



Metaphorical Focus In Salinger's The Catcher In The Rye

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Abstract

The article focuses on the metaphors of the literary text of *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger using George Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphor. The research examines how metaphors take linguistically different positions in the text of novels. The research is qualitative in nature and analyses how context-related semantic associations generate different concepts by comparing the target domain and the source domain domains using the cognitive stylistic framework. The researchers found that different idiosyncratic meanings emerged from the reader's perception. He also explored low-key and lucrative denominations. The research will be of great help to the scholars of cognitive stylistics.

Keywords: metaphors, George Lakoff, *The Catcher in the Rye*, Cognition, Mind Mappings.

Introduction

The metaphorical approach refers to the word used metaphorically as the approach that "stands out against the background of a literal frame" (Steen, 2002, p. 394). In literary fiction, however, metaphors are invariably present and scattered throughout the semantic field, but the presence of metaphors is more difficult to assess, as these stories tend to be a faithful representation of real life. Consequently, the presence of these metaphors allows the stories to resonate with the reader's exposition according to the schema theory (Bartlett, 1932), but which tends to be subconsciously related to the theme of the story. Similarly, the ambiguities and confusions that result from multi-layered text lost in connotations stimulate the brain to think that a piece of literature is using strange similarities to evoke things that are not directly there. This compelling appearance leads to the metaphor that is perhaps one of the most defining characteristics of language. According to Hawkes; "The metaphor resides at the heart of language and actually defines and refines it, and therefore the human being" (Hawkes, 1997). Metaphors not only embellish language, but are somehow embedded in cognitive structures that help to understand hidden messages. The metaphor involves the use of a poetic expression that is used to make a comparison between two different things for a better understanding. Likewise, cognitive stylistics, which is part of applied linguistics, is the result of conscious activities of the mind. According to Stockwell (2002, p. 46)

thinks that "cognitive stylistics offers a new way of thinking about literature that includes the application of cognitive linguistics and psychology to literary texts" (Gavins & Steen, 2003, p. 35). It suggests that cognitive stylistics deals with linguistic attributes related to the interpretation and perception of the reader. In addition, cognitive stylistics serves as a bridge between literature and psychology. Freeman (2000, p. 253) explains the concept as "the products of other knowing spirits in the context of the physical and sociocultural worlds in which they were created and read" (Glotova, 2014, p. 2445).

Stockwell (2002, p. 15) argues that cognitive stylistics manages the cognitive abilities of people who, based on their prior knowledge, understand both the apparent and underlying meanings of texts. Helps draw parallels between text and context through knowledge and beliefs. Woldemariam (2015, p. 18) states that cognitive stylistics plays its role on the basis of the analytical association of different things. Therefore, it can be said that cognitive stylistics focused its attention on contextualization rather textualization.

Conceptual metaphor theory

Conceptual metaphors are perhaps the most effective tools for forming an epistemological concept that a piece of literature seeks to complete in order to be credible. The mind is not an impartial agent working unaided, but tends to add a layer of connotation to the denotative value of a given word. Many writers have an uncanny tendency to spread metaphors throughout their semantic field to convey ideas that may not be very easy to convey unless they are hidden under the intricate cloak of metaphors. These metaphors are examined in the light of George Lakoff's (1993) conceptual / cognitive metaphor theory. The theory will provide the basic theoretical framework to identify the source domains and map the target domains in the context of the novel and what impact they have on the reader's perception.

The Catcher in the Rye

The story of the novel itself is nothing more than a colossal metaphor; because writers create characters who go on various adventures, these adventures function as descriptive metaphors for actual events. In some cases, there are stories in the form of allegories deliberately presented as blatant metaphors; in other cases, there are fact-based stories that invite the reader to evoke metaphorical inferences about the topic by gathering fact-based meanings of real events. Sometimes metaphors seem to be a unifying central image or images that hold everything together, especially in stories with many subplots. These metaphors elevate a story from good to memorable.

J. D. Salinger and The Catcher in the Rye

Jerome David Salinger was an American writer best known for his outstanding work *The Catcher in the Rye*, published in 1951. Salinger began composing his masterpieces while still in school. His university professor advised him to pursue his writing career. He also served as a sergeant in WWII. Few chapters of *The Catcher in the Rye* reflect insights from his personal exposure, which he gained on the battlefield visiting various Nazi German concentration camps. Holden's experience in Central Park and the deep meanings in the closing lines of *The Catcher in the Rye*: "Never say anything to anyone. If you do that, you will miss everyone" (Salinger, 1951, p. 230) they praise us with the presence of the author among the psychology of the narrator, who continued to be a

victim of frustration and detachment even in the critical period of the Second World War. World. He had also suffered a nervous breakdown in 1945 after witnessing a terrible bloodshed in Luxembourg (Augustyn, 2021). The peculiarity of Salinger in relation to his fiction was that he never wanted to be rewritten.

Research Objectives

The research focuses on examples of metaphors used in the text *The Catcher in the Rye* to examine the effects of metaphors on the meanings in the text of *The Catcher in the Rye*.

Literature review

This chapter provides an overview of the relevant literature on metaphors and theories related to metaphors. In addition, scientific articles and other relevant research are taken into account in order to open the theoretical and speculative bases for the study of the metaphors of Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. Gonçalves and Craine (1990) affirm that metaphors play a key role in the field of cognitive therapy, which allows the individual to find the characteristics of the inner personality through the subconscious scheme of knowledge in a metaphorical way. However, Nisbett and Wilson (1977) discover the basic principles of cognitive therapy by stating that the mechanism should not be limited only to words spoken in response related to physical observation, but metaphorical expressions related to the nature of the client and perception. Similarly, in his research article "The Cohesive Role of Cognitive Metaphor in Discourse and Conversation", Ponterotto (2012) states that cognition plays a central role in structuring conversations and suggests that conceptual metaphors are considered a fundamental component of cognitive theories of discourse. . However, Bailey (2003) shows that conceptual metaphors play a prominent role in understanding the true nature of any language. In addition, conceptual metaphor theory helps with language teaching and analysis of literary texts. She goes on to say about "metaphorical competence" (Low, 1988) that it is an exemplary phenomenon of knowing things on a deeper level. Consequently, Romero and Soria (2005) reflect on metaphorical expressions in the prism of Lakoff and Johnson's theory (1980) and delve into the literal and non-literal uses of expressions. Analysing the metaphor in the mind, Camp (2006) focuses on the meaning of metaphors in cognitive science and psychology. Psycholinguists believe that metaphors, along with other poetic means, distinguish text from literal text. Furthermore, Kövecses (2008) propagates some criticism regarding the conceptual metaphor theory that the conceptual metaphor theory has worked a lot in linguistics and literature.

Furthermore, Casasanto (2009) carries out a study on the difference between two metaphorical domains, which can be modified depending on the specifications. Basically, a metaphorical term is an abstract entity that can be perceived according to related knowledge. Lakoff (1993, p. 244) believes that "metaphors are primarily conceptual in nature, not linguistic." People tend to use conceptual metaphors based on abstract ideas, whether they use language or not. As for linguistic metaphors, it depends more on the contextual information by which the metaphors can be identified. Mental representations are formed as the use of language differs more widely from those images that are created as a product of understanding, memory, and experience. At the same time, Gibbs (2009) affirms in his study that it is about the inclination of people towards the theory of conceptual metaphor due to its specific nature. As for metaphors,

it gives readers the opportunity to take the meaning with them anywhere in terms of its context and background. Also, Zhang & Hu (2009) assume metaphors as the tools with which we see the world with different dimensions and that ultimately influence our way of thinking.

Boot and Pecher (2010) argue, however, that abstract entities in the metaphorical realm are generally perceived when thinking about objects that exist in the real world. Boot & Pecher (2010) carried out an experiment in a non-linguistic area in which participants were selected to determine similarity and spatial proximity. Subsequently, the participants identified the colour specifications by comparing two entities based on spatial existence. They found that mental representations are not limited only to literary text, but that people can also draw mental mappings about proximity and identical things. Barcelona (2012) in his article 'On the plausibility of claiming a metonymic motivation for the conceptual metaphor' examines the empirical evidence and the theoretical solidity of the hypothesis that conceptual metaphors are necessarily motivated by metonymy. In his study, Musolff (2012) analyses metaphors in the sense of Critical Discourse Analysis, which show how linguists have linked them to extract parallel meanings in a social context. Likewise, Ibarretxe-Antuñano (2013) examines the relationship between conceptual metaphor and culture and considers that culture is the main entity responsible for developing meanings in cognitive linguistics, which is a mixture of different conceptual fields. Similarly, Sandikcioglu's (2014) essay *Orientalism: The Ideology behind the Metaphorical Gulf War* applies his personal interpretation of the cognitive theory of metaphor to his own analysis of the coverage of the Gulf War by two leading journals. Americans. Kövecses (2018) presents the idea of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory in the context of media communication, how the message is transmitted to the masses through metaphors and what effects they have on their perception when listening to the messages. Using metaphors, he finds that conceptual metaphor theory helps audiences to know better because it helps to investigate media cognition, which is a separate domain. Furthermore, the discourse of the media is shaped by the use of metaphorical expressions and the context.

Theoretical framework: The cognitive theory of metaphor

The study is based on the conceptual theory of metaphor in the field of cognitive stylistics. Cognitive stylistics is a growing field in the interpretation of fictional texts and provides a framework for how text can be processed and its meaning derived. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) point out those metaphors are not only limited to literary texts, but can also be found in various forms of language. The semantic aspect of metaphors has been anchored in the minds of users, who are fully aware of its use and the meaning associated with it. A conceptual metaphor is a systematic set of correspondences between two areas of experience (Kövecses, 2002). To understand the nature of metaphors, the derivation of one domain is unequivocally important for a clear understanding of the other domain.

Research Methodology

The objective of the section is to examine the research methodology that has been adapted to complete this dissertation that has helped in the analytical process of metaphor analysis by finding it in the literary text of *The Catcher in the Rye*. In the cognitive

field, Rye remains in George Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphors (1993). This research is qualitative and analytical in nature and examines the text of *The Catcher in the Rye* to extract and analyse the cognitive metaphors used. This method allows the scientist to explore metaphors that represent a different concept in general to understand the context more appropriately. The scholar has read the text of *The Catchers in the Rye* several times. The text from *The Catcher in the Rye* is used as the primary data source. Furthermore, our focus is on George Lakoff's (1993) cognitive metaphor theory. The data collection process requires a thorough understanding of various metaphors used by various characters in the text of *The Catcher in the Rye*. In addition, careful reading with concentration opens several factors in the perception of conceptual metaphors in context. Textual inferences are analysed in relation to the paradigm of theoretical interpretation of cognitive metaphors. Data was collected in symbolic form of words, phrases, and sentences. The most important thing is to look for the existence of metaphors that personify other concepts and, in particular, fit the text in a contextual way. The metaphors that generate different meanings come mostly from the conversation of the protagonist Holden Caulfield and illustrate the being of him in his immature age.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Seven metaphorical expressions were selected from Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* using the theory of conceptual metaphor. The first metaphor reflects the complex structure of the destination domain and the source domain.

1. But they are also extremely sensitive. (Salinger, 1951, p. 1)

The sentence essentially focuses on two abstract terms, namely "sensible" and "hell". The "sensible" correspondence is compared to the figure "hell". "Sensitive" means getting upset easily over small things or becoming sensitive and probably getting upset over various issues. Now what is "hell"? Probably a place that is very large and uncomfortable where no one wants to go. It also represents anger and frustration.

2. The whole team ostracized me. (Salinger, 1951, p. 3)

The type of text is narrative. In this scenario, mental constructions are integrated through map matching. Holden compares and contrasts with the metaphorical expression "exclusion." The person is compared to ostracism, a Greek concept of de facto selection for no particular reason. Then his school team graduated him. "Excluded" refers to being excluded from the team, just as the ancient Greeks did with the voters. The perception of the immediate situation is that the narrator, who is the protagonist of the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, has moved away from the group of his companions because he has forgotten some of the playground equipment. In this context, Holden Caulfield tells readers of his incident that he forgot his sports team on the subway and his entire team berated him throughout the trip.

3. He didn't give you a lot of horse manure about the great guy that was his father. He probably knew how fake he was. (Salinger, 1951, p. 3)

The source domain "his father" is compared to two things at the same time. One of the target areas is "horse manure", which helps manage the land and increases soil fertility. Therefore, comparing a person to "horse manure" is like increasing the attributes of that person. In the other mind map, a person is compared to a "wrong bum."

4. Pencey was full of scammers. (Salinger, 1951, p. 4)

The type of text is explanatory and makes the situation of the institution visible. The social setting is at Pencey, a high school with high standards. Children come from everywhere for a high-quality education. The purpose of the communication is to expose the factual evidence in the text and to deviate from the established norms and values. The narrator questions the cultural values of a renowned educational institute by comparing it to the objective domain "thief." The target domain "Pencey" is compared to the source domain "Crook". So, using metaphorical inference, the criminals are the people involved in the crime and morally corrupt. Measuring both at the same angle raises the real threat and questions about the thinking of the narrator, Holden Caulfield, as well as the location of 'Pencey'.

5. Life is a game, boy. Life is a game played by the rules. (Salinger, 1951, p. 9)

The correspondence "life" has been associated with the illustration of "a game" and "its rules", which also brings with it different realities due to the conceptualization of the reader. Now life is a mixture of many feelings. It is something that has ups and downs, be it moral or social. Life is the name of purpose and the fulfilment of that particular purpose requires rules and regulations. Attempts have been made to incorporate the belief system into the mind of a student who is struggling in life on various issues. The type of text is descriptive and describes the rules of life. The social context refers to Mr. Spencer's house. Mr. Spencer is a Holden Caulfield teacher who taught him history.

6. So I shot the bull for a while. I told him he was a real jerk and all that. (Salinger, 1951, p. 13)

Here, too, the scene is at Mr. Spencer's house. Mr. Spencer approaches Holden about some items Holden tries on. Since the child is not good at studying, he makes unconvincing comments about himself. Conformity through context-induced metaphorical manifestation "a teacher" is compared to "a bull." Basically a bull is an animal that is strong but fierce and energetic side by side. Mr. Spencer is an old man, but he still wants to take care of his student. The student reacts angrily and describes him as a "bull". Here the "bull hunting" shows excuses. Also, Holden Caulfield describes himself as an "idiot" in front of a teacher. In reality, an "idiot" is someone with poor analytical skills. The idiot is considered a stupid person. He then admits that he is stupid and stupid because he cannot make up his mind to study in the right direction.

7. With a guy like Ackley, if you looked up from his book, you were dead (Salinger, 1951, p. 21)

The type of sentence is descriptive and describes a situation related to a man named Ackley. The metaphor "disappeared" is compared to the aspect of getting lost. 'Goner' is essentially omitted in American English, meaning dead or off duty. So when Ackley walks into the room, people get really mad, even if he's reading a book. Furthermore, an incarnation of 'Goner' also claims to become a raccoon or goose, depending on the etymology of the word. If one thinks about the meanings and characteristics associated with them, both types are highly unpredictable in terms of their actions. When a boy meets Ackley, frustration makes his actions unpredictable.

Conclusion

The study becomes familiar with the basic understanding of the selected novel, the questions asked, the problem, the purpose, and the meaning. It also includes other related concepts. It contains a short preamble to explain the subject of the study to the reader. The objectives of the study were established to maintain the dissection mechanism of the text to achieve meanings through mental mapping. The introduction provides in-depth insight into the author, his selected work. The Catcher in the Rye, and Lakoff's (1993) theory of conceptual metaphor. The study was carried out to look at various expressions, especially metaphors, to examine shades of meaning based on mental constructions and inferences using conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff 1993). Metaphorical expressions are likely to be explored further once the etymology of the word is known. For example, the entire team ostracized me on the sentence selected from the indents in the text. (Salinger, 1951, p. 3) the word "exclusion" has an etymological meaning in the sense of basic understanding. However, the Greeks initially used the term to denote someone voting. The term was also used by Salinger to refer to a similar case of Holden, who was considered an outsider among his colleagues. The possible meanings of the terms were also explored. Life is a game, boy. The exploration of metaphorical instances takes place through the theory of conceptual metaphor. The instances also paved the way for the study to be carried out on a given design. These cases arose to reveal knowledge. Second, the metaphorical expressions affected the meaning of the text in such a way that the researcher had to read between the lines outside of literal context to make a precise distinction. In this particular case, the context gives way to its importance due to the perceptions and intuitions related to the novel. Third, cognition plays an important role in preserving the meanings originally proposed by the author, since the meanings are processed and anchored in the reader's mind and the reader can better extract them according to their way.

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