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**METAPHOR OF 'LIFE' IN SHAKESPEAREAN SELECTED TRAGEDIES**

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The University of Basrah., Basrah, Iraq**Abstract:**

The metaphor has turned into a crucial part in individuals' intellectual system as opposed to being seen as linguistic matter as far back as the production of the masterpiece *Metaphor We Live By*, contributed by Lakoff and Johnson. The first part of the paper will give a brief introduction to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). The second part will discuss how CMT can be used for the stylistic analysis of a particular text. As per the cognitive methodology, the human perspectives are basically metaphorical, or say, as Gibbs expressed, the human mind metaphorically works (Gibbs: 1994). As such, in the cognitive methodology, the metaphor is not some rhetorical by-product of objective thinking, but in fact, it is the foundation of the human conceptual system, (Verdonk and Weber, 1995). By this comprehension of Metaphor in the level of thought, CMT totally varies from the traditional understanding which considers metaphor as a component of language. Mapping crosswise over spaces and domains (i.e. understanding the Target domain by utilizing Source domain) is not full but rather it is partial. It implies just a few parts of the source domain are utilized as a part of perceiving the target one. The words that were used in all the above three quotations which dealt with the metaphor of LIFE IS A PLAY (i.e. words such as: scene, act, audience, p, ayer and stage) are common linguistic expression that used a with domain of a theatre play. So the source domain for the proposed conceptual metaphor is 'PLAY'.

**Keywords:** traditional linguistics, Cognitive linguistics, metaphorical, comprehension, LIFE IS A PLAY, etc

**Introduction:**

The metaphor has turned into a crucial part in individuals' intellectual system as opposed to being seen as linguistic matter as far back as the production of the masterpiece *Metaphor We Live By*, contributed by Lakoff and Johnson. Conceptual metaphor, as an essential idea in cognitive sciences, alludes to something interior, opening somewhere down in human thought (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Utilizing the conceptual metaphor as an analyst device to examine the literature is a part of what is called cognitive Poetics (cognitive stylistics), where the speculations and essentials of Cognitive linguistics shed lights on the reading of the literary works (Stockwell, 2002).

The proposed conceptual metaphor, this paper suggests, related to Shakespearian mind rather than necessities of the texts. In another word, the proposed particular metaphor operates in the mind of Shakespeare. This study will provide concrete evidence that metaphor is a way of thinking and matter of thought rather than merely linguistic phenomena. It will also open new horizons to studying metaphor as a stylistic device to identify how a specific concept is identified by a particular literary writer through pursuing linguistic metaphors that are used in different literary works which are written by him or her.

The first part of the paper will give a brief introduction to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). The second part will discuss how CMT can be used for the stylistic analysis of a particular text. The third part will be an application of CMT to selected quotations about life from three Shakespearian tragedies (Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Macbeth). The final part by a way of conclusion will focus on the findings of the paper.

**Brief Introduction to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)**

The primary premise of cognitive sciences about metaphors is that Metaphor is not only a linguistic issue but also a matter of thought. As indicated by Lakoff and Johnson's metaphor is pervasive in ordinary life in language as well as in thought. Our normal conceptual framework, regarding which we both think and act, is essentially metaphorical in nature (1980).

As per the cognitive methodology, the human perspectives are basically metaphorical, or say, as Gibbs expressed, the human mind metaphorically works (Gibbs: 1994). As such, in the cognitive methodology, the metaphor is not some rhetorical by-product of objective thinking, but in fact, it is the foundation of the human conceptual system, (Verdonk and Weber, 1995). By this comprehension of Metaphor in the level of thought, CMT totally varies from the traditional understanding which considers metaphor as a component of language. For instance, in CMT literature, human mind comprehends an abstract space of life (Target domain) by utilizing a surely understood or experienced concrete area (called Source domain) and displays that understanding in linguistic structures.

For example, we understand the social organization (an abstract domain) by using our experience about plants, where the conceptual metaphor will be SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE PLANTS (according to CMT terminology: A IS B, where A means the Target domain and B means the Source one). Thus 'SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE

PLANTS' is a conceptual metaphor by which the human mind understands social organizations or institutes by using plants as the source domain, but at the level of language it can be expressed in many linguistic forms

All the above linguistics metaphors (taken from Kövecses: 2002) are based on understanding (or mapping in CMT terminology) social organizations as plants. Using plants as a domain for understanding social institutes or organizations means the concept of SOCIAL ORGANIZATION is metaphorically conceptualized as a PLANT. Thus, the knowledge of the domain of PLANT, a concrete domain of experience with a well-known structure in terms of actions, aims and the interties are involved to form the domain of SOCIAL ORGANIZATION. As in (Kövecses: 2002).

Source Domain	Target Domain
PLANTS	THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS
The whole plant	The entire organization.
A part of the plant	A part of the organization
The growth of the plant	Development of the organization
The root of the plant	The origin of the organization
The flowering	The best stage, the most successful stage
The fruits or crops	The beneficial consequences

It implies just a few parts of the source domain are utilized as a part of perceiving the target one. The features that are utilized as a part of mapping are said to be highlighted, instead of the unmapped ones that stay covered up and hidden. As Evans cited, hiding and highlighting in Conceptual Metaphor Theory is that when a target domain is structured in terms of a particular source domain, this highlights certain features of the target while at the same time covering up other features (2007). This partial mapping amongst target and source spaces assumes a crucial role in study stylistics utilizing Conceptual Metaphor Theory as a system for complex examination of a style for the writer as well as for the readers' responses towards the literary text.

#### 1. Metaphor as a stylistic device:

This divergence in highlighting and hiding is useful in the investigation of style for the metaphors in any literary as well as non-literary text due to the fact that hiding some features

of source domain and highlighting other ones is totally up to the selection of the literary writer. Oncins-Martínez states that:

*“This distinction is of relevance for the analysis of style, since the preference for certain metaphors in terms of what they highlight or hide, or the particular ways in which they are exploited become available as elements with which to describe, assess and even differentiate styles.”* (2011).

In other sense, since the mapping from one space into another is under the control of the metaphor-producer and is subject to his/her own needs and knowledge, it is useful in comprehension his/her beliefs and concepts.

Moreover, this will also open new windows to anticipate and expect how a particular literary writer will use linguistic metaphors about a given domain in other literary works even before (s)he writes or before readers start reading his/her books.

## 2. Applying CMT a to metaphor of 'life' in Shakespearian tragedies:

Application of CMT to identify metaphor of 'life' in the selected Shakespearian tragedies based on the hypothesis that Shakespeare recognizes 'life' in many ways but there is a single unique conceptual metaphor that is repeated in more than one Shakespearian text.

Metaphors of 'life' in *Romeo and Juliet*:

Romeo's view of life is in harmony with English people's conceptual metaphor which conceptualizes LIFE IS A JOURNEY as in Act 1, Scene 4:

Romeo:

*But he that hath the steerage of my course,*

*Direct my sail.*

But what is unique in Romeo's quotation is that he thinks that LIFE IS A SHIP IN JOURNEY.

Another concept of life according to Romeo is his view he life as part the of marketing and business fields. He believes that LIFE IS BARGAINING WITH DEATH, as in Act 5, Scene 3:

Romeo

*A dateless bargain to engrossing death.*

The field of business was used again in Romeo's concept of life, as in Act 1, Scene 5:

Romeo

*O dear account! My life is my foe's debt.*

Here, Romeo sees LIFE IS A DEBT.

Juliet identifies life in a unique way as in 4, Scene 3:

JulieThe

*My dismal scene I needs must act alone.*

In this quotation, the noun 'scene' has many meaning as "part of play" or "place wheif is something happened" or "view" but using of the verb 'act' which one of its meaning is "to perform in plays" makes the intended meaning is related with domain of theatre so that Juliet believes LIFE IS A PLAY.

In Act 4, Scene 1:

FRIAR LAWRENCE

He believes that LIFE IS A DAY this metaphor is logically justified based on the fact that day and life are tperiodsiod when humans are active and do things opposedite to the night and death when humans are inactive. This leads to very common metaphors whiinvolveves SLEEPING IS DEATH or DEATH IS SLEEPING which might find across cultures (these metaphors are available in English and Arabic) see Ruiz, J. H. (2007).

In Act 3, Scene 5:

CAPULET

*But for the sunset of my brother's son.*

Here Capulet thinks that DEATH IS SUNSET which implies that BIRTH IS SUNRISE and this totally agrees wia th seeing of the Friar Lawrence about life as the friars believes LIFE IS A DAY and Capulet sees death the as sunset.

Metaphor of 'life' in Hamlet:

In Act 1, Scene 2:

HAMLET:

*'Tis an unweeded garden*

*That grows to seed.*

Here, Hamlet thinks that LIFE IS A GARDEN. This might be because in the garden one finds harmful plant as well as weeds aa nd useful planet in one hand as parallel to life which has harmful people as well as useful ones.

But in Act 5, Scene 2:

## HAMLET

The noun 'audience' means "a group of people who have come to a place to see or hear a film, performance, speech etc." the verb 'act' hanyany meaning but. Both words 'act and audience' are firthe om domain of plays and theatre so Hamlet believes that LIFE IS A Play. It could be because Hamlet sees for each person in this life there is a special role one can play.

In act 1 scene 2:

GERTRUDE:

*All that lives must die,*

*Passing through nature to eternity.*

The verb 'pass' means "to move in a particular direction or to a particular place or position" so in this quotation Gertrude thinks that LIFE IS A JOURNEY. Seeing 'life' as a 'journey' a is widespread metaphor in English as well as in other languages and cultures.

Metaphors of 'life' in *Macbeth*:

In act 5 scene 4:

MACBETH:

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player*

*And then is heard no more.*

Here, Macbeth believes that LIFE IS A SHADOW and he meant "Life is nothing more than an illusion". This quotation also implies another metaphor which stated that LIFE IS A PLAY since that the noun 'player' might mean "actor" and the noun 'stage'. Seeing 'life' as similar to 'theatre' by Macbeth agrees with the same view for Juliet as well as Hamlet.

In the same act and scene, he gives another meaning for 'life' as he says:

MACBETH

*It is a tale*

In act 2 scene 3:

MACBETH

*The wine of life is drawn.*

The concept of 'life' takes another quality in Macbeth's mind since he thinks that LIFE HAS A WINE.

Common metaphors of 'life' in the selected Shakespearian tragedies:

Based on the quotations above. It is obvious that there are two types of common metaphors that work in mind of Shakespeare namely LIFE IS A JOURNEY, as well as LIFE IS A PLAY. The first conceptual metaphor of LIFE IS A JOURNEY is culturally based. It is part of English language and culture (as well as other languages and cultures) to speak about life as a journey. Below is a list of additional phrases that speakers of English use to talk about the concept of life (taken from (Kövecses, 2010):

He's without *direction* in life.

I'm *where* I want to be in life.

I'm at a *crossroads* in my life.

She'll *go places* in life.

He's never let anyone *get in his way*.

She's *gone through* a lot in life.

English people do so because thinking about the abstract concept of life is facilitated by the more concrete concept of journey (Kövecses, 2010).

The second common conceptual metaphor in mind of Shakespeare which might be unique and used only by Shakespeare is LIFE IS A PLAY.

The words that were used in all the above three quotations which dealt with the metaphor of LIFE IS A PLAY (i.e. words such as: scene, act, audience, player and stage) are common linguistic expressions that used a with domain of a theatre play. So the source domain for the proposed conceptual metaphor is 'PLAY'. But why is this unique conceptual metaphor repeatedly used in different three Shakespearean tragedies?! The present study suggests that this unique conceptual metaphor about 'life' is not related to the development of the plot within the textual world of each tragedy since the three tragedies are varied in their themes and plots. The present study, instead, proposes that the given unparalleled conceptual metaphor operates and activates in mind of Shakespeare and it linguistically manifests in his texts consciously or unconsciously. This view, of seeing the particular conceptual metaphor which repeatedly used in different texts which are written by a single writer as revealing the system of beliefs of its writer, supports the claims of considering metaphor as way of thinking in one hand, and in another hand gives a concrete evidence of the validity of using metaphor in studying language style of a specific writer.

Anticipating the conceptual metaphor:

Another important question occurs to mind which states: can we anticipate occurrence and usage same conceptual metaphor in other texts that were written or will be written by same writer even if we didn't read them yet?

The research was investigating the conceptual metaphor of 'life' in the three given tragedies but what is interesting in the present study to find that in another Shakespearean text which is comedy not tragedy which so-called, *As you like it*, the following quotation in act 2 scene 7:

## JAQUES

*All the world's a stage,*

*And all the men and women merely players.*

*They have their exits and their entrances,*

*His acts being seven ages.*

Here, Jacques means "The whole world is a stage, and all the men and women merely actors. Shakespeare through words of Jacques echoes same conceptual metaphor of LIFE IS A PLAY with same words that are common in the domain of a theatre play but with different kind of literary works which is Shakespearian comedy. This props the idea that the given conceptual metaphor about 'life' works in mind of Shakespeare and he well understands 'life' by concept of 'play'. This conceptual metaphor of 'life' might be justified in mind of Shakespeare because he is very related to the domain of 'a theatre play' since he considers as one of the most important English dramatists in all ages.

This quotation gives the first step to serious thinking in the possibility of expecting a particular conceptual metaphor in varied texts that are written by the same author. This new view and serious comprehensive study tries to examine the hypothesis underlying it.

The study does not claim that the given conceptual metaphor is the only Shakespeare metaphor about 'life' or his only way to understand 'life'. But in fact it attempts to show that 'repetition' of a single conceptual metaphor within different texts for a particular writer might mention the writer's point of view.

Point of view in the figurative sense entails not only the presence of a conceptualizing character, but also a particular way of conceptualizing a world-view or ideology. Point of view recommended by Fowler is ideological which characterizes as 'the system of beliefs, values, and categories by reference to which a person or a society comprehends the world' (1986:130); it is meaning number three in Wales' grouping that seems evoked at this point. Fowler hence considers who may be behind the transport of a specific belief system in writings, whether the writer by means of the figure of the implied author, the narrator, the writer secretly talking through the narrator or basically the characters. Such insights would put ideological point of view on a similar surface to meaning four in Wales' definition. Fowler (1996:166) highlights two perspectives in the high ideological point of view which is linguistically shown, one clear and a second more deceptive.

## Conclusion:

The study sheds light on the potential ability of metaphor to be studied from multi-dimensions and angles. Far from that metaphor can be studied in relation to its producer character his/her system of beliefs and ideology in the textual world, or its role in developing the conflict within the textual plot, it can be studied in relation to its literary writer across



his/her different works and texts. In the relation between metaphors and their authors, metaphors relate the texts with their contexts to identify how a particular literary writer conceptualizes his/her real world by echoing his/her concepts through varied texts.

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