

# Conceptual Metaphor of Different Conventionality Levels from the Perspectives of Translatability Assessment and Translation Strategies

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the Conceptual Metaphor Theory from an innovative perspective: translatability and translation strategy. The experiment recruited 239 undergraduate students of different translation training to evaluate the translatability of twelve sentences of different metaphor types before translating them into Vietnamese. Additionally, this study examines how students deal with metaphorical mapping images as well as grammatical and lexical refining attempts. The factorial ANOVA results ( $p=.02$ ) indicate that the effect of metaphor types on translatability levels is conditional on translation training levels, despite the fact that the main effect is on metaphor types, not translation skill. Besides, twelve in-depth strategies to deal with the source sentences are identified, establishing a new model for metaphorical translation strategy. Chi-square analysis reveals associations between translation training levels and strategies ( $p<.01$ ); and between metaphor types and strategies ( $p<.01$ ). This study argues for the possibility that translation could be considered among conceptual metaphor's cognitive mechanisms.

**Keywords:** CMT; conventionality; metaphor translation; translatability; strategy.

## INTRODUCTION

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) initiated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) proposed that metaphors are not only embellishments of speech; rather than that, they are pervasive in human mind and integral to our mental processes (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999; Lakoff and Turner, 2009; Lakoff, 1993; Rewiś-Łętkowska, 2019; Schaffner, 2004; Zhang et al., 2022). People are especially likely to employ metaphors while pondering on or discussing abstract concepts that are not directly related to our daily lives (Hemphill, 2019; Lakoff, 2016; van Poppel, 2020).

Conceptual metaphors (CMs) are collections of conventional mental connections between two conceptual domains, or mappings. The target domain is comprehended by systematic comparisons to comparable elements in another domain, the source domain (Ahrens & Zheng, 2022; de Saint Preux & Blanco, 2021; Nguyen, 2018; Sanders, 2016). This mapping of the two domains is referred to as conceptual mapping. For example, the commonly debated metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 4) depicts a mapping from the source domain, WAR, to the target domain, ARGUMENT, that "structures the actions we perform in arguing" and "highlights the

adversarial nature of the argument" (Evans and Green, 2006, p. 304).

Typically implicit, CMs are cognitive aids that validate metaphorical language (Lakoff, 2006). Thus, the following statements might be viewed as surface manifestations of the implicit conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980): (1) I've never beaten him in an argument; (2) He attacked every weak spot in my argument; (3) Your statements are illogical; and (4) He sought to defend himself but was overpowered by the weight of his adversary's arguments.

CMs, in general, are critical for our understanding of the brain's cognitive processes because they "reflect how abstract concepts may be structured, and how abstract and concrete concepts are organized and interrelated in our minds" (Lai et al., 2009:145). Additionally, Ahrens (2002, p. 301) asserted unequivocally that "the more clearly we understand our metaphors, the more clearly we will know the limits on our understanding of the world."

While CMT has aided our comprehension of metaphor's pervasiveness in human language and cognitive system, the theory has been primarily concerned with

deciphering the underlying conceptual contexts involved in conventional metaphors" (Lakoff, 1993). This has led to criticism that the theory has a 'anything goes' aspect to metaphor comprehension and interpretation (Tsur, 1999) and that it cannot account for the psycholinguistic data (Ahrens, 2010). Thus, proponents of Conceptual Metaphor Theory should provide criteria for distinguishing novel from conventional CMs, as well as between metaphors that syntactically constrain a categorization interpretation of the type 'X is a Y' and those that do not (Ahrens, 2002, 2010; Fernandes, 2021; Qiu, 2022).

Numerous neuropsychological studies on metaphor classification have been conducted in linguistics. According to Ahrens (2002), metaphors fall into four categories: conventional metaphors that are common in the language; novel metaphors that follow the mapping principle but are novel usages; novel metaphors that do not follow the mapping principle; and anomalous metaphors. Then Ahrens conducted a cognitive experiment in which participants were asked to judge the acceptability and interpretability of several types of Chinese metaphors. The findings indicate that for different types of metaphor, the evaluation outcomes differ significantly. Nguyen (2019) replicated Ahrens's experiment on Vietnamese and obtained comparable findings.

Also adopting the CMT, Lai et al. (2009) conducted a study to cognitively examine the reactions toward sentences with mapping images categorized into four levels of conventionality including literal control, conventional metaphor, novel metaphor, and anomalous. This study actually examined the neural mechanisms of how these types of sentences are processed with event-related potentials (ERPs). They found that brains react differently to sentences with different familiarity of metaphorical mapping images. It should be noted that the present study adopted Lai et al.'s (2009) experimental sentences as source of research equipment since they have proved the reliability and effectiveness in testing conceptual metaphor. The same pattern, but with more specific analysis on novel metaphor processing, has been lately reconfirmed in Abraham et al. (2021). However, the preceding investigations examined conceptual metaphor perception solely from a neurological and cognitive approach. The present study has attempted to examine this language phenomena from a distinct perspective: that of translation, with the goal of determining how translation reflects the translator's capacity to perceive the conceptual metaphor.

The explicit examination of CMs in translation is a recent development and a rare occurrence (Fernández,

2011). This is largely because of persistent fallacies about the nature of metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003; Massey & Ehrensberger-Dow, 2017). Initially, the approach to translating CMs was advocated by Mandelblit (1995); Toury (1995); Kovecses (2005); Al-Hasnawi (2007); Iranmanesh and Kaur (2010); Taheri-Ardali et al. (2013); and Tobias (2015). They sought a method for appropriately transferring metaphors that adhered to a source-oriented strategy that identified source text metaphors (cognitive and linguistic) and evaluated their target text equivalents by comparing the original and its translations (Fernández, 2011). Each of them aimed to propose their own model for strategy to deal with metaphorical challenges.

Once Mandelblit (1995) offered two schemes for metaphor translation based on comparable and dissimilar mapping conditions, he emphasized that the primary challenge in translating natural language is the lack of correspondence between the source and target languages' metaphorical mapping systems. Toury (1995), meanwhile, postulated four recurrent procedures: metaphor into meaning, substitution, paraphrasing, and complete omission. He discussed two possible strategies: transforming a non-metaphor into a metaphor and creating a metaphor in the absence of one in the source text. Later, Kovecses (2005) examined the linguistic expression of CMs in English and Hungarian, providing instances of how similar mappings and different mapping circumstances affect translations. The author proposed four schemes for the translation of metaphors based on these findings: (1) similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementations; (2) similar mapping conditions but distinct lexical implementations; (3) distinct mapping conditions but similar lexical implementations; and (4) distinct mapping conditions and distinct lexical implementations.

In accordance with Mandelblit (1995), Al-Hasnawi (2007) conducted a cognitive study of the translation of some randomly chosen metaphors from English to Arabic in order to ascertain how members of a given culture map or structure their experience of the world and record it in their native language. Additionally, Iranmanesh and Kaur (2010) noted that the translation of CMs is highly dependent on the mapping condition and word choice. They developed a six-scheme model of metaphor translation after examining a variety of English metaphors and their Persian subtitles in three American films: (1) metaphors with similar mapping conditions and the same wording; (2) metaphors with similar mapping conditions but different wording; (3) metaphors with different mapping conditions but the same wording; (4) metaphors with different mapping conditions and different wording; and (5) the SL

metaphor to literal language in the TL, and (6) the SL literal language into metaphor in the TL.

On the basis of the preceding models, this study attempts to provide a new model with particular and thorough strategies; it focuses on how translators deal with imagery mappings and how they refine distinctively their translation products.

In short, these approaches to metaphor translation are typically prescriptive in nature, attempting to establish predetermined equivalences or rules regarding the optimal method for locating mappings and correspondences between the SL and the TL, and sharing the hypothesis that the more correlation between the mappings of both languages, the easier the translation task. The study of metaphor translation has increasingly shifted away from prescriptive and heuristic approaches toward more empirical, descriptive investigations that analyze products in conjunction with the hypothesized strategic cognitive processes that shaped them (e.g., Ahrens & Zheng, 2022; Lai et al., 2009; Schaffner, 2004; Sjørup (2013), Tirkkonen-Condit, 2002; Tobias, 2015; Tseng & Chuang, 2022; Zheng, 2015).

As previously stated, cognitive approaches to conceptual metaphor translation have shifted away from prescriptive toward more descriptive empirical research, with a recent emphasis on the translator's role. There has been little, if any, empirical research on the subject of conceptual metaphors' conventionality from a translation standpoint. The purpose of this study is first to investigate students' perceptions of metaphor in translation through translatability assessment. Then, it aims to study quantitatively the factors affecting metaphorical translation of sentences with varying degrees of conventionality, the strategy for dealing with metaphorical mapping images, and trainee translators' syntactic and lexical attempts to refine the translations. Therefore, the present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do students of diverse levels of proficiency in translation evaluate the translatability of metaphors with varying degrees of conventionality? What factors influence their evaluation?
2. How do students of varying levels of translation proficiency cope with metaphor translation? What factors influence their metaphor translation strategies?

## METHODS

To ensure that exhaustive answers to the research questions were uncovered, a study design was clearly

defined, down to the smallest detail, for data collection and analysis. The following section details the procedures of conducting research experiments regarding participants, instrument, and data analysis. It should be emphasized that while the data for this study were mostly derived from Lai et al. (2009)'s example sentences, the tests based on these example sentences were fully redesigned to accommodate the purpose of comprehending the conceptual metaphor from a translation perspective.

## Participants

This study enrolled 239 student volunteers. These students were all English majors at a university in central Vietnam. This number of students was then separated into three subject groups: novice, fundamental, and advanced. The students were classified according to the amount of previous translation courses they had taken. The novice group consisted of students who had had no training in translation, whereas the fundamental group consisted of students who had completed at least two translation training courses. Advanced students were those who had taken three or more translation courses.

It's worth noting that English language students at this university spend their first semesters taking language skills courses before moving on to foundation courses in translation or business and tourism English. Students will be required to study two basic translation modules beginning in the third semester: Vietnamese-English Translation 1 and English-Vietnamese Translation 1. Following that, students may declare a major in either English for translation or interpretation, or English for business and tourism. As a result, students majoring in Business and Tourism English will discontinue advanced translation courses in order to pursue their own major.

Thus, based on the criteria for categorizing participants according to the research goal, the 239 students who participated were classified into three groups denoted by the following numbers: There were 103 students in the Novice group, 39 students in the Fundamental group, and 97 students in the Advanced group. It should be highlighted that the 39 students in the Fundamental group were business English majors who did not intend to take any further translation courses. By examining the figures in the preceding group classification, we can observe a trend in the majors chosen by English majors students. It is obvious that students pick translation and interpretation as academic degrees for their future jobs.

Prior to participation in the study, individuals signed a voluntary consent form. The authors of this article

sought permission from the faculty members of their classes to conduct research on students during class time as an ungraded extracurricular activity.

### Instrument

Students were invited to respond to a survey experiment as part of this investigation. This survey experiment was divided into two sections: personal data collection and a translation experiment. Students were required to enter complete personal information in the personal information area, which includes their name, class, contact information, and translation courses attended. Following completion of Section 1, students received instructions on how to respond to the experiment for Section 2. It's worth emphasizing that students were not aware of the study's primary objective because they would be unaffected by the term "conceptual metaphor." The goal of this study is to determine whether students have a natural perception of conceptual metaphors, that is, whether they demonstrate awareness of conceptual metaphors despite their lack of conceptual knowledge by their handling of metaphor translation. By addressing the translation issue linked with this conceptual metaphor, they demonstrated their metaphorical awareness.

In this section of the survey experiment, students were provided with 12 questions with varying degrees of familiarity, each of which had three sentences. All of these sentences were used in a 2009 study by Lai et al. on the interpretability of metaphorical sentences. Lai and colleagues identified four distinct sorts of relationships between source and target domains in that study: literal control, conventional metaphor, novel metaphor, and anomalous. However, their study discovered that the sensicality assessment score for anomalous sentences is so low that translation is impossible. As a result, the anomalous sentences would be omitted from the current study and would not contribute to the research goal. Selected sentences at each level have been then shuffled to avoid students translating a sequence of sentences at the same degree of familiarity, which may cause them to recognize the goal of their research and alter their techniques.

To begin, students were asked to rate the level of translatability of each sentence from English to Vietnamese. This assessment was made using the Likert scale (1-5). The scoring system for this assessment was as follows: (1) untranslatable; (2) translatable but with difficulty; (3) translatable but with hesitation; (4) translatable; (5) completely translatable. Following that, each student would translate the experiment's sentences into Vietnamese. Each student took an average of 40 minutes to complete this survey

experiment. All data collection techniques had been facilitated by Google Forms technology, which was especially beneficial during this Covid-19 outbreak, when students were unable to attend school in person.

The following table summarizes the 12 sentences used in the survey experiment and their degree of familiarity. This is the order in which the items were placed in the actual experiment after it was shuffled.

**Table 1.** Examples of experimental sentences

	Sentence	Sentence type	Source	Target
1	That was too much food to digest.	Literal control	FOOD	FOOD
2	The anger he felt was warm.	Novel metaphor	FIRE	ANGER
3	Her life has a new direction.	Conventional metaphor	ROAD	LIFE
4	Every second of our time was attacked.	Novel metaphor	WAR	TIME
5	Every soldier in the frontline was attacked.	Literal control	WAR	WAR
6	The love she gave was warm.	Conventional metaphor	FIRE	LOVE
7	The path turned in a new direction.	Literal control	ROAD	ROAD
8	That was too much love to digest.	Novel metaphor	FOOD	LOVE
9	Their style has a new direction.	Novel metaphor	ROAD	FASHION
10	That was too much info to digest.	Conventional metaphor	FOOD	IDEA
11	Every point in my argument was attacked.	Conventional metaphor	WAR	ARGUMENT
12	The coffee you drank was warm.	Literal control	FIRE	FIRE

### Data Analysis

To address the research questions, this study's data analysis process was separated into two major stages: (1) study to determine the translatability of sentences incorporating additional relationships between source and target domains; (2) analysis of the translation procedures students used to solve sentences containing metaphors with varying degrees of familiarity. After averaging the mean evaluation scores of each set of students, the factorial ANOVA test was used to examine the association between two factors: *translation proficiency* and *levels of metaphorical novelty* when evaluating the translatability of the experimental sentences. The second stage assessed each student's translation product qualitatively to identify how students solved metaphors when translating into Vietnamese. To begin this stage, the study examined how students treated source and target domains: would they retain the images or would they substitute new metaphors or perhaps delete the metaphors of the original

texts? Additionally, this stage of analysis aims to investigate how students refine their translations from a syntactic and lexical innovation standpoint. After synthesizing and classifying these strategies, they were used to run a Chi-square test to determine which factors influenced the translation strategies. This study will also demonstrate whether students with varying degrees of translation training have varying perceptions of metaphor through the aforementioned data analysis processes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section reports the results after implementing the procedures mentioned in the Methods section, together with a discussion regarding the findings. The section will be divided into three parts based on the nature of the results. To begin, the results of students' assessment of conceptual metaphors will be revealed, followed by an examination of the factors influencing that assessment. Following that, student translation data will be used to develop a new model for metaphor translation strategies. From this model, the study will highlight the factors affecting these translation procedures in order to provide the most comprehensive overview of the conceptual metaphor from a translation standpoint.

### Translatability Assessment of Metaphor

The students' awareness of the challenges that metaphor creates throughout the translation process is demonstrated by their judgment of the levels of translatability of sentences with varying degrees of familiarity. In other words, the results of this assessment indicate students' level of confidence when confronted with translation metaphors. As mentioned previously, this assessment is based on a Likert scale (1-5) that corresponds to the degree of translatability of the experimental sentences. This result is then examined using the two-way ANOVA test to determine whether there are any associations between the variables. This stage of analysis aims to identify whether the two independent variables: translation proficiency and metaphorical familiarity have effects on the dependent variable: translatability rating. The findings of a two-way ANOVA when analyzing the association between three variables are shown in Table 2.

The ANOVA results in Table 2 confirm that the familiarity of the metaphor images has an effect on the assessment of translatability for experimental sentences based on the students' level of translation training

[ $F(2, 708) = 2.736, p = .028$ ]. This indicates that these two independent variables are inextricably associated, exerting a common effect on students' judgments on translatability. However, when each independent variable is examined separately, it becomes clear that levels of metaphorical familiarity have a significant effect on the assessment of translatability [ $F(1, 708) = 26.904, p < .005$ ]. As a result, this is the primary factor determining students' confidence when evaluating the degree of translation for various types of sentences. Proficiency in translation alone is unlikely to have an effect on this assessment unless it is accompanied with metaphorical familiarity [ $F(2, 708) = 1.294, p = .275$ ].

**Table 2.** ANOVA result representing the effects of sentence type and translation proficiency on translatability judgement

	df	F	Significance
Sentence type	1	26.904	.000
Translation proficiency	2	1.294	.275
Sentence type * translation proficiency	2	2.736	.028
Error	708		

Thus, the study's initial findings confirm that regardless of the perspective, the familiarity of the metaphor utilized impacts the evaluations towards the metaphorical sentences, including both cognitive and translation approaches. This conclusion is also consistent with the findings of Lai et al. (2009). However, the current study discovers an effect of translation training level on the appraisal of metaphor's translatability, even though this effect varies according to the types of sentences containing various metaphors. It can be argued that for each distinct type of sentence, students with varying degrees of translation training will have varying assessments of its translatability permitted metaphor. This distinction is detailed in Table 3 below.

In general, Table 3 demonstrates unequivocally that the less traditional the metaphor is, the lower the translatability score it is assessed with. With a 4.19 evaluation rate for literal control sentences, it is clear that students are most confident with literal control phrases. It should be mentioned that students' assessment of ability to translate various sorts of sentences reveals their level of confidence when performing translation work. That is, the higher the rating of the student is, the more confident they will be in their ability to translate the sentence. Thus, when the total means of assessment scores for sentences containing conventional (3.98) and novel (2.68) metaphors are compared, it is obvious that students are significantly more confident when translating sentences using common metaphorical mappings.

**Table 3.** *Specific means of translatability judgement results*

Sentence type	Translation proficiency	N	Mean
Literal meaning	Novice	97	3.90
	Basic	39	4.20
	Advanced	103	4.47
	Total	239	4.19
Conventional metaphor	Novice	97	3.64
	Basic	39	3.76
	Advanced	103	4.39
	Total	239	3.98
Novel metaphor	Novice	97	2.90
	Basic	39	2.88
	Advanced	103	2.41
	Total	239	2.68
Total	Novice	291	3.48
	Basic	117	3.61
	Advanced	309	3.76
	Total	717	3.62

From the standpoint of the students' translation level, it is clear that students with varying abilities will interpret the ability of sentences to be translated differently. With literal control and conventional metaphor sentences, students at all three levels of translation training follow a consistent pattern: sentences without concealed metaphors will be judged as having a better level of translation. However, when students gain more comprehensive training in translation abilities, their confidence in their ability to translate these sentences will gradually rise. Specifically, novice students rate their ability to translate literal control and conventional metaphor sentences as 3.9 and 3.64, respectively, while basic students rate their ability to translate these two types of sentences as 4.2 and 3.76, and advanced students rate their ability to translate as 4.47 and 4.39. This finding demonstrates that the more rigorously taught students are in translation, the more assured they will be of their ability to translate metaphors. Interestingly, this pattern is reversed for phrases containing innovative metaphors. With novel metaphors, students who have had higher translation training will have a more conservative judgment (novice: 2.9; basic: 2.88; advanced: 2.41). This result implies that when students receive additional translation training, they will become more aware of and receptive to unusual metaphors. In other words, students trained in translation can more clearly discern the conventionality of metaphor.

The first research question has been completely addressed by the aforementioned findings. The familiarity of various metaphors is the crucial factor that determines the translatability of various types of sentences. Additionally, the level of translation training has an effect on this assessment, however it must vary according to the type of sentence. Nonetheless, it can still be asserted that translation training has some effect

on students' awareness and confidence while translating metaphorical sentences.

### **New Model for Metaphorical Translation Strategy**

Among the objectives of this study is to determine whether sentence types with varying degrees of metaphorical familiarity and varying degrees of translation have an effect on translation strategies. But first and foremost, this study attempts to develop a new model for metaphor translation procedures based on existing models. Along with examining how students deal with metaphorical mapping domains, this new model examines how students refine their translation products. The refining of the student's translation will be evaluated from both lexical and syntactic perspectives. After analyzing all student translation data, twelve techniques are identified and a new detailed model for metaphorical translation strategies has been established.

Prior to presenting the new model, it should be noted that the goal of this study is not to assess the effectiveness or correctness of students' translation production. This research examines how students dealt with the difficulties of translating metaphors and the strategies they devise to overcome the difficulty posed by metaphors. The fact that they might provide an inaccurate translation is not considered in this study, particularly given how difficult it is to determine whether a translation is correct when dealing with novel metaphors. Thus, while the examples below may be unsatisfactory, the study's objective is to examine translation strategy, not translation effectiveness.

As such, this new model will introduce each strategy separately, focusing on two distinct steps: how metaphorical mappings are resolved and how refining is accomplished.

1. *Retaining mapping images (MIs) while preserving source text's syntactic and lexical choice*
2. *Retaining MIs with syntactic refining effort*
3. *Retaining MIs with lexical refining effort*
4. *Retaining MIs with both syntactic and lexical refining effort*
5. *Replacing MIs while preserving ST's syntactic choice*
6. *Replacing MIs with syntactic refining effort*
7. *Replacing MIs with lexical refining effort*
8. *Replacing MIs with syntactic and lexical refining effort*
9. *Deleting both SD and TD with meaning interpretation effort*
10. *Deleting SD with meaning interpretation effort*
11. *Deleting TD with meaning interpretation effort*
12. *Giving up*

Each strategy is illustrated with typical instances and explanations below.

1. *Retaining mapping images (MIs) while preserving source text's syntactic and lexical choice*

(1) "That was too much food to digest" (FOOD – FOOD)

Đó là quá nhiều thức ăn để tiêu hoá.(FOOD – FOOD)  
that be too plenty food to digest  
'That is too much food to digest.'

(ST45)

As demonstrated in Example 1, the student utilizes mapping images (FOOD - FOOD) for his/her translation output. Additionally, the source sentence's syntax is preserved (SVCA), and the target text retains the literal meaning of the words in the original text.

2. *Retaining MIs with syntactic refining effort*

(2) "Every second of our time was attacked."

Mỗi giây của chúng ta đều là sự tấn công.  
every second of us all be CLASS. attack  
'Every second of ours is an attack.'

(ST35)

Example 2 shows that in this translation production, the MIs are retained (WAR – TIME), whereas there is an attempt to refine the product in terms of syntax while without changing the semantics. In the ST, the sentence structure is SV, but in the output text, the student switches to the structure SVC.

3. *Retaining MIs with lexical refining effort*

(3) "Their style has a new direction."

Phong cách của họ phát triển sang một hướng mới.  
style of them develop into a direction new  
'Their style develops into a new direction.'

(ST111)

As shown in Example 3, the MIs are retained (ROAD – FASHION) while there is effort to refine the lexicon in the TL, with no change of syntax (SVO). It is seen that the verb *have* in the ST has been translated into *develop* as a lexical refinement attempt.

4. *Retaining MIs with both syntactic and lexical refining effort*

(4) "The coffee you drank was warm."

Bạn đã uống một ly cà phê nóng  
you PAST.M. drink a cup coffee hot  
'You drank a cup of hot coffee.'

(ST136)

In Example 4, the MIs are retained (FIRE – FIRE) with an attempt of both syntactic and lexical refinement. In this example, the syntactic pattern of complex sentence with a relative clause in the ST has been substituted by a simple sentence with the pattern of SVO in the translation product. Besides, there are some changes in lexicon such as adding a classifier (a cup of) for the head noun (coffee) and changing the semantic meaning of *warm* into *hot* in Vietnamese.

5. *Replacing MIs while preserving ST's syntactic choice*

(5) "That was too much info to digest."

Đó là quá nhiều thông tin để hiểu.  
that be too plenty information to understand  
'That is too much information to understand.'

(ST155)

Example 5 illustrates a case in which the MIs in the ST (FOOD – INFO) are replaced when translating into Vietnamese (KNOWLEDGE – INFO). Besides, no changes in terms of lexicon and syntax are found in this translation process.

6. *Replacing MIs with syntactic refining effort*

(6) "Their style has a new direction."

Có một ý tưởng mới trong phong cách của họ.  
have a idea new in style of them  
'There is a new idea in their style.'

(ST135)

In the example above, the source domain ROAD in the ST is replaced by a new source domain IDEA to map with the target domain FASHION after translation. Also, a new syntactic structure (SVCA) is employed to refine the translation product while there is no attempt to refine the lexicon.

7. *Replacing MIs with lexical refining effort*

(7) "The anger he felt was warm."

Con giận mà anh ấy cảm nhận được rất bức bối.  
CLASS.anger that he feel PASS.M. very annoying  
'The anger that he felt is annoying.'

(ST159)

Example 7 shows how the MIs are replaced when translated (FIRE – ANGER and ANNOYANCE – ANGER). In this example, the student retains the complex sentence structure with relative clause but with an attempt to refine the semantic meaning of the word *warm* in the ST by the word *annoying* in the translation.

8. *Replacing MIs with syntactic and lexical refining effort*

(8) "That was too much love to digest."

Tình yêu rất lớn để đón nhận.  
love very big to welcome receive  
'Love is great to warmly receive.'

(ST154)

In Example 8, the novel metaphorical expression LOVE IS FOOD in the ST is replaced by the expression LOVE IS GIFT, which seems to be more conventional. By the way, there is also some change in the translation product in terms of syntax and lexicon.

9. *Deleting both SD and TD with meaning interpretation effort*

(9) "Their style has a new direction."

Đây là thể loại mới rất được ưa chuộng.  
this be genre new very PASS.M. favorite  
'This is the favorite genre.'

(ST18)



As can be seen in the example above, both MIs (ROAD – STYLE) in the ST have been eliminated, indicating that the student has abandoned the use of metaphorical images in the translation product. Rather than that, the student purposely interprets the sentence's underlying meaning.

#### 10. Deleting SD with meaning interpretation effort

(10) "The anger he felt was warm."

Anh ấy chỉ hơi chút tức giận.  
he only a bit little angry  
'He is only a bit angry.' (ST135)

Example 10 demonstrates that the ST's SD (FIRE) is erased without a replacement in the target text, while the TD (ANGER) is retained. Dealing with the novel metaphor of FIRE to depict ANGER, the translator seeks to interpret its meaning as "a bit" in order to primarily convey the message's central idea.

#### 11. Deleting TD with meaning interpretation effort

(11) "Every second of our time was attacked."

Chúng tôi luôn luôn bị tấn công.  
we always PASS.M. attack  
'We are always attacked.' (ST42)

It is of interest that in the case above, the TD (TIME) is omitted from the translation product and no metaphorical image is substituted. Meanwhile, the SD (WAR) file is retained. Beyond all else, the translator attempts to interpret the message's meaning in order to overcome the difficulties posed by the novel metaphorical images.

12. *Giving up*: Students show no attempt to translate the STs.

### Impacts on Metaphorical Translation Strategy

The purpose of this work is not simply to develop a new model for metaphorical translation strategies; rather, it is to ascertain which factors influence students' choice of translation strategies. As a result, after the new model is identified, all data on the student's

translation strategy for each experimental sentence is quantitatively examined.

Two Chi-square tests were run to examine the influence of metaphor conventionality level and students' translation proficiency on their choice of translation strategy. The initial Chi-square tests reveal an association between translation proficiency and translation strategy [ $X^2(22, N = 2,868) = 86.961^a, p < .01$ ]. Thus, it can be observed that students' choice of translation strategies is likewise contingent on their level of training in translation. The second Chi-square analysis demonstrates that there is still an association between metaphorical conventionality levels and translation strategy [ $X^2(22, N = 2,868) = 880.435^a, p < .01$ ]. Thus, two independent variables influence translation strategies: translation ability and levels of metaphorical conventionality. These findings may be of interest because they demonstrate how the translation alternatives differ at each level of these two factors. Table 4 details the frequency of use of each strategy based on levels of proficiency and metaphorical conventionality.

As illustrated in Table 4, when considering the relationship between different types of sentences with varying degrees of conventionality and their corresponding translation strategies, it can be concluded that sentences with metaphor will cause students to employ a broader range of strategies than literal control sentences. This variety of techniques is significantly greater when the sentence contains a novel metaphor. Particularly for literal control sentences, 87.9% of translated versions adhere to translation strategies 1–4, which include the retention of source text MIs. This percentage is composed of 47.2% of translated products that are preserved in both syntax and lexicon, and 30.7% of translated products that have been refined in either syntax or lexicon or both. It's worth noting that only a very small proportion of students ask to have their MIs replaced or deleted. Students abandon the translation of literal control sentences at a rate of 3.2%.

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistical results on translation strategy

Literal control																										
		S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7		S8		S9		S10		S11		S12		Total
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Nov.	160	42.1	70	18.4	75	19.7	17	4.5	2	0.5	2	0.5	2	0.5	0	0.0	8	2.1	19	5.0	5	1.3	20	5.3		<b>380</b>
Fun.	58	40.6	29	20.3	35	24.5	6	4.2	2	1.4	0	0.0	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.7	6	4.2	3	2.1	2	1.4		<b>143</b>
Adv.	170	56.9	60	20.1	26	8.7	17	5.7	4	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0	3	1.0	10	3.3	4	1.3	4	1.3		<b>299</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3.2</b>		<b>822</b>
Conventional metaphor																										
Nov.	134	35.6	22	5.9	34	9.0	3	0.8	53	14.1	71	18.9	12	3.2	7	1.9	2	0.5	23	6.1	4	1.1	15	4.0		<b>376</b>
Fun.	47	32.6	10	6.9	15	10.4	2	1.4	24	16.7	29	20.1	7	4.9	1	0.7	1	0.7	6	4.2	4	2.8	2	1.4		<b>144</b>
Adv.	115	35.4	36	11.1	26	8.0	11	3.4	15	4.6	36	11.1	16	4.9	15	4.6	11	3.4	16	4.9	4	1.2	12	3.7		<b>325</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3.4</b>		<b>845</b>
Novel metaphor																										
Nov.	114	30.7	13	3.5	23	6.2	7	1.9	38	10.2	50	13.5	9	2.4	21	5.7	2	0.5	60	16.2	4	1.1	28	7.5		<b>371</b>
Fun.	30	22.2	9	6.7	7	5.2	0	0.0	9	6.7	24	17.8	5	3.7	7	5.2	1	0.7	38	28.1	4	3.0	4	3.0		<b>135</b>
Adv.	79	39.7	19	9.5	4	2.0	9	4.5	15	7.5	26	13.1	3	1.5	6	3.0	0	0.0	28	14.1	4	2.0	8	4.0		<b>199</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5.7</b>		<b>705</b>



When sentences containing conventional metaphors are translated, the fraction of translations that reuse MIs reduces to 53.8%, which comprises 35% with no modifications to the syntax or lexicon and 17.8% with refinement to the syntax or lexicon. Meanwhile, up to 33.8% of translations employ the MIs substitution strategy, with 22.9% demonstrating an attempt at refining the translation. The percentages of students who delete MIs and abandon translation are relatively low, at 7.5 and 3.4, respectively.

When it comes to translation of sentences containing novel metaphors, it is clear that this set of sentences has the greatest variety of translation strategies. Only 44.5% of the translated versions of this type of sentence recycle MIs, with 12.9% making an effort to refine the production. 30.2% of translations have replacement of MIs, but up to 21.4% include syntax and/or lexicon refining. It can be shown that students eliminate either/both SD or/and TD from sentences that contain novel metaphors (23%, the highest percentage among the three types of sentences). Students attempt to interpret rather than translate the meaning of this type of sentence. Notably, students favor deletion of SDs over other alternatives (17.9%). This is explained by the metaphor's novelty in conceptualizing target images. Students who are aware of this mapping anomaly would choose to delete them in the translation.

Table 4 also provides a comprehensive picture of the association between students' translation proficiency and their choice of translation strategy. In general, the less trained students are in translation, the less consistent their translation strategies are. This is seen by the students' extensive usage of many translation strategies for the same type of sentence. Meanwhile, students who get more specialized translation training demonstrate a greater level of consistency in their translation strategies. Translation strategies are not scattered, but rather concentrated on a few. This is proven by the general standard deviations of the novice, fundamental, and advanced levels, which are respectively 10.3, 10.5, and 12.1. As can be shown, the less translation training students receive, the more scattered their translation strategies are, resulting in a lower standard deviation. Meanwhile, because advanced students concentrate on a limited number of translation strategies, the standard deviation is understandably higher.

More precisely, it can be seen that, while advanced students focus on retaining both MIs and syntax and lexicon of the STs (56.9%), or on retaining MIs but attempting to refine the syntax of translation (20.1%), novice and fundamental students employ additional

strategies such as lexical refinement and SD deletion. Following the same pattern, novice and fundamental students spread out broader translation strategies for sentences with conventional metaphor, including retaining MIs with no change to the syntax or lexicon or with lexical refinement; and replacing MIs with no change to the syntax or lexicon or with syntax refinement. The remaining strategies in this group are very evenly distributed in terms of utilization, whereas advanced students concentrate exclusively on the strategy of preserving MIs with no change in syntax or lexicon or with syntactic refinement, or on the strategy of replacing MIs with no change in syntax or with lexicon refinement. Finally, when it comes to the group of novel metaphor sentences, advanced students are consistent in only three translation strategies: retaining MIs with no change in syntax or lexicon (39.7%), replacing MIs with lexical refinement (13.1%), and deleting SDs (14.1%). Meanwhile, novice and fundamental students have dispersed numerous translation strategies, including retaining MIs without refining the syntax or lexicon, replacing MIs with modifications to the syntax/lexicon, eliminating SDs, and giving up. Furthermore, additional strategies are used at a pretty equal proportion.

Thus, this subsection demonstrated the effects of two variables on translation strategy: translation proficiency and levels of metaphorical conventionality. It may be argued that when students encounter different types of sentences that contain varying degrees of familiarity with metaphorical images, they will employ a variety of strategies while translating into Vietnamese. Simultaneously, students with varying degrees of translation training will employ a variety of metaphorical translation strategies. As a result of this finding, it is clear that metaphor perception is highly variable and that it does not occur naturally but rather through the process of learning and practice.

## CONCLUSION

This study examines metaphor awareness from a different perspective, that of translation. With the goal of determining how the metaphor is perceived, this study discovered a relationship between objective factors and an assessment of the metaphor's difficulty degree from a translation standpoint. Additionally, this research revealed differences in translation strategies across sentences with varying degrees of metaphor and between students with different degrees of translation training.

To begin, the research findings indicate that students have a pre- and while-translational perception of metaphor. This understanding of metaphorical

translation is demonstrated first by students' ratings of their ability to translate various types of sentences with different degrees of conventionality. Furthermore, this examination demonstrates both the students' confidence and their concern regarding metaphorical translation. The findings of this examination indicate that students with varying degrees of translation training and exposure to various types of sentences will have varying perspectives on the translatability of sentences. The more students receive translation training, the more assured they will be in their assessment of abilities to translate sentences with literal control and conventional metaphor. Students with advanced translation skills, on the other hand, will be more circumspect when confronted with novel metaphors. This implies that translation training has increased students' awareness of the challenges inherent in the translation process induced by metaphor. Thus, it can be observed that translation also contributes significantly to assessing the influence of metaphor on language processing in terms of metaphor perception. This is an innovative perspective on metaphor for English major students.

This study established its contribution by proposing an innovative model for conceptual metaphor translation strategy. The distinction between this model and other approaches is that it includes a detailed explanation of how students cope with metaphorical images and how they refine their translation from both a lexical and syntactic standpoint. This new model, which includes twelve distinct strategies, can be regarded the most detailed representation of how translators approach metaphor. Additionally, this study sought to identify the factor that affect the translation strategy. The findings indicate that sentences with varying degrees of metaphorical conventionality have an effect on these translation strategies, as do students with varying degrees of translation proficiency. The investigation revealed that the more novel the metaphor is, the more diversified the translation procedures are used by students. Simultaneously, students with less translation training tend to employ a variety of translation strategies, whereas more advanced students are more consistent in their use of metaphorical translation strategies. Thus, this study reaffirms the critical importance of the metaphor's conventionality and translation training in the metaphor translation process.

This study appears to be valuable in terms of determining how students perceive metaphors from a translation stance. As a result of the foregoing research and conclusions, it is clear that translation can be a valid method for assessing learners' metaphorical cognitive abilities. Additionally, the way learners cope with metaphors suggests a new route for research on

metaphor perception. The study, in particular, established a relevant model that might serve as an optimal detailed foundation for future research on translation procedures. However, this study has limitations in terms of experimental sentences' context. This can make translation more challenging for students. Nonetheless, as stated at the outset of the paper, this study did not focus on translation efficiency, and hence did not consider whether or not the student's translation product was correct. The goal of this study was to ascertain the learner's perception of metaphor, and it yielded pertinent findings.

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