

Study on the Multimodal Metaphor Used in Senior High School English Textbooks: An Analysis of the People's Education Press (PEP) Edition

Luyao Cheng

Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China 401331

Abstract: This study investigates the multimodal metaphorical expressions present in the People's Education Press (PEP) senior high school English text books, which is one of the widely used textbooks in China. Realizing that we can spread and learn about the information through the means of text, pictures, the structure of a page and so on, this research finds out how a combination of text, images and layout work together to make meaning metaphorically. Leveraging Conceptual Metaphor Theory, frameworks of multimodality and multimodal metaphor, I am hoping to find out some common types of multi-modal metaphors, investigate how these multimodal metaphors can be constructed, and discuss their potential functions in teaching and learning English. The results show that multimodal metaphors have an important but implicit role in these textbooks in vocabulary learning, grasping abstract concepts, learning about cultures, and teaching multimodal literacy.

Keywords: Multimodal metaphor; English textbooks; PEP edition; Multimodality; Conceptual metaphor; Pedagogy

1. Introduction

In modern educational settings, multimodal meaning-making relies on multiple sign systems—linguistic, visual, auditory, and spatial. In terms of ELT materials, English language teaching materials and textbooks are also included, where more and more texts come together with pictures for people to learn. In such a multicultural scene, metaphors, which are always thought to be a linguistic situation in which one thought was expressed through another notion (Argument is war), go beyond words. Multimodal Metaphor is when different modes come together to make a metaphor or to make it stronger. PEP senior high school English textbooks are the textbooks mainly read by millions of Chinese students, which are also important places where PEP makes full use of such multimodal metaphors. And so I shall look into what it looks like in terms of landscape of the multimodal metaphors present in the textbooks on a variety of ways they are used as well as if there are any didactical implications. It would be very useful for the teachers and those who would like to be one, to understand, know these metaphors so that we could use them in our understanding and our being involved in developing the whole communicative competence. This paper begins by setting the stage for the theoretical aspects, second describes how these textbooks were analyzed, third reports on the results and pedagogical implications of these findings.

2. Theoretical Framework

This paper is most importantly based upon the CMT which was created by Lakoff and Johnson and they stated that metaphors were not only used for literary decoration, but were also used as a key cognitive process organizing both our thought itself and our perception of the universe. CMT wants us to think about abstract stuff (target) via more real or sorta-known things (source). In terms of this, there are scholars working under the field of multimodality like Kress and van Leeuwen also argue that visuals have its own grammar and meanings as well as the case with languages. Charles Forceville also linked all these things together in his proposal of a framework of multimodal metaphor, namely if metaphors can be shown solely by images (picture metaphor), a mix of images and text (verbo-picture metaphor), or perhaps a totally different combination of modes (Forceville, 2009). For forceville, looking at the typology, it would be whether there was a metaphoric target and source present in and between all the different modality, To illustrate a

textbook might show picture of “climbing a ladder” next to lines of “reaching success” to form the multimodal metaphor “SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY UPWARDS.” From this perspective, the way PEP textbooks use different types of semiotics to create meanings other than the pure text, and thus what the students make of those concepts and vocabulary as well as the cultural nuances involved in using the English language.

3. Methodology

In this study, the main body was a sample of PEP senior high school English compulsory texts. It needed to be as many different topics as possible and as many different stages of the series. Qualitative Content Analysis Approach is used to find and figure out some examples of multimodal metaphor. The analysis went through a lot of levels to go over and check each and every one of the units that were selected. The first step is reviewing carefully how everything fits together like a heading, the body text, caption, vocabulary lists and their photos, pictures, drawings, graphs, even pages. The second step was based on seeing what was co-occurrent and interacting, trying to find out if there is a multimodal metaphor. It was basically creating a concept map between a source domain and a target domain. For forceville’s categorization of multimodal metaphor, particularly, verbo - pictorial metaphors as a guide for categorization. each was recorded with all text and visuals accounted for and noted with an inferred conceptual metaphor. It’s on not just did they have meaning, but what they might be doing as metaphors explaining meaning, engaging learners, telling culture, so there was a base from which to discuss pedagogical function.

4. Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the PEP’s senior high school English textbooks reveals different kinds of multimodal metaphor, and most were the verbal-pictorial metaphors, meaning text with pictures working together to make a metaphorical meaning. Like those units about growing up or our goals for the future that used path imagery, going on a journey, or climbing (like a road that goes twist and turns beside a passage talking about “life’s journey” or steps that go up signifying “progress”). And here are examples of the prevalent concept metaphors, LIFE IS A JOURNEY and PROGRESS IS UPWARD MOVEMENT. Abstract concepts like emotions or states of being were also shown in multiple ways: an environmental protection group might depict a weak plant next to a healthy one next to some text on damage or recovery to make ecological situations feel more like health (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IS PHYSICAL HEALTH). And the diagrams that give explanations of a complex procedure or grammatical structure tend to use spatial metaphor too – flow charts, in which stages are places on a path, or tree diagrams in which hierarchy is up and down. Occasionally, the layout itself gave a metaphorical contribution – central images, as central were their importance (Importance is centrality), or contrasted for difference (difference is spatial separation). But even as these multimodal metaphors might be used to create more concrete versions of the ideas, their success is dependent upon just how well the student can understand each of the modes. And some metaphor might also include culture reference that all the students don’t understand either, teachers need to play a role in it. As far as overall frequency of explicit MM metaphors goes it was variable but placing them in introductory sections and vocab and also in illustrative tasks seems to have been done with the intent to get the benefits of visual-verbal synergy even though that may not be the best theoretically grounded choice.

5. Pedagogical Implications and Suggestions

Multimodal metaphors contained in PEP English books are of educational value. Firstly teachers are intentional in their use of multilayered metaphors of education to help students remember vocabulary and comprehend some abstract ideas. If teachers zero-in on students’ awareness about the way images and text together produce meaning, then learners would be able to spot those hidden metaphors and have a better grasp on the underlying idea mappings. Like, when they see a picture in the textbook of a bridge connecting two ideas. A teacher might use this moment to say that IDEAS ARE LOCATIONS and the bridge acting as CONNXSSION is the physical link. second, incorporating the analysis of multimodal metaphors into classroom activities helps students to develop multimodal literacy and critical thinking. And students can be pushed to find, to understand, to even craft their own multimodal metaphors - using them in creative ways can be a really great way to connect to the language and ideas. It helps them get ready for how we talk to each other more and more through a lot of different ways to send and get info outside of class. Third, textbook designers could use a more concentrated and theoretically supported way to include multimodal metaphor planning. And be clear in terms of cultural appropriateness, and give teachers advice on how to take advantage of these sources. think about intentionally using some of these multimodal metaphor throughout a course/unit or an entire series to really make your vocab/grammatical struc pop And also keep in mind that there could be some vague or wrong understanding, so it’s very important to make sure that these visual and verbal parts can truly support rather than create doubts about what is trying to be learned.

6. Conclusion

We explored the multimodal metaphorical instances in the PEP senior high school English textbook in this study; it was a hidden but integral part of the learning materials. Text, image and layout form metaphoric meaning of abstract ideas, procedures and conditions, which correspond to theoretical approaches concerning conceptual metaphors and diverse modality. And those multimodal constructions can have different educative uses as well – they might help people get to know the literary text better, it can help to widen the student's vocabulary, it can provide some information about the culture and it can just make the reader stay in the flow of things. But they will be most helpful if educators/author are more proactive in their thinking, and teachers have to be able to find and describe metaphor. Students should know how to do multimodal literacy. Textbook authors might also be better able to intentionally and purposefully incorporate multimodal metaphors, and make those clearer for teaching about using them. Future could also include this analysis of more textbooks, or different versions of the same textbook, or even some empirical studies about how students view, understand, or learn certain type of multimodal metaphors. To sum up, recognizing and taking advantage of the power of the multimodal metaphor is a benefit for English learning.

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About the author:

Luyao Cheng(2001.04-), female, Han nationality, from Jiangjin Chongqing, master's student, research direction: English linguistics.