

ID: 267003

Language and Language Education

Conceptual Metaphors and Metonymies in Chinese American Literary Works

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Received: March 15, 2023

Revised: April 29, 2023

Accepted: May 15, 2023

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Abstract

Metaphors and metonymies, which are types of figures of speech, can be used as the basis to analyze the esthetics of literary works. However, in cognitive linguistics, metaphors and metonymies are also pervasive in our everyday life and reflect human conceptualizations. Employing cognitive linguistics perspectives, this research, is aimed to analyze the conceptual metaphors and metonymies (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) in two Chinese American literary works: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011). Major conceptual metaphors and metonymies were extracted from the two books. The data gained were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed and categorized into themes.

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The results revealed that, of all 322 cases found, 83-84% showed a combination of conceptual metaphors and metonymies. After being classified into 21 theme groups, the analysis revealed that the center of most conceptual metaphors and metonymies was found to be linked to “human.” This finding indicated that conceptual metaphors and metonymies were, most of the time, based on human life and experiences that were pervasive in everyday life. These conceptual metaphors and metonymies are shared universally and play a role in truly understanding culture-specific beliefs and practices, especially in the Chinese American society. It is hoped that better understanding of the commonality gained from this research can help guide future research in cognitive linguistic analysis of other literary works.

Keywords: Chinese American, metaphor, metonymy, literary works

บทคัดย่อ

อุปลักษณ์และนามนัยซึ่งเป็นประเภทของสำนวนโวหารสามารถนำมาใช้เป็นหลักในการวิเคราะห์สุนทรียภาพในงานวรรณกรรม ทว่าในเชิงภาษาศาสตร์ปริชาน อุปลักษณ์และนามนัยยังปรากฏในชีวิตประจำวันและสะท้อนมโนทัศน์ของมนุษย์ งานวิจัยนี้อิงทฤษฎีภาษาศาสตร์ปริชาน โดยมีจุดประสงค์ในการวิเคราะห์อุปลักษณ์และนามนัยเชิงมโนทัศน์ของจอร์จ เลคอฟและมาร์ค จอห์นสัน (2003) ที่ปรากฏในงานวรรณกรรมจีนอเมริกันสองเรื่องคือ *The Joy Luck Club* ของเอมี แทน (2016) และ *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* ของเอมี ชิว (2011) โดยนำอุปลักษณ์และนามนัยหลักที่สกัดจากงานวรรณกรรมทั้งสองเรื่องมาวิเคราะห์เชิงปริมาณและคุณภาพ

และจัดประเภทตามกลุ่มความคิด ผลการวิจัยเปิดเผยว่า 83-84% จากจำนวนทั้งหมด 322 กรณีที่พบเป็นทั้งอุปลักษณและนามนัยเชิงมโนทัศน์ ผลการวิเคราะห์กลุ่มความคิดจำนวน 21 กลุ่มพบว่า ศูนย์กลางของอุปลักษณและนามนัยนั้นเชื่อมโยงกับ “มนุษย์” ข้อค้นพบนี้ชี้ให้เห็นว่าอุปลักษณและนามนัยเชิงมโนทัศน์อยู่ในชีวิตประจำวันและประสบการณ์มนุษย์มากที่สุด อุปลักษณและนามนัยนี้เป็นสากลลักษณและมีบทบาทต่อความเข้าใจ ความเชื่อและธรรมเนียมปฏิบัติที่เป็นลักษณะเฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมโดยเฉพาะในสังคมจีนอเมริกัน หวังว่างานวิจัยนี้ทำให้เราเข้าใจความเป็นธรรมดาสามัญดีขึ้นและชี้แนวทางวิจัยด้านภาษาศาสตร์ปริชานในงานวรรณกรรมอื่นในอนาคต

คำสำคัญ: จีนอเมริกัน อุปลักษณ นามนัย งานวรรณกรรม

Introduction

Comprehending the use of figures of speech such as metaphor, metonymy, simile, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, and paradox can enhance our appreciation of the esthetics of literary works (Suwathikul, 1995). Figures of speech used in literary works reflect the so-called “literary style” (Prasitrathsint, 1998), exemplified by the figurative words found in a non-fiction book entitled “Teacher in the Cookie Shop” (Payungsri, 2021), and metaphor in discourse (Semino, 2008). Figurative words in literary works can uncover underlying concepts of humans. These concepts, when analyzed, can create an association of ideas and lead to mutual understanding among interested individuals and/or in academia (Nagavajara, 2020). Additionally, these concepts can mirror the relationship between

language and worldview, as stated in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Hinton, 1994), as well as the global and local or the so-called “glocal” culture behind the authors’ thoughts. In fact, the concepts encompass thoughts about our life, mind, and beliefs that are abstractions (Pinker, 2015).

An approach that allows us to truly understand human life, mind, thoughts, beliefs, and culture is through the use of conceptual figurative language elements such as conceptual metaphor and metonymy. This approach is based on cognitive linguistics (Evans, 2019; Saralamba, 2005). To the view of Lakoff (2004), every word has a frame that can be evoked when we negate it: framing is a way to use language to link to our worldview. He gave the example in (1).

(1) “*Don’t think of an **elephant!** Whatever you do, do not think of an **elephant.**”*

(Lakoff, 2004, p.3)

In (1), the word “elephant” has a frame “large.” When we negate the frame “*Don’t think of an elephant!*,” we evoke the frame. In this case, “an elephant” is not a real animal, but is mapped with “*Whatever you do (should not be big).*”

In cognitive linguistic theory, framing is linked to our metaphorical conceptual system, which can be found in everyday life (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003), as exemplified in (2).

- (2) “***TIME IS MONEY.***
You’re wasting my time.”

(Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p.7)

In this metaphor, an abstract (target) domain: “TIME” is mapped with another (source) domain “MONEY” which is concrete. Both share our common universal-cultural concept of a valuable commodity. Thus, viewing a metaphor conceptually can lead us to introspect about framing and embedded culture related to the metaphor. As a metaphor can be a partial mapping between the two domains (Feyaerts, 2003), we can interpret that, “TIME” is not always “MONEY.” For example, we cannot make a deposit of “TIME” at a monetary bank.

The view of conceptual framing also applies to conceptual metonymy with a part-whole frame (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014). Unlike the usage by traditional grammarians, “metonymy” in cognitive linguistics includes “synecdoche” and offers the part-whole view, which can be between a larger and a smaller subcategory (categorical metonymy) or between parts of the same frame (frame metonymy). Examples are in (3) and (4).

- (3) “*Two **heads** are better than one.*”

(Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014, p.102)

- (4) “*a working **mother***”

(Lakoff, 1990, pp.80-84)

Example 3 shows a part-whole frame metonymy in that the word “heads” specifies a body part that refers to a person’s whole “BODY” frame. In Example (4), “a working mother” presents a metonymic model or social stereotypes under the cluster model of “MOTHER” with other “MOTHER” terms and their associated social stereotypes such as *a housewife mother*, *a stepmother*, *a foster mother*, etc. (Lakoff, 1990).

With a holistic view of the previous literature, conceptual metaphors and metonymies have been studied to derive theories of use as indicated above. The theories have been based on corpora such as: the conceptual metaphor “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” (Saralamba, 2021); discourse studies e.g., the conceptual metaphor “AIDS IS AN ENEMY” (Angkapanichkit, 2019, p. 209); comparative lexical semantics e.g., body parts and metaphorical expressions (Matisoff, 1986); or on ontological metaphor translations from a non-fiction book (Pomsook & Akanishdha, 2022).

Literary works have often been examined in general terms such as critical reading (Yin, 2005) or use of figurative language (Umiyati & Susanthi, 2022), or specifically the impact of parenting styles on the behavior of children (Pattana, 2020). However, research using cognitive linguistics to examine the use of conceptual metaphors and metonymies was found to be limited. A question arose as to how conceptual metaphors and metonymies reflect thoughts, social stereotypes, and culture. This research is then expected to provide valuable answers to this question.

This study used cognitive linguistics to analyze conceptual metaphors and metonymies, with some related similes in two Chinese American literary works: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011). The books, both written in American English and acclaimed as New York Times Bestseller, were chosen since their stories are based on the real lives of Chinese-American females from different generations. *The Joy Luck Club* contains the Chinese American life stories of four families and is focused on mother-daughter relationships. The four mothers, having passed through hardship during the war in China, were first-generation Chinese immigrants in America. Their daughters were born and raised in America (second generation). This book features intercultural communication among characters of different ethnicities (Kanoksilpatham, 2023). *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* offers the contemporary view of a Chinese-American mother, as the second generation, who raised her two Chinese-American daughters, the third generation.

Both books illustrate the comparative and contrastive views of the Chinese (Eastern or Oriental) culture and the American (Western) culture: on the one hand, from the eyes of the first generation born and raised in China and, on the other hand, from the eyes of the second and third generations who were born and raised in Chinese families in America. Others have commented on these differences in views. Chunharuangdej (2008) explains that the Chinese culture includes beliefs in Confucianism, the dualistic ‘yin-yang’ worldview, gratitude, and other civic virtues. Like Tan (2016) and Chua (2011), it can be noted that Asian mother-

daughter conflicts in America are commonly found in other literature e.g., in poems of an Asian mother and daughter living in America by Cathy Song (Yuvajita, 2008). In a sociolinguistic study, Tannen (2006) reveals that mother-daughter conflicts universally exist among different races; mothers try to get involved with daughters; but daughters wish to be independent and view mothers' comments as criticism, especially on dress, hair, and appearance. Scollon and Scollon (2001) explain cultural differences among Chinese American females based upon different generations: Authoritarians, Depression/War, Baby Boomers, and InfoChild, and especially note the fact that the later generations have developed to be more self-expressed, individual, and socialized.

It is believed that, to some degree, the similarities and differences between Chinese versus American concepts, thoughts, beliefs, and culture, can be revealed in the use of conceptual metaphors and metonymies in Chinese-American literary works. This research provides a fusion view of Eastern-Western disparity by analyzing this usage.

Objectives

The objectives of this research, based on cognitive linguistics theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003), first, were to find the conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes (if any), presented in the two Chinese American literary works: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011); and, second, to analyze and categorize the derived data into different theme groups.

Research Methodology

This is documentary research that did not require human subjects. First, based on the cognitive linguistics theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003), major conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes (if any) were extracted from the two literary works: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011). In detail, a **conceptual metaphor** consists of two domains that share common characteristics or framing such as “TIME IS MONEY,” as in (2) above. “TIME” is one (abstract, target) domain, but “MONEY” is another (concrete, source) domain, and both are valuable resources. A **conceptual metonymy**, appearing in an excerpt in the literary works, has the part-whole concept, as exemplified previously in (3) in which “heads” are construed as persons. A **simile** is similar to a metaphor, but it has a preposition such as “as, like, as if, etc.”

Second, to quantify the results, the data gained were documented in MS Word and Excel programs for linguistic analysis and quantification, respectively. The quantification of the data was divided into two parts. The first part was designed to show the number of cases found for conceptual metaphors (MP), metonymies (MN), similes (S), a combination of a metaphor and a metonymy (MPN), a combination of a metaphor and a simile (MPS), and a combination of a metonymy and a simile (MNS).

The second part was the classification of conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes (if any), based on theme groups. Qualitative data were also added to provide detailed

information on the conceptual metaphors and metonymies discovered.

Findings

The results are presented in two main sections: the conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes in the two books (Section 1) and their analysis and categorization (Section 2).

1. The Conceptual Metaphors, Metonymies, and Similes in the Two Literary Works

In this research, a total of 322 cases of conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes were extracted from the two books: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011). Each case was analyzed to find whether it was only a metaphor (MP, thereafter), a metonymy (MN), a simile (S), or a combination of a metaphor and a metonymy (MPN), a combination of a metaphor and a simile (MPS), or a combination of a metonymy and a simile (MNS), as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1

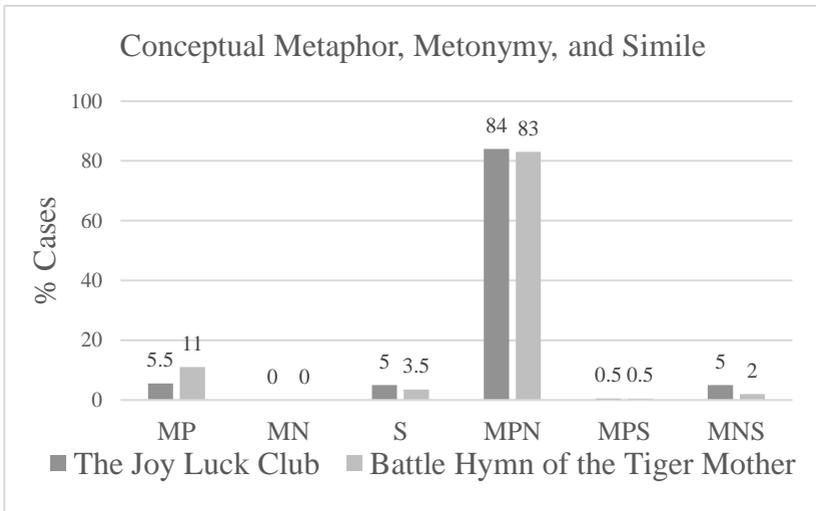
The Conceptual Metaphors, Metonymies, and Similes in the Two Books (No. of and % Cases)

Types	The Joy Luck Club No. (%)	Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother No. (%)
Metaphor (MP)	9 (5.5%)	17 (11%)
Metonymy (MN)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Simile (S)	8 (5%)	6 (3.5%)

Types	The Joy Luck Club No. (%)	Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother No. (%)
Metaphor and metonymy (MPN)	135 (84%)	134 (83%)
Metaphor and simile (MPS)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)
Metonymy and simile (MNS)	8 (5%)	3 (2%)
Total (322)	161 (100%)	161 (100%)

Figure 1

The Conceptual Metaphors, Metonymies, and Similes in the Two Books (% Cases)



Note: MP=Metaphor, MN=Metonymy, S=Simile, MPN=Metaphor and Metonymy, MPS=Metaphor and Simile, and MNS=Metonymy and Simile (MNS)

The quantitative data in Table 1 and Figure 1 revealed that, of all 161 cases in *The Joy Luck Club* and another 161 cases in *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, surprisingly, most were found to be a combination of a metaphor and a metonymy (MPN): 135 cases (84%) and 134 cases (83%), respectively. Only a few cases were solely metaphors (9 cases = 5.5% and 17 cases = 11%); similes (8 cases = 5% and 6 cases = 3.5%); a combination of a metonymy and a simile (8 cases = 5% and 3 cases = 2%); and a combination of a metaphor and a simile (1 case = 0.5% for both). No case was found to be only metonymy (0%).

2. The Analysis and Categorization of Metaphors, Metonymies, and Similes in the Two Literary Works

The data were analyzed and categorized, based on themes related to the conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

The Themes of the Conceptual Metaphors, Metonymies, and Similes in the Two Books (No. of and % Cases)

Themes	The Joy Luck Club (JLC) No. (%)	Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother No. (%)
1. Family	2 (1.24%)	5 (3.1%)
2. Body parts	38 (23.56%)	31 (19.22%)
3. 3a. Animals (Chinese zodiac)	10 (6.2%)	12 (7.44%)
3b. Animals (general)	20 (12.4%)	5 (3.1%)

Themes	The Joy Luck Club (JLC) No. (%)	Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother No. (%)
4. Wars (arguments and leukemia)	1 (0.62%)	50 (31%)
5. Key figures	19 (11.78%)	9 (5.58%)
6. Ethnicity	11 (6.82%)	11 (6.82%)
7. TIME IS MONEY.	0 (0%)	6 (3.72%)
8. HAPPY IS UP.	0 (0%)	2 (1.24%)
9. Containers	2 (1.24%)	0 (0%)
10. Directions	8 (4.96%)	0 (0%)
11. Astrology	7 (4.34%)	0 (0%)
12. Five elements	9 (5.58%)	0 (0%)
13. Temperature	2 (1.24%)	2 (1.24%)
14. Dreams	2 (1.24%)	10 (6.2%)
15. Valuable objects	5 (3.1%)	0 (0%)
16. Plants and produces	8 (4.96%)	4 (2.48%)
17. Music	1 (0.62%)	6 (3.72%)
18. House	4 (2.48%)	0 (0%)
19. Food	6 (3.72%)	0 (0%)
20. Life (path, hope, container, and rope)	0 (0%)	4 (2.48%)
21. Others	6 (3.72%)	4 (2.48%)
Total (322 cases)	161 (100%)	161 (100%)

Table 2 presents the number of cases of conceptual metaphors, metonymies, and similes from the two literary works: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011) classified into 21 theme groups: (1)

family, (2) body parts, (3) animals (Chinese zodiac and general), (4) wars (arguments and leukemia), (5) key figures, (6) ethnicity, (7) TIME IS MONEY, (8) HAPPY IS UP, (9) containers, (10) directions, (11) astrology, (12) five elements, (13) temperature, (14) dreams, (15) valuable objects, (16) plants and produces, (17) music, (18) house, (19) food, (20) life, and (21) others (miscellaneous items).

The details of the conceptual metaphors and metonymies found in nine selected major themes: family, body parts, animals, wars, key figures, TIME IS MONEY, HAPPY IS UP, plants, and life, are described qualitatively in Sections 2.1-2.9 below.

2.1 Family

In the two books (Chua, 2011; Tan, 2016), the framing of “a family” includes family members (a husband, a wife, a father, a mother, children, siblings, genetic relatives, in-law relatives, and so on); the relationship among family members; and the place which members can call “home.” Excerpt (5) shows a combination of a metaphor and metonymy.

(5) Amy Chua’s mother said to Amy: “*Lulu’s not you*—and *she’s not Sophia*. She has a different personality, and you can’t force her.”

(Chua, 2011, pp.185-186)

In (5), this excerpt is an utterance from Amy Chua’s mother in which she explains to Amy Chua that Lulu, Amy’s daughter, is not Amy, nor Sophia (Lulu’s sister). It can be counted

as a **metaphor** in that *Lulu* is one (target) entity/domain; the pronoun *you* (Amy; a source domain) indicates another domain; and *Sophia* is another source domain. All three domains share the same genetic relationship between a mother (Amy) and daughters (Sophia and Lulu). In the explanation of Amy's mother, although Lulu is Amy's genetic second daughter, Lulu is not exactly Amy. Lulu has her own personality. That "*Lulu's not you*" corresponds to Lakoff's saying: "*When we negate a frame, we evoke the frame*" (Lakoff, 2004, p.3). Excerpt (5) can be viewed as a part-whole relationship or **metonymy**: Lulu can be viewed as a part of Amy from a mother-daughter relationship or as a family member.

2.2 Body Parts

Body parts are universally linked to metaphors and metonymies both in Southeast Asian languages such as Thai, Tibetan, Burmese, and Lahu, as well as in Western languages e.g., English (Matisoff, 1986).

From the findings in this research, in both books, many metaphors and metonymies have human body parts as their components, as in (6) and (7).

(6) Lindo Jong (Mother) said to Vincent (Waverly's brother): "*Meimei play, squeeze all her brains out for win chess. You play, worth squeeze towel.*"

(Tan, 2016, p.99)

In (6), "brains" are body parts. The framing of "a brain" is about one's thoughts or the process of thinking. In this case, it

is a **metaphor** “A BRAIN (a target domain) IS A TOWEL (a source domain).” In other words, “to squeeze a brain” or to be able to think is mapped with “to squeeze a towel.” Lindo Jong’s utterance means that Waverly Jong has to think hard to win the chess game. In addition, “a brain” is a body part and can stand for Waverly’s intelligence. Thus it can be a **metonymy**.

(7) *“Even at fifty, which is how old she [Florence] was when I first met her, she **turned heads at parties**. She was also witty and charming, but definitely judgmental.”*

(Chua, 2011, p.101)

Excerpt (7) has the phrase “*turned heads at parties*” which means get the attention of people. This idiom is both a **metaphor** and a **metonymy**. An **orientational metaphor** is “HEAD (a target domain) IS FRONT (a source domain).” Lakoff and Johnson (2003) explained that, depending on a physical basis, we face what is in front of us. Thus, what we face can catch our attention. Besides, the word “HEADS” names a body part. It refers to the whole person and construes the part-whole relationship as a **metonymy**.

2.3 Animals

Previously, Saralamba (2021) explained the conceptual “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” metaphor in English and Thai.

In this research, the conceptual “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” **metaphor** was found in both literary works and can be subcategorized into “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” in the

Chinese zodiac years (rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and boar) and “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” in general. Examples are in (8)-(12).

(8) *“I was born in the Year of the Tiger...**Tiger people** are noble, fearless, powerful, authoritative, and magnetic. They’re also supposed to be lucky.”*

(Chua, 2011, p.13)

In (8), the noun phrase “*Tiger people*” can construe the “PERSONS (who were born in the Chinese zodiac year of Tiger) ARE TIGERS” **metaphor**. Both “PERSONS” (a target domain) and “TIGERS” (a source domain) share the characteristics of being noble, fearless, powerful, authoritative, and magnetic. As the Tiger zodiac year is a part of all twelve years and Tiger people are a part of the total population, this can be referred to as a part-whole relationship or a **metonymy**.

(9) (Waverly Jong) *“**I’m a rabbit**, born in 1951, supposedly sensitive, with tendencies toward being thin-skinned and skitter at the first sign of criticism.”*

(Tan, 2016, p.183)

Excerpt (9) illustrates a combination of a **metaphor** and a **metonymy**: “*I’m a rabbit*.” In this case, “I” (Waverly Jong, a target domain) is mapped with the “RABBIT” animal (a source domain) in the Chinese zodiac year. Both “I” and “RABBIT” have the common characteristics of being sensitive, thin-skinned, and skitter. Like (8), the “Rabbit” is one of the

twelve zodiac years, and a Rabbit person is a part of the entire people. Thus, this can be a **metonymy**.

Besides the excerpts with the animals in the Chinese zodiac years, the “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” metaphor includes animals in general, as in (10).

(10) (An-mei Hsu) *“And when my brother shouted that Auntie was a talking chicken without a head.”*

(Tan, 2016, p.35)

In (10), the expression “*Auntie was a talking chicken without a head.*” is both a **metaphor** and a **metonymy**, as “Auntie” (a target domain) is mapped with “a talking chicken without a head” (a source domain). The common characteristics of both “Auntie” and “chicken” are that they talk a lot without worthy thoughts or content.

Additionally, the “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” metaphor includes other general “ANIMALS,” as in (11).

(11) *“My father was the black sheep in his family. His mother disfavored him and treated him unfairly. ...my father’s family was almost dead to him.”*

(Chua, 2011, pp.232-233)

Excerpt (11) is a **metaphor** and a **metonymy** in that Amy Chua’s father (a target domain) is mapped with the black sheep (a source domain). In English (Saralamba, 2021), “the black sheep” conveys the meaning of “a disliked member of a

family.” In this **metaphor**, Amy Chua’s father did not get along well with his family like the black sheep which stands out from the other family members or the white sheep. The black sheep can be viewed as a part of the whole group, and thus it is also **a metonymy**.

The “HUMANS-ANIMALS” relationship can be reversed to be “ANIMALS ARE HUMANS,” as in (12).

(12) Lindo Jong said to Rich Schields (Waverly Jong’s fiancé), “*Why you are not eating the best part? ... You have to dig in here, get this out. **The brain** is most tastiest, you try.*”

(Tan, 2016, p.227)

In (12), crabs are considered to be luxurious food by both Asians and Westerners. The best part of the crab (“*the orange spongy part*”) is mapped with the most important body part of humans which is the brain. Thus, **the metaphor** is “CRABS (a target domain) ARE HUMANS (a source domain).” It is also **a metonymy**, with the part-whole concept of the orange spongy part and the whole crab.

2.4 Wars

The two books present the relationships between mothers-daughters and leukemia as wars. In the former case, mothers and daughters are female, but, based on Tannen (2006), their conflicts are universal and rooted in the mothers’ involvement, as opposed to the daughters’ wishes to be independent. In Tan (2016), it can be

implied that Asian girls have been taught to be obedient, keep their parents' promise, and behave well. The mother-daughter conflicts between the first and second generations are not simply viewed as wars. Rather, when conflicts occur, mothers (the first generation), cultivated to keep their feelings inside, tend to be silent. Unlike Tan (2016), Chua (2011) discloses the mother-daughter (second-third generations) conflicts as wars as younger generations tend to speak out. It corresponds with Scollon and Scollon (2001) that four different generations of Americans were embedded with different cultures and that younger generations are more self-expressed and independent. Examples are in (13)-(15).

(13) *“Lulu and I fought like beasts—Tiger versus Boar—and the more she resisted, the more I went on the offensive.”*

(Chua, 2011, p.50)

(14) *“The house became a war zone.”*

(Chua, 2011, p.68)

(15) *“Lulu was always collecting allies, marshaling her troops.”*

(Chua, 2011, p.75)

In (13)-(15), Amy Chua (2011) sees her relationship with her second daughter, Lulu, as a war. Both Amy and Lulu were born and raised in America, unlike the first generation in the *Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) who was born and grew up in China. The Amy-

Lulu conflicts are based on arguments, not physical attacks. Thus, these conflicts correspond to Lakoff and Johnson's **metaphors**: "ARGUMENT (a target domain) IS WAR (a source domain)" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, pp.4-5) and "ARGUMENT IS A FIGHT" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p.84), as seen from the terms: "*fought, Tiger versus Boar, offensive, a war, allies, and troops,*" in (13)-(15). This concept also matches the part-whole **metonymy** as *the two sides (Tiger versus Boar), a war zone, allies, and troops* are elements of "WAR."

Besides, the concept of "WAR" is related to illness: leukemia, which is mapped with the framing of "enemy," as in (16)-(17).

(16) "*Her leukemia [Florence's] was **aggressive** and would almost certainly relapse within six months to a year.*"

(Chua, 2011, p.103)

(17) "*Katrin's leukemia was so **aggressive** that the doctors at Dana-Farber told her she had to go straight to a bone marrow transplant.*"

(Chua, 2011, p.203)

Excerpts (16)-(17) exemplify how "leukemia" is construed as "HUMAN" from the word "aggressive." This negative word implies that "leukemia" is on the opposite side of us and can attack us. It leads to the **metaphor**: "LEUKEMIA (a target domain) IS ENEMY (a source domain)." This matches the concept of a disease as an enemy in the case of HIV/AIDS (Angkapanichkit, 2019).

Additionally, being aggressive is a symptom of leukemia, and this can be counted as a part-whole **metonymy**.

2.5 Key Figures

The characters in the two books are mapped with key figures, as in (18)-(20).

(18) The grandmother [An-mei Hsu] said to the baby (granddaughter): “*You (the baby) say **you are Syi Wang Mu, Queen Mother of the Western Skies**, now come back to give me the answer!*”

(Tan, 2016, p.239)

In (18), the expression “*you are Syi Wang Mu, Queen Mother of the Western Skies*” is a **metaphor** with “you” (the baby) in one (target) domain, mapped with “*Syi Wang Mu, Queen Mother of the Western Skies*” in another (source) domain. Both share the same characteristics of coming to teach the grandmother’s daughter about losing innocence but not hope. In addition, as “Queen Mother,” this can be interpreted as a **metonymy**, as a part of all mothers.

(19) “*She [Lulu]’s a wild one with **an angel’s face**.*”

(Chua, 2011, p.11)

In (19), “*an angel’s face*” can be conceptualized as a **metaphor**: “A PERSON (a target domain) IS AN ANGEL (a source domain).” In this case, both Lulu and an angel have a characteristic in common: beauty. Additionally, as “face” is

a body part, it can be a part-whole **metonymy**, as stated in Lakoff and Johnson (2003).

(20) “*Sophia clearly was a Mozart person.*”

(Chua, 2011, p.64)

In (20), the expression “*a Mozart person*” is a **metaphor**: “A PERSON (a target domain) IS MOZART (a source domain).” “MOZART” refers to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, one of the greatest pianists. In this **metaphor**, Sophia is mapped with Mozart, and both share the same talent for playing piano. However, Sophia is not entirely the same as Mozart, and thus it shows a part-whole concept, which can be considered a **metonymy**.

2.6 TIME IS MONEY

The metaphorical expression “TIME (a target domain) IS MONEY (a source domain)” is universal and can be found in these literary works, as exemplified in (21).

(21) “*So the more **time** Lulu **wasted**—quibbling with me, drilling halfheartedly, clowning around—the longer I made her play.*”

(Chua, 2011, p.74)

In (21), the verb “*wasted*” which co-occurs with the noun “*time*” evokes **the metaphor**: “TIME IS MONEY” as both are valuable resources. Verbs such as “*waste, spend, take, etc.*” can be used with both “TIME” and “MONEY,” as in Lakoff and Johnson (2003).

2.7 HAPPY IS UP

The “HAPPY (a target domain) IS UP (a source domain)” metaphor also appears in these literary works, as in (22).

(22) *“One good thing in our lives, though, was Coco [a pet dog], who got cuter by the day. She had the same strange effect on all four of us. Just looking at her **lifted our spirits.**”*

(Chua, 2011, p.116)

Excerpt (22) illustrates **the metaphor**: “HAPPY IS UP;” as Amy Chua’s family felt very happy with the pet dog named “Coco.” Its cuteness “*lifted our spirits.*” The verb “lifted” presents the view of the “UP” direction. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) explained that “HAPPY IS UP” is a **spatial-orientational metaphor**. Universally, positive feelings direct to the “UP” orientation.

2.8 Plants

The framing of “HUMANS” (a target domain) can be conceptualized as “PLANTS” (a source domain) as both are living things, can grow, and can reproduce, as in (23).

(23) Lindo Jong told Huang Taitai, *“And finally, I saw him **plant a seed** in a servant girl’s womb. He said this girl only pretends to come from a bad family. But she is really from imperial blood, and... He said the servant girl is Tyan-yu’s true spiritual wife. And **the seed he has planted will grow into Tyan-yu’s child.**”*

(Tan, 2016, p.62)

In (23), Lindo Jong told Huang Taitai about what Tyan-yu's grandfather said to her (Lindo Jong) in her dream. In this excerpt, the human action of reproduction between Tyan-yu and a servant girl is mapped with the "planting a seed" concept. This leads to the "HUMANS ARE PLANTS" **metaphor**. Besides, this can be a **metonymy** as "a seed" is part of a plant, and "a child" in a womb is part of a woman.

2.9 Life

"LIFE" of humans is abstract and can be mapped with different concrete or abstract objects, as in (24) and (25).

(24) Amy Chua said to Sophia, *"I've decided to favor a hybrid approach, ...The best of both worlds. The Chinese way until the child is eighteen, to develop confidence and the value of excellence, then the Western way after that. Every individual has to find their own path."*

(Chua, 2011, p.248)

In (24), the sentence: *"Every individual has to find their own path."* can be implied that a child can find one's own way of life. This can be construed as the "LIFE (a target domain) IS A PATH (a source domain)" spatial **metaphor**. "A PATH" is construed as where one walks from the starting point (birth) to the endpoint or destination (death). Along the way, there are life stories. This includes the path ahead of us as our future life and the path behind us as our past life. Thus, in this **metaphor**, "LIFE" is an abstract domain that is mapped with "PATH,"

a concrete domain with shared spatial linear conceptualization. “A PATH” can be viewed as a part of life, and thus it expresses the part-whole relationship which is considered a **metonymy**.

(25) [Amy Chua] “Given that life is so *short* and so *fragile*, surely each of us should be trying to get the most out of every breath, every fleeting moment. But what does it mean to *live life to its fullest*?”

(Chua, 2011, p.248)

The concepts of “LIFE” in (25) can be mapped with a rope, as seen from the word “short.” In another interpretation, “LIFE (a target domain) IS A CUP (A CONTAINER) (a source domain).” The word “*short*” can mean the smaller size of a cup. In addition, the word “*fragile*” gives a picture of a cup that is breakable and needs to be handled with care. The other phrase: “*its fullest*” can be conceptualized as a cup filled with a drink (water). “A cup filled with a drink” refers to how we can maximize our life or way of living. Altogether, “LIFE” and “CUP” share the mutual aspects of being short, fragile, and full. It is a **metaphor** and can also be a **metonymy** when we view “LIFE” or “CUP” as having parts or components.

In sum, the quantitative and qualitative results of the analysis of the two books: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011) revealed mainly conceptual metaphors and metonymies with similes, classified into 21 theme groups. Amongst them, nine selected themes: family, body parts, animals, wars, key figures, TIME IS MONEY,

HAPPY IS UP, plants, and life were, qualitatively, exemplified in detail. The results indicated a holistic view of the conceptual metaphors and metonymies related to human lives, as discussed in the next section.

Discussion

Firstly, in this research, 322 cases of conceptual metaphors and metonymies, together with some cases of similes, were found in the two books: *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) and *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011). Most of them were found to be a combination of a conceptual metaphor and a metonymy (83-84%). This suggests that conceptual metaphors and metonymies function as the main conceptual rhetoric devices in these two books to help interested readers better construe the lives of the characters. This finding is consistent with the view that conceptual metaphors and metonymies, indeed, are “pervasive in everyday life” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Pomsook & Akanisdha, 2022).

Secondly, from the data analysis, the conceptual metaphors and metonymies were classified into 21 types. In the main, each metaphor and/or metonymy is connected to “humans.” This can be interpreted as indicating that humans are the center or the focus of conceptual metaphors and metonymies in the two books; notably involving family, body parts, animals, wars, key figures, time, money, happiness, plants, and life. For example, many metaphors and metonymies involved the mapping of human body parts to non-human items e.g., “brains,” which are located at the top of the human body, are considered

the best part, and are mapped with the best part of the crab, as in (12). The metaphorical expression can be “A CRAB IS A PERSON,” like the expression “*the foot of a mountain*” with the “A MOUNTAIN IS A PERSON” metaphor in Lakoff and Johnson (2003).

Conceptual metaphors and metonymies blend our language and worldview together, as in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that language affects our thoughts and worldview, and vice versa (Hinton, 1994). We can examine the way in which this interaction between language and worldview relates to our perception of our life by using “PATH” in the “LIFE IS A PATH” example in Section 2.9. To Lakoff and Johnson (2003), “LIFE” can also be mapped with “A CONTAINER” or “A GAMBLING GAME.”

Universally, the results of conceptual metaphor and metonymy analyses have shown the frequent involvement of global thoughts and worldviews such as “TIME IS MONEY” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003); “MOTHER” (Lakoff, 1990); mother-daughter conflicts (Tannen, 2006); “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” (Saralamba, 2021); wars against diseases e.g., leukemia or AIDS (Angkapanichkit, 2019); and “HAPPY IS UP” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

The conceptual metaphors and metonymies mirror cultural specifics. An example is the belief that a person has his/her characteristics influenced by the animals associated with the year of birth according to the Chinese zodiac years. This construes the “HUMANS ARE ANIMALS” metaphor.

This research was based on the two books with the same theme by Chinese American authors living in America.

Accordingly, it yielded a view of Chinese American culture in terms of diachronic and contemporary culture. To be more specific, *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016) focused on the first generation who was born and raised in China and the second generation, born and raised in America. The *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011) concentrated on the second and third generations, born and raised in America. The two books accordingly complemented each other to yield some specific cultural conclusions. For example, the first (mother) generation, born and raised in China, has learned to keep their emotions and feelings inside, whereas the second and third generations have been trained to speak up. Thus, in *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan, 2016), when mothers were not satisfied with their daughters, they preferred to keep silent. In contrast, in *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011), the second (mother) generation, born and raised in America, spoke up when the daughter did not comply with what the mother expected. The mother-daughter arguments in Chua (2011) are explicit and lead to many more metaphorical cases of the “ARGUMENT IS WAR/ARGUMENT IS A FIGHT” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). These findings are consistent with what Scollon and Scollon (2001) mentioned about the cultural differences among four different generations of Asian Americans. That is, younger generations become more self-expressive, individualized, and independent.

Conclusion

This research provides a view of how conceptual metaphors and metonymies in cognitive linguistics theories can be applied to literary works and has implications far beyond the

literary analysis per se. Rather, the results reflect our universal experiences but culture-specific conceptualizations of how we, as humans, see the world. This research can benefit not only the literature discipline, but also other fields: linguistics, cognitive science, and psychology. It is hoped that this research can inspire the future cognitive linguistic analysis of literary works.

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