

EXPLORING THE USE OF METAPHORS IN CHILDREN LITERATURE: A DISCURSIVE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the discourse analysis of metaphors used in children literature. It basically deals with the role of metaphors in understanding literature. Metaphors provide a more vivid, flexible and expressible language. Metaphor is not a matter of language but it controls our feelings, ideas and actions. This paper aims to investigate the use of metaphors in children's literature from discursive perspective. Metaphors are used to say something in another way or we may call it as saying or conveying something in indirect way. Our basic purpose of writing this paper is to explore the use of different metaphors in children literature that how metaphors are helpful in understanding children literature. This paper also deals with the cultural values as well as the psychological impact of metaphors on children psychology. We are going to analyze the use of different and childish metaphors in course books of children that how metaphors attracts children in studying and understanding. By studying children literature we have seen many examples and we further categorized them into its type's i.e. Dead metaphors, active metaphors, extended metaphors, and implicit metaphors are discussed in a detailed way. Some mixed examples of metaphors are also analyzed along with these metaphors. In this study we have checked the psychological impact, cultural values embedded by these metaphors and the ideologies lying behind the usage of these metaphors. The end of this paper is loaded with number of references regarding this topic.

Keywords: Metaphors, Children Literature, Discourse analysis, Contextual Metaphors.

INTRODUCTION

The present study is devoted to metaphors that how they are used in children's literature. We have generalized this topic from discursive perspective that how they function in understanding the concepts. From ancient times metaphors are used in poetry, literature and art. These are not only used by poets or intellectuals but frequently used in our daily conversations. Metaphors are not just a matter of language or words but these poetic devices control our thoughts, feelings and ideas. As this field is a broader so we can find many works on this topic. Metaphors have been a topic of central interest by Lakoff and Johnson's work "We live by". The main function of metaphor in literature is to relate two different things on the bases of some similarities between them. Mostly children get wrong concept of things because their life experiences are limited as compare to adults. In this study the main focus is on how these metaphors have impact on child psychology, how these metaphors functions according to given cultural context and what types of metaphors mostly used in children's literature. Metaphor is one of the most familiar figure of speech author uses as a literary

device in order to describe one thing in terms of another. Children perceive these metaphors according to their age, their cognition, and their level of understanding.

According to Ellen Winner (1999) there are two kinds of usage of metaphors in literature. The first one is spontaneous usage of metaphor and the second one is intentional use of metaphor. Spontaneous use of metaphor happens when authors use metaphors automatically to emerge certain ideologies while on the other hand, intentional use happens when we use these metaphors according to our needs. The second one is the most important in the case of children's literature, because they provide a visual description of concepts. These literary devices are frequently used in children's literature in order to describe two opposite things on the bases of some similarities existing between them. Their impact on children is according to their psychology. Although there is hardware of the understanding of the concepts is present in the children. The name of the topic "use of metaphors in children literature (a functional perspective) implies that what is the function of metaphor which used in children's literature. There are many researches we can find in this field; the basic function of the metaphor is to understand concepts of things.

Maria Papaya (2004) said that metaphorical thinking is very important and essential in communication, in learning, in discovering, and in inventing. These metaphors give us a broader view, how we see the world. These provide us a new perspective of conceptualizing the world. Metaphors provide us a visual description of concept.

In this study we have collected many things. For example the ideology lying behind the usage of these metaphors what type of functions they perform in learning different things. Michel Marsh said that language is metaphorical and systematic in nature. Human conceptual system is accordingly fulfilled by usage of these metaphors. The second thing which we have generalized is the cultural background provided by these metaphors. There is an interrelated connection between the usage of these according to culture and the culture provided by these metaphors. Writers always use these metaphors according to the culture to which certain books have to be taught. There are different types of metaphors used in children literature. Active metaphors, dead metaphors, extended metaphors, implicit metaphors, ontological metaphors, orientational metaphors, structural metaphors, conduit metaphors, grammatical metaphors, simple metaphors, complex metaphors, compound metaphors etc.

Explaining terms "Metaphor" is actually a technique to draw a comparison between two dissimilar things in writing poetry, prose, articles, headlines or we may say metaphors are figure of speech that can be used for a hidden comparison between different objects or things by having some characteristics common between them For example if a mother calls her very weak and timid son "a Lion" then "Lion" is used as a metaphor here. Secondly I am going to explain children literature.

Research questions

- What is the psychological impact of metaphors towards learning?
- What ideological impact do the metaphors construe in children books?
- What cultural values are embedded through metaphors of children literature?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this paper we are going to study that how metaphors are used by children in their language. Metaphors are "A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action

to which it is not literally applicable". Metaphors are basically used to say something about a thing which actually that is not in reality. Metaphors are used at broader level by different kind of people in their general or particular talk. Metaphors are used by Politicians, Newspaper editors, article writers and also by children. Use of metaphors in child literature is a very important and broader topic and many researchers have worked on it. I have read many articles. Zieliński (2014) worked on how metaphors are used by politicians. Metaphors are mainly used by Political leaders in their political speeches very frequently. Flowerdew and Leong (2007) discussed the metaphors used by patriotic people. A difference between Nationalism and Patriotism is shown in this article. The patriotism of Hong Kong is shown in it. Some metaphors like "war", family" are used in it.

Lu and Ahrens (2008) investigated that metaphors are used by presidents in their speeches for making them more influential and expressive. Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (1980) explained very clearly that metaphors is a technique which is not only used in ordinary or common language but also in poetry it has a great effect. Metaphors in poetry support the poetic imagination and rhetorical flourish. And they basically focus on conceptual metaphors used by people. Lakoff and Johnson describe three types of metaphor in their work "we live by". They say that we cannot speak without metaphor rather we live by these metaphors. Metaphor not only provide a more expressible, vivid and flexible language but also shape our understanding and perception. They also discuss that metaphors provide a more flourish rhetorical and not an ordinary language. There is a distinction among metaphorical expressions and metaphorical concepts. We use these metaphorical expressions in our daily human processes and functioning but we do not know in what way we used them. Language is metaphorical in nature. Its means that when we use language in our daily conversation, then it is not merely description of words but also give a complete picture what we are saying. Foremost and important claim made by Lakoff and Johnson is metaphors are not matter of language but human processes are themselves metaphorical. System of human concepts is also shaped and structured metaphorically, so when we use metaphor then it mean that we are imposing some concepts which are essential to understand. They give three types of metaphors. Those are ontological, orientational, and structural metaphors which are notion based, orientation based and structural based respectively.

C.S Lewis admonishes us about the importance of metaphors in saying that "the man who does not consciously use metaphors talks without meanings". He compares the beauty of Italian architecture with music by saying frozen music. He says that there are two kinds of usage metaphors, the first one is spontaneous use of metaphors and he second one is intentional use of metaphors.

Methodology

There are three sections to which whole research is divided. In the first section, research questions would be posed. In the second section data of research is presented and collection of data is viewed. In the last section the method which I have used is discussed. This study is three dimensional, first of all this research focuses on ideological impact of metaphors on children's learnings. Secondly, it generalizes cultural values reflecting through these metaphors and finally, it also discusses how psychology of children is used in conceptualizing the world through these metaphors.

My research questions which were posed:

What ideological impact do the metaphors construe in children literature?

What is psychological impact of metaphors towards learning?

What cultural values are embedded through metaphor usage in children literature?

These questions encompass these sub-points in the mind. In first question the ideology of the author behind the usage of metaphors is discussed. These metaphors provide some ideas in conceptualizing the world through these metaphors. There is hardware for understanding things in the human conceptual system but the software is provided by authors via these metaphors. The software is those life experiences which construe a complete conceptual system. This kind of software developed with the passage of time, and children suffer in the process of learning because they are lack of these experiences. The same is the case with second question, through this question I have checked that how children psychology is being used during in the process of understanding. Children's psychology is different from adults toward learning. The answer of these questions gives a proof that these metaphors provide a complete visual description. Children perceive things when there is a comparison of target concept and the concept lying already in the mind of children. Final question is very interesting because culture greatly effects on the mind of individuals. We can say that the cultural values provided by these metaphors are the knowledge of the very culture. We use metaphors according to culture in which children have brought up.

Data Collection

The data has been collected from three course books of English medium school. These were English books in which metaphors were used in different things like poems and lessons. These books are of different standards. The first one is of 3rd standard, second one is of 4th and the third one is of 5th standard. As these books have to teach in Pakistan so the Pakistani cultural values are embedded through these metaphors.

Data analysis

We limited our analysis to those metaphors which are frequently used in children's literature. My aim is not to bring all types of metaphors but to get the most striking and frequent ones. In my research we have discussed active metaphors, dead metaphors, extended metaphors, implicit metaphors, complex metaphors, and compound metaphors along with their examples. In this research we applied metaphors analysis in order to find out metaphors from different books. Metaphors analysis helped me out not only in finding but to describe their significance and the ideologies lying behind these metaphors. We have analyzed these metaphors not only at linguistic level but also described the image provided by these metaphors.

Active metaphors found in children's literature

“Active metaphor is one which is relatively new and has not become part of every linguistic usage” Active metaphors are frequently used in children's literature. The use of active metaphors is a sign of fertile imagination. These metaphors are particularly used in order to impress the children. Active metaphors are also known as live metaphors. There are many situations in which we come across different concepts which are difficult to understand. These types of metaphors are also used as a tool to explain these types of concepts. Active metaphors are as follows:

1. You are my sunshine.
2. She is looking pretty rabbit.
3. Recreation is Food for thought.

4. It has been a purple dinosaur of a day.
5. The past is a foreign country.

According to these examples sunshine, melting pot and pretty rabbit has been used. In all three examples noun are performing the duties of metaphors. These metaphors are used as poetic devices to describe one thing in terms of another. In example 1, sunshine is used as metaphor and carries great importance and significance. Sun is a symbol and source of light. In this example, through metaphorical expression showing the love and affection towards his son. So in this example the ideology of the writer is to illustrate the care of parents towards their children. Most of the time, this can be used to show the love and kindness. In 2nd example again metaphor is used to show deep feeling and there is also some curiosity about the beauty and fairness of someone. This metaphor actually reveals the mood and attitude also.

In 3rd, 4th AND 5th examples three active metaphors are used. Through these three metaphors, three different ideologies are implemented on children. In 3rd example, recreation is compared to the food of thought. Mind is the main part of body it works as a machine which controls all the functions of human body. So working must be in healthy mood. Most of the time this metaphor is used in the context to advice someone. In 4th achievements of a person are given the name of purple dinosaur. Purple dinosaur is the sign of prosperity and victory. The significance of this metaphor is to identify the end of something. In 5th, foreign country is used as an active metaphor to demolish the importance of past. The future is the main concern of every man. Everybody has some goals, some plans and some resolutions for his future life. It is very important to forget the failures of past to accomplish plans of future. This metaphor has great significance in this respect that it is used to advise someone.

Dead metaphors found in children's literature

“A dead metaphor is a figure of speech which has lost its original imagery of its meaning due to extensive, repetitive and popular usage”. According to some scholars dead metaphors are like dead parrots which are not parrots at all. So there is a conflict whether these are metaphors or not. Examples of dead metaphors which I have found in children's literature are as follows:

1. Time is running out.
2. Fall in love
3. The light of my life.
4. He is cool cucumber.
5. Pakistan is making progress leaps and bounds.

Time is one of great source for everyone; time is more precious than money and other material sources. In 1st example time is compared like a running thing. The ideology to use this metaphor is to give a conscious look upon the importance of time. It is said that everything can be regained except time. Author used this metaphor to cite the preciousness of time. In 2nd example the literal meaning is different rather awkward than connotative meanings. Falling is a physical thing but through this metaphor falling is made a spiritual thing in love. Significance of the usage of this metaphor in children literature is to make clear understanding of the concept. Authors use this metaphor to convince his reader to create a situation through the power of imagination. In the 3rd example literal meanings are very simple but real meanings give a complete importance of someone in the life of his lover. Light is a sign of happiness and rejoice fullness. There are some people in our lives which

have great influences on us. Without them darkness prevails in our surroundings but in their presence we feel comfortable rather complete. In the 5th example there is a comparison of the coolness of someone to cucumber. Significance of this metaphor is that, via this metaphor we can idealize the coolness of somebody an implement on our readers. In the 6th example progress of Pakistan has been told, through this metaphor it is clear that how much rapid growth is happening.

Extended metaphors found in children literature

“A metaphor that is comparison between two unlike things that continues throughout a series of sentences in a paragraph or lying in a poem”. Examples of these metaphors in the form of poems are as follows:

HOPE

“Hope is the thing with feathers That perches in the soul, And sings the tune--without the words, And never stops at all, And sweetest in the gale is heard; And sore must be the storm That could abash the little bird That kept so many warm. "I've heard it in the chilliest land, and on the strangest sea; yet, never, in extremity, It asked a crumb of me."

Extended metaphors are those metaphors which are in the form of series of words. This is a metaphorical poem in which different extended metaphors about hope have been used throughout the poem. Author is emerging different kinds of ideologies about hope in the form of soul, singing of a tune without words. He said that hope is the only thing in this world which keeps human being to unite with their lives and they use to live at this ray of hope that tomorrow will become better as compared to today. In the words of Emily Dickinson hope is the beauty of life and without hope life is dull and without colors rather nothing. In this poem of Emily Dickinson the word hope is used as a metaphor. Hope is referring to bird here which means that if a person has hope he can fly anywhere in the universe like bird. Hope is actually referring to encouragement here. “Perches” is also used as metaphor which means hope penetrates in our souls, hope is fixed in every body. It is an asset which everybody has. Sings the tune is also used in metaphorical sense which means hope is always singing, which helps in encouragement.

Now in the second stanza the poet said that a person who destroys hope with a storm of anger and negativity feels the pain they cause in others. Words like gale, the storm, abashing of little bird all showing the extremities of weather or nature that all these can damage little bird but the bird is brave enough to face all these situations. Now similarly as we know that bird is representing hope so here the power of hope has been shown that whatever the situation is hope can overcome any suffering. Hope is always there for you in every wildest and toughest circumstances.

Now in final lines the it has shown that despite having to face the tough realities or the sweeter one hope is always there with us, whether there are coolest lands covered with snow or the strangest seas (here coolest lands covered with snow is showing easier and happy moments and on the other hand the strangest seas showing the toughest and hard circumstances of life) hope is present with us and the loyalty of hope can never be measured because hope never asked anything in return to us. Showing the faithfulness and unselfishness of hope.

In life if we have hope we can face any situation we can face all the circumstances. Whether tough or wild with the help of hope, willpower, strength we can face all bravely. Whether its storm or a gale hope don't bothers. It encourages us to face every situation. Whether the chilliest time of life or the hardest or strangest time hope is always with us as a best friend and the best thing of hope is that it never demands anything in return. Not even a crumb as mentioned in poem which means that it never demands the small part or a fragment in return so we have to face every situation with great hope and strength. And we should have the belief that we can fly like a bird above the sky.

SEASONS

This poem is one of a series of 5 seasons poems which has incredible educational potential when studying metaphorical language, as each one is an example of imagery, alliteration, personification and metaphor poetry and each is illustrated to show exactly the image that actually exist.

In this poem, poetess tried to picture out the seasons with the help of metaphorical expressions. She portrays the qualities of seasons as in the humans. "Princess of hope" is metaphorical expression here, that spring brings the hope with her for new flowers are refreshment of gardens. "Magical kaleidoscope" is again metaphorical expression that spring can see all the things around with her magical widget and make the environment more beautiful and attractive which lifts our spirits with pleasure.

Internally, poetess comprises the female gender with the beauty of spring. She is giving urge to this gender because she is female herself. Firstly, she is asking the question that if spring would have the qualities of a human being? What would it be? Then she is giving answer herself that it would have female gender because of its innocence and delicateness. Spring brings hope as a woman is always hopeful. Woman can passionate the others by lifting spirits, the spring have the same qualities. As the woman can read the minds and comprehend the hidden ideas, spring is just like that.

"Promenade Queen" is used as metaphoric expression for summer. Again poetess is giving the feminine qualities to summer. "Colorful gown" is a metaphoric expression which is reflecting the ideology that in summers, girls use to wear colorful and bright dresses which give out an attractive look to viewers.

Firstly, she is asking again that if the qualities of summers are attributed to human beings, what it would be. Then she is answering herself that it would be a woman which is like "promenade queen". As queen feels proud on his beauty and sovereignty, same summer is proud and when she wears a colorful gown of cool wind which gives a sigh of relief to human beings. Summers create a beautiful scene around same as the woman construct when she uses colorful dresses and fragrance.

"Princely master" is used a metaphoric expression, which means that autumn is a season which brings noticeable change in weather and it is like the prince of other weathers. "Golden throne" is used as again metaphor for autumn season that it enjoys the power and control which is capable to re arrange the activities around the world.

Poetess tried to exhibit the power and authority of a male gender. She is comparing the autumn season with human being and said that this season is having princely qualities.

Powers like a prince who changes and rearranges the things around him. As a prince just sits on his golden throne and use to see the whole scenario and orders. Same the autumn season is having the qualities to change the environment and behavior of people as well. Even the scenery of gardens use to change in this season.

“A king with a powerful voice” is a metaphorical expression which has been used for a winter season. “Ownership” and “regally sharing” are also used as metaphors here. Which are the qualities of human being but used for a season.

Poetess tried to explain the importance and sovereignty of winter season. She used the expression like “king” is order to show its worth. Poetess gave most importance to this season by saying it a king while other seasons were attributed the characters of queen, prince and princess. Although every season is important but here the most importance has been given to winter season which enjoys his authority on others. It is just like a king who use to grudge on his servants. Similarly, winter season is very cold and compels the people to remain in houses and clouds use to thunder with power. “Ambassador” is used as metaphoric expression. “prince” “princess” king” and “queen” are also used as metaphors for seasons.

Poetess summed up the whole concept of seasons in one year that all four season make an astonishing year. If the qualities of year are attributed to man then the person is having all above mentioned qualities which all the seasons are having. As a family looks amazing and beautiful with its complete members, similarly, a year is handsome with all its four seasons. We cannot neglect the importance of any one of these. All seasons are important for an appropriate weather and environment as well.

Implicit metaphors found in children’s literature

“In an implicit metaphor, the full subject is not explained, but is implied from the context of the sentence”. Implicit metaphors do not give the subject directly but there is need of description for the complete understanding of the concepts. One thing is sure that the description lies in the common sense and does not on a high standard of knowledge. I have found following examples from the children books:

1. Ready to hit the sack
2. We were drinking the white
3. She had the screaming.

In first example there is used a metaphor but not giving the direct content and subject. So we cannot interpret it. The ideology behind this metaphor is to show that someone is going to take some action or something happening all at sudden. To accomplish this concept children have to use their common sense otherwise they will be unable to understand the real ideology. In second and third same case is persisting. White would be the color of the milk or some kind of cold drinks. Or it might be something else. As we don’t know about the context so we cannot say specifically that what they are talking about. Third case is also the same we don’t know why she is screaming, by watching some accident or any murder etc.

Commonly used metaphors used in children literature

- 1- Life is a rollercoaster.

This is a metaphorical expression having very universal ideology that life is just like rollercoaster, as rollercoaster have an elevated track, moves in up and down direction and has many tight turns and slopes, so is the life full of such incidents.

A roller coaster is a type of small railway in an amusement park which travels very quickly climbing up and down hills. So is the life. Life has its ups and downs, sadness and happiness is part of life. Just like a rollercoaster there are very tight turns and elevated tracks in it. In life we are not moving in a straight path but on elevated path where nothing remains constant not happiness neither sadness. In every situation life moves on. Life goes on and on whether it's your moment of joy or sorrow, it goes on like a rollercoaster with ups and downs.

2- Her angry words were bullets to him

The ideology behind this line is that we have certain relations in our life, which matters a lot to us, when they became angry or get hurt then their angry words are nothing less than the bullets. So in such condition words seems to be bullet rather than words only. This sentence actually means that some words are that much harmful and penetrating that they are nevertheless than bullets. Obviously in everyone's life some relations are very meaningful, so when such relations utters some angry words then it badly effects someone. It appears to be life taking words just as a bullet when shot from a gun ends life.

3- My big brother is a couch potato.

Couch potato is a metaphorical expression usually used for lazy and physically inactive sort of person. This term was first coined by Robert Armstrong in 1970. Couch potato is a type of a person whose leisure time is spend always on television or watching videos. Couch potato is commonly used metaphor which means the person who lives a sedentary lifestyle. Sedentary lifestyle is a type of style in which a person activities are sitting free, watching television, playing games on computer, reading novels or course books etc. so couch potato is an expression used for lazy and physically inactive sort of person.

4- My memory is little cloudy about that incident.

Ideology behind this sentence is that life is full of incidents, some incidents lasts forever in our memory but some are temporary and rest we forget. Because life is full of incidents, bad incidents, happy incidents etc. so some incidents are very cloudy that means not clear, we forgets the exact scenarios. Life is just like a rollercoaster, it moves on and on in every situation, whether best or the worse, it has elevations, variations, tough and tight curves, ups and downs, so in every situation we gains some experience and such experience is an asset. Every person life is filled up with many incidents and we are not capable enough to remember all those or capture all those in words. So sentence reveals that some of the incidents of life are cloudy or we may say unclear or in absurd form.

5- I do not like him because he is a shady character.

Well, ideology behind this sentence is that there are such type of person who are totally untrustworthy and disloyal personalities. Or we may call them as a borderline criminal in detective movies etc. a suspicious person who makes other people suspicious as well. So a negative and untrustworthy sort of person have shady characters. People are categorized into many types, some are loyal, trusty, innocent, helpful, caring, loving etc. on the other hand people are disloyal, emotional abusive, rude, ignorant, liars, cheaters, rude, racist etc. good ones and bad ones while on the other hand there are some persons who appears to be good but internally they are worst of all, known as hypocrites as well. They are untrustworthy, totally dark from inner but appears to be very good from outer. They are self-suspicious and make other people as suspicious as well through their acts and they possess monkey mind where vulgar and destructive ideas comes continuously.

Mix examples found in children's literature

1. The mind is an ocean.
2. The city is a jungle.
3. My brother is hawk owl.

4. Jenny is a growing flower.
5. Book is a friend.
6. Teacher is lamp for nation.
7. Life is fashion show.
8. Laughter is the music of the soul.
9. She is a chicken.

In all these examples different metaphors are used. In first mind is compared with ocean because in mind there is overflow of thoughts like overflow of water in ocean. There are number of ideas which are prevailing randomly in our minds. There are also number of prepositions which come out in the form of words. In the second example city is compared with jungle which mean that there is a bad condition of law and order is prevailing in the city. The other meaning is that the city is like a jungle due to random hustle and bustle. My brother is hawk owl mean my brother is a kind of person who is very cruel towards other and does not care about any one. Cynicism of someone is embedded via this metaphor. In the fourth one growing flower is the growth and prosperity of someone. In 5th mean book is always very helpful toward its readers. We can get all kind of help from books at any time. Teacher is giving the light of knowledge to whole nation. We are walking on ramp to perform our duties that is why life is a fashion show for everyone. Chicken is sign of fool in some ways or a thing which can be achieved very easily. The ideologies lying behind these metaphors are very clear is to conceptualize the world in a better way and give a broader view of things.

CONCLUSION

I have concluded that metaphorical thinking is essential to communicate, learn and invent. Language is metaphorical in nature. Children are unable to understand deep concepts about life. There is hardware present in children but they feel difficulty in learning new concepts because of lack of linguistic information and life experiences. The metaphors used in children's literature provide software to conceptualize the world in more better and broader way. Metaphors are also very important because they provide a visual description about something or some idea. I have found different types of metaphors in children's literature which are frequently used. Active metaphors, dead metaphors, extended metaphors, implicit metaphors, compound metaphors and simple metaphors are frequently used. Metaphors are not only limited to language but they control our thoughts, feelings and ideas. It shapes our way of thinking about world. In children's literature metaphors are used according to child psychology and level of understanding. There is a special psychological impact of these metaphors on children. The target concept is embedded through a psychological matching of concept which already present in the mind of children. So the comparison between target concept and the concept already present in the mind of children is provided by these metaphors.

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