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Enhancing academic writing through metaphor-based instruction: the role of conceptual metaphor theory in English for academic purposes

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Abstract

This study investigates the pedagogical utility of metaphors within English for Academic Purposes (EAP), employing Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as a framework. The topic is crucial in linguistics and EAP as it addresses the challenge of making complex academic concepts accessible to students, particularly those for whom English is an additional language. Existing research often overlooks the specific application of metaphors in EAP instruction, creating a gap this study aims to fill. The primary research question is: How can metaphors enhance students' understanding and critical thinking in academic writing? Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis at a Jordanian university. Findings indicate that metaphor-based instruction significantly improves students' critical thinking and writing skills. This contribution is vital as it suggests effective strategies for EAP educators to enhance academic success through metaphorical teaching, thus advancing pedagogical practices in the field.

Introduction

The use of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in recent linguistic research has been central to finding ways in which metaphors can function cognitively and communicatively in English for Academic Purposes (EAP). As far as it is appropriate for the research into the metaphor in EAP, so far it provides a way in which very abstract academic concepts can be brought down to earth and made tangible and intelligible for learners. This paper considers the possibility of synthesising stylistics with EAP, especially how metaphors can be pedagogically appropriated in enhancing student understanding and critical thinking in their academic writing. English for Academic Purposes is a specialised branch of English Language Teaching that aims to equip learners with the language and rhetorical skills necessary for academic success. But of all the students, this is one of the hardest problems many face: the complexity of academic discourse, more so when English is used as their second language. An effort to climb over this hurdle has seen metaphorical pedagogy adopted more and more. Metaphors help to translate abstractions to concrete experiences and thus have always led to better cognitive engagement and comprehension. The present study is one that located in this pedagogical background; the systematic incorporation of metaphors into EAP instruction that supports student learning is an integration of interest.

This study is theoretically based on Lakoff and Johnson's seminal work of 1980, which argues that metaphors are not just linguistic decorations but cognitive fundamentals that shape our perception and understanding of the world. According to CMT, systematic correspondences—cross-domain mappings—permit the understanding of abstract concepts, target domains, in terms of more concrete concepts, or source domains. For example, an argument can be treated as a construction ('building a strong argument'), something that students might find very useful in framing their thoughts and writing more coherently. This study takes the general theoretical insights as the basis for the specific, applied task in the EAP setting. Despite its enormous importance in cognitive linguistic theory, there has been precious little research on the practical application of metaphor in EAP pedagogy and learning. What work there is has mainly focused either on use of metaphor in more general educational settings or on student experience and outcomes. This study will, therefore, be intended to fill this gap by focusing on how instructors use metaphors to advance EAP instruction, particularly the development of academic writing. A qualitative case study design is used in conducting an investigation on experiences within a Jordanian university to explore the effectiveness of metaphor-based instructional strategies on the furtherance of the critical thinking skills and academic writing abilities of EAP students and instructors.

Literature Review

This section offers a concise explanation of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and provides an overview of research in stylistics and metaphor within the realm of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). We do not intend to explore the debates or critiques of EAP writing strategies and assessments presented by scholars such as Britton (1982), Robertson (1988), Widdowson (1994), or Adams (2014). As educators, we lack control over our assessments (including type, topics, marking criteria, and methods) or the content we teach (such as argumentation, academic writing, and essay structure), as these are determined by our provider (Study Group). Our emphasis is on adjusting our teaching methods to help our students learn the prescribed topics, such as argumentation and essay structure. We utilise our expertise in stylistics to support our students' learning, and thus our literature review focuses on the application of stylistics in EAP teaching.

Metaphor studies hold significant importance within the field of linguistics, particularly in stylistics. A central theory in metaphor research is Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). In "Metaphors We Live By," Lakoff and Johnson (1980) investigate the integration of linguistic and cognitive principles to explore the conceptual nature of metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 153) argue that "metaphor is primarily a matter of thought and action and only derivatively a matter of language," suggesting that while metaphors are verbal expressions, they are also cognitive processes that influence our perception of the world. CMT aids in comprehending this phenomenon.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) posits that one concept is understood in terms of another (Kövecses 2002, p. 6; Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 5). These concepts, referred to as "conceptual domains," are mental processes. According to this theory, the "target domain" (typically more abstract) is comprehended through the "source domain" (typically more concrete), and the systematic correspondence between these domains (the metaphor) is termed "cross-domain mapping" (Kövecses 2002, p. 6; Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 250). This correspondence between the domains can be represented as A IS B, where A represents the target domain and B represents the source domain. For example, in the expressions "he's building a strong argument," "her argument has a solid foundation," or "their argument collapsed under scrutiny," the concept of ARGUMENT serves as the target domain (indicated by the term "argument"), and it is comprehended through the notion of a CONSTRUCTION (conveyed by the terms "building," "foundation," and "collapsed"), which is the source domain. The cross-domain mapping generated here is ARGUMENT IS A CONSTRUCTION. Given that an argument is a subjective, unique, and abstract concept, it is constructed differently by each individual. In contrast, a construction is a universal experience, making it concrete. In this example, three different phrases share the same metaphorical mapping of ARGUMENT IS A CONSTRUCTION, classifying it as a "master metaphor" (Kövecses 2008, p. 382). In recent years, there has been an increasing emphasis on

metaphor studies within educational settings, particularly for adult learners. This section offers a concise overview of studies relevant to our research; for a more comprehensive review, refer to Littlemore (2016). Low, Littlemore, and Koester's (2008) small-scale study broadly investigates the occurrence and application of metaphor in lectures to develop a practical framework for analysing metaphor use in educational contexts. However, most studies focus on the role of metaphors in learning and students' experiences rather than on educators' metaphorical language. According to Petrie and Oshlag (2002), the use of metaphor can help re-engage students who have lost interest by enabling them to connect what they are learning to their own experiences. Furthermore, Littlemore (2004) contends that emphasising metaphor within the context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) can enhance students' critical thinking abilities. In an experiment involving thirty students enrolled in a British university's International Development MBA programme in Public Service Administration, participants were divided into a control group and an experimental group. Both groups attended a general "critical thinking" session, but only the experimental group participated in a "metaphoric awareness-raising" session. The findings revealed that the group which attended the "metaphoric awareness-raising" session demonstrated significantly greater critical thinking skills.

Other studies investigate the application of stylistic principles beyond metaphor in educational settings. For example, Marr (2019) describes how first-year university students working in English as an additional language can achieve successful paraphrasing using Halliday's (2009) approach of Grammatical Metaphor, with a focus on ideas and their logical relationships (referred to as the ideational metafunction within Systemic Functional Linguistics). More recently, Bridle and McIntyre (2022) conducted a study that involved a short course designed to equip students with the tools to independently research style and identify variation using concepts from corpus stylistics. To understand the norms associated with an academic register, students completed a series of worksheets using the British National Corpus (BNC). The tasks focused on personal pronouns, contractions, initial coordinating conjunctions, absolute referents, and slang/informal/idiomatic expressions. The BNC was subsequently used to aid students in preparing a brief research paper. The authors suggest that even over a brief course and with minimal training, the controlled use of the BNC interface and the emphasis on foregrounding concepts were effective in helping students recognise fundamental patterns of proper language use.

Pedagogical stylistics, a subfield of stylistics, is focused on its application in education (see Cushing 2018, 2019; Giovanelli 2010, 2014, 2016, 2020; Mason and Giovanelli 2017; Zacharias 2020). However, since the primary focus has been on secondary school education, there is limited research on the use of stylistics in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) teaching and learning. Despite the range of studies on the use of metaphors in education, there is similarly little research on the use of specific metaphors for teaching writing skills, which is the objective of our study. It

is important to note that the principles discussed in this paper can also be applied to secondary school teaching and learning. However, due to our professional background and the lack of research connecting stylistics and EAP, this study focuses on this particular area.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design employed in this study is qualitative, focusing on the application of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) within the context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Given the exploratory nature of this research, a case study approach is used to provide an in-depth understanding of how stylistic principles, particularly metaphors, can enhance EAP teaching and learning. This approach allows for a detailed examination of the teaching methods and their impact on student learning outcomes.

Participants

The participating students were EAP students at a university in Jordan. The students came from different backgrounds and were studying for a bachelor's degree in ESP. The number of students who participated was 30 (N=30), which is a good size for this quantitative study to gain good insights about them.

Data Collection

Observations

Triangulation type of data collection took place. The researcher used observation and interviews to collect data on the instructional strategies employed. The focus was on the integration of metaphors and stylistic principles in the classroom. The purpose of the observation was to capture the interaction between the teacher/researcher and the students, as well as the use of metaphors in explaining complex academic concepts. Field notes were taken during the observation period to document student responses and interactions. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three students to understand their experiences and perceptions of using metaphors and their comprehension in an ESP class. The interviews covered main points such as the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed to overcome these challenges.

Document Analysis

Lesson plans, handouts, and student assignments were collected and analysed. The analysis focused on identifying metaphors and other stylistic elements in the teaching materials and how these elements were designed to improve learners' understanding of metaphors.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from observations, interviews and document review and analysis is through theoretical thematic analysis. It entails a general method of overall sample data analysis which focuses on finding patterns (themes) in the data. The thematic analysis follows Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: first, the participants get acquainted with the data to be analysed; second, it involves identification of the initial codes; third, identification of themes; fourth of reviewing of the themes; fifth defining and naming of the themes; and, lastly, writing up of the report.

The first step includes familiarisation with data where the researcher goes through the field notes, interview Transcripts and teaching materials in multiple readings. Initial codes are then established in order to isolate relevant aspects that cones to teaching EAP when using metaphors. The latter are divided into potential themes that refer to the concepts that characterise the given data. Themes are discussed, debated, and modified to reflect information found in the research process and to be useful in answering the questions posed. It is necessary to formalise the last of the themes and assign appellative corresponding to the results of the conducted research.

In order to minimise the research bias and to increase the research credibility, that is, the extent to which different data sources confirm the research, different collection techniques such as observation, interviews and analysis of documents are used in conjunction or 'triangulated'. Hypothesis of triangulation makes the results of research more reliable by cross checking the results from multiple sources. Member checking is also used where the participants are asked to go through the study's conclusion so as to validate some of the interpretations made. Besides, accounting and comprehensive record is kept like documentation of the research process and decision making process, during the collection and analysis of the data.

Ethical Considerations

Pursuant to the guidelines of the researcher's university, ethical approval is sought from the ethics committee before proceeding with the study. All participants provide an informed consent to participate in the study, which therefore helps the participant understand the use of the research, the strategies to be used in the study together with the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any one time without any explanation as to why they are doing so. There is also respect to participant and researcher's identity, where all information collected is stored and secured with restrictions to only the research team.

Results

Reflection on classroom observation shows that the teacher/ researcher often uses metaphors as a way to explain the concepts studied. To make the concepts, which were supposedly beyond the ken of nearly seven year olds, easy and comprehensible, educators used metaphors. For instance, one of the educators asserted that constructing an argument in an essay is likened to setting up "a house" where the thesis statement forms the framework of the house the main points are the walls and the support/evidences constitute the bricks that strengthen the house. In this case, students could visualise the parts of an essay and realise the significance of each part one is writing.

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Table 1

Results of the Study on Metaphor-Based Instruction in EAP: Insights from Educator and Student Interviews

Theme	Sub-theme	Key Findings	Example/Quote	Participants
Educators' Use of Metaphors in EAP Instruction	Types of Metaphors Used	The teacher/researcher uses metaphors to explain complex concepts, making them tangible and relatable.	"Building a house" metaphor for essay structure	Teacher/Researcher
		Various metaphors are used, including structural and ontological metaphors, based on familiarity and relevance to students.	"Time is money"; "The argument fell apart"	Teacher/Researcher
Students' Perceptions of Metaphor-based Instruction	Impact on Critical Thinking Skills	Positive perception of metaphor-based instruction; metaphors enhance engagement and comprehension.	"When the teacher explained the structure of an essay as building a house, it made so much sense to me."	Student 1
		Experimental group showed improved critical thinking skills; metaphors encouraged deeper thinking.	"Navigating through an argument" metaphor	Experimental Group Students
Challenges in Implementing Metaphor-based Instruction	Adapting Metaphors for Diverse Classrooms	Challenges include ensuring all students understand metaphors due to diverse backgrounds.	"I found the 'LOVE IS A JOURNEY' metaphor confusing because I am not	Student 2

			familiar with the concept of a journey."	
		Strategies include explaining metaphors in detail, providing examples, and encouraging student-created metaphors.	Flexibility and adaptability in teaching methods	Teacher/Researcher
Integration of Stylistic Principles in EAP Teaching	Effectiveness of Metaphor-based Activities	Teaching materials incorporate stylistic principles, enhancing understanding of academic writing.	Activities for identifying and analysing metaphors in texts	Document Analysis
		Positive student response; activities improve metaphor use and understanding, enhancing creative thinking.	"Rewriting a paragraph using metaphors helped me understand the content better and improved my creative thinking skills."	Student 3
Broader Implications for Pedagogical Stylistics	-	Findings suggest the potential of applying stylistic principles to enhance language learning.	Need for ongoing professional development and collaboration	Teacher/Researcher

Sub-theme: Types of Metaphors Used

The researcher used various forms of metaphors; for instance, structural metaphors involve developing one concept from another (for instance, "people work for time"). Ontological metaphors help to frame occurrence, activity, emotion and idea into tangible objects (for instance, "the argument collapsed"). The interviews emphasised that using metaphors was a conscious decision by educators to use references that learners could easily relate to, increasing the comprehension of the topic.

The findings on the use of metaphors from interviews conducted with students revealed a positive reception on the part of the students. In terms of feedback, a significant number of the students said that metaphors should be used in lessons as they enhance understanding and make the topic more interesting in academic writing. For example, one student said, "I found the notion of building an essay comparing its structure a very effective way of tackling the issue at hand because I was able to visualise the concepts that were involved and how I could develop them.

The key findings as reported were that students who underwent the "metaphoric awareness-raising" session exhibited a much better critical thinking ability. They said that using metaphors assisted them to focus or reflect on what they were studying as students. For instance, some of the metaphors that were helpful to students included: 'navigating through an argument', which made students consider the structure of their arguments and the overall organisation of their essays in order to enhance topical analysis thus enhancing critical thinking skills.

However, the researcher noted the following challenges in implementing the metaphor-based instruction despite the merits: One difficulty was to share the advanced meanings of the clichés through the multiplicity of languages and cultures of the students. Certain expressions that were used by the author felt by some students as questionable or unrelated to the points discussed. For instance, a student who did not have any idea about the concept of "journey" faced a lot of difficulty in understanding the similarity, "LOVE IS A JOURNEY". To address this difficulty, the researcher tried the following strategies: the author defined metaphors in detail and used multiple examples of their application and also asked students to create metaphors themselves. These approaches were influential in filling the gap that was evident from the students' cultural diverse nature and the metaphors used in teaching. To accommodate children who may find it challenging to grasp abstract concepts being taught metaphorically, the researcher recommended that flexibility in the application of such techniques in the classroom could be useful.

Based on the findings of the current study through document analysis done, it was established that teaching material incorporated the principles of stylistic, mostly in use of the metaphor in a bid to enhance student understanding of academic writing. For instance, some of the highlighted lesson plans included activities in which students described and classified metaphors in teachers' materials that helped them to develop their ability to detect figures of speech in scholarly works. To teach the concept of metaphors, handouts were provided for students to express them with actual examples of metaphors and go through the process of coming up with their own metaphors. Students' attitude to these activities was also positive, and they noted that such practice enhanced their understanding of the use of metaphors as well as their ability to apply this idea into writing. Integral to this kind of strategy was an assignment where students were asked to rewrite a given paragraph using metaphors in order to express the ideas that were taught and which is helpful to the learning process as well as stimulates creativity among the students. It found that those activities assisted students to enhance their understanding of the use of academic language.

The conclusion drawn from this would be useful in supporting a number of general on educational stylistics. Some of the positive outcomes of using metaphor-based instruction in EAP teaching support the idea of using stylistic features as practical guidelines for learning. The participants stressed the importance of experiencing new forms of continuing education in order to improve teachers' competencies in promoting the use of consistent metaphors and other stylistic devices

and to promote the sharing of new approaches that can be effectively used in the teaching-learning process.

Chart 1

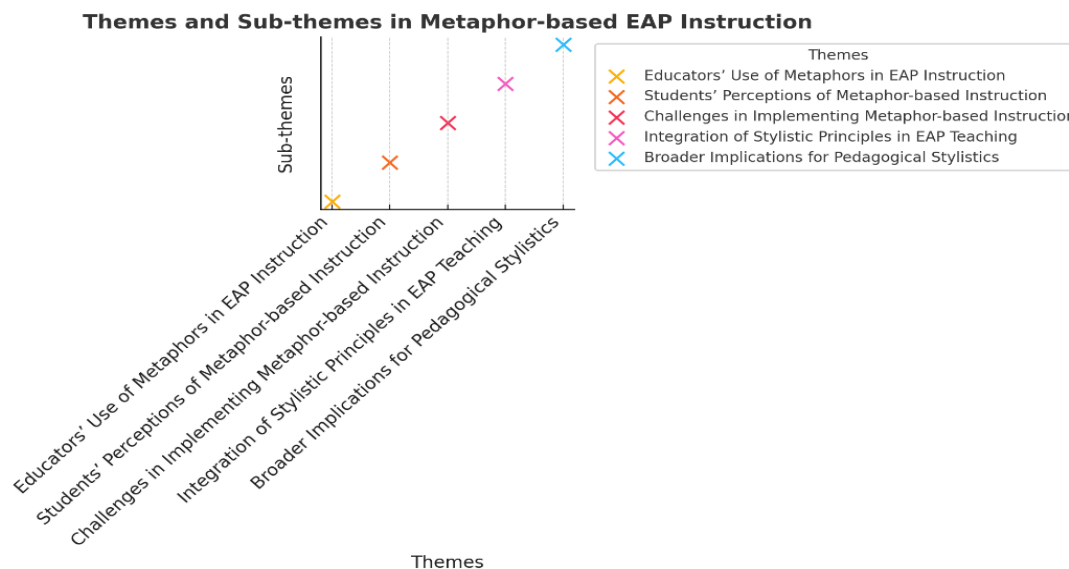*Themes and Sub-themes in Metaphor-based EAP Instruction*

Chart 1 represents the primary themes and their associated sub-themes identified in the study on the use of metaphors in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction. The x-axis lists the main themes, which include "Educators' Use of Metaphors in EAP Instruction," "Students' Perceptions of Metaphor-based Instruction," "Challenges in Implementing Metaphor-based Instruction," "Integration of Stylistic Principles in EAP Teaching," and "Broader Implications for Pedagogical Stylistics." The y-axis, labeled "Sub-themes," does not list specific sub-themes but implies their relationship to the main themes through the scatter plot. Each theme is represented by a distinct colour-coded marker, and the legend provides a key to these markers. The plot shows the distribution of sub-themes across the different themes, highlighting the specific areas of focus within each theme. The angled x-axis labels ensure clarity and readability of the theme titles.

Discussion

Overview of Findings

The results of this research provide a great insight on how Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and stylistic strategies are valuable in a development of EAP course. In this way, using metaphors as an element in teaching, the educators were able to illustrate abstract concepts of studying and make these concepts more comprehensible for students. This discussion will further expand on the implications of these observations, and it will explicate some of the difficulties encountered by

educators as well as provide suggestions for potential research and learning approaches going forward. As in accordance with the research findings of the present research and the class observations and the qualitative interviews, the purpose of the case-study part is to establish and explicate the applicability and the benefits of using metaphors effectively and systematically in the context of EAP instruction and writing concept mainly focusing the 'Making Sense'. Teachers either employed the specific object to various structural to ontological levels depending on the student or made a direct reference of cultural relevance with a specific object. It helped not just in reiterating what was being taught but also helped in holding out the learners' imagination. For example when describing the structure of essays and when differentiating between an outline and an outline of an outline the metaphor of 'building a house' was equally constructive in the manner because it created patterns in the minds of the students which made it easy for the students to understand and even memorise the information. This concurs with Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who argue that metaphors are not mere linguistic entities but essential frames for thinking that determine how we conceive and perceive reality. Through many abstract experiences that relate to the topic, metaphors are useful in helping students relate to prior experiences and hence allow the matching of their experiences with new knowledge. The cognitive alignment here is important in a multicultural EAP class where students may have a hard time grasping academic written and spoken language.

Impact on Critical Thinking Skills

The result of the study is that there was a notable enhancement of critical thinking in the students who had undergone instruction with metaphors. There was a greater improvement in the experimental group which had attended a session on 'metaphoric awareness-raising'. The current study seems to provide results that reflect the argument of Littlemore (2004) where she has presented evidence that metaphors can be employed to enhance critical thinking. Metaphor facilitates students to make associations between abstract notions and their own experience. Although the evidence here is limited, metaphors such as 'navigating through an argument' were seen to help students with a logical flow and coherence in their essays, which would not only foster analytical skills but be crucial for academic achievement. This means that it is not only easier for students to learn through metaphors; cognitive involvement is also significantly enhanced by this means, likely leading to critical reflection on the part of the student. Such engagement is at the heart of academic writing, where students are expected to analyse, synthesise, and evaluate information.

Challenges in Implementing Metaphor-based Instruction

The outcome of the study is that there was a marked improvement in critical thinking in the students who had received training with metaphors. There was more significant improvement in the experimental group which had one session on 'metaphoric awareness-raising'. The current

study seems to yield results that support the contention of Littlemore (2004) wherein she has found evidence that indicates that metaphors can be used to improve critical thinking. Metaphor can help in supporting students to make connections between abstractions and their own experience. This is poorly evidenced, but examples could include metaphors such as "navigating through an argument" that enhance the student's logic flow or coherence in essay writing, which would both foster analytical skills and be crucial for academic achievement. This means that not only is learning via metaphor easier for students, but also cognitive involvement is being activated by this means to a considerable extent, which may lead to critical reflection on the part of the student. Such engagement is at the heart of academic writing, where students are expected to analyse, synthesise, and evaluate information.

Strategies for Addressing Challenges

To address this problem, they elaborated on them and shared many examples with the class, which included metaphors and asked students to create their own. These filled in the gap between the various backgrounds of the students and the instructive metaphors, which in turn helps to achieve a more inclusive environment for learning. More so, this improvement in the prompting of students to devise their own metaphors also takes ownership of the learning. This participatory approach will not only have them validate their experiences but also further enhance their engagement and understanding. Inclusion of students in the process of metaphor creation allows educators to be sure that metaphors would resonate with the deep underlying contexts of the students' own lives and cultures.

Integration of Stylistic Principles in EAP Teaching

An analysis of the documents reveals that teaching materials based on stylistic principles, mainly metaphors, made a remarkable contribution to student learning in academic writing. The exercises which require students to identify and analyse metaphors contributed to students' proper understanding of the use of figurative language that develops their ability to comprehend and analyse better. For example, lesson plans based on metaphor analysis help students understand how figurative language functions in academic discourse:. This not only facilitated reading but also enhanced writing, when students learned to use metaphors appropriately in their academic writing. From these results, it is clear that a cautious integration of stylistic principles into teaching materials can go a long way toward enhancing the practice of EAP.

Effectiveness of Metaphor-based Activities

Students managed the activities that related to metaphor quite well; the exercises helped a lot in enhancing their abilities of application and apprehension of metaphors in academic writing. The assignments in paragraph rewriting by a metaphor augmented knowledge about content and

creativity. This creative engagement is important because academic writing often needs students to express complex ideas in very clear and engaging ways. The students' exercise with metaphors developed their understanding of subtleties in the use of language in academic contexts, which allows them to express their thoughts with full commitment. This goes to show that metaphor-based activities can be very useful not only for the development of the analytical side of academic writing but also for the creative one.

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Broader Implications for Pedagogical Stylistics

The effective inclusion of metaphor-based instruction into EAP teaching also has repercussions outside the EAP field. The results reveal the ability of the stylistic application to serve as a tool in increasing language learning, especially in simplifying for the student difficult academic concepts. This holds promise for professional development in teacher training. Teachers must have sufficient knowledge and skills for the application of stylistic principles, which include metaphors, in their teaching. Continuous professional development by teachers and interaction among themselves can help facilitate the sharing of best practices and the emergence of creative ways of teaching.

Recommendations for Future Research

In that sense, studies are too scant with regard to the employment of definite metaphors in the teaching of writing skills, and it is just fitting for further studies to be conducted so that a wider variety of metaphors can be explored that could influence all these factors in language learning. Long-term longitudinal research would allow looking at the long-term effects of metaphor-based instruction on students' achievements and critical thinking while learning. Future studies, then, should explore the adaptability of metaphors to other linguistic and cultural contexts where they might be effective. This could be achieved either by working with culturally specific metaphors or creating new ones so that they are resonant with other groups of students. It may also be useful to conduct research with metaphors in other areas of language learning outside academic writing.

Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore the significant impact of metaphor-based instruction on enhancing English for Academic Purposes (EAP) learning. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) serves as a pivotal framework for simplifying complex academic concepts, making them more comprehensible and engaging for students. The qualitative case study approach revealed that metaphors like "building a house" for essay structure enabled students to visualise and organise their thoughts more coherently, thereby improving their critical thinking and academic writing skills. This supports Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) assertion that metaphors are not merely linguistic devices but essential cognitive tools that shape our understanding of the world. The cognitive alignment facilitated by metaphors helps students connect prior experiences with new knowledge, enhancing their overall learning experience. However, the study also identified challenges in

implementing metaphor-based instruction, particularly in diverse classrooms where students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds varied. Some students struggled to grasp certain metaphors, underscoring the need for educators to adapt their teaching strategies to ensure inclusivity. Effective strategies included providing detailed explanations, multiple examples, and encouraging students to create their own metaphors. These approaches bridged the gap between students' diverse backgrounds and the instructional metaphors, fostering a more inclusive learning environment. Additionally, the integration of stylistic principles in teaching materials was found to significantly enhance students' understanding of academic writing. Activities focused on identifying and analysing metaphors in texts improved both comprehension and creative thinking skills, suggesting that thoughtful incorporation of stylistic principles can greatly benefit EAP instruction. The broader implications of this study highlight the potential of pedagogical stylistics in language learning. The findings advocate for ongoing professional development and collaboration among educators to share best practices and develop innovative teaching strategies. Future research should explore a wider variety of metaphors tailored to different linguistic and cultural contexts to further enhance the effectiveness of metaphor-based instruction. In conclusion, this study demonstrates that metaphors are powerful tools in EAP instruction, capable of significantly enhancing students' critical thinking and academic writing skills. By addressing the challenges of diverse classroom contexts and continually refining instructional strategies, educators can fully leverage the potential of metaphors to support and enrich student learning.

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