Arab World English Journal
INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL ISSN: 2229-9327
مجلة اللغة الانكليزية في العالم العربي

Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Volume.7 Number.1 March, 2016

Pp. 459-575

Contradictory Conceptualizations of teachers by Students in the Saudi Context[i]

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Abstract

This study is part of a larger project by the authors of the current article and their co-author on the role of metaphor in the conceptualization of the components of the learning process[ii] such as learning per se, the student, and the teacher. The current article addresses the conceptualization of teachers by their own students at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University. In particular, the article elicits data from 173 students through the following prompt: "Write a narrative in which you describe student-teacher relations according to your experience as a student in higher education, giving your opinion based on concrete cases." The objective of the study is to measure the weight of metaphor in teacher-student relations. The collected data is analyzed through the contemporary theory of metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), which allows for a search for the conceptual metaphors (CMs) underlying the narratives. Data analysis follows the qualitative method, which is confirmed with quantitative percentile counts. The findings reveal a set of conflictive student-generated metaphors, but mostly evaluating teachers positively according to affective style criteria such as familial, social, and interpersonal factors. Such findings should be used as an indicator to decision makers to consolidate what is positive and improve what is less positive to enhance learning.

***Key words*:** conceptual metaphor, conflictive metaphors, evaluation of teachers, affective learning, cognitive learning.

Introduction

Notwithstanding educational managers, the teacher and the student are undoubtedly the most important human factors in education. They are all the more important that they depend on one another not only for the success of the educational process, but also for their success in the future. Indeed, the student and the teacher crucially interact at least on three of the most seminal components of education, namely, what knowledge and skills to be presented to the student, testing for this educational content, and the teacher and student's linguistic behavior vis-à-vis each other. Oxford et al (1998) argue that the teacher's "actual status (defined as the amount of esteem, admiration and approval obtained from the society or the immediate social group) depends on how positively or negatively the students, as well as the parents or the administrators, evaluate the teachers' behavior" (p. 7). However, in the Saudi context the bone of contention, we argue, between the teacher and student is student assessment, or the grade, which students take as a criterion of positive or negative evaluation of the teacher. For that, it is expected that a big deal of the Saudi students' perceptions of their teachers will be conditional on how generous with grades the latter could be.

The current article seeks to investigate these perceptions through metaphor. For over three decades now, the topic of metaphor has been attracting a lot of attention since the realization by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action" (p. 3). Metaphor is a powerful tool for looking into the conceptual system behind language. The pervasiveness of metaphor is so fundamental to our life as human beings that there may not exist one single domain of knowledge where metaphor does not define, guide, and enrich it with the conceptual correspondences of other domains. Thus, life is commonly conceptualized as a journey, game, sport; emotions as fire; time as money or valuable commodity; purposes as destinations; politics as religion or sport, etc. Moreover, metaphor has enjoyed a reputation for being a persuasive tool in almost all walks of life (Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Maalej, 2007). Cacciari (1998) spells out the functions of metaphor as "bridging from abstract domains to perceptual experiences," using "the expressive properties of events and things that surround us for giving names to mental contents otherwise difficult to shape linguistically," "expressing the emotional experience," "setting and changing the conceptual perspective" of a given culture, "summarizing bundles of properties," and contributing to "saving face" through its indirectness (pp. 121-140). For these reasons and many others, educationalists cannot help but capitalize on metaphor in conceptualizing the educational experience.

The structure of the article is as follows. The first section offers an overview of teachers' metaphors in education. The second section offers some thoughts about the Saudi educational context. The third section spells out the methodology used in the article. The fourth section, which makes up the bulk of the article, deals with the metaphors Saudi students perceive their teachers by. The fifth section offers a discussion of the findings.

1. Teachers' metaphors in the literature

The discourse of education is teeming with metaphors about enhancing learning (Low, 1988; Bowers, 1992; Green, 1993; Petrie & Oshlag, 1993; Swan, 1993; Mayer, 1993; Sticht, 1993; Ponterotto, 1994; Lazar, 1996; Deignan, Gabrys, & Solska, 1997, Cortazzi & Jin, 1999), about teaching (Thornbury, 1991; Hiraga, 1997-8; Cortazzi & Jin, 1999; Patchen & Crawford, 2011), about policy making and change (Schwartzman, 1995; Weaver-Hightower, 2008; Botha,

2009; Kranenburg & Kelly, 2012; Maalej, 2008), and about evaluating teachers, students, and learning (Oxford et al, 1998; Martınez, Sauledaa & Huber, 2001; De Gerrero & Villamil, 2002; Jensen, 2006; Jin & Cortazzi, 2008; Hiraga, 2008; Berendt, 2008; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008a,b; Michael & Malamitsa, 2009); Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Pishghadam and Navari, 2010; Castro, 2012). Being of more relevance to the current study, the latter trend of educational research, which deals with teachers' perception by students, will be overviewed here.

Oxford et al (1998) were some of the first pioneers to start work on the metaphoric conceptualization of teachers and their perception by their students (p. 7). Oxford et al's contribution to teachers' metaphor in education lies in linking up the educational metaphors to four "different philosophies of education," namely, Social Order (TEACHER AS MANUFACTURER, TEACHER AS COMPETITOR, TEACHER AS HANGING JUDGE, TEACHER AS DOCTOR, and TEACHER AS MIND-AND-BEHAVIOR); Cultural Transmission (TEACHER AS CONDUIT); Learner-Centered Growth (TEACHER AS NURTURER, TEACHER AS LOVER OR SPOUSE, TEACHER AS SCAFFOLDER, TEACHER AS ENTERTAINER, TEACHER AS DELEGATOR), and Social Reform (TEACHER AS ACCEPTOR, TEACHER AS LEARNING PARTNER). However, some of the metaphors that Oxford et al consider as metaphors are not ones. For instance, the TEACHER AS MIND-AND-BEHAVIOR is a metonymy. The TEACHER AS DELEGATOR reflects some of the things that a teacher may do in class, i.e. delegate some power or authority (if any) to some students.

Using informants from Britain, China, Japan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iran, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) collected data by observing teachers in their classes, eliciting it from UK undergraduate and postgraduate students and from foreign students from the other five countries (p. 149). Owing to the context of the current study, the Lebanese metaphors for teachers will be singled out for mention. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) mention the following CMs as predominant ones among Lebanese students: A good teacher is A PARENT, A FRIEND, A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE, A MODEL, A GUIDE, A LOVER, FOOD, A CATALYST, A MEDICINE, AN ANCHOR, and AN ARTIST. As will be shown later on, most of these Lebanese metaphors are also adopted by Saudi students (p. 171).

Working on Malaysian data, Nikitina and Furuoka (2008a) were able to isolate six CMs about teachers, namely, (1) TEAM MEMBER, (2) BOSS, (3) INTERACTOR, (4) PROVIDER, (5) ADVISOR, and (6) PRECISE MECHANISM. In another study, Nikitina and Furuoka (2008b) measure students' perception of their teachers against Oxford et al's "different philosophies of education," and conclude that Malaysian education does not yet involve Social Reform.

Investigating the (mis)match between teachers' self-perception and their perception by their students in Iran, Ghabanchi and Talebi (2012) administer a twenty-metaphor questionnaire to 200 Iranian students to choose from. In actual fact, professors were conceptualized by Iranian students as A COPY MACHINE, A CASSETTE PLAYER, A MICROPHONE, A MISSIONARY, A SUMMARIZER, and A MIXER. In ideal situations, students would love for their professors to be AN ARTIST, A SPRING, A WRITER, A WINDOW TO THE WORLD, and A CHALLENGER. Methodologically, the questionnaire does not seem to us to reflect students' actual metaphors as much as the researchers' metaphors from whose list students have chosen the metaphors that they think apply to their teachers.

Overall, this sample from the literature suggests that students seem to have total freedom to speak their heart about their teachers, which yielded both positive and negative conceptualizations.

2. Overview of the Saudi higher educational context

Many factors may be invoked to explain the nature of the Saudi higher educational context. The first factor is the cosmopolitan nature of the teaching body. With a constantly growing student population and ensuing scarcity of Saudi teachers, COLT includes teachers from countries as different in education culture and experience as Algeria (6), China (1), Egypt (16), Germany (1), India (3), Iran (1), Japan (1), Jordan (4), Morocco (4), Russia (2), Saudi Arabia (41), Somalia (1), Spain (1), Sudan (3), Syria (3), Tunisia (4), and Turkey (3).[iii] Although this might constitute richness for the educational experience of Saudi students, it may also pose insurmountable challenges for some of them to adapt owing to the discrepancies between their secondary educational training and the demands that academia makes on them. Students very often complain about the toughness of some teachers who do not show enough generosity to and flexibility with them in matters of student assessment. As a result, students mostly think that teachers stand in their way, with very few of them having a place in their heart for their teachers as many of their narratives tell.

The second factor is the discrepancy between student achievement and student assessment, which is causing students to be demotivated in their studies. One of the indicators of such demotivation is the high rate of absenteeism among students, which may lead to debarring some of them from entering exams. Low-achieving students, who are often given undeserved high grades, are misleadingly treated as achievers. The culprit is the famous expression "mašših" (push him through). Some students may have recourse to non-academic means to be employed and succeed in life. This demotivation is symptomatic of a culture of laziness perhaps strongly nourished by excessively comfortable life of some Saudi students who seem to be studying for the prestige of getting a university degree or to please their parents. In the absence of an expected "cooperation" on the part of teachers, students often "avenge" themselves on those teachers who "swim against the current" by evaluating them negatively at the end of the term.

Another factor, which may be related to the spirit of competition and challenge, concerns the fact that the system is mostly anti-coeducational and exclusively confined to Saudi citizens. The educational system in Saudi Arabia is experimenting with two styles: Mostly, the system is not co-educational[iv] owing to sociocultural traditions; however, there exist institutions such as the health institutions where co-education is the rule. Although co-education has many detractors, it has been attested to produce a spirit of competition between and challenge to male and female students. In Britain, many school authorities have experimented with total separation, partial separation, and full integration of males and females.[v] As one of the few countries in the world with a tremendous international student outflow, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shows one of the lowest rates of international student inflow even though the system is gradually allowing international students into higher education institutions in the Kingdom under the impetus of international university rankings and academic accreditation.

3. Methodology

This section addresses the composition of the population of the study, data collection, and data analysis.

3.1. Population of the study

The article is based on data elicited from male college students at (COLT). The students come from three undergraduate academic departments known as the Department of English Language and Translation (DELT), the Department of French Language and Translation (DFLT), and the Department of Modern Languages and Translation (DMLT). The latter counts eight second language programs, including Spanish, German, Russian, Turkish, Chinese, Japanese, Persian, and Hebrew. The researchers distributed 349 copies of the prompt, and received 173 filled copies (58 from the DELT, 53 from the DFLT, and 62 from the DMLT), thus discarding 176 copies because they did not satisfy the prompt. The students used as informants have spent between one year and five years at COLT.

3.2. Data collection

Data was elicited through a free narrative topic in which students were expected to show their perception of their teachers. The prompt was as follows: "Write a narrative in which you describe student-teacher relations according to your experience as a student in higher education, giving your opinion based on concrete cases." The prompt was set in Arabic in order to ensure that students have no language barrier that might impede the linguistic expression of their opinions. To collect data, which is the set of CMs conceptualizing the teachers, the researchers had to meet as a group many times. The procedure utilized to extract conceptual metaphors (CMs) consists in (i) coding each copy with the initial letter of the language program and giving it an Arabic number, (ii) assigning one researcher to read the narratives to the others, (iii) attempting to capture the CM, (iv) re-reading the narrative in case no unanimous agreement is reached by all the researchers, and (v) adopting the text of the CM when agreement is reached. The CMs for teachers are then tabulated, which makes them ready for data analysis.

3.3. Data analysis

The data collected and tabulated is analyzed qualitatively by the researchers. The objective of the qualitative analysis is to pursue the entailments of the CMs which underpin the students' perception of their teachers.

4. Saudi students' conceptual metaphors for teachers

The corpus of the current article is stories or narratives told by students about their teachers. Carter (1993) argues that "stories about teachers are often told in the service of or on the way to more dominant paradigmatic interests, such as discovering the ever-elusive 'effective practice'" (p. 9). Carter (1993) adds that "stories exist within a social context and are motivated, that is, are told for a purpose" (p. 9). Students' stories about teachers in the Saudi context have a particular purpose: If a teacher does not treat them as achievers, he is discredited in end of term faculty evaluation. In other non-Saudi violent contexts, he may be kidnapped, set on fire, or even killed[vi]. However, Carter (1993) warns against a methodological risk about using stories in education, which has to do with the precariousness of generalizing from stories because the latter "resist singular or paradigmatic interpretation" and "the relationship between story and reality is, at best, troublesome" (p. 10). Before dealing with the perception of teachers by their students in

the Saudi context, a few thoughts about the motivations behind teachers' evaluation by students are in good order.

4.1. Motivations of students' positive and negative evaluations

We will ask the following questions: What motivates students to evaluate their teachers positively or negatively? Are the motivations related to cognitive learning, affective learning, or other factors? One of the motivations for positive or negative evaluations of teachers by students is psychological, i.e. the fact that teachers may be deemed caring or uncaring. Using the concept of "source credibility" borrowed from communication and persuasion theories, Teven and McCroskey (1996) find three hypotheses of theirs confirmed: (i) "teachers who are perceived as more caring by their students would also be evaluated more positively by their students," (ii) "students who perceive their teachers as more caring will also evaluate the content of the course that instructor is teaching more positively," and (iii) "students who perceive their teachers as more caring will report they learned more in the course" (p. 6). This seems to indicate the importance of an educational psychology, incumbent on the teachers. In the Saudi context, doing your job properly and refraining from socializing with the students, which teachers abide by because it is required by law to do so, are interpreted by students as uncaring behaviors. Saudi students seem to privilege the affective style as a favored way of dealing with cognitive learning, which reverses their evaluations of their teachers. Teachers who focus on cognitive learning are evaluated negatively and those who focus on the affective style are evaluated positively. Freedom of enrolment where students can choose their teachers comes to evidence this trend: cognitive learning style teachers have fewer students than their affective learning style counterparts.

Another reason is the fact that the cognitive style of teaching seems to encourage demotivation and the affective style is found to stimulate motivation in students. Gorham and Christophel (1992) find a correlation between teachers' behaviors and students' motivation and demotivation (p. 239). They (1992) conclude that "motivation is perceived by students as a student-owned state, while lack of motivation is perceived as a teacher-owned problem" (p. 239). Shephard (2008) establish a correlation between motivation as conducive to sustainability in higher education with affective learning, which "relates to values, attitudes and behaviours and involves the learner emotionally" (p. 88). His argument is as follows: Demotivation takes place because higher education focuses more on cognitive learning, which "relates more to knowledge and its application." Shephard (2008) argues that "perhaps, higher education has a particular and specific function, to graduate influential citizens who value their environment and appreciate that they have a responsibility to help to sustain it" (p. 88). Extrapolating from this, we may argue that if teachers focus more on cognitive learning at the expense of affective learning their students are more likely to evaluate them negatively, and vice versa.

Anderson et al (2012) elicits evaluations of teacher effectiveness from doctoral students, and came up with the teachers' characteristics in the following table, which we borrowed from them (p. 291):

Table 1. ***Thematic conceptual matrix of effective teachers with descriptors***

Theme	**Descriptor / Exemplar**
Director	Use of a variety of teaching methods Clear expectations and transparent grading policy

Enthusiast	Passionate about the topic that they are teaching
Transmitter	Able to take complex and make simplistic The ability to demonstrate the relevancy of the material
Expert	Thoroughly explaining a topic Knowledgeable about their course and content area
Responsive	Gives constructive feedback Able to provide timely feedback Return e-mails and phone calls promptly
Connector	Relating coursework to practical work Available for discussion or assistance
Student centered	Engage students in discussion Meeting needs of students Approachable by students
Ethical	Show respect to students Apply some standards to all students (fair)
Professional	Ability to conduct individual research Organizational skills must be good

The criteria of effective college teachers in the table seem to relate more to performance and professional competence than to the affective criteria stipulated by Teven and McCroskey (1996) and Shephard (2008). As will be shown in the following sub-section, the criteria in this table do not seem to prominently feature in the students' evaluation of their teachers at COLT.

4.2. Teachers' conceptual metaphors by students

As L2 teachers and researchers, our objective in investigating students' metaphoric conceptualizations about their teachers, is to get acquainted with the factors that might be spoiling the learning process, reconstruct and analyze the underlying socio-cultural belief systems governing the student-teacher relations, and attempt to suggest solutions to them in order to improve these relations so that the learning process be enhanced, without ever adopting an incriminatory attitude towards teachers who we are part of.

Across the departments, the concept of mutual respect between student and teacher is a recurrent theme. With the DELT, mutual respect is paired with social closeness, where students refuse to be considered enemies by their teachers and object for their learning to be mechanical. Such an attitude is a call for more humane student-teacher relations and learning. With the DFLT, mutual respect is paired with partnership between the two parties while in the DMLT mutual respect is paired with unlimited collaboration between the two parties. Respect here is focused upon as a requisite for partnership and collaboration. The reason why this cultural value of mutual respect is not dwelt upon here is that it has not been captured metaphorically by the students of COLT in conceptualizing the teachers.

As is clear in the table below, students produced 196 linguistic metaphors (LMs) distributed over 16 CMs, with the DELT students producing 26.5%, the DFLT students 36.2%, and the DMLT students 37.2%. Clearly, the DELT students have been less imaginative than their fellow students in the DFLT and DMLT. The teacher-student relations in this study are mostly

characterized by conflictive CMs, which Oxford et al (1998) call "clashing metaphors." These CMs can be categorized into two blocks: conflictive dyads and kinship-based CMs.

Table 2. ***CMs for teachers at COLT***

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS FOR TEACHERS		DELT	DFLT	DMLT	Total
1	THE TEACHER IS A TRAVEL GUIDE	2	8	7	**17**
2	THE TEACHER IS AN OPPRESSOR	20	10	5	**35**
3	THE TEACHER IS A FRIEND	8	8	8	**24**
4	THE TEACHER IS AN ENEMY	2	5	1	**8**
5	THE TEACHER IS A FAIR COURT JUDGE	2		3	**5**
6	THE TEACHER IS AN UNFAIR COURT JUDGE	2	2	2	**6**
7	THE TEACHER IS A FATHER	2	15	20	**37**
8	THE TEACHER IS A BROTHER	7	14	16	**37**
9	THE TEACHER IS A KIN	4	1	1	**6**
10	THE TEACHER IS A ROLE MODEL	1	5	4	**10**
11	THE TEACHER IS A CAREGIVER	1	1	1	**3**
12	THE TEACHER IS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE			3	**3**
13	THE TEACHER IS A STRAY ANIMAL		1		**1**
14	THE TEACHER IS A WEED		1		**1**
15	THE TEACHER IS A MESSENGER			2	**2**
16	THE TEACHER IS A PSYCHOTIC	1			**1**
TOTAL		**52**	**71**	**73**	**196**

4.2.1. Conflictive dyadic conceptual metaphors

The most recurrent CM dyads are GUIDE-OPPRESSOR, FRIEND-ENEMY, FAIR COURT JUDGE-UNFAIR COURT JUDGE, ROLE MODEL-WEED, AND MESSENGER-STRAY ANIMAL and PSYCHOTIC. The GUIDE-OPPRESSOR dyad accounts for 26.5% of the overall LMs, with 17 of these going to GUIDE and 35 to OPPRESSOR.

The GUIDE-OPPRESSOR dyad accounts for 52 instances of LMs, which is over one-quarter of the overall LMs produced by students, with 17 instances for GUIDE and 35 for OPPRESSOR. Thus, teachers at COLT are perceived more as oppressors than guides by the students, which may not pave the way for a sound learning environment. As a travel guide, the teacher is a facilitator of learning and an invaluable support to the student. (F13) says: "The teacher is … the guide of the student's development, progress, and success in the future." Travel suggests that LEARNING IS A JOURNEY where the student and the teacher are co-travelers even if the teacher has a different role from the student. The teacher is necessary for the student's wellbeing, but neither the travel guide is a guide without the traveler, nor is the traveler a traveler without the travel guide, whose job is to indicate the way. Thus, the concepts of guide and journey make this conceptualization learning-oriented.

However, as an oppressor the teacher is evaluated negatively, which establishes a tense relation between teacher and learner. (E4) says: "The teacher is a dictator, and the student humiliates himself to graduate." The oppressive conceptualization of the teacher is inherited from the politics domain, whereby the teacher is thought to exploit his position at the expense of the vulnerable stance of the student to the point that this exercise of power on the part of the

teacher humiliates the student as expressed in (E4). This conceptualization is teacher-oriented, which does not serve the learning process.

The FRIEND-ENEMY dyad accounts for 32 LMs, which represents 16.3% of the overall LMs, with 24 going to FRIEND and 8 to ENEMY. Clearly, the student-teacher relations lean more towards friendship than enmity. (R3) says: "My relation with the teachers in the program is an intimate one" while (F26) says: "When I ask him for anything, he refuses, yells, and belittles me." It might be argued that calling someone a friend is not a metaphor. For instance, Low (2003) suggests that the teacher as a friend and the teacher as a learning partner are metonymies (p. 250). In our data, the befriended teacher is a metaphor, because in the Arab sub-cultures the friendship frame for students does not literally include the teacher. A teacher is still surrounded by a halo in the Arab sub-cultures even if this is being challenged and contested. While the TEACHER AS A FRIEND is learning-oriented the TEACHER AS AN ENEMY does not serve learning.

The FAIR COURT JUDGE-UNFAIR COURT JUDGE dyad accounts for 5.6% of the overall LMs, with 5 going to FAIR COURT JUDGE and 6 to UNFAIR COURT JUDGE, which shows that students are equally divided on the issue of the fairness of their teachers. For a teacher to be a fair or unfair judge may be a student assessment-related issue. (S6) says: "The teacher does not discriminate between students, and is fair to all students" while (F8) says: "Some teachers favor some students over others, which bothers me greatly." From experience with Saudi students, the researchers know that most high-achieving students tend to think of their teachers as fair judges while most low-achieving students often blame their low achievement or even failure on the teacher, and often have a bone to pick with the teacher who praises achievers, gives them some concessions, or treats them in a special way, which is considered as unfairness by these students. Thus, the fair judge CM is conducive to learning while the unfair court judge CM is detrimental to it.

The ROLE MODEL-WEED dyad accounts for 5.6% of the overall LMs, with 10 going to ROLE MODEL and 1 to WEED. Like the FRIEND-ENEMY dyad, the first member of the dyad overwhelmingly dominates, which suggests a positive evaluation of the teacher. For a teacher to be a role model is to serve as an ideal for the student to emulate. (C3) says: "Spending more time with the teacher than with his own brother, a teacher influences the student who considers him as a role model." Although this CM is teacher-oriented, it may be thought as psychologically facilitating learning since looking forward to the teacher as a role model may carry with it positive results for the learning process. However, (F50) says: "Very few teachers spoil the student's psychology and productivity, thus they should be uprooted." This "weed" metaphor must have arisen from an unfortunate experience that one student had with a teacher. The entailment of (F50) suggests nuisance to the life of surrounding life, which requires uprooting the teacher, i.e. ending his contract. This student must have been turned off from learning. Fortunately, only one student out of 173 holds this attitude about his teachers.

The MESSENGER-CAREGIVER-SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE versus STRAY ANIMAL and PSYCHOTIC dyad accounts for 4.5% of the overall LMs, with 1 for each of MESSENGER, STRAY ANIMAL, and PSYCHOTIC, and 3 for each of CAREGIVER and SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE. (C7) says: "The teacher could have been a messenger." In the Arab culture, people think so high of the teacher as a social role that the latter has been likened to a messenger as epitomized by the Egyptian poet Ahmed Shawqi: "Stand up to the teacher and give him enough veneration; the

teacher could have been a messenger." The entailments of this CM have to do with the sanctity of the teachings of the teacher and obedience to him. Although only one out of the 173 COLT students has conceptualized his teachers as a messenger, this religious veneration certainly has a positive impact on the learning process of this very student.

In contrast, (F20) says: "If let to graze with animals in pastures, some teachers cannot return to their barn while other animals can." In actual fact, the teacher here is conceptualized as less than an animal. Moreover, (E50) says: "Many of the [teachers] have psychologically disturbed personality, and oppress students. If you see their exams questions, you realize that they are real psychopaths." Even though these are very limited cases and the students may have their own reasons to think of their teachers negatively, it hurts for the teacher to be conceptualized as a stray animal and a psychopath. Apart from the CM of MESSENGER, the negative conceptualizations show that interpersonal relations are irrevocably damaged between student and teacher, which is highly detrimental to the learning process.

On a more positive tone, (G4) conceptualized THE TEACHER AS A CAREGIVER as follows: "The teacher is concerned with the student, and gives him help at any time the student needs that" while (G1) conceptualized THE TEACHER AS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE in the following way: "When the teacher transfers his knowledge to the student in a good way, the latter will certainly remember the teacher forever." Thus, this affective perception of the teacher is likely to be conducive to cognitive learning.

Thus, the overall conclusion about these conflictive dyads is that the students tend to slightly lean towards the positive member of the dyad, with 64 positive and 52 negative LMs. Teachers are conceptualized more as friends than enemies and more as role models than weeds. However, it seems that COLT students consider their teachers to be more oppressors than guides.

4.2.2. Kinship-based conceptual metaphors

The previous sub-section has addressed what for the purposes of the article have been called conflictive dyadic CMs. These CMs account for 80 out of 196 LMs, which is 40.8% of the overall total. In the current sub-section, the CMs capitalize on the kinship system, and are all positive conceptualizations of the teacher.

THE TEACHER IS A FATHER capitalizes on the father figure as the head of the family. (H7) says: "The relation between the student and the teacher is that between a son and his father." Although the figure of father is not evocative of progeny here since it is used metaphorically, the entailments of the CM emerge precisely from the concept of fatherhood, whereby the student in (H7) considers himself the "son" of his teacher. In the Arab culture, the father, together with the mother, is revered as the one who has given birth to their children. Barakat (1993) points out that "the father continues to wield authority, assume responsibility for the family, and expect respect and unquestioning compliance with his instructions." Even outside the family, "a father figure rules over others, monopolizing authority, expecting strict obedience, and showing little tolerance of dissent" (p. 23). Thus, non-metaphorically and metaphorically the concept of FATHER is very influential in shaping the family and society in Arab countries. In the Qu'raan, God exhorts humans to give due respect to their parents, mentioning them after the worship of God.[vii]

The FATHER frame includes being responsible for feeding, clothing, and educating one's children. It also includes providing them with the necessary care, affection, and protection up to a later age than in western countries, which motivates the use of the father metaphor for the teacher at the university level. A father may also be expected to be caring and understanding. According to the CM, THE TEACHER IS A FATHER, the teacher is not expected to satisfy the material needs of the student as a father does for his children. Rather, he is expected to show his students that he is a caring and understanding teacher, i.e. morally supportive of them. Conceptualizing the teacher as a father is considering him socially superior owing to the knowledge he has. So, as a metaphoric son, the student acknowledges the power that the teacher has over him but expects the teacher to return the favor in respect and assessment terms. Although this CM is teacher-oriented, it is affective learning-oriented, and is likely to enhance learning.

Like its father counterpart, THE TEACHER IS A BROTHER evokes the family frame; being a brother is being on the same lineage as another offspring of the same parents. (P2) says: "The teacher is a brother." In the Islamic tradition, brotherhood is conceptualized metaphorically, whereby fellow Muslims are called "brothers in Allah" or "brothers in Islam." Brothers in Islam share the same faith and believe in and worship the same deity. A popular saying about this conception of brotherhood is: "Love for your brother what you desire for yourself." Perhaps the brother metaphor here is motivated by this Islamic tradition of brotherhood. Cognitively, the brother metaphor emerges from an image schema of HORIZONTALITY, where both brothers, i.e. the student and the teacher, stand at the same remove from each other, thus positing the student on the same footing as the teacher.

Socially, the brother frame includes mutual interests, mutual trust, and mutual assistance. A brother expects his brother to be informal, easygoing, and outgoing. Obviously, not all of the categories in the brother frame are recovered in THE TEACHER AS A BROTHER. Owing to the difference in age group between the student and the teacher, the latter becomes an elder brother to the former, which links up with the concept of respect invoked earlier on in this article. Even though the teacher may be posited as deserving respect, the student expects this respect to be reciprocated with mutual interests, mutual trust, and mutual assistance. In conceptualizing their teachers as brothers, the students aspire to the status of peers with them. This CM seems to be more learning-oriented as conceptualizing the teacher as a brother may facilitate or enhance learning.

A less important kinship-oriented CM than THE TEACHER IS A FATHER and THE TEACHER IS A BROTHER is THE TEACHER IS A KIN. (J3) says: "In the Japanese program, I feel as if I were in a family; we have fathers, who are our teachers and we have brothers who are the students." Conceptualizing the teacher as a kin is positioning him within the extended family. Barakat (1993) points out that "the traditional Arab family constitutes an economic and social unit in all three Arab patterns of living—Bedouin, rural, and urban—in the sense that all members cooperate to secure its livelihood and improve its standing in the community… The success or failure of an individual member becomes that of the family as a whole" (p. 23). Since the Saudi society is a collectivist one, allegiance to the family is very strong and allegiance to the tribe is even stronger.

Thus, the kinship-based CMs are overwhelmingly positive conceptualizations of the teacher. However, while THE TEACHER IS A FATHER and THE TEACHER IS A BROTHER capitalized on the nuclear family and social closeness, THE TEACHER IS A KIN capitalizes on the extended family or even the tribe.

5. Discussion

This section focuses on two items: (i) the semantic domains capitalized upon by students to conceptualize their teachers, and (ii) the distribution of the instantiations of CMs per department.

In their narratives, COLT students seem to have downplayed academic criteria and privileged familial, social, and interpersonal factors in evaluating their teachers. The only immediately academia-related factor is knowledge, in which they seem to consider their teachers as very hard acts to follow. Could we have expected them to make use of academic factors to evaluate their teachers? The answer is probably in the negative, because students are students everywhere. In order of importance, the semantic domains capitalized upon include the kinship system (FATHER, BROTHER, and KIN), violence (OPPRESSOR), tourism (TRAVEL GUIDE), friendship (FRIEND), enmity (ENEMY), the legal system (FAIR COURT JUDGE-UNFAIR COURT JUDGE), stardom (ROLE MODEL), affection (CAREGIVER), mental disorders (PSYCHOTIC), the animal kingdom (STRAY ANIMAL), agriculture (WEED), and religion (MESSENGER).

The positive-negative distribution of the instantiations of CMs per department is summed up in table 3:

Table 3. ***Instantiations of CMs per department***

Type of conceptualization	**DELT**	**%**	**DFLT**	**%**	**DMLT**	**%**
Positive conceptualization	27	51.92	52	73.23	65	89
Negative conceptualization	25	48	19	26.76	8	10.95
Total	**52**		**71**		**73**	

As Table 3 shows, the DELT has the least positive conceptualizations and the most negative ones while the DMLT has the most positive conceptualizations and the least negative ones, with the DFLT in between both departments. However, the three departments are equal in conceptualizing their teachers as friends (8 instances), unfair court judges (2 instances), and caregivers (1 instance).

Compared to the DFLT and the DMLT, the DELT offers the most negative conceptualizations of the teacher even though the positive (27) and negative (25) are almost equivalent. Indeed, over 34% of the DELT students think of their teachers as oppressors and 3.4% as their enemies against 19% considering them as part of the family, about 14% as friends, 3.4% as their guides, and 1.7% as role models for them. The fact that 34 out 58 students conceptualize their teachers as oppressors is an alarmingly frightening evaluation which deserves scrutiny and resolution. The students are not very explicit in their narratives about why they qualify their teachers as oppressors, but it seems that teachers' lack of socialization with their students, which is encouraged by the nature of Saudi society, is interpreted as haughtiness and

indifference, which aloofness and lack of socialization are, in turn, interpreted as authority on the part of the teacher. Another explanation of this conceptualization may lie in the cosmopolitan nature of DELT, which accounts for at least six different nationalities. Although the students are exposed to teachers of Arab origin, they may be experiencing difficulty in coping with different Arab sub-cultures and mentalities, which are felt to be alien and oppressive to them.

The DFLT shows more positive and less negative conceptualizations of their teachers than the DELT. Indeed, 56.6% of the DFLT students conceptualize their teachers as part of their family, 15% as guides, 15% as friends, and 9.4% as role models for them. However, 18.86% consider their teachers as oppressors and 9.4% as their enemies, which is slightly higher than the DELT's. The DFLT students have used two very negative conceptualizations, namely STRAY ANIMAL and WEED. Although the number is insignificant, it suggests a very tense student-teacher interpersonal relation. It should be pointed out that the DFLT is not less cosmopolitan than the DELT, and yet it seems that its students have a higher opinion of their teachers.

As pointed out earlier on, the DMLT accounts for the most positive conceptualizations of teachers and the least negative ones. Indeed, about 60% of the DMLT students have conceptualized their teachers as part of their family, 13% as friends, 11.29% as guides, and 6.45% as role models. The DMLT is the only department to have produced the MESSENGER CM, which bestows a reverential dimension on teachers. As to negative conceptualizations, the DMLT has marked the lowest percentage, with only 8% conceptualizing their teachers as oppressors and 1.6% as enemies.

The situation in the DMLT deserves dwelling upon. The DMLT is a heterogeneous department, including eight European and Asian languages, and more cosmopolitan than the DELT and DFLT. Although it employs many nationalities such as Chinese, Egyptian, German, Moroccan, Iranian, Saudi, Spanish, Syrian, Tunisian, Turkish, etc., the most dominant one is the Egyptian one. Historically, Egyptians are known for their knowledge of the Saudi mentality in education since they have taken part in partly shaping it. Therefore, they mostly know better than other nationalities how to deal with Saudi students. Another fact relates to the number of students at the DMLT. Compared to the DELT and the DFLT, the DMLT has the lowest student-faculty ratio. Because classes include very few students, teachers and students get to know each other better, which creates special bonds of "friendship," solidarity, and familiarity between them. Because having fewer students helps the learning process, this is also helping student-teacher relations to be friendly and less vertical than they are expected in the Arab world.

The following table 4 sums up the various positive and negative CMs shared by the departments, and their percentile count per department.

Table 4. ***Positive and negative conceptualizations per department***

CMs	DMLT	DFLT	DELT
FATHER/BROTHER/KIN	60%	56.6%	19%
ROLE MODEL	6.45%	9.4%	1.7%
FRIEND	13%	15%	14%
GUIDE	11.29%	15%	3.4%
OPPRESSOR	8%	18.86%	34%
ENEMY	1.6%	9.4%	3.4%

Conclusion

The objective of the current article has been to capture the metaphoric conceptualization of teachers by their own students at COLT. The population of the study was made of 173 students from the three departments at COLT. To collect data, the researchers use the prompt technique to elicit a narrative of the students' account of how they perceive their teachers. Data analysis adopts a qualitative-cum-quantitative method, and hinges on Lakoff & Johnson's (1980) contemporary theory of metaphor which allows the researchers to move from the students' linguistic expressions to their ensuing conceptual metaphors.

The findings reveal a set of conflictive student-generated dyadic CMs and kinship-based CMs, mostly evaluating teachers positively according to affective style criteria such as familial, social, and interpersonal factors. In spite of conflictive CMs, the students' narratives are mostly positive as can be shown in table 5 below:

Table 5. ***Positive and negative CMs and their instantiations***

	Positive conceptualizations		**Negative conceptualizations**	
1	THE TEACHER IS A TRAVEL GUIDE	17	THE TEACHER IS AN OPPRESSOR	35
2	THE TEACHER IS A FRIEND	24	THE TEACHER IS AN ENEMY	8
3	THE TEACHER IS A FAIR COURT JUDGE	5	THE TEACHER IS AN UNFAIR COURT JUDGE	6
4	THE TEACHER IS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE	3	THE TEACHER IS A STRAY ANIMAL	1
5	THE TEACHER IS A FATHER	37	THE TEACHER IS A WEED	1
6	THE TEACHER IS A BROTHER	37	THE TEACHER IS A PSYCHOTIC	1
7	THE TEACHER IS A KIN	6		
8	THE TEACHER IS A ROLE MODEL	10		
9	THE TEACHER IS A CAREGIVER	3		
10	THE TEACHER IS A MESSENGER	2		
	Total	**144**		**52**

According to these conceptualizations, teachers have been evaluated in terms of sociocultural frames of judges, friends, enemies, etc. and kinship frames such as fathers, brothers, and other kin and not from within the professional teacher frame.

However, at the level of the departments, there is a difference as can be shown in the following recapitulative table 6:

Table 6. ***Percentile of CMs per department***

Type of conceptualization	**DELT**	**DFLT**	**DMLT**
Positive conceptualization	51.92%	73.23%	89%
Negative conceptualization	48%	26.76%	10.95%

As is clear in Table 6, in the DFLT three-quarters of the conceptualizations are positive and one-quarter is negative while in DMLT 90% positive and 10% negative. However, in DELT over 50% of the conceptualizations are negative and approximately 50% are positive. These

findings, especially those of DELT, may serve as an indicator to COLT and its departments as to where the teacher-student relations go wrong and how they can be improved and consolidated to facilitate learning.

Acknowledgement

The authors are grateful to the Deanship of Scientific Research at king Saud University and the Research Center at the College of Languages and Translation for funding the current research.

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Endnotes

[i] The authors are indebted to a reviewer for AWEJ journal for his/her insightful comments, which helped improve the quality of the current article. However, responsibility for the contents is incumbent on the authors.

[ii] The publication in question is: Al-Ghabban, M., S. Ben Salamh, & Z. Maalej (2016). Metaphoric modeling of foreign language teaching and learning, with special reference to teaching philosophy statements. *Applied Linguistics, 37* (doi:10.1093/applin/amv053).

[iii] COLT faculty list- Itqaan Program: Quality Unit, College of Languages & Translation, King Saud University.

[iv] Article 155: "Co-education is disallowed between males and females at all educational levels, except at nursery schools and kindergarten" (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Educational Policy Document, 1937, ch.2, Girls' education).

[v] Are co-ed or single-sex lessons best? Co-ed schools are increasingly keen to teach their boys and girls separately, according to one Cambridge academic. But is this really a good idea? The Guardian, Wednesday 2 December 2009 (http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/dec/02/co-eds-or-single-sex).

[vi] Students Attack Teachers in Fire, Pencil, Punching, and Kidnapping Incidents (Dec 2, 2013). Accessed on 24-1-2014 at http://freefabulousgirl.com/2013/12/02/students-attack-teachers-in-fire-pencil-punching-and-kidnapping-incidents/

[vii] "Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! Bestow on them thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood'." Sura XVII, Bani Israil or the Children of Israel, Verses 23-24.