

**DISCOVERING TEACHER TRAINEES TEACHING PREFERENCES
USING METAPHORS**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNIMAS	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FCSHD	Faculty of Cognitive Science and Human Development

ABSTRAK

Penemuan Kecenderungan Teknik Mengajar bagi Guru Pelatih menggunakan Metafora

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Metafora dapat dijadikan sebagai salah satu cara untuk mencerminkan kepercayaan terhadap diri sendiri, individu lain dan pada dunia melalui perspektif yang berlainan. Daripada metafora, pelbagai bentuk tafsiran dapat dijalankan. Dengan menganalisis metafora yang dihasilkan oleh para guru, kecenderungan teknik pengajaran dapat diramal dan seterusnya pengajaran dan pembelajaran dalam kelas bahasa dapat dipertingkatkan (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008). Kajian ini memfokuskan kepada imej guru pelatih UNIMAS daripada latihan perguruan sebagai guru Bahasa Inggeris dan sebagai hasilnya, kecenderungan teknik pengajaran dapat diramalkan. Seramai 61 orang responden daripada program TESL dan 14 orang responden daripada program ESL telah dipilih. Teknik yang digunakan untuk mengumpul data ialah dengan membuat salinan borang yang mengandungi ayat yang tidak lengkap, iaitu “menjalani latihan untuk menjadi guru bahasa adalah seperti...” Data-data dianalisis menggunakan topologi metafora daripada Oxford et al. (1998). Hasil kajian mendapati kebanyakan metafora yang digunakan mencerminkan Pendekatan Pembangunan Pelajar. Oleh yang demikian, guru-guru pelatih memilih teknik pengajaran yang diramalkan seperti Teknik Senyap, Pengajaran Bahasa Komuniti dan Pendekatan Komunikasi untuk mengajar dalam kelas bahasa. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa guru-guru pada masa kini telah menyedari akan kepentingan Pendekatan Pembangunan Pelajar dalam memaksimumkan kebolehan dalaman para pelajar bahasa.

ABSTRACT

Discovering Teacher Trainees Teaching Preferences using Metaphor

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Metaphor can be a way to reflect our belief about ourselves, others and the world in another perspective. From metaphor, variety of evaluations can be made. By analyzing metaphor generated by teachers, teaching preferences can be predicted where the teaching and learning in the language classroom can be enhanced (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008). This study examined the images UNIMAS teacher trainees have about the training that they received to be an English language teacher and as a result the teacher trainees preferred teaching methods were predicted. The study involved 61 participants from TESL programme and 14 participants from ESL programme. The instruments used for data collection was a photocopied form with an incomplete sentence "Training to be an English language teacher is like ...". The data were analysed using the typology of metaphors developed by Oxford et al. (1998). Results showed that majority of the metaphors reflected the Learner-Centered Growth perspective. Based on this, it was predicted that the teacher trainees preferred teaching methods were the Silent Way, Community Language Learning and the Communicative approach. In relation to this, the findings also seem to suggest there have a realization of the importance of the learner-centered growth in maximizing the inner potential of the language learners.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Preview

This chapter is the introductory chapter of the study. The background of the study presents general information related to the field studied. This chapter also consists of the research problem which explains the problem specifically. The objectives of the study explain why this study is done, while the significance of this study explains what the outcomes are and the scope of the study tells exactly what the study cover. The definition of terms can be as a guide in understanding the study better.

1.1 Background of study

Metaphor helps people to find basic answers about the world and reality in order to make sense of their beliefs (Saban, 2004). Different beliefs represent different perspectives about the situation. As a result, metaphors are used as a tool of decision making and as a way of making reflection. Because of metaphor is a simplified version of how people perceived the world, their beliefs can be easily understood and they can use it as a tool for guiding them in the future.

A study conducted by de Guerrero & Villamil (2001) agreed that using metaphor as a tool for reflection is the most essential way to examine how teachers portray themselves. In the study also indicated that teachers always symbolized their profession, belief and daily practices using metaphorical language. Even the sociocultural theory supports the method is the best way for teachers make their own reflections about themselves. From the reflections, other information such as teaching methods and teaching preferences can be identified.

Another study carried out by Nikitina & Furuoka (2008), the metaphor was generated by the students on how they perceived their language teachers. Through analysing the metaphors, most of the participants' perspectives are positive towards their language teachers. They believed that the learning process occurred in the classroom are shared between the teachers and students. The participants really appreciate the conducive and warm environment in the language classroom. Therefore, essential methods can be identified in teaching language to meet the participants' needs. So, using the same metaphor analysis, a different perspective can be seen which in this study the UNIMAS teacher trainees' perspectives towards their training to be English teachers and how these metaphors can be as a tool for predicting the teaching methods that the participants preferred.

Hence, this study mainly focus on how do UNIMAS teacher trainees reflect themselves in training to be English language teachers which will lead to the preferences in teaching the language as a subject in schools.

1.2 Research problem

According to McCombs & Whisler (1997), learner-centered approach in the English classroom setting is important and can optimize the learning experience. Therefore, a great deal of shift from the traditional approach to the learner-centered approach is needed. However, because of the different setting where English language is the second language the learner-centered approach is hard to apply in the English classroom. Therefore, the present study are conducted to examine the UNIMAS teacher trainees towards their training to be English teachers in order to predict their teaching preferences so that they can manipulate these teaching methods to optimise the learning experience in the English classroom to the fullest.

Metaphors are prime tools of cognition in order to help people create their own mental images of the world surrounding them and doing things according to these mental images. (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008). In this study, the UNIMAS teacher trainees which are the students from the TESL and ESL programme generate the metaphors about their training to be English language teachers. So, these generated metaphors are their mental images of their experiences in undergoing the training to be English language teachers. By analysing these metaphors, the researcher can identify the differences or similarities of the participants' views in going through the same training to be qualified English teachers. Teaching methods preferred also can be discovered through analysing the metaphors.

1.3 Aims of the study

This present study focuses on metaphors about training to be an English language teacher generated by the UNIMAS teacher trainees with the aims to:

1. Examine the images UNIMAS teacher trainees have about the training that they received to be an English language teachers.
2. To predict the UNIMAS teacher trainees preferred teaching methods in the English language classroom using the metaphors generated.

1.4 Research questions

This present study looks at the images generated by the teacher trainees about their training to be an English teacher and from those images the preferred teaching methods are predicted to enhance the learning in the language classroom. The study attempts to answer the following questions;

1. How do the TESL undergraduates view their training of becoming the English language teacher?
2. How do the ESL undergraduates view their training of becoming the English language teacher?
3. Are there any differences in views about their training to be English teachers?
4. Based on the views, what are the TESL undergraduates preferred teaching methods?
5. Based on the views, what are the ESL undergraduates preferred teaching methods?
6. Are there any differences in their preferences of teaching methods?

1.5 Scope of the study

This study looks only the metaphors that generated by the UNIMAS teacher trainees about the training that they received to be an English language teacher. By analysing the metaphors, the teaching methods preferred can be predicted. However, this study will not look upon the students' preferences in learning English as a second language. It also will not look at their views in teaching English as a second language in the classroom.

1.6 Significance of the study

It is not easy to be an English teacher in a country where English is a second language. Most of the students are obviously not the native speakers and have many different cultural backgrounds. Even the English teachers themselves are not the native speakers of the language that they taught. So, there are many difficulties in teaching and learning the subject itself. Therefore to be a good English language teacher, the teacher must have a wide knowledge in the subject matter itself. Nevertheless, having a wide knowledge did not guarantee the students learn what the teachers had taught. That is why every learner who wants to become an effective English teacher goes for training. In this study, the training that is mentioned is the four years course in the educational field in UNIMAS.

By examining the UNIMAS teacher trainees' views towards their training using the metaphors that they had generated, their preferred teaching methods can be predicted. By predicting their preferable teaching methods, the future teachers who will be entering the teaching line soon will know how to manipulate their preferred methods in order to produce a conducive and fun learning environment in the English language classrooms. Hence, effective learning of the subject matter will occur. As Freeman (as cited in Nunan & Richards, 1990) mentioned in his article, the training and the

development of the learners must be in balance. The training which emphasise on the teaching skills and other language skills such as linguistics and literature must be hand in hand with the development of the learners where a change of behaviours after undergoing the training must occur to see the effectiveness of the training. Nikitina & Furuoka (2008) also agreed that by balancing the theory and practice, it will help the teacher to morph wider educational theories.

1.7 Operational definition of terms

In order to understand the study better, the researcher provide definition for the terms used in the study. These definitions can be as a guide in understanding the terms as some of the terms may have several definitions.

1.7.1 Teacher trainees

Teacher trainee is a person who is undergoing a training programme in order to develop their teaching skills especially in the classroom practice (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004). The teacher trainees can be classified into two categories which are pre- and in-service teachers.

1.7.1.1 Pre-service teacher

McDermott (2008) said that pre- service teachers is the beginning teachers where they can create, discover, multiple and unpredictable connections between themselves, their students and the community. They can experiments with many things in the teaching profession without having to worry of making mistakes to gain experiences in order to expand their theoretical knowledge that had been studied before.

In this study, the pre-service teachers refer as the TESL programme students who have no formal training of being a language teacher and some of them may have a little teaching experience but most of them have no teaching experiences before the teaching practice. They had just finishing their STPM and matriculation course or having diploma which is not in the educational field.

1.7.1.2 In-service teacher

Freeman (as cited in Nunan & Richards, 1990) said that in-service teacher is teacher who has years of teaching experiences who had given the opportunity to upgrade themselves to a higher qualification. In other words, these teachers become the students again. In this study, these in-service teachers refer as the ESL programme students who continue their study but have years of educational background. These in-service teachers have earned a diploma in teaching from the Teaching Training College and work as a teacher before furthering their study to the higher level institution.

1.7.2 Metaphor

One of the ways people search the basic meaning in order to help them making sense of the world and reality is through metaphor (Saban, 2004). In this study, the metaphor is a way to give the researcher a mental image of the participants experience in the subject of the study. These mental images that are generated from the participants are analysed in order to connect them to the second aim of the study.

1.7.3 Metaphors analysis

According to Cameron & Low (1999, as cited in de Guerrero & Villamil, 2001), metaphor analysis is a method that examines metaphors that have been generated in discourse to uncover the underlying conceptualization. It involves collecting the metaphors generated and generalizing them to the conceptual metaphors they represent.

In this study, the metaphors are generated by the teacher trainees and will be analysed using the Oxford et al.'s (1998) Taxonomy of Metaphors. These metaphors will be conceptualized to predict the participants' teaching preferences in teaching English language in the classroom. The metaphors also will be used to portray the teacher trainees while training to be English language teachers.

1.8 Chapter Review

By examining the teachers' portrayal of them training to be an English language teacher, the teaching preferences can be predicted. In this chapter, the objectives, background of this study and the scope had been clearly stated above based on the research problem.

The next chapter will be the explanation in depth about the theories and other studies that had been made before to understand better about the problem.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter Preview

The chapter begins by explaining the importance of applying the learner-centered approach in teaching and learning. It also explains the reasons why teachers do not opt of changing to the approach. Then, the chapter is followed by explaining the contribution of this approach in teaching and learning in our education system. Next, the chapter also explaining why constructing metaphor is chosen as a tool for decision making in this study. The Oxford et al.'s (1998) Taxonomy of Metaphors is explained also in order to understand more about the taxonomy. Besides that, it also provides the literature reviews related to the current study. The chapter ends by providing the reasons why the study needs to be done Malaysia context.

2.1 Metaphor as a tool for decision making

According to Vosniadou & Ortony (1989, as cited in Moser, 2000), metaphors are analogies which allow us to picture a person experience in the terminology of another experience. This brings to another understanding of a complex topic or a new

situation. A research done by Gentner (1983, as cited in Moser 2000), metaphor tells a great deal of necessary understanding, for decision making and action. Another research done by Neuweg, Sternberg & Horvath (1999, as cited in Moser 2000) found that metaphors are a linguistic manifestation of the unspoken knowledge or expertise. This is because metaphors are easily got because metaphorical expressions cannot be avoided in the everyday or professional language. Therefore, using metaphor as a tool to evaluate expertise of teachers is an essential way in knowing about the profession.

Saban (2004) also mentioned that by examining the metaphors of teaching, a good insight can be gained of how teachers in different sociocultural contexts portray themselves, their students and their work. Therefore, their belief and understanding about teaching can be examined to see another perspective towards the profession. These beliefs can reflect on the teachers on how they view their work and from the reflections, several of teaching methods and styles can be discovered to solve the classroom teaching and learning processes. In a research done by Saban, Kocbeker & Saban (2007), they concluded that metaphors can expose a various ways of teaching and learning conceptions. Everyone such as education students, professional teachers, elementary teachers or secondary education has different views about teaching and learning. Therefore, by using metaphor analysis as a means to assist teachers in exploring their values, beliefs and philosophies about teaching and learning is an essential way and should be used widely.

2.2 Learner-centered approach

As the world develop, so do the mind of our young ones. Therefore, teachers are no longer seen as the source of knowledge and motivation. Since there are many other ways for them to look for knowledge as there are so many other resources such as Internet, television and other electronic gadgets which they could manipulate to get the information, new methods of teaching are created. These methods are more focus

on the learners' needs and teachers are act only as the facilitator. Thus, playing an authoritarian role in the classroom and act as if teachers are the only source of students to gain knowledge would only makes the students even more passive in the classroom and lack of motivation to learn. That is why, according to Lincoln (1995, as cited in McCombs & Whisler, 1997), the experts are urged by the educators and the psychologists to reexamine the concepts used in the education system, schooling and whom the system served. That is where the learner-centered approach arises.

So, what is learner-centered approach? According to Harmer (2001), learner-centered teaching is making the learners' needs and experiences the core of the educational process. The model focuses uniformly on the learner and learning which bring to the most important goal of schooling that is to promote the learning of learners and learners learn best when they are part of the learning system. The Arizona Faculty Council (2000) also stated that learner-centered approach is all about the students learning and experiences in the classroom. By giving students the opportunities to take control of their own learning, student can acquire the basic skills to learn which eventually provide a basis for learning throughout life.

Brown (2003) stated that because classroom teachers now had faced many new challenges such as legislative mandates for school renewal, the interchangeable of students needs, and the technological advances and not to forget the factor of school violence, other methods of teaching had to be created to suits this needs. The researcher also believed that "one teaching style fits all" method is not the most essential way to teach these students anymore nowadays. This statement is agreed by Fauziah, Parilah & Samsuddeen (2005), whom believed teaching, should be done in a variety and diverse ways which aims to the students needs. Teaching also should continuously change for the better ways that promote learning. Using the leaner-centered model as a framework in constructing and planning the educational system and classrooms, the needs of the students can be satisfied which would make them

stay in school, learn and experience the knowledge in the classroom and graduate from the school with the knowledge and skills needed to become a successful and productive person whom they wished to be.

According to McCombs & Whisler (1997), learner-centered approach provides educators a better solution to view and plan for schooling from the student-adult relationships to curriculum, instruction and assessment to policies, procedures and structures in classrooms. From there, the students can expand their knowledge and increase the positive students' experiences which as a result increased the students' motivation, learning and achievement. Fauziah, Parilah & Samsuddeen (2005) also believed that because the learner-centered model really focus on the students needs and learning experiences in the classroom, the students can freely participate with the discussion in the classroom and developing the texts given where they can voice out their opinion and point of view and teachers are more as a facilitators whose role is to clarify, stimulate and promote the students mind. Therefore, that is why the learner-centered approach is preferred by the researcher as a solution to solving the dysfunctional of the educational system and the classroom.

However, not all researchers agreed with the learner-centered approach as the ultimate solution in improving the educational system and classroom. O'Neill (1991, as cited in Harmer, 2001) claims in his influential materials writer and trainer of his disagreement of the learner-centered approach as the source of teachers to overcome the challenges that teachers faced nowadays. He believed that if the teachers letting the students responsible for their own learning where teachers only facilitate from time to time, it would result to a form of neglect. This means the teacher would not be the knowledge giver anymore. He also claims that the old fashion way of teaching has always worked and every student feels more comfortable with the old fashion approach. Some of the teachers supported this study and believed that teacher should be the main source of knowledge where teacher as the mediator to the materials.