

Cognitive Translation and Conceptual Wine Tasting Metaphors: A Corpus-Based Research

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Abstract : Many researchers have underlined the importance of metaphors in specialised language. Their use of specific domains helps us understand the conceptualisations used to communicate new ideas or difficult topics. Within the wide area of specialised discourse, wine tasting is a very specific example because it is almost exclusively metaphoric. Wine tasting metaphors express various conceptualisations. They are not linguistic but rather conceptual, as defined by Lakoff & Johnson. They correspond to the linguistic expression of a mental projection from a well-known or more concrete source domain onto the target domain, which is the taste of wine. But unlike most specialised terminologies, the vocabulary is never clearly defined. When metaphorical terms are listed in dictionaries, their definitions remain vague, unclear, and circular. They cannot be replaced by literal linguistic expressions. This makes it impossible to transfer them into another language with the traditional linguistic translation methods. Qualitative research investigates whether wine tasting metaphors could rather be translated with the cognitive translation process, as well described by Nili Mandelblit (1995). The research is based on a corpus compiled from two high-profile wine guides; the Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide and its translation into French and the Guide Hachette des Vins and its translation into English. In this small corpus with a total of 68,826 words, 170 metaphoric expressions have been identified in the original English text and 180 in the original French text. They have been selected with the MIPVU Metaphor Identification Procedure developed at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. The selection demonstrates that both languages use the same set of conceptualisations, which are often combined in wine tasting notes, creating conceptual integrations or blends. The comparison of expressions in the source and target texts also demonstrates the use of the cognitive translation approach. In accordance with the principle of relevance, the translation always uses target language conceptualisations, but compared to the original, the highlighting of the projection is often different. Also, when original metaphors are complex with a combination of conceptualisations, at least one element of the original metaphor underlies the target expression. This approach perfectly integrates into Lederer's interpretative model of translation (2006). In this triangular model, the transfer of conceptualisation could be included at the level of 'deverbalisation/reverbalisation', the crucial stage of the model, where the extraction of meaning combines with the encyclopedic background to generate the target text.

Keywords : cognitive translation, conceptual integration, conceptual metaphor, interpretative model of translation, wine tasting metaphor

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