On the Conceptual Metaphors of Business in Chinese Negotiation Discourses

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Abstract

In this paper, the conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics is used as a theoretical framework for the study of conceptual metaphors in business negotiation in English and Chinese discourse. Firstly, conceptual metaphors in English and Chinese business negotiation discourse are collected and classified. Secondly, the similarities and differences of metaphors in English and Chinese discourse are compared. In this paper, by means of comparison and illustration, the method of qualitative research is adopted. It collected a large number of business cases and business negotiation dialogues, summed up several kinds of metaphors in English and Chinese business negotiation which are in a higher frequency. Through the comparative analysis of these categories, the same points and different points are summed up. Finally, it's the effects on business English Major Students through the analysis of the results, and how should more reasonable teaching methods be taken. However, due to cultural differences, the usages of conceptual metaphors in different cultures are also different. In a word, conceptual metaphor plays an important role in business negotiation. Based on the conclusion of the comparative study, it is helpful to the study and research of business English leaders. At present, since the research is not comprehensive, we are looking forward to the theory and method of more developed and applied to the business negotiation.

INTRODUCTION

With the globalization of Chinese economy, the cooperation between Chinese enterprises and foreign enterprises has become more and more extensive. International business negotiation is an indispensable part of business practice. Moreover, face to face communication between negotiators determines that business negotiation is normally a kind of economic activity depending largely on language. And we should pay attention to language itself in business negotiation. Successful negotiation could bring more business opportunities and further development to business enterprises and companies.

The paper aims to discuss how to communicate with other countries people., and it makes mplication for the international business negotiation and teaching strategies are suggested with hope to arouse teachers and students attention to the metaphor in International Business Negotiation. Successful negotiation could bring more business opportunities and further development to business enterprises and companies. Among these studies, there was no systematic study of conceptual metaphors in English and Chinese business negotiation discourses. In order to fill the gap, this thesis will attempt to make comparative study of conceptual metaphors in English and Chinese business negotiation discourses to reveal the difference and similarities between them and hope to provide some implications to the teaching of international business negotiation.

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF METAPHORS

1.1 Definition of Metaphors

Metaphor has been seen as the use of one expression to refer to a different concept in a way which is still regarded as meaningful and metaphor has most prototypically been associated with poetic and literary usage. However, much work in cognitive science has demonstrated that metaphor is a basic pattern in the way the human mind works. In Metaphor We Live By (Lakoff & Johnson,1980) the author makes the study of metaphor shift from poetic ornamental language device that reflects the cognitive source of human thinking.

It has been widely recognized that metaphor is vital not only to poetry and ordinary language, but also to diverse realms such as the interpretation of dreams and the nature of models in science thought. Metaphor can be divided into two different types: visible metaphor and invisible metaphor. In the visible metaphor, both the primary term and the secondary term are present in the sentence. It takes the forms of "X is Y". The invisible metaphor refers to either of the following two types. Some books are to be tasted, other s to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and disgusted. The secondary term is present in the sentence but the primary term is lost. The primary term is suggested by the secondary term. This kind of metaphor leaves room for the readers imagination. The machine sitting at that desk was no longer a man; it was a busy New York broker.

1.2 Historical and Contemporary Metaphor Research

Metaphor has traditionally been regarded as a rhetorical device. In the 1980s, researchers began to study metaphor from a cognitive perspective, which has set off a revolution in the study of metaphor. After that, metaphor has become the object of study of many disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, linguistics, anthropology, cognitive science, has become an important way for the formation of the concept of human perception of the world.

The first stage is the ancient Greek and Roman period. Study on the metaphor of the earliest place in ancient Greece, were mainly divided into bad schools and appreciated schools. Plato believed that metaphor is the enemy of philosophy, just to teach people how to describe, and philosophy of the content belongs to the truth, not in line with the philosophy of the purpose. But Aristotle holds metaphor is a language art, it is added in the language of a means of modification, so as to help achieve a special kind of aesthetic effect. Ancient Rome had inherited the concept of metaphor of the sub clan, and Quintilian considered it's the most widely used and most attractive accessories.

The second stage is the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The study of metaphor in this period is relatively quiet, and generally belongs to the classical period, it is still in the framework of rhetoric and poetic. Vinsauf distinguished 63 species of poetry of the decorative techniques, further reduced Quintilian's four categories of metaphor relations to "the combination relationship between human and non-human", namely the personification rhetoric. Dante pointed out that the poet's work is deepening, enriching the meaning of the works until eventually found the presupposition of God meaning, metaphor has reach the necessary road to the other side of the truth by the phenomenon of the shore.

The third stage is the 1600s-1900s. Romantic movement is a watershed of study on the metaphor of the three hundred or four hundred years, roughly divided into two factions: good or bad appraise. In the middle of the 1700s-1800s, many scholars denounce that metaphor is the culprit of disordering order, destructing language and hiding truth. Since the second half of the 18th century to the 19th century, with the rise and development of the romantic movement, people rediscover the value of metaphor, metaphor study has stepped into the new stage of poetic and linguistic research. Shelley put forward that language itself is poetry, in the world of childhood, the language people say is a living metaphor.

The fourth stage is the twentieth century to today. In 1960s, the study of metaphor is divided into two stages, the modern and the contemporary. In the modern stage, Richard first proposed the concept of the interaction of metaphor, which is a complex of tenor and vehicle, Metaphorical meaning is born in the interaction. The human language is actually in metaphor and metonymy operates on these two dimensions, the existing syntax structure is based on the metaphors and metonymy conceptual relations. Contemporary stage, Black pointed out that the metaphor is composed of the topics and subtopics, subtitle system connotation and the significance of these after selection, compression, combination and emphasis onto the subject of metaphor. Ricoeur believes that metaphor is a kind of predication, and has the function of indirect reference to reality, internalization and re description of the world.

The significance of metaphor is to deny the inherent division between sense and representation and break the old category, establish new logical relation. In 1980, Lakoff&Johnson published Metaphors We Live By, it represent comprehensive study of the metaphor of cognitive perspective. They hold that the daily concept is metaphorical, the focus of metaphor is not in language, but in the use of a field to explain the concept of another area, it is mapping the schema of the original domain to the target domain, so that people can understand and build the target domain through the source domain.

2. CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY

2.1 The Development of Conceptual Metaphor Theory

The earliest study on metaphor can be traced back to Aristotle's period who enabled metaphor to obtain its positive value, and who is thought to undervalue metaphor as no more than an ornament to language. He represented that "metaphors are pleasing words those make us to learn something" and that "a command of metaphor is the mark of genius". In Rhetoric and Poetics, Aristotle defined metaphor as "the transference of an alien term: transference from genus to species, from species to genus, from species to species, or by analogy. Although constrained from further discovery of the genuine nature of metaphor, Aristotle's definition dominated the mainstream of metaphor study for a long time.

The role of metaphor began to shift from a matter of figurative instrument to a matter of language and a matter of ideas and thoughts.We can theoretically picture Conceptual Metaphor Theory now. Conceptual metaphor is a cross domain mapping in the conceptual system and metaphor is not just a rhetorical device, but part of daily speech that effects the way how people to perceive, think and act, that is, metaphor is pervasive in our life; it is a figure of mind, a way of thinking, and the mapping is a tool to comprehend new things and above all, metaphor is conceptual and the core part of long-term memory in people's conceptual system.

2.2 Classification of Conceptual Metaphors

In the 1980s, American linguist George Lakoff and Mark Johnson published the book *Metaphors We Live By* which opened up a new episode of modern linguistics. This book makes the cognition language is a metaphor reach a new height. Make the research of the metaphor from now on slip the leash of conventional metaphor which is based on literature and rhetoric; formally step into the new field of cognitive science. Lakoff believes that metaphor is not the surface phenomenon of language, but a kind of deep cognitive mechanism. It has formed our thinking and judgment of the world; make the language structured and systematic, resulting in a huge productivity. Lakoff also found conceptual metaphors exist everywhere in our life. They do not only exist in human language, and also exist in human thought and action; conceptual metaphor is a human view of the world can be expressed by different kinds of concept; a kind of concept can be metaphorized by another kind of conceptual metaphor.

A. Ontological Metaphor

Ontological metaphor means that human use own experience and physical objects the basis, and transform these abstract conceptions such as incidents, behaviors, feelings and thoughts to entity.

Regarding inflation as an entity allows human beings to refer to it, quantify it, identify it, treat it as case, act with respect to it, and even believe that we understand it. Ontological metaphors are necessary for dealing with human experience.

B. Structural Metaphor

Structural metaphors plays an important role, it makes beyond directionally, and gives us the possibility to build a concept based on anther concept. The meaning is that structural metaphor are from our experiences. Structural metaphor means one concept is built on anther conceptual metaphor.

It is obvious that people don't just talk about argument in terms of war. People can actually win or lose argument. People know the person who are fighting with as an opponent. We attack his positions and defend our own. The human gain and lose in the ground. People plan and use strategies. If we find a position indefensible, we can neglect it and take a new line of attack. Many of the things we do in arguing are partially structured by the concept of this war.

C. Orientational Metaphor

Orientatioanl metaphor gives us a concept a dimensional orientation; their characteristics are on going experience, not using a concept to build another concept. Orientational metaphor is based on the experience connecting two parts of metaphors. One part is linking verb " is ", it should be regard as connections of different experience at the same time. Orientatioanl metaphor is also based on experience of human's body and culture. For instance, in some cultures, future is in front of us, but in some other cultures, future is behind us.

Orientational metaphors are based on human physical and cultural experience. For example, in some cultures the future is in the front of us, whereas in others it is in back of us. Now let us study some orientational metaphors and give a brief hint about how each metaphorical concept might have arisen from human physical and cultural experience.

From these sentences above, it is obvious that drooping posture typically goes along with sadness and depression, erect posture with a positive state. In short, as a central concept in cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor is in fact a prime manifestation of the cognitive view that language and thought are inextricably intertwined.

3. COMPARSION AND CONTRAST BETWEEN ENGLISH AND CHINESE BUSINESS NEGOTIATION DISCOURSE IN TERMS OF METAPHOR USAGE

3.1 Methodology

The thesis adapted qualitative research method in the data analysis. The data used in this thesis were collected from ten English books. All the books selected for data collection were published in past five years from about

business negotiation in English and Chinese. These books not only introduced the theories and strategies of the business negotiation but also provided many specific negotiation cases and discourses in business negotiation. All of them were bought in the bookstore.

All together author collected in English metaphorical expressions and Chinese ones from the above this books. Metaphor types had been made in this metaphor types. The similarities and differences had been found and concluded.

3.2 Typical Metaphor Types in Business Negotiation Discourses

3.2.1 Metaphors About War Business Is a War

War metaphor is intensively applied metaphor in business negotiation discourses. There are plenty of similarities between war and business negotiation, the negotiation is like the war between two countries, they adopts tactics during the negotiation, try to win the debate at a higher level, finally intend to sign the contract, and all aspects of business will be involved in discourses. If mapping the source domain WAR into the business, this war will involve the two companies or a number of enterprises; they compete with the labors, technology, financial resource and so on. The market is a battle, all the company endeavour to snatch customers, resources and benefits.

For example:

(1) 你們這招誘敵深入用的太好啦！我們想不往下談都不行了。

我們是絕不會打無準備之仗的，資料資料已經清楚寫在資料裏了。

In a practical war, the soldiers may just fight with negotiators, but in a business negotiation, the price and the profit was army on their hand, they could be killed and cut by rivals.

(2) 你們不能這樣砍我們的價格啊。

你們拼命殺價，那還怎麼談下去。

There was invisible enemy existed in the negotiation; one may compete wit similar company to win the customers they were negotiating with.

(3) 就科技而言，我們是不可能輸給他們的。　The army could take different strategies in the war, it depended their attack and retreat.

Compared with the Chinese expression, there were expressions in English business of the battlefield which are similar to Chinese expression. The whole business was treated as a war, they occupy the market and win the customers.

3.2.2 Metaphors About Journey Business Is a Journey

A business negotiation is similar with a travel, it has start point, process and destination, it might be full of risk and excitement, travelers had to face the hardships and dangers, which would test the courage and guts of the negotiators, the result of the negotiation might also be a rewarding experience, or nothing. Here are some metaphorical expressions in the collected data. Like the

traveling, people may walk, or take different kind of transportation.

(1) 還是謹慎點好，小心駛得萬年船。

願大家一起順風順水的做成這單生意。

祝我們兩家公司都一帆風順，一本萬利

In the process of journey, people should know the direction to find the path, for example:

(2) 我也不繞彎了，直接進入正題吧。

各讓一步，都給大家留條活路嘛。

(2) In addition , don't kill the deal just because you can.

Compared the metaphorical in two languages, we could find out that these two language shared the same idea, and it made a journey move over a path towards a destination. Thus the elements in journey were widely used in a business negotiation in both language, such as: "活路"、"方向"、"船"、"way" and "start". And the word to describe the motion, such as: "繞彎"、"捷足先登"、"跑"、 "move" 、"further" and "going". Basically, the two sides in the negotiations are hoping to contribute to the successful of the negotiations and clinch a deal.

3.2.3 Metaphors About Food Business Is Food

According to the collected data, food metaphors often appear in business negotiation. Lakoff and Turner found that the entities of the sources domain were mapped onto the target domain. In the food metaphor, different kinds of food like: "餅"、"油水"、"粥"、" 獨食"、"羹"and"甜頭" are mapped onto the profit and benefits in business.

(1) 他們也想撈點油水。

把這張餅做大了，對大家都有好處。

我們是不是吃獨食的，有好處大家分。

People will be hungry and unable to survive without food, also the companies would go bankrupt, and employee would lose the job if there is no profit.

(2) 交完稅，我一分錢利潤都沒有了，您總不能讓我們餓死吧。

回去沒法和老闆交代啊，我會丟飯碗的。

Here are some examples in English data. In English business negotiation, various food metaphors are used. For example:

Good wine need no bush.

I'm afraid to tell you it is not my cup of tea.

The entities of food domain like "hungry" 、"feed" 、"饿" and "飯碗" were mapped onto the business domain to denote the relationship between the staff and company.

Compared the metaphorical in two languages, it could be come out that these two language shared the familiar idea that made a journey was to found out a path towards a distance. Finally, all sides in the negotiation contribute to the success of the negotiation and make a deal.

3.2.4 Metaphors About Human Body

People' own experience will provide them with knowledge source, let them perceive the outside world. Typically a structured system is like a person. We can find that both in two languages, the metaphor company is a person had been used. Let's see the collected data.

(1) If one was bleeding and get injured, the company's interests is damaged, it may be "bloody".

這個價格我們可是大出血了。

The good situation of a company is like a person's health. People would get sick even die without health, a company might go bankrupt without a good condition, which was the reason why the businessman can furthest maintain the health of his company.

(2) 可以請市場替我們把把脈，怎麼改良產品。

他們的公司已經奄奄一息了。

你們有困難我們肯定會伸把手的。

Market provides information for the company wherever the product was reasonable or not, the sale was acceptable or not.

The defined of the body part such as head and finger were share by both two languages users. The head as the top part of the body equaled to the leader, the market also offered the information to a company the product was valuable.

3.3 Discussion the Similarities and Differences of Conceptual Metaphor Between English and Chinese

In international business negotiations, Chinese people wants negotiations to be based on the general principles and both sides of the common interests of consensus. To discuss specific details on this basis, the concrete principle is an obvious characteristic of Chinese negotiating.

Firstly, in western countries, by linear thinking, they concern more about things between logic, emphasizing specific composition. So in the process of negotiating, discussions of specific terms are usually from the beginning. They believe that the composition of the contract is a complete set of legally binding clauses that should be strictly observed. For general principles, there is only cliches but no substantive content. Therefore, for the western countries negotiating members, in the way of thinking, it reflects "direct" and "concise" characteristics. Their principle is usually straight and straight to the point.

Secondly, in China, usually creating a harmonious atmosphere and deep feelings is the means of negotiation. Therefore, members of China's negotiation in contact with western negotiators will treat each other. In the negotiations, Chinese hope to reduce friction, build long-term business partnership with the negotiation object. But western people are not people like to build interpersonal relationship and partnership of long-term attention, their style is often the business ones, the practical part. In the process of negotiating, to maximize the benefits is the ultimate goal, usually they will sign the contract as a separate individual behavior, rather than to establish long-term cooperative relationship.

At last, in the negotiation process, westerners require discuss the specific terms at first, and Chinese require general principles, personnel of the negotiations between the two sides must realize that general principles and specific terms are not opposites, but they are dialectical unity. Western negotiators think the general principles are not essential because of their misunderstanding. Language is a tool for communication. To master a country's language is not just a simple understanding of the meaning of the language, but to know some of the words and phrases in a certain culture implied meaning. In international business negotiations, which words can be used, which are not suitable for use, be sure to grasp. To achieve the goal of a successful negotiation, the negotiators should try to express their ideas in a simple, clear and straightforward manner. International business negotiations are mostly in English, and sometimes both sides are not native speakers of English, which will increase the difficulty of communication. In this case, we should try to use simple and clear English, which doesn't cause misunderstanding of polysemy, puns, slang, idioms.

Anyway, international business negotiation will be influenced by many cultural factors, the cultural differences between China and the west are in many aspects, only negotiators being familiar with the difference, show honesty, respect, will negotiations be successful.

4. THE APPLICATION OF METAPHOR IN BUSINESS NEGOTIATION

4.1 Results

The positive role of metaphor in Business English Negotiation is self-evident. With the economy's changing, new phenomena is showing up in the business field, new things are emerging one after one, it causes the vacancy of many words and expressions in business field. In order to make the bilateral communication and exchanges carried out smoothly, business people also use metaphor and similar things in the daily life together, so others can fully understand your expression and transmission of meaning and information. It does not mean that ignoring the use of metaphor can play a better effect in business negotiations.

Sometimes, using metaphor will bring negative effect. This is because in business negotiation, English language clarity principle is still the most basic principle. It requires both sides express their ideas accurately, never produce ambiguity and unnecessary misunderstandings. Otherwise, it is easy to talk about the loss caused by the two sides.

4.2 Application

4.2.1 Negotiation of the Application of Metaphor

Negotiation is not a game. It is involves compromise, communication, or the confrontation and application of both techniques. Through our analysis, because negotiations involve the interests of both sides, so the highest state of negotiations is to concern the interests of both, which is win-win.

On the one hand, in business negotiations implement of equity principle makes it easier to create a win-win situation. Fairness includes subjective fairness and objective fairness. It is formal fairness but in fact it is not real fairness. In present negotiations, the greatest fairness is opportunity's fairness. The principle of time is to represent the nature of time, construction and patience in negotiations. Short-tempered negotiators are more likely to be the loser. But it is important to make a prompt decision at the right time. The principle of information requires that negotiators should know the information of the opposite side to the greatest extent, have a correct understanding, analysis and response about the information; meanwhile, to keep personal information is necessary.

On the other hand, we may give false information to the other party, disturb others' mind. Negotiators in the negotiations can use others psychological factors to make the best use of the circumstances, achieve transaction efficiently. Owing to the important influence of negotiations psychological activity for negotiations, now the discussion of psychology research is becoming more and more in-depth, the analysis of the psychological activity in the negotiations is gradually developing into a new branch of psychology. In business negotiations, negotiating position is also called the posture, whoever has a high bargaining position, and he is in a strong position, vice versa. It is not people's own feeling if they have a higher negotiating position, not the position they have in their companies or official circles. Bargaining position is the position you have in your opponent's heart, the weight and position your opponents give to you.

Only this kind of weight can represent the advantages and weakness in the negotiations. According to the objective and contents of the negotiation, negotiations should be hold according to certain principles and a common thread, and let the content used in foreign trade activities in the real life.

4.2.2 International Communication of the Application of Metaphor

Business negotiations can promote international communication. In the process of business negotiations, communication between both sides promote the cultural communication, it is advantageous to the cultural communication and mutual integration. In business negotiations, a lot about cultural issues are involved. Different countries have different cultural background, so in the communication process some culture conflict occurred inevitably.

So when negotiating with foreign firms, at first it is should know about the cultural background of the other, this is beneficial to the negotiation. If thorough preparations are not made, detrimental effect will be produced, thus affecting the cooperation and communication on both sides. Business negotiation can also promote the progress and development of the international economy, and it is beneficial to economic cooperation and exchanges between nations. It can not only promote the economic developments but also promote the development and progress of the world economy.

At the same time, business negotiation is pushing international community to move forward, is conducive to international process, and speeding up the steps of globalization.

4.2.3 Teaching of the Application of Metaphor

The business negotiations discussed in this paper is helpful to optimize the teaching process, promote the progress of teaching, let Business English major students learn more about some content in business negotiations. All the knowledge business negotiations need will be involved in the learning process for Business English major students. They need to understand the economic situation at home and abroad, know the culture of different countries, and different methods of foreign trade cooperation.

In the first place, they can promote the progress and improvement of international cooperation and exchanges, and optimize the teaching process. Metaphor has a guidance meaning of understanding vocabulary and growth of vocabulary are metaphorical. In the interpretation of the polysemous word, teachers can make students understand the connection between polysemous words, let them know important means of development and extension of metaphor's meaning. There are a lot of metaphors existing in the discourse of college textbook; metaphors inspire people to have insight into the connections between things through suggestive association, and reveal the similarities of the surface meaning and deep connotation of words.

In the second place, metaphor expresses cultural connotation, it is a tool for people to understand the world and construct knowledge, and a kind of migration of mentality. There are no borders metaphors, but from the metaphors that different nationalities are using, it is evaluated can see the convergence and divergence of different cultures in the world. Therefore, in the course of teaching, metaphor is also a tool for us to experience and learning culture. It can let us get a glimpse of same and different local conditions and customs and history of different nationalities. Taking full advantage of metaphor in the process of teaching can improve learning efficiency, and has important guiding meaning and using value for developing the students' ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing in foreign language teaching.

In the third place, teachers should give students all aspects of theoretical knowledge. Through the study of conceptual metaphors, students can learn much knowledge that had never been involved, to know more about conceptual metaphors, and solve a lot of problems in real life; it is conducive to make a business negotiation go on wheels.

Therefore, in the teaching process, teachers should teach students knowledge about metaphors; let students understand how to carry on the business negotiation through a better way. So they can find better teaching way and method from the research content of the paper.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this thesis is mainly the typical conceptual metaphors in English and Chinese business negotiation discourses. This paper has made a comparative study of conceptual metaphor in English and Chinese business negotiation discourse. Through the analysis of the collected data about conceptual metaphor, totally metaphorical expressions had been found, in which contained in Chinese discourse and in English discourse. Based on the above analysis, the following have been obtained.

This paper was of some help for further study on conceptual metaphors use in business negotiation discourse, but some limitations also existed. Firstly, the lack of the amount of data may affect the results of the study, because time and resources were limited and author's theoretical knowledge as well. Secondly, this books which provided the sample data is just one part of the business negotiations, they do not represent all similar words in negotiations. People may have different opinions about the classification of conceptual metaphors. Finally, other researchers may have different ideas on metaphor identification, which is done only by author herself. It is also talk about that the actually application about conceptual metaphor in business negotiation. This is very important for English learners.

All in all, the finding of study had been obtained; the implication for the international business negotiation teaching had been discussed. More profound study could make in this field. This research only made a study between Chinese and English. It is highly recommended that further study could take more language into analysis and the further studies could be carried on with more samples.

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