or potentially universals result "from certain commonalities in human experience, which "constitute universal embodiment on which many conceptual metaphors are based" (Kövecses, 2010, p. 217). However,

linguistic expressions that possess a particular, potantially universal conceptual metaphor will themselves be the same in different languages (Barcelona 2000, Maalej 2004: cited in Kövecses, 2010). It is also true that conceptual metaphors and their linguistic manifestations vary from language to language, and from culture to culture (in fact even intraculturally) occuring along "the social, regional, ethnic, style, subcultural, diachronic, and individual dimensions" (Kövecses, 2010, p. 217).

The use of metaphor in discourse suffers from overcommitment to principles of generality. Backgrounding linguistic forms of metaphors, much of the research has neglected context-sensitive variations in use of metaphor in a variety of discourses in which human beings construct and live their lives. Therefore, applied linguistic approaches must pay due attention (Zanatto, Cameron, and Cavalcanti, 2008, pp 2-3). Given the cultural differences and the low exposure problem, learners and teachers working in EFL settings can gain considerably from its explicit teaching.

It is also true that metaphor awareness aimed at teaching and learning of a foreign language can directly or indirectly have a positive influence on the enhancement of academic progress, teacher education and research at least in the mid term as well. Focusing on academic language, Zwiers (2008, p. 27) suggests that metaphor deserves the attention of teachers of students in pursuit of academic English to use and understand features of academic language, features commonly "used to describe complexity, higher-order thinking, and abstraction". However, speakers of languages other than English use figurative expressions in different ways, and teachers should keep in mind that they bring to the class already developed academic versions of a non-English mother tongue.

Zwiers (2008, p. 28) emphasizes that metaphorical cliches (dead metaphors) are found throughout academic discourse. The high frequency of these not-so-obvious terms highlights "the importance of teaching students to think figuratively in all content areas" in order to perform better in academic settings. "To use and understand these terms, students need to have mental flexibility and openness to connecting ideas to background knowledge, understanding the context, and making the leap to verbal and poetic interpretation".

Focusing on educational linguistics on teacher education, Villamil and de Guerrero' s (2005) study indicated that metaphor is a socially constructed semiotic artifact that can serve as a chief mediator in helping teachers develop an understanding of teaching. Metaphor can be used as a means to become aware of the way we think, which has implications for our beliefs and consequently our actions. Used wisely, they help us become aware of the wrongs assumed to be right as well as the rights unnoticed or assumed to be wrongs, uncovering any distorted patterns in thinking, and fostering and challenging the beliefs accordingly.

Metaphors contribute to collaboration of colleagues working in different disciplines since, as in Kramsch's (1995, p. 43) words, they aim to "domesticate and render familiar the eminently unfamiliar process of acquiring a language" of a

discipline "other than one's own". Kramsch (1995, p. 50) also emphasizes that metaphors can also be borrowed from other disciplines for purposes of academic legitimacy giving the example of foreign language educators borrowing "the metaphors of psycho- and sociolinguistics and reindex them to fit their own discourse community." Kramsch (1995, p. 52) examines, on the example of one particular metaphor (the term input), "how language came to shape the conciousness of applied linguists and language teachers and the way they talk with or past each other."

As Littlemore's (2004; cited in Littlemore and Low, 2006, p. 272) study suggests, even a small amount of teacher scaffolding can in some circumstances at least, reap rewards". Littlemore and Low (2006, p. 273) share what pedagogical research conducted over the years suggest, and state that helping "learners to identify and understand their own metaphoric thinking processes, and exercise a degree of control over them, is likely to facilitate both L2 learning and use". They also conclude that "control over metaphor is one of the essential tools for empowering learners to cope successfully with native speakers" (p. 290). The findings have implications for not only teachers or researchers but also testers. Littlemore and Low (2006, p. 289) suggest that research literature should not only engage the interest of the metaphor scholars but also connect with "the broader frameworks of skill and ability standardly used by language teachers, testers, and researchers".

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the ability of the students of an ELT department in Turkey to find meaning in metaphor and their speed in doing this. The data were collected by means of a computer-based test. Then the data were analyzed in terms of metaphor production through a statistical procedure. According to Littlemore (2010, p. 307), metaphoric competence is, to some extent, a multifaceted entity in that a student may be quick in metaphor but not so at producing multiple interpretations. We need further investigations into the nature of native and foreign language lexicon. "A substantial amount of second language learning involves thinking metaphorically."

Table 1 Tests of Metaphoric Processing and the Corresponding Psychological Processes Hypothesized to Underlie Them

Test of metaphoric processing	Predominant underlying psychological process
Tendency to find meaning in metaphor	Loose analogical reasoning
Speed in finding meaning in metaphor	Rapid loose analogical reasoning

Subejcts and Instruments

The subjects of the study were 90 Turkish ELT first year students at Atatürk University in Turkey. The age-range was between 18 and 20. The test consisting of 50 metaphorical sentences, twenty-five of which are in Turkish and other twenty-five are in English, administered demonstrated paralellness to that of Littlemore (2001a) who partly designed it using the test devised by Pollio and Smith (1979) in which the subjects were asked to score the sentences from (1) to (5).

Procedure

It is hypothesized that metaphor would depend largely on the psychological process of *loose analogical reasoning.* The idea behind this hypothesis is that subjects with a loose analogical reasoning style would be more likely to find and to tolerate analogies, which are not clearly caught between the two parts of the metaphors, and would therefore be more likely to accept the metaphors as meaningful. Before starting, subjects were displayed a rubric in their native language explaining *metaphor* and *anomaly.* They were also told that they would be displayed a number of metaphors which they are required to rate the extent to which they thought each metaphor made sense on a scale of 1-5. The scale, which appeared on the screen throughout the test, is translated below:

(5) "It's obviously a metaphor. The relationship between the two elements is clear."

(4) "The metaphor is less convincing. One can see that there is a relation but it's not immediately obvious."

(3) "This is the middle of the scale. You're really not sure if it's a metaphor or not."

(2) "There could be a metaphorical meaning but you can't see it."

(1) "It's obviously an anomaly. It is not possible to find a relationship between the two elements."

The metaphors had been pre-selected from an article by Katz, Paivio, Marschark, and Clark (1988) from among the 464 metaphors normatively rated on 10 scales by 634 raters. Their article had aimed to help researchers interested in the systematic investigation of metaphoric processes control for differrent metaphor-related variables. It was frequently emphasized that subjects were just to decide whether there was a relationship between the two items of the sentence not to judge the quality of that relationship.

Data Analysis

Given the computer based test results, Figure 1 shows that the frequency of the score (5), which is the highest rate that points out the subjects understood the metaphor and the relationship between the two domains (% 43,33) in Turkish sentences. This

figure indicates that most of the Turkish metaphoric sentences were understood. The second most occupied rate was given as (4). This score indicated that the subjects did not convincingly understood the metaphor, however; they saw a relation in the sentence but did not see this relation immediately.

These two evaluation criteria in fact recall a loose analogical reasoning. Because as it is hypothesized that subjects with analogical reasoning style would be more likely to find and understand the similarities, between the two domains of the metaphoric use, and therefore they would be more likely to see the metaphors meaningful.

Though the subjects showed an easy understanding about metaphoric relation in native language expressions, they did not achieved the same but close speed in catching the foreign language metaphoric expressions (see Figure 2).

Figure1. Performance of Turkish Students in Finding the Meaning in Metaphor in Native Language
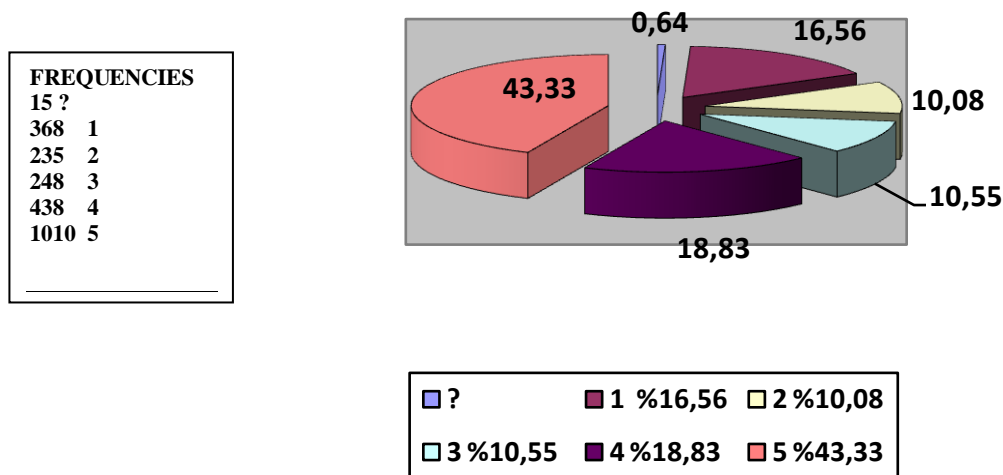
FREQUENCIES
15 ?
368 1
235 2
248 3
438 4
1010 5

?   1 %16,56   2 %10,08
3 %10,55   4 %18,83   5 %43,33

Those two figures of data within different languages may suggest that present situation in terms of comprehensibility and semantic relatedness of the Turkish students is statistically related and nearly half of the subjects showed a high level of comprehension. However, the speed in native language was higher than foreign language. The average response latency when selecting answers 4 and 5 (which indicate that they believed the sentence to be a metaphor) was taken to indicate their speed in finding meaning in metaphor. As for the time elapsed that subjects found

meaning among the metaphoric expressions, it is seen that the subjects are more successful and faster than in foreign language, as stored in the computer program.

The frequency of the highest rate which indicates high metaphoric comprehension was %40.29, and the second highest score (4) occupied %19.47 regarding the whole. It seems that finding meaning in metaphor is less automatic in foreign language (% 40.29) than in native language (% 43.33). If ways could be found, the increase in the automaticity of this process among foreign language learners, then their metaphoric comprehension ability, which is also a part of their communicative ability, may reach the approximate level of a native speaker. In terms of differences between two languages a prominent diversity was not observed.

Figure 2. Performance of Turkish Students at Upper-Intermediate Level about Finding the Meaning in Metaphor in Foreign Language
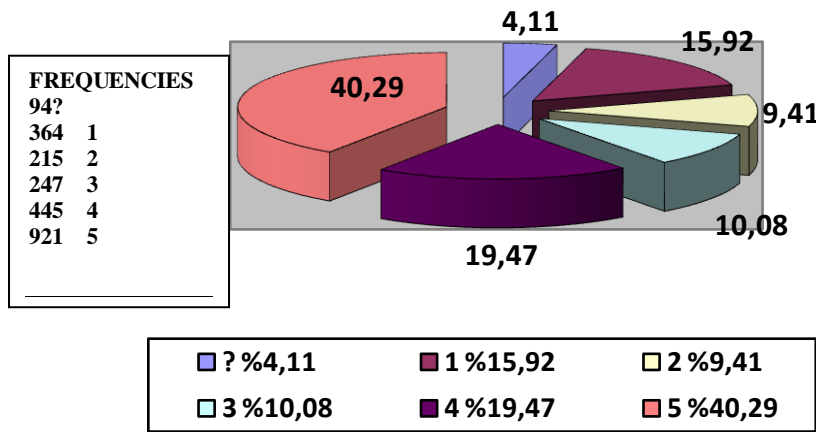
Discussion and Conclusion

The preservice EFL teachers' lack of speed in finding meaning in metaphor in English foreign language in contrast to their speed in Turkish native language can be attributed to low exposure EFL settings, which typically are deprived of communication opportunities. "What is conventional and salient for native speakers, may not be salient at all, or to the same extent, to those who do not belong to the community of usage." This is the reason for advanced level L2 students' consistent problems with figurative language comprehension and production (Bromberek-Dyzman and Ewer, 2010, pp. 318-319).

Examining metaphoric competence and its relationship to the learning and teaching of the target language, Littlemore (2001b) found that speed in finding meaning in metaphor is statistically significantly related with holistic cognitive style. Littlemore (2001c) found holistic learners use more communication strategies that are based on comparison, whereas those with analytical style focus rather on individual

features. According to Littlemore (2010, p. 298), in conversational discourse which contains metaphors understanding metaphors quickly is important to maintain the naturalness of communication, especially so in foreign language discourses in that its contribution to the communicative competence is likely to be considerable.

In terms of fluency, a similar result was obtained by a recent study conducted by Littlemore (2010, p. 307). Eighty-two upper-intermediate French-speaking university students of English in the second year of the Languages and Linguistics program at a university in Belgium exhibited "higher levels of metaphoric fluency in L1 than in L2", which was expected. Those displaying a high level of metaphoric competence in the L1 (French) demonstrated the same ability in English L2.

It is possible to infer from these findings the need for explicit instruction especially in EFL contexts. As Chen (2009, p. 97) rightly remarks, "the associative links in the second language lexicon are usually less firmly established than mother tongue links." Egan (2010, p. 138) emphasizes metaphor ability as a learning tool that teachers should help students keep "vividly alive by exercising it in building their portfolios" and those teachers supervising these portfolios can draw on to engage students in learning process (Egan, 2010, p. 128).

Kathpalia and Carmel (2011, p. 273) state that metaphors are not exclusively academic formal texts therefore they constitute a common feature of everyday language. However, in language teaching, the present emphasis is placed on grammatical competence at the expense of metaphoric competence, which affects communication and results in students' having difficulties with interpretation, process, or production of metaphors (Kathpalia and Carmel, 2011). Neglecting the metaphoric competence affects the grammatical, Littlemore and Low (2006, p. 268) state that the metaphor "can contribute centrally to the grammatical competence". In fact, they emphasize the key role it plays in all areas of communicative competences (grammatical, textual illocutionary and sociolinguistic). However, Kathpalia and Carmel's (2011) study identifies students' attempts to use grammatical, textual, illocutionary and sociolingusitic metaphors ending up as unidiomatic, which can affect their fluency. Metaphor is also to do with intelligence, which is also recognized as one of the important predictors for language learning achievement. As Littlemore (2001a) argues, metaphoric intelligence is an additional aspect of intelligence and may bring a number of benefits to language learning since it is thought to play a role in communicative competence and use of communication strategy. According to Littlemore (2010, p. 298) in conversational discourse which contains metaphors understanding metaphors quickly is important to maintain the naturalness of communication, especially so in foreign language discourses in that its contribution to the communicative competence is likely to be considerable.

Highlighting the need for taking a cognitive linguistic approach, the findings have suggested that EFL learners of English should be explicitly taught strategies that enable students to enhance and speed up their conception of the metaphorical structure underlying the target language. According to Zwiers (2008), given the pervasivenes of metaphor not only in works of literature but also articles, letters, speeches, lectures and conversations, figurative language should be prioritized in teaching English. Especially so when it comes to metaphor, which normally goes unnoticed as it is so automatic even to teachers. In addition to the automaticity, what contributes to this lack of awareness is the fact that classroom teaching of English neglects metaphors, many of which are learned out of schools. Therefore metaphors, thinking behind them, appropriacy in their use should be included in the the classroom teaching (Zwiers, 2008). Chen and Lai's (2011) experimental study also supports validity of explicit instruction.

Likely to involve the psychological processes of associative fluency, analogical reasoning and image formation, metaphor-based vocabulary guessing strategies can be taught to guide learners to apply autonomously given their individual differences. Learners access as many meanings as possible for the base concept (associative fluency) while identifying all possible links this concept and the surrounding context (analogical reasoning). In other words partial similarities are identified between the source domain given and the target domain inferred from the context. Forming a mental image of the new expressions (mental imagery) is likely to help engage in both of these processes (Littlemore, 2004).

Andreou and Galantomos (2008) believe that learning metaphors and idioms in a more coherent way can be achieved by the development of a conceptual syllabus, a product-oriented syllabus arranging metaphors and idioms around certain conceptual domains and providing morphosyntactic and communicative cues in the process of their instruction. However, in line with Boers (1999, pp. 54-55: cited in Andreou and Galantomos, 2008, p. 72), aware of its limits, they see the conceptual syllabus not as the sole means but a complementary one. Arguing for incorporating metaphoric mapping method to use of conceptual metaphors, Chen and Lai (2011, p. 545) conclude that "instruction involving metaphoric mappings can lead to longer-term effect than instruction involving conceptual metaphors. … In addition, the advantages of relating existing and concrete knowledge to new and abstract concepts through epistemic mappings can solve problems caused by cultural specificity."

Future studies can report actual practices of such a syllabus and strategies on retention of collocations, phrasal verbs or idioms. For instance, testing the effects of conceptual metaphor awareness on adolescents learning phrasal verbs, Yang and Hsieh (2010) reported its overall positive effect except on retention. They warn teachers against any assumption about student readiness or willingness to adopt strategies taught due to exclusive reliance in a teaching/learning culture on memorization. On the other hand, Waehayi and Waraporn (2012) had positive results from their experimental study with twelfth graders on the effect of conceptual metaphor method on the

retention of phrasal verbs. The method contributed retention test within 2 weeks after posttest.

Future studies can treat use of metaphors, as listed by Bartels' (2005), as a data collection tool reflecting teachers' knowledge and cognition. Villamil and De Guerrero's (2005) study is a successful example of tracking the development in MA-TESL students of theoretical notions of writing. It is possible to build on their experience complementing it with interviews and literacy histories as suggested. Another idea for future study would be what Kramsch (1995) highlights as misunderstandings caused by the fact that metaphors used in a field is different from those used in another, and its effect which affect the collaboration of multi-disciplinary studies such as foreign language education and applied linguistics.

To sum up, special attention should be payed to EFL settings. Considering the input-poor environment of EFL settings, chances for EFL learners' exposure to these are low, so is the likelihood for preservice teachers of English most of whom are nurtured by the same enviroment. Metaphoric expressions, on one hand may cause foreign language comprehension, on the other hand, they may more likely contribute to the cultural specific understanding and thought domain of the target language. Therefore metaphor based studies deserve comprehensive attention through diverse angles.

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