

Researching Conceptual Metaphor in a Parallel Corpus

Ahmed Nafea Alharbi

Abstract

This article will explore the translational treatment of conceptual metaphors in a parallel corpus of American self-help texts on marriage relationships and their Arabic translations. The focus here on conceptual metaphors is primarily motivated by the need for a definitive account of the challenges posed by such metaphors in translation, the sorts of procedures used to handle them, and the actual factors contributing to the ease or difficulty of their translation. These issues have not been adequately addressed in previous analyses, which have concentrated largely on individual metaphorical expressions rather than on concepts that give rise to them. Little information was therefore available on the translation of different kinds of conceptual metaphors that characterize a particular discourse. This study introduces a detailed and replicable methodology for researching conceptual metaphor within the context of a parallel corpus from a descriptive perspective.

Keywords: translation studies, metaphor, parallel corpus, translatability, translation procedures

Introduction

Conceptual metaphor has been a widely discussed topic in cognitive linguistics since the inception of Lakoff and Johnson's theory of conceptual metaphor in 1980. The basic argument of this theory is that metaphorical expressions are surface manifestations of inherited patterns of thought that allow us to make sense of one thing (typically abstract) by conceptualizing it in terms of something else (typically concrete). This perception of metaphor as being intrinsically conceptual is in sharp contrast with the traditionally accepted view that sees metaphor as a purely linguistic matter bereft of any cognitive content, and which has long dominated the study of metaphor.

In their seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*, cognitive linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson define conceptual metaphor as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another."¹ They employ the terms *target domain* and *source domain* to distinguish two different semantic areas involved in conceptual metaphor. A target domain can thus be said to be that which is described or understood metaphorically in terms of another, conceptually different source domain. In the conceptual metaphor RELATIONSHIP IS A PLANT, the abstract notion of *relationship* is the target domain whereas the non-abstract concept of *plant* serves as the metaphor source domain.

To date, there have been a comparatively small number of studies devoted to examining the translation of conceptual metaphor in a parallel corpus context. The fact that these studies have not incorporated a detailed description as to how metaphorical data have been recognized and extracted from their respective corpora highlights a methodological gap in the existing body of knowledge on metaphor within the field of translation studies. The absence of information on data gathering and analysis methods

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¹ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 5.

constitutes a critical shortcoming because it can affect how results are interpreted. It also denies the possibility of practical knowledge about how to undertake a corpus-based analysis of metaphor translation. This raises the need for a full-fledged, methodological approach that takes such matters into account.

The present study therefore aims to address this need in the literature by providing a comprehensive framework for researching the translation of conceptual metaphors from a descriptive standpoint. A key feature of this framework is that it makes use of automated and manual procedures. Automated procedures are necessary for the quick detection and retrieval of metaphor-related lexis. Manual procedures are then necessary for the reliable interpretation of such lexis. Another feature of this framework lies in its consideration of the pragmatic and persuasive properties of conceptual metaphors in the original discourse, and whether they are preserved by the translators of the target discourse. This issue has barely been noticed in prior studies examining the translation of conceptual metaphor from a descriptive viewpoint.

The data compiled for this research consisted of 11 American self-help books on marriage relationships along with their published Arabic translations. The total number of words contained in the English and Arabic sub-corpora is 704,517 and 723,679, respectively. Together, they make for an overall corpus size of 1,428,196 words, which is deemed sufficient both to identify the nature and role of conceptual metaphors in this type of discourse and, subsequently, to examine the issues associated with their translation into Arabic.

Self-help books on marriage relationships are a recent addition to the genre of self-help. They made their first appearance only a few decades ago. Despite that, they have rapidly gained wide popular appeal both in the United States and around the world, including the Arabic-speaking world. John Gray's *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* is an example of such books. Since its publication in 1992, the book has gained massive worldwide popularity, selling over 50 million copies, and was translated into at least 42 languages, according to Barbara McMahon.² The advertised goal of this sub-genre of self-help books is to provide advice to married couples on how to improve the quality of their marriages. It also gives counsel on a diversity of marriage-related problems, including marital distress, poor communication, verbal abuse, loud quarrelling, jealousy, and lack of intimacy.

Fundamentally, there are two reasons for the choice to focus on self-help books addressing the topic of marriage relationships. The first is because of their appeal to readers both in America and throughout the world. This is evident in their impressive sales figures which have been reported to reach millions of copies annually. Despite their popularity and mass appeal, there seems to have been no prior research devoted to identifying the kinds of conceptual metaphors that shape American self-help works on marriage relationships or examining the issues associated with their translation into Arabic. Hence, a further reason for focusing on such works is the scarcity of research in this area. That said, the present study seeks to answer the following three questions:

1. What issues do conceptual metaphors present in the translation of self-help books on marriage relationships from English into Arabic?
2. What are the key factors that determine the translatability of conceptual metaphors?

² Barbara McMahon, 'Forget Mars and Venus', *The Daily Mail* (2022). At: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10359823/JOHN-GRAY-Forget-MarsVenus-problem-today-husbands-wives-alike.html>. Accessed 29/04/2023.

3. What would a comprehensive framework for the study of conceptual metaphor in a parallel corpus look like?

Background of the Study

Metaphor is a controversial subject that has given rise to a fair amount of research in Translation Studies since the mid-60s of last century. Much of this research has been guided by the traditional view which conceives of metaphor as an implied comparison based on imagined similarity. Evidence of this is found in early writings on metaphor by several translation scholars.³ For them, metaphor was no more than a rhetorical tool for drawing resemblances between typically unrelated objects or ideas, which was in alignment with the dominant mood of their time. It was on the basis of such an understanding that the study of metaphor in translation had remained largely limited to literary genres. Other text types, on the other hand, received little attention on account of their rare use of figurative language.

Finding effective ways of translating metaphors was a key concern for early writers on the subject. As a result, different lists of procedures were offered for application to help address metaphor-related translational problems. Such lists were tentative in nature, meaning that they were not informed by close examination of real translated data, but were rather the product of hypothetical reasoning.⁴ This mode of thinking about metaphor as a translational problem in need of adequate treatment was a hallmark of what later became known as the prescriptive approach to metaphor translation. As their name implies, the intent of prescriptive studies on metaphor translation is to lay down a deterministic formula for translators to implement when they deal with metaphorical expressions regardless of the text type or language pair involved. A common criticism of this approach is that it constricts the translator's ability to come up with and assess alternatives. It also falls short of accounting for the fundamental role expected of metaphor translation research—that is, to theorize about translational behaviours as they actually are, and not what they ideally should be. The fact that most key figures who hold to the prescriptive view on metaphor translation have no experiential footing outside the realm of translation theory provides further cause to question the accuracy of their empirical judgments about the problematicity of translating metaphor, let alone how best to resolve it. It was not until the emergence of the conceptual metaphor theory in 1980 that the subject of metaphor within Translation Studies began to gradually expand toward non-literary contexts.

The theory represented a break away from the traditionalist perspective that confined the use of metaphor to literary modes of discourse. Instead, it showed metaphor to be a pervasive phenomenon in daily life and, as such, not unique to creative works. In recent years, an impressive number of studies have been conducted in the field of corpus linguistics to test the validity of this theoretical claim about the ubiquity of

³ For instance, see Menachem Dagut, 'Can "Metaphor" be Translated?', *Babel*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1976), pp. 21-33; Peter Newmark, 'The Translation of Metaphor', in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor*, eds. Wolf Paprotté and René Dirven (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1980); Edna Apeh and Yishai Tobin, 'The Place of "Place" in a Text from Agnon', *Babel*, vol. 30, no. 3 (1984), pp. 148-157.

⁴ For instance, see Dagut, 'Can "Metaphor" be Translated?'; Newmark, 'The Translation of Metaphor'; Kirsten Mason, 'Metaphor and Translation', *Babel*, vol. 30, no. 3 (1982), pp. 140-149; Mildred Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984).

metaphor.⁵ These studies have come up with overwhelming evidence in support of the conceptual stance on metaphor. The implication such an expansionist view has for translation studies is that it highlights the importance of considering metaphor in all kinds of translations—ranging from the domains of economics, politics, and science to banking, journalism, and biomedical science.⁶ In these context-dependent studies, metaphor is no longer seen as the outcome of creative language use but rather as a common way of thinking about something in terms of another. Such emphasis on the conceptual nature of metaphor, which characterizes later works on the subjects, is accompanied by a shift in focus from prescribing what translators ought to do to handle metaphor to describing how metaphor is already handled in their translation. The advantage of using a descriptive over prescriptive approach in the study of metaphor translation is that it allows accurate identification of factors that determine the extent to which metaphor is translatable. The most efficient way to realize this is through accessing and analyzing both the original and the translated texts where metaphor occurs. It is only then that a factual account of metaphor translatability can be reliably established.

There are several procedural lists offered for the translation of metaphor within the framework of the descriptive approach. Such lists vary from each other in several respects. Some are general in their scope and application whereas others are linked to specific languages and contexts. An example of a general list is Toury's succinct list of translation procedures, which is intended to serve as a modified replacement for the kinds of lists previously prescribed in the field, and which Toury rejects on account of their impracticability and fuzziness.⁷ An example of a list that applies in more specific contexts is Al-Harrasi's elaborate list of translation procedures, which he applies to illustrate the different manners in which metaphors in a corpus of 18 political texts are translated from Arabic into English.⁸ A more conspicuous area of disparity between the aforementioned types of procedural lists relates to the theoretical orientation with which they are associated. While Toury's list deals with the surface linguistic forms of metaphors, Al-Harrasi's list concentrates on the conceptual correspondences underlying such forms of metaphors.

Toury represents an earlier generation of scholars who subscribed to the descriptive approach as regards the translation of metaphor. As such, he saw metaphor as operating within the domain of language alone. This view has proven to be overly restrictive since it reduces the whole notion of metaphor to a mere linguistic trope, which thus ignores the cognitive mechanisms that lie behind the use of metaphor in language.

⁵ For instance, see Lynne Cameron, *Metaphor in Educational Discourse* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2003); Jonathan Charteris-Black, *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Gill Philip, 'Locating Metaphor Candidates in Specialized Corpora Using Raw Frequency and Key-Word Lists', in *Metaphor in Use*, eds. Fiona MacArthur, José Luis Oncins-Martínez, Manuel Sánchez-García and Ana María Piquer-Piriz (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2012).

⁶ For instance, see Ahmad Al-Harrasi, "Metaphor in (Arabic-into-English) Translation with Specific Reference to Metaphorical Concepts and Expressions in Political Discourse" (PhD, Aston University, 2001); Mo'tasim-Bellah Alshunnag, "Translating Conceptual Metaphor in Popular Biomedical Texts from English to Arabic" (PhD, University of Salford, 2016); Mark Shuttleworth, *Studying Scientific Metaphor in Translation*. (New York: Routledge, 2017).

⁷ See Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995).

⁸ See Al-Harrasi, "Metaphor in (Arabic-into-English) Translation with Specific Reference to Metaphorical Concepts and Expressions in Political Discourse."

Al-Harrasi's study falls into the camp of the more recent work on metaphor translation. It focuses on both the linguistic as well as the conceptual dimensions of metaphor in a corpus of existing translations. This makes it the closest and most relevant of all others to the current corpus-driven analysis of conceptual metaphor in translation.

Research Methods

The methodology employed to carry out this study has two components: a source-text component and a target-text component. The source-text component comprises two distinct phases. The first phase is to identify the kinds of conceptual metaphors that characterize the source discourse of American self-help books on marriage relationships. The second phase is to analyze these kinds of conceptual metaphors in order to determine the motivations underlying their choice and to highlight what functions they are supposed to fulfill in such books. The approach used for metaphor identification combines automated and manual procedures. It proceeds by generating a keyword list of the 50 most significant keywords in the English source texts, which is a procedure carried out automatically by means of the AntConc corpus analysis software.

Once generated, the keyword list is then lemmatized, meaning that keywords appearing in different grammatical forms, such as *love* (noun), *loved* (verb), and *loving* (adjective), are conflated into the same entry 'love' for ease of analysis. The next step is to undertake sample concordance analyses on the lexical keywords contained in the lemmatized list. This is a manual step that aims to explore to what extent these keywords can be viewed as target domains for conceptual metaphors within the context of the English source discourse. A keyword is only deemed to be a prospective target domain when it is both semantically meaningful and has as its basic referent an abstract idea or concept. These two combined represent the fundamental line of reasoning that is adopted here for testing the probability of a given lexical keyword to operate as a target domain for conceptual metaphors. A full-scale concordance analysis is then conducted for any lexical keyword found to serve as a target domain in the said discourse. The aim of this analysis is to identify all metaphoric uses belonging to these key target domains. The metaphoric uses identified in this manner are subsequently subjected to further scrutiny to confirm their classification as metaphors. The criterion applied for this purpose is the presence of semantic tension between a word's literal sense and its contextual meaning that justifies classifying it as a metaphor. Confirmed metaphors are split up into groups based on the source domain from which they are derived. The resulting groups of related metaphors are labeled using Lakoff and Johnson's format of 'TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN'. This leads to the last step in the current approach to metaphor identification which is to determine, according to the suggested threshold of at least 20 occurrences, the kinds of conceptual metaphors that are characteristic of the English source discourse under study. Once determined, the focus of the second phase is on analyzing the discourse contexts in which these metaphors occur for the purpose of revealing the authorial intents behind their use.

The target-text component of the methodology also follows a linear sequence. It starts with searching the Arabic part of the parallel corpus to extract the corresponding translations of the metaphors derived from the English source texts. The extracted data are then examined to find out how the source-text metaphors have been translated in the target texts and to define the factors that govern their translatability. The examination phase involves identifying the sorts of procedures that are used in the translation of these metaphors. The next step is calculating the overall application rate of each of the procedures used. The information thus gained is then inspected for the presence of any

consistent tendencies in the translational treatment of the source-text conceptual metaphors. It is by virtue of such inspection that useful insights can be drawn as regards the hurdles involved in the act of translating conceptual metaphors, the effectiveness of the procedures adopted to tackle them, and the actual factors contributing to the ease or difficulty of their translation. What follows is a concise account of the outcome of applying this methodology.

Results

According to the results of the concordance data analyses, there are five lexical keywords that have been found to be frequently used as target domains for metaphors within the examined English source texts. They are, in order of frequency: relationship (24 %), love (22 %), feeling (20 %), time (19 %), and marriage (16 %)—see Figure 1 below. The majority of metaphors belonging to these five key concepts are drawn from source domains that are either made explicit in the context itself (e.g., investment, project, and battlefield) or have been discovered in previous research (e.g., journey, building, and money). The fact that most of the source domains are either context-defined or predefined makes the task of linking them with their relevant target domains proceed at a quicker pace, as it requires no lengthy efforts to substantiate their existence in the corpus.

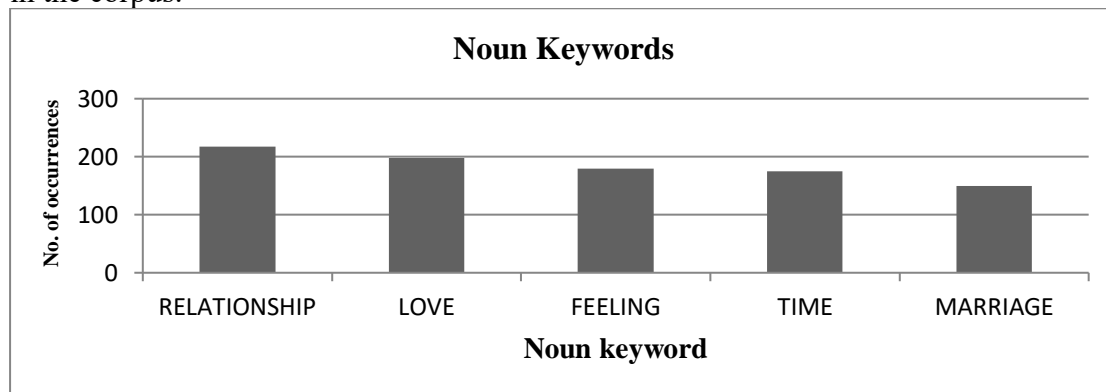


FIGURE 1. Occurrence frequency of the five noun keywords as target domains

There exist a number of source domains that are neither contextually specified nor formerly designated. One proposed strategy for dealing with such cases of undefined source domains is to draw on background knowledge of word meanings to match the metaphorically used lexis in question with the overarching semantic field to which it typically corresponds. The matching task can alternatively be carried out with the aid of any standard dictionary in the absence of complete word knowledge, or for a better degree of accuracy. Close analysis of relevant textual content is sometimes necessary, especially in metaphorical cases (like the ones given below) whose sources are not derivable by such knowledge alone. A crucial advantage of this analysis is that it provides further cues to help facilitate the detection of lexically ambiguous or obscure source domains. Nourishment, concealment, language, and business venture are all examples of undefined source domains that have not been clearly specified within the metaphorical expressions or recognized by previous research on conceptual metaphors. Their usage is inferred via application of the strategy described above.

The full-scale concordance analyses of the five target domains listed above have resulted in the identification of 24 different kinds of conceptual metaphors, all of which have been found to meet the threshold requirement of at least 20 occurrences. Such metaphors are arranged by the keyword with which they are associated as follows:

Target domain	Conceptual metaphors	No. of occurrences
Relationship	RELATIONSHIP IS AN INVESTMENT	36
	RELATIONSHIP IS A JOURNEY	25
	RELATIONSHIP IS A PROJECT	24
	RELATIONSHIP IS A BUILDING	22
	RELATIONSHIP IS A HUMAN BODY	21
	RELATIONSHIP IS ARTWORK	20
	RELATIONSHIP IS A PLANT	20
Love	LOVE IS A CONTAINER	80
	LOVE IS AN ORGANISM	29
	LOVE IS A LIQUID	24
	LOVE IS NOURISHMENT	20
Feeling	FEELING IS A PHYSICAL FORCE	42
	FEELING IS A CONCEALED ENTITY	40
	FEELING IS A PERSON	25
	FEELING IS A LANGUAGE	23
Time	TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE	40
	TIME IS MONEY	26
	TIME IS SPACE	21
	TIME IS MOTION	21
	TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY	20
Marriage	MARRIAGE IS A PATIENT	31
	MARRIAGE IS A LOCATION	26
	MARRIAGE IS A BUSINESS VENTURE	24
	MARRIAGE IS A BATTLEFIELD	22
Total	24	682

TABLE 1. Central conceptual metaphors in the English sub-corpus

These conceptual metaphors are designed to fulfill a variety of reader-oriented functions—such as explaining abstract and elusive notions (e.g., RELATIONSHIP IS A PLANT), eliciting desired effects (e.g., FEELING IS A PERSON), and encouraging the adoption of particular attitudes toward marriage-related matters (e.g., MARRIAGE IS A PATIENT). They have also been found to contribute to the overall didactic function of the discourse by enhancing the reader's understanding of the complicated nature of married life.

Close examination of the ways in which the conceptual metaphors above are handled in the Arabic target texts has identified three types of translation procedures. These are, in order of frequency: instantiation (73%), de-metaphorization (15%), and domain switching (12%)—see Table 2 below. The **instantiation** procedure means that the translator keeps in the target text the same kind of conceptual metaphor that is originally used in the source text. The **de-metaphorization** procedure, on the other hand, means that the translator replaces an individual expression of the source-text conceptual metaphor with a literal, non-metaphorical substitute, which can be due to linguistic or cultural factors (or a combination of the two). The third procedure of **domain switching** means that the translator changes the domain from which the source-text metaphor is drawn, thus resulting in a different conceptual metaphor. The

examination has also illustrated that there are several factors underlying the translator’s implementation of any of these procedures to handle conceptual metaphors. Some of these factors are related to variations and similarities between the source and target languages and cultures, while others concern contextual and pragmatic issues like familiarity of the translated metaphor, adequacy of potential translation equivalents, and significance of the original metaphorical content.

Besides the three procedures identified above, there have been four further sub-procedures, all of which belong to the first procedure of instantiation: direct instantiation, instantiation plus addition, instantiation by shifting imagery, and partial instantiation. These sub-procedures can be defined as follows:

- **Direct instantiation:** refers to a word-for-word rendition of the original metaphor. This sub-procedure is implemented in the translation of 471 of the 682 metaphorical expressions analyzed.
- **Instantiation plus addition:** refers to adding an extra layer of meaning to the original metaphor without changing its source or target domain. This sub-procedure is implemented a total of 25 times.
- **Instantiation by shifting imagery:** refers to replacing the original metaphorical image with another one from the same semantic domain. This sub-procedure is implemented three times.
- **Partial instantiation:** refers to instantiating only a functional aspect of the original metaphor. This sub-procedure is also very rare, occurring only twice.

Translation procedure		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Instantiation (Inst.)	Direct Inst.	471	69
	Inst. plus addition	25	4
	Inst. by shifting imagery	3	0.4
	Partial Inst.	2	0.2
De-metaphorization		103	15
Domain switching		78	11.4
Total		682	100

TABLE 2. Types and frequencies of procedures applied in the translation of conceptual metaphors in the corpus

These results may also be displayed graphically as follows:

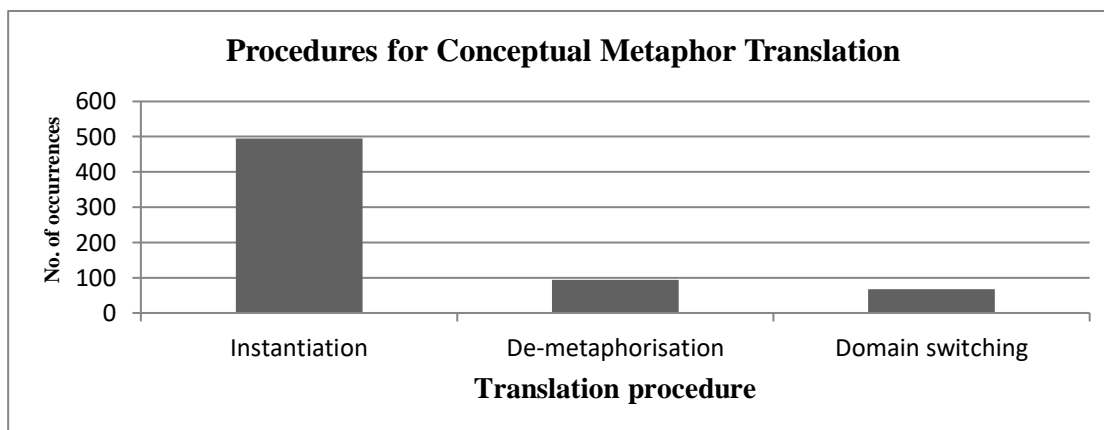


FIGURE 2. Rates of application of the three procedures for conceptual metaphor

Translation Identified in the Target Texts

As can be seen above, 501 of the 682 instances of conceptual metaphors identified in the English sub-corpus have been rendered into Arabic using the instantiation procedure. This makes it by far the most preferred way of handling conceptual metaphors in the relevant texts. De-metaphorization forms the next most preferred procedure for conceptual metaphor translation—accounting for as many as 103 of the total number of cases. As the third most preferred procedure for conceptual metaphor translation, domain switching is noted in 78 of all the cases analyzed. A more detailed discussion of these results is provided next.

Discussion and Findings

In light of the quantitative data outlined above, it has been established that the kinds of conceptual metaphors that occur in this text type present no major challenges in translation as the vast majority of them are reproduced verbatim by their translators into Arabic. This is attributable to a range of reasons, which can be summed up in four points: (a) their high level of universality, (b) their lack of novelty, (c) the availability of translational equivalents in the target language, and (d) the receptivity of the target readership to the source-language metaphorical imagery. These are the principal determinants that influence the extent to which an English conceptual metaphor is translatable into Arabic.

The very high rate of application of the direct instantiation sub-procedure demonstrates a manifest tendency on the part of the translators to preserve intact all the instantiations of the original metaphors in their target texts. It also seems to reflect the degree of significance attached to the figurative texture of the original discourse, which has been identified as a rhetorically powerful tool to influence readers. Its preservation may thus be understood as a means to create an effect on the target audience equivalent to that of the original on its own audience. The following is an example of employing direct instantiation to translate instances of conceptual metaphors in the corpus. In it, the target domain of marital relationship is figuratively described in terms of the source domain of investment, thus leading to the conceptual metaphor RELATIONSHIP IS AN INVESTMENT. This description is preserved intact in the Arabic translation without any modifications whatsoever. The Arabic verb 'يستثمر' *to invest* is semantically identical to the metaphorically used verb 'invested' in the English source text; both refer to the act of devoting effort and energy to gaining a profitable outcome.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
Your partner is about to get very excited and be very flattered at the hard work and energy that you have invested in your relationship. ⁹	فإن شريك حياتك على وشك أن يشعر بالإثارة والإطراء لكل الجهد الشاق والطاقة اللذين استثمرتهما في هذه العلاقة. ¹⁰	Your life partner is about to feel excited and flattered for all the hard work and energy that you have invested in this relationship.

The quantitative data also display a marked use of the de-metaphorization procedure to handle instances of conceptual metaphors in the English source texts. This means that

⁹ Phillip McGraw, *Relationship Rescue* (New York: Hyperion, 2000), p. 164.

¹⁰ Phillip McGraw, *Relationship Rescue*, trans. Jarir (Riyadh: Jarir, 2011), p. 230.

the translator does not stick to the default option of preserving the metaphoricity of the original usage in the translation. Alternatively, they choose to de-metaphorize it by converting it to a non-figurative usage, as the example below clearly shows:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
This is what causes you to feel you have fallen out of love with someone. ¹¹	وهذا هو ما يجعلك تشعر بأنك لم تعد تحب شريك حياتك. ¹²	And this is what makes you feel that you no longer love your life partner.

The source text above contains an instance of the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A CONTAINER. It is indicated by the use of the phrasal verb ‘fall out of’ which typically occurs with nouns from the physical domain of containment. Its contextual usage with the non-physical emotion of love is consequently identified as constituting a metaphorical instance to represent love in terms of a container for married couples. This representation is not reproduced in the target text where it is replaced with the non-figurative expression 'لم تعد تحب' *you no longer love*.

The loss of metaphoricity in the corresponding target texts could be accounted for in part by the fact that some instances of conceptual metaphors comprise culture-specific characteristics that are difficult for the translators to borrow or even adapt to fit the requirements of the recipient cultures. This seems to be the case in the translation of the English expressions ‘fallen out of love,’ ‘go outside your marriage,’ and ‘treasure the time’ for which there are no standard (collocational) equivalents in the Arabic culture. If transferred verbatim, such expressions would not only lose their metaphoric potential, but would also sound exotic to the target-language reader.

Structural variations between the two relevant linguistic systems could too be cited as a potential factor behind the de-metaphorization of metaphorical instances in the target texts. Evidence for such variations is found in the expressions ‘around her time of ovulation,’ ‘consult with him ahead of time,’ and ‘for some time to come’ which are translated respectively as 'خلال فترة التبويض' *during the ovulation period*, 'تستشيريه' *consult with him in advance*, and 'لبعض الوقت' *for some time*. What can be seen here is that although these translations empty the original expressions of their metaphorical content, they are necessitated due to the absence of similar lexical phrases in the target language. In Arabic, neither ‘around’ or ‘ahead of’ nor ‘to come’ forms part of the existing collocational patterns in which the word ‘time’ conventionally occurs. This should explain why these metaphorical phrases are difficult to retain in the presence of such linguistic constraints.

A glance back at Table 2 also reveals the existence of a considerable number of metaphorical expressions that have been translated by use of the domain switching procedure. This means changing the conceptual domain from which a metaphor is drawn, which can be seen in the Arabic translation of the metaphorical expression ‘your feelings are like messengers’ as 'مشاعرك هي بمثابة رسائل' *your feelings are like messages* in the following case:

¹¹ Gray, *What You Feel, You Can Heal* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 134.

¹² Gray, *What You Feel, You Can Heal*, trans. Jarir (Riyadh: Jarir, 2007), p. 134.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
Your feelings are like messengers from your subconscious to your conscious mind. ¹³	مشاعرك هي بمثابة رسائل من عقلك اللاوعي إلى عقلك الواعي. ¹⁴	Your feelings are like messages from your subconscious mind to your conscious mind.

This example shows evidence of changing domains between the original text and the text in which the metaphor is translated. The word ‘messengers’ occurs as a metaphor in the original text to conceptualize the target domain of feelings in terms of the animate source domain of people. This word is substituted in the translation by ‘رسائل’ *messages*, which is derived from the inanimate source domain of communication.

When looking at translational cases like that noted above, it becomes apparent that the domain switching procedure does not constitute a radical shift from the intended function of the original metaphors. On the contrary, its application can be viewed as a viable solution to rid the target texts of semantic oddity that is likely to result if a literal translation approach is adopted instead. The aforementioned metaphor of feelings as messengers is an example of such an observation. It is converted by the translator of the Arabic text to the familiar *feelings as messages* metaphor, which not only sounds less confusing to the readership of the translated text, but also provides a way out from the inappropriacy of the literal option.

Using the Arabic word ‘رسل’ *messengers* to describe feelings in the target text is potentially problematic since this word has a dual meaning in the dictionary. On the one hand, it means ordinary people employed to carry messages or parcels; on the other, it refers to prophets (revered people with divine revelations). The latter is the overriding sense that is more commonly linked to the concerned word in the target culture, where religion forms an inseparable part of daily life. This makes its use in the translation as a replacement for ‘messengers’ particularly challenging, which explains why this option is abandoned by the translator in favor of the more appropriate alternative ‘رسائل’ *messages*.

Conclusion

This paper researched the translation of conceptual metaphors in a parallel corpus of English-Arabic self-help texts on marriage relationships. The research methods adopted in identifying and analyzing conceptual metaphors in the corpus consisted of a combination of automated and manual procedures. The two together proved very helpful in facilitating the processing and analysis of the compiled corpus data. Here follows a detailed list of the steps undertaken to identify commonly occurring kinds of conceptual metaphors that characterize the American discourse of self-help books on marriage relationships.

1. Generate a list of the 50 top-ranked keywords in the English sub-corpus.
2. Lemmatize the generated keyword list.

¹³ Gray, *What You Feel, You Can Heal* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 105.

¹⁴ Gray, *What You Feel, You Can Heal*, trans. Jarir (Riyadh: Jarir, 2007), p. 105.

3. Perform concordance analyses on the keywords contained in the flemmatized keyword list.
 - a. Collect a sample dataset of 200 example sentences for each keyword appearing in the flemmatized list.
 - b. Examine separately the sample datasets to detect potential target domains for conceptual metaphors.
 - c. Conduct a full-scale concordance analysis for any keyword found to serve as a metaphor target domain.
 - d. Apply the criterion of semantic tension to all instances of candidate metaphors identified through the said analyses.
 - e. Classify as metaphors those capable of meeting the mentioned criterion.
 - f. Group together the verified metaphors according to their source domains.
 - g. Establish the conceptual bases underlying such groups of related metaphors.
 - h. Determine, according to the designated threshold value of at least 20 occurrences, those kinds of conceptual metaphors that can justifiably be regarded as characteristic of the discourse in question.

The Arabic translations, which constitute the second component of this study's parallel corpus, are also approached and processed in a fairly straightforward manner as follows:

1. Collect the relevant full-text translations.
2. Search the collected translations to extract the target metaphorical data.
3. Examine the target metaphorical data against their source counterparts to reveal how metaphors have been treated in the translations.
4. Interpret the results obtained from this examination to generate insights about the issues that conceptual metaphors present in translation.
 - a. Identify the different types of translation procedures used in handling instances of conceptual metaphors.
 - b. Measure the overall application rate of each of these translation procedures.
 - c. Inspect the information thus gained for the presence of any consistent tendencies in the treatment of conceptual metaphors.
 - d. Determine, on the basis of such inspection, the issues posed by such metaphors in translation, the appropriateness of the procedures applied to handle them, and the actual factors affecting the quality of the translated products.

The conclusions reached by this study are of vital importance for understanding what happens to conceptual metaphor during translation, and what governs its translatability. Firstly, they provided empirical evidence demonstrating the extensive use of the instantiation procedure in the translation of conceptual metaphors. They also corroborated the view that conceptual metaphors are different from other types of metaphor (e.g., novel and poetic metaphors) in that they tend to reflect cross-cultural patterns of thinking, and this is a main reason why they are easier to handle in translation. This implies that the instantiation procedure should be given precedence over other translation procedures when handling instances of conceptual metaphors. Another implication to be noted is that the preservation of the source-language figurative aspects is critically important not only for ensuring accurate translation, but also for creating an equivalent effect on the target-language audience; hence, if it is removed from the translation, this is likely to result in a loss of the intended rhetorical function as well as lead to a misrepresentation of the original message.

Moreover, the study's conclusions indicated that differences between the source and target languages and cultures are a prime cause of the non-preservation of some expressions of conceptual metaphors in translation. They finally demonstrated the

validity of the descriptive approach for analyzing the ways in which conceptual metaphors are dealt with by translators in different contexts. The fact that conceptual metaphors tend to vary from one type of discourse to another in terms of content and function makes the application of any other approach ineffective in capturing the distinct issues associated with the act of handling them in translation.

Given their usefulness, these findings can be used to foster further empirical analyses of conceptual metaphor in translation.