Concept-Based Instruction as an Innovation to Improve Grade 5 Learner's Metaphoric Competence

Prof. Resty C. Samosa

Graceville National High School Colegio de San Gabriel Arcangel

Clarry Jane Admana, Vincent Almia, Verlan Jane Garcia, Marvin Roi Lorilla

Colegio de San Gabriel Arcangel

ABSTRACT

This study uses Concept-Based Instruction in teaching metaphors to the ESL learners. Concept-based curriculum and instruction is a critical link in making learning more relevant and interesting for students. This study aims to shed light to the teaching and learning of metaphors using Concept-Based Instruction in the context of English as a Second Language learners. It aims to explore how the concept-based approach influences their development of metaphorical competence. The major concern of this study is to determine the effectiveness of Concept-based instruction approach in improving Grade 5 ESL learners' metaphorical competence in assessing the improvement of the subjects. The study assessed the Concept-Based Instruction as an Innovation to improve Grade 5 learner's metaphoric competence in the selected private school students in the Schools Division of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. The Respondents of the study were purposively selected which compromised of Twenty-eight (28) from the private school students in the Schools Division of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. The goal of CBI is to stimulate development through the effective presentation of high-quality conceptual knowledge linked to practical activity, in which students not only internalize the conceptual knowledge but also learn how to apply it to their own goals in any of the school subjects taught, including language. The study revealed there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest score of the students in the utilization of the Innovation in improving the learners' metaphoric competence.

Keywords: *concept-based instruction, metaphoric competence*

INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is a recurrent, comprehensive figurative language that is very important to second language learners. It covers most of the figurative language to the point that some translation books often call it metaphorical language. It is used in practically every genre of text and every register of speech and is just as appropriate for explaining the inner workings of a "black hole" (a metaphor) as it is for describing the inner workings of the human heart (Veale et.al., 2016). It is so widely used in different cultures that speakers and writers frequently use metaphorical expressions to convey their ideas. And since its structure and application are culturally determined, understanding English metaphors necessitates a solid understanding of cultures, with special attention paid to metaphor in cross-cultural communication (Aleshtar et.al., 2014).

Metaphoric competence is one's ability in comprehending and producing metaphors, usually in a second language or foreign language. It is an important aspect of linguistic competence too. In a study conducted by Aleshtar et.al., (2014), it is shown that metaphorical competence is significantly correlated to a learner's language proficiency, that is, the higher the learner's language proficiency, the more metaphors they can understand and produce. This is also supported by Littlemore et.al., (2013) showed that the proportion of metaphor used by language learners increases across the five Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) levels. Hoang (2018) similarly asserted that there is a positive relationship between competency and the quantity of metaphorical expressions, albeit this is mostly true for grammatically accurate metaphorical terms. Thus, to genuinely achieve an advanced level of proficiency, it is necessary that a speaker develops a metaphorical capacity in the second language (Lantolf & Bobrova, 2014).

However, most studies showed that metaphorical competence of ESL learners poses problems such as the ability to interpret, process, or produce metaphors. according to Kathpalia and Carmel (2011), it is shown that despite the fact that second language learners seek to utilize a variety of metaphors in their writing, such as grammatical, textual, illocutionary, and sociolinguistic, these are often unidiomatic and must be further developed for fluency in the target language. Consequently, with the frequent use of metaphors in various texts, it has the potential to be a substantial factor to non-native English speaking learners' comprehension difficulties (Sandgren, 2014). And this is an issue since in the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Filipino students around the age of 15 received a reading comprehension rating of 340 points, well below the global average of 487 points, and ranked last out of 79 countries. But despite the substantial amount of foreign research on metaphoric competence, there are yet no studies that have explored the pedagogical possibilities of teaching metaphors to the language learners that are conducted in the Philippines. That is the reason why this study is conducted.

Concept-based curriculum and instruction is a critical link in making learning more relevant and interesting for students (Erickson & Lanning, 2014). It's a three-dimensional curriculum and instructional design that looks at framing the discipline's facts, knowledge, and abilities with generalizations and concepts rather than focusing on lower-level skills, facts, and themes like traditional curriculum does. Instead of memorizing information, students are required to consider deep conceptual understandings (Erickson et al., 2017). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind influenced it. Sociocultural theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of social, cultural, and psychological processes by recognizing the importance of human language in communication, cultural representation, and conceptualization. It focuses on internalizing new concepts in order to know how to employ complicated meanings (semantics) in real-world contexts to perform intentionality rather than knowing ends (morphology) or word order sequences (syntax) (pragmatics).

According to a study by Benhamlaoui (2021) investigating the potential of CBI model versus traditional instruction for improving EFL (English as Foreign Language) learners' understanding of the concept of tense/aspect in English and their use of associated forms, it was discovered that the CBI methodology outperformed traditional training in terms of boosting participants' grasp of tense/aspect as well as their use of the three target forms. Additionally, some studies in the teaching of metaphor in EFL context showed that Concept-Based Instruction (CBI) is effective in improving the learners' metaphorical awareness,

retention, and competence (Chen and Lai, 2015; Liu and Hsieh, 2020).

Teachers must shift their focus to developing the conceptual mind by using inductive methods to guide students through concepts, generalizations, and principles, as well as using topics, facts, and abilities to enhance conceptual learning, not as a goal in and of themselves but as a means to a deeper understanding. Concept-based curriculum and instruction give the needed foundation for learning and create opportunities for student academic engagement and growth since it is linked to the learning process and how the brain absorbs, evaluates, and stores new knowledge (Erickson et al., 2017). However, research on metaphor and second language education and the practical applications of this knowledge for language teaching have not been investigated (Hoang, 2014).

Hence, this study aims to shed light to the teaching and learning of metaphors using Concept-Based Instruction in the context of English as a Second Language learners. It aims to explore how the concept-based approach influences their development of metaphorical competence. So that as Hoang (2014) stated, metaphor will soon be valued in second language education in order to promote innovative metaphor-based practices of L2 teaching and learning.

ACTION RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of Concept-based instruction approach in improving Grade 5 ESL learners' metaphorical competence of selected private school in City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan for Academic Year 2021-2022.

Specifically, this action research will seek to answer the following questions:

1. How may the Grade 5 Learners be described during pretest and posttest on metaphorical competence?

2. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest on metaphorical competence of the learners that were exposed to Concept-Based Instruction?

3. What instructional implications may these findings have in an ESL classroom?

METHODS

This study utilized pretest-posttest true-control group design to determine the effectiveness of concept-based instruction in improving the metaphoric competence of Grade V English learners. The treatment group should be assessed both before and after the strategy or program is implemented (Samosa, 2020). Gain scores were used to describe the dependent variable, and the difference in scores between the pretest and post-test scores of the treatment group was measured and a metaphoric competence test was utilized as a measure of the performance of the treatment groups.

One section of the treatment group got concept-based instruction (CBI) as an intervention among Grade V learners in acquiring metaphors in their English lessons. The pre-test, which was given by the researcher, was the focus of the first day of implementation. Following the delivery of the pre-test to members of the treatment group, the researcher immediately began conducting lessons in the treatment group utilizing concept-based instruction. The hypothesis was then evaluated to see if there was a significant difference in the members of the experimental group's metaphoric competence test scores between the pretest and posttest

The respondents of the study were purposively selected by the members of the research

study. In this study, the researchers used a purposive sampling technique. It is a kind of sampling in which the researcher looks for common qualities or specific characteristics among the participants (Samosa, 2021). The study included Twenty-eight (28) Grade V students in the selected private school in the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan who were enrolled in the K to 12 Curriculum and were taught by the same teacher in the session in the SY. 2021 -2022.

The researcher used the metaphoric competence test as a pretest and posttest. The usage of a Table of Specification (TOS) was required to ensure that it was reliable and valid in accordance with the Department of Education's Curriculum Guide. Samosa (2021) gave emphasis to the relevance of Content Validity Procedure in determining whether the test content accurately reflects the subject's content. Thus, the researchers used a researcher-made metaphoric competence test that was submitted to the experts in the area of English, such as Master Teachers, for content and face validations. The validators were given the duty of making constructive comments and recommendations for the instrument's improvement, and they examined the test items' congruence with the learning competencies.

In gathering the data, researchers submitted a request letter to conduct the study, as noted by the School Principal and researcher coordinator, to the Schools Division Superintendent for clearance and permission to perform the study in the selected private school in the Schools Division of City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. After receiving approval, the researcher provided the Informed Consent Form to all learners' parents/guardians so that the study could be carried out. They were told about the researcher's central objective and role in helping their children attain their goals by implementing concept-based instruction (CBI) to improve metaphoric competence in English V. Following the retrieval of the Informed Consent Form, the researcher delivered the metaphoric competency test to the study participants via a pretest. Another letter of request was sent by the researchers to the school's principal in order to officially carry out the study. The researcher followed ethical principles and issues relating to data collection procedures to ensure the confidentiality of the results. The researcher manually examined the metaphoric competence test in the form of a pretest and posttest after the appropriate data had been collected. The test results were tabulated and tallied using an Excel spreadsheet. Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) were used to compute and process the obtained and tabulated data after it was tabulated.

In assessing the improvement of the subjects, pretest scores of the experimental group were compared using the t-test of the independent means. The intervention was delivered to the experimental group after the pretest. Then a posttest was given after the intervention to see if there was a significant change between the experimental group's pretest and posttest results. The Weighted Mean was used to determine the improvement of the learner responders, the critical value and computed t value, they were statistically considered along with the p-value and an alpha level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section summarizes the data gathered using the study's research instruments. It interprets and analyses data acquired to characterize the effectiveness of concept-based instruction as an innovation for improving students' metaphoric competence. The findings of the study were as follows

Table 1: Pretest-posttest of Grade 5 learners on metaphoric competence

	Pre-test Score	Posttest Score	Gain Score
Mean	84	88.61	4.61

Presented on table 1 was the pretest-posttest of Grade 5 learners on metaphoric competence. As gleaned on the tabulated data, it indicates that before the utilization of the concept-based instruction, learners' achievement in pretest were 84, then in posttest were 88.61. Hence, the learners' gain mean score of 4.61%. In addition, it can be concluded that metaphoric competence as innovation had a positive effect on the learners' achievement, as evidenced by the significantly greater mean in the posttest than in the pretest.

In line with study of Liu and Hsieh (2020) which stated that CBI, specifically the STI design, effectively encouraged learners' metaphorical awareness/competence by mediating their appropriation and internationalization of metaphorical notions across the material, verbal, and mental levels. It also helps learners become more aware of the notions inherent in the target language, allowing them to internalize important psychological tools for meaningful and agentive cultural exploration. The teaching of metaphor in an EFL context backs up the findings, demonstrating that Concept-Based Instruction (CBI) is beneficial in boosting learners' metaphorical awareness, retention, and competency (Chen and Lai, 2015).

Table 2: Test of significant difference between the pretest and posttest on metaphoric competence that was exposed to concept-based instruction innovation.

df	t-test	t-test critical value	Probability level	Decision	Interpretation
26	5.35	2.05	$P<0.05$	H_o is rejected	significant

Upon computing the data, it appeared that the computed t-value of 5.35 exceeded the t-test critical value of 2.05 at the degree of freedom of 26. The results are significant at 0.05. Thus, there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest score of the learners in the utilization of the Innovation in improving the learners' metaphoric competence. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The findings align with those of Negueruela-Azarola, et.al., (2015) who stated that this process of engaging with concepts and actively employing them with others in social interaction is the beginning of conceptual intra-action, which leads to language learning and growth. Similarly, Garcia (2017) demonstrated that learners consciously engage with a grammatical concept as a tool for thinking, both intrapersonal and interpersonal, fostering awareness of new conceptual categories in the heritage language in his paper presenting a pedagogical proposal for implementing concept-based instruction. As such, it seems imperative to move away from traditional pedagogical models cantered on rules and repetition in favour of ones that empower students and promote their agency as they co-create, transform, and co-own their learning experiences. Furthermore, C-BI has been shown to transform teachers into mediators who supply the sense-making skills and major teaching-learning activity that allows students to be active participants in the classroom.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study increase ESL educators' pedagogical understanding that learners, even in elementary level can internalize metaphorical expressions when given suitable material and social mediation based on their ZPD. Moreover, a concept-based approach

appears to be helpful in promoting their metaphoric competence. With these, teachers can mediate their learners' assimilation of metaphor concepts and create relevant, high-quality, and systemic cultural and conceptual tools like Schema for Orienting Basis of Action (SCOBA). More so, to engage their learners in exploring their learning environments they can also have a variety of communicative activities in addition to CBI and SCOBAs.

Moreover, A Systematic Theoretical Instruction (STI)-driven pedagogical approach can be combined with the use of new technology during the instruction or even in designing digital Schema for Orienting Basis of Action (SCOBA) as high-quality mediational means, particularly in online classes. This will be a great help to introduce learners to the metaphorical expressions or concepts embedded in the language, allowing them to internalize important psychological tools for meaningful and effective learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study sheds light on the effectiveness of using concept-based instruction as an innovation in teaching metaphors and improving the Grade 5 learners' metaphoric competence in two aspects. First, that the use of concept-based instruction teaching metaphors carries beneficial effects is validated. And that instruction with Schema for Orienting Basis of Action (SCOBA) should be incorporated with instruction of metaphor in order to assist figurative language learning. The Learners exposed to Concept-Based Instruction are significantly different in pre-test and post-test results. With the significantly higher mean in posttest than in the pretest, the concept-based instruction had positive engagement and impact on the Learner's achievement.

REFERENCES

1. Aleshtar, M. T., & Dowlatabadi, H. (2014). Metaphoric competence and language proficiency in the same boat. Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98, 1895–1904

2. Benhamlaoui, M. (2021). Concept-Based Instruction for Enhancing Understanding and Use of English Tense and Aspect Markers by Algerian Learners of L2 English (Doctoral dissertation, University of Essex).

3. Chen, Y.-C., & Lai, H.-L. (2015). Developing EFL learners' metaphoric competence through cognitive-oriented methods. International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 53(4), 415–438.

4. Erickson, H. L. & Lanning, L.A. (2014). Transitioning to concept-based curriculum and instruction: How to bring content and process together. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, INC.

5. Erickson, H. L., Lanning, L.A., & French, R. (2017). Concept-based curriculum and instruction for the thinking classroom. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

6. García, P. (2017). Implementing concept-based instruction in the heritage language classroom: A pedagogical proposal.

7. Hoang, H., &Boers, F. (2018). Gauging the association of EFL learners writing proficiency and their use of metaphorical language. System, 74, 1-8.

8. Hoang, H. (2014). Metaphor and Second Language Learning: The State of the Field. TESL-EJ, 18(2), n2.

9. Kathpalia, S. S., & Carmel, H. L. H. (2011). Metaphorical competence in ESL student writing. Relc Journal, 42(3), 273-290.

10. Lantolf, J. & Bobrova, L. (2014). Metaphor instruction in the L2 Spanish classroom: theoretical argument and pedagogical program. Journal of Spanish Language Teaching. 1. 46-61. 10.1080/23247797.2014.898515

11. Littlemore, Jeannette &Krennmayr, Tina & Turner, James &Turner, Sarah. (2013). An Investigation into Metaphor Use at Different Levels of Second Language Writing. Applied Linguistics. 35. 117-144. 10.1093/applin/amt004

12. Liu, S., & Hsieh, C. Y. C. (2020). Developing metaphorical awareness and competence in Chinese as a foreign language through concept-based instruction. Foreign Language Annals, 53(3), 478-504.

13. Negueruela-Azarola, E. D. U. A. R. D. O., García, P. N., & Buescher, K. (2015). From interaction to intra-action: The internalization of talk, gesture, and concepts in the second language classroom. The handbook of classroom discourse and interaction, 115, 233.

14. OALD. (2019). Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press

15. Samosa, R C. (2020). Understanding the End- to – End Praxis of Quantitative Research: From Scratch to Paper Presentation Book of Life Publication.

16. Samosa, R. C. (2021). Exploring the Essence & Meaning from the Sound of Experiences: Qualitative Research. Poetry Planet Book Publishing House.

17. Samosa, R.C. (2021). From Test Validity to Construct Validity & Back: Theory and Application in the Experimental Design in Science Action Research. Philippine Association of Physics and Science Instructors, De La Salle University, Manila.

18. Veale, T., Shutova, E., & Klebanov, B. B. (2016). Metaphor: A computational perspective. Synthesis Lectures on Human Language Technologies, 9(1), 1-160.