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Metaphors We Academicize the World With? – Metaphor(icity) Perceived in the Context of Academia (A Case Study of English Philologists-to-be)

Abstract

Since the advent of Cognitive Linguistics in the 20th century (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2003), the role and perception of metaphor(ization) started to change, not only among theoretical linguists and researchers, but also in the context of Applied Linguistics. Thus, no longer treated as a mere ornament or anomaly, metaphor has been more and more appreciated by educationalists, course book writers, and teachers, but also by psychologists, clinicians, and other professionals. In short, it has become an educational and a diagnostic tool in many ‘applied’ areas of human development.

In line with this rekindled interest in metaphoricity, in my study I attempt to learn more about awareness and perception of metaphoric conceptualisations among English philology university students (both freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors) in the environment of academia, an environment they naturally function in and belong to.

My preliminary assumption is that despite the already widely acknowledged importance of metaphors in sciences and humanities (cf. Cameron & Maslen, 2010; Haase, 2009, 2010; Hermann, 2013), the perception and awareness of metaphorical construals in the ‘academic habitat’ among prospective English philologists may be variegated, ranging between more traditional and more modern perspectives. My intention is, then, to obtain feedback from them as it concerns their views on (the role of) metaphor(ization) in the academic habitat and beyond it, in their life and in the world in general. The results reveal that the students are closer to traditional rather than modern stances on metaphor, though the situation is more complex.

Keywords: metaphor(ization), academic environment, metaphor perception by students, metaphor awareness among students

Introduction

Since the present study attempts to ‘gauge’ various aspects of metaphoricity as they are identified and perceived by students of English philology (who are both language- and linguistics-oriented), it is essential at this point to present some preliminaries that may help the reader to place it within a proper framework and to see it from the appropriate perspective (as I believe it to be). Even though metaphor is commonly sighted in audio-visual images (see, e.g., Forceville, 2008), the mode which it is almost intuitively believed to reside in is language. In my study I hope to elicit answers shedding some light on my research questions by asking students to specifically *write* how they understand and perceive the notion of metaphor(ization). Thus, it may be so that they will allude to other modes of metaphoric expression (like audial or visual), but it seems that language is, after all, the prevailing means of expressing metaphors, as humans often speak or write *about* and *in* metaphors. As Nacey aptly points out, “[m]etaphor is a symbiosis of three different dimensions: language, thought, and communication. That metaphor is found in language – that is, the words we speak and write – likely comes as no surprise, but views differ as to whether metaphor is best viewed as an optional or intrinsic component” (2013, p. 9).

Theory and Background

The two opposing views on the nature of metaphor highlighted by Nacey (2013) are crucial in the light of my considerations in this paper. Along these lines one may formulate further (dichotomous) distinctions which may prove useful in the ensuing analysis. They will be presented and elaborated on gradually in the Discussion and Results sections here, but a few main traditions and ways of approaching metaphor need to be introduced right at the beginning. Also, the idea that metaphor is ‘found’ in language, thought, and communication, and often at the intersection of these three modes, provides an inspiration for other theoretical sections that follow. Still, my intention here is not really to provide the reader with a detailed overview of research on metaphor; rather, what I attempt is to highlight certain metaphor-related aspects, such as terminology, typologies, and classifications in relation to the issues underlying the goal of my study (which is metaphor perception and awareness among philological students). I employ these theoretical constructs selectively while structuring the main methodological tool of my analysis (the questionnaire given to students), both prescriptively and descriptively—prescriptively, as I offer students certain

lexical items from which to choose, to facilitate the presentation of their views on metaphors; descriptively, as I expect that some of their own ‘private’ formulations characterizing/defining metaphor will coincide with some academic considerations about metaphor.

Metaphor in Research—The Aristotelian vs. the Platonist tradition

It is chronologically justified to start with two classical views, namely the Aristotelian tradition and the Platonist tradition of understanding metaphor. As Nacey (2013, p. 10) further elaborates, the Aristotelian tradition treats metaphor as a form of a substitution (a case of saying one thing but meaning another) or as a form of comparison (in cases when one thing is similar to another thing in some way, rather than the same as that thing). Such a view implies that literal language is primary and figurative language is secondary, or, in other words, auxiliary. As Nacey (2013) puts it in a nutshell, “[a] brief summary of the Aristotelian view is then that everyday language is literal, and that metaphor is a detachable poetic ornament, no more than “a frill, a deviant, decorative aspect of language” (cited in Winner, 1988, p. 15).

In turn, the Platonist view stresses the idea that metaphor is an intrinsic element of language, and so it “holds that metaphor is inseparable from language as a whole” (2013). Here Nacey enumerates certain theories of metaphor positioned within semantics, pragmatics or somewhere between these two. Thus, metaphor residing in semantics is represented by Black’s (1981) ‘interaction’ view, whereas metaphor embedded in pragmatics can be glimpsed in Searle’s (1993) indirect speech act proposal and in Sperber and Wilson’s (1991) relevance theory (for details see Nacey, 2013, pp. 10–11).

The approach which I consider to be cogent is the one represented by the Platonist tradition since it to a large extent corresponds with research and findings currently developed within the contemporary cognitive linguistic paradigm. It will be, then, intriguing to check which of the two traditions delineated above the participants of the study are drawn to.

Metaphor Research in the 20th Century—The Terminological Conundrum and a Metaphor Metalanguage

In the second part of the 20th century we can see a breakthrough when it comes to the understanding of mechanisms governing metaphor. In short, many researchers believe these mechanisms are no longer solely linguistic, but predominantly cognitive. With the formulation of Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) starts a new era of metaphor research.

An increasing number of scholars is drawn to the idea that metaphor undergirds our understanding and perception of the world, something encapsulated in the telling title of the seminal work written by the two researchers mentioned above—*Metaphors we live by*. “[M]etaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person’s conceptual system” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 6, as cited in Nacey, 2013, p. 12). As Nacey summarizes, “metaphor pervades both our everyday language and our thought, with the former merely a reflection of the latter: [...] The words we use are derivatives of the metaphors structuring our thought” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 6, as cited in Nacey, 2013, p. 12).

The theory initiated by Lakoff and Johnson is further developed, modified, and refined by other scholars, and what is obviously needed is new terminology. By this I mean that academics both coin new words or phrases to embrace new metaphor research, but also that they harness already existing lexis in different configurations and contexts. Thus, for instance, every conceptual metaphor (understood in terms of cognitive linguistics) is believed to consist of the so-called source domain and the target domain, and usually a more abstract target domain is structured in terms of a more concrete source domain, and the whole process is called a “cross-domain mapping” (for more clarifications see, e.g., Evans, 2007, pp. 51, 61–62). Then it is also argued that numerous concrete domains are ‘embodied,’ meaning that they originate from bodily experiences. The point that I make by the aforementioned exemplification is that researchers mix and employ together well-known entrenched vocabulary with newly-coined words and phrases, and this usage (or ‘merger’) counts as technical language. When such a new approach to the study of language as cognitive linguistics is born, linguistic nomenclature should keep abreast of this change and the ‘gap should be filled’. Professor Vyvyan Evans, who is a cognitive linguist, makes an attempt to do so by creating *A Glossary of Cognitive Linguistics*. In the preface to his work he writes:

[T]here are many terms employed in cognitive linguistics that enjoy wide currency within the field. Nevertheless, there are many others which are primarily used within the context of one of the two main sub-branches. There are also other terms that are only used in the context of a specific approach or theory. Hence there are inherent difficulties in selecting the terms to be covered so as to avoid a volume of this sort becoming too unwieldy. (Evans, 2007, p. viii)

The citation above is meant to be illustrative of something characteristic of modern meta-language concerning metaphorization, and that is terminological confusion and imprecision. (Cognitive) linguists are anxious to describe various aspects of metaphors, such as, for example, their processing and typologies,

so they proliferate words and phrases in various configurations. However, the more not necessarily means the better. The opening of the section in which Nacey (2013) confronts convoluted typologies of metaphors reads as follows: “The typology of metaphor—typically as ‘alive,’ ‘dead,’ or somewhere in between—is an area of varied terminology, inconsistent or absent definitions, and strong opinion” (p. 21). Here, I do not really try and aspire to present in detail the plethora of metaphor typologies, since this has already been done by Nacey—I express my admiration, as she did it very skillfully and painstakingly. Instead, I enumerate an impressive number of words appearing in Nacey’s account, especially adjectives, employed by linguists who are at pains to pinpoint the essence and characteristics of metaphor (Nacey calls them monikers and states that certain metaphors are discussed in the literature under these monikers; for details see Nacey, 2013, pp. 21–30). Sometimes I also briefly delineate academic contexts in which these monikers and other metaphor descriptors function, that is, I show them in certain constructed frameworks, if I believe certain juxtapositions and co-occurrences of these lexical items appear relevant.

When it comes to *alive* metaphors, they may be further called innovative, active, fresh, live, novel, literary, newly-invented, poetic, and/or creative. *Dead* metaphors are considered literal, which to many may sound contradictory, and rightly so; as Black (1993) observes, “[a] so-called dead metaphor is not a metaphor at all” (p. 25). Within CMT, the label ‘alive’ converges with the adjective ‘conventional,’ and these conventional metaphors are characterized as “[...] most deeply entrenched, efficient, and powerful” (see Lakoff & Turner, 1989, p. 129; and Nacey, 2013, p. 22). It is worthwhile to note that the first adjective (entrenched) reads formal, while the other two appear less formal, but definitely more evaluative (efficient, powerful). Conversely, for Black (1993) CMT’s conventional metaphors overlap to a large extent with dead ones, which have become collectively institutionalized, and, as a result, banal; we may also discern a dichotomous distinction: dead metaphors are connected with banality, whereas novel metaphors (another adjectival metaphor descriptor) are characterized by vitality, and for Black should be the focus of any theory of metaphor. Metaphors that are no longer readily recognized as such are often labelled as historical, and these are further specified as opaque, whereas the other metaphoric pole, namely, conventional metaphors are considered to be potentially transparent and easily recognizable (but all of them are codified). Interestingly, these two adjectives meant to be meta-linguistic in the context of metaphor characterization are *metaphoric* themselves, as they make use of the notion of the amount of light reaching something, in this case human cognition.

More or less in the same vein, Cornelia Müller (2008) in her book *Metaphors Dead and Alive, Sleeping and Waking. A Dynamic View* presents her new

dynamic model of metaphoricity by *metaphorically* employing the notion of sleep: in her view, metaphors are neither traditionally dead nor alive, but they are rather *sleeping* or *waking*, this degree of activation or metaphor alertness depending on context and intention. To continue this discussion and illustrate even more explicitly how metaphorically rich, dense, and potentially confusing the academic metadiscourse concerning metaphor can be, let us look once again at a longer fragment from Nacey:

Black (1993, p. 25) too recognizes a cline ranging from ‘**extinct**’ to ‘**dormant**’ to ‘**active**’ metaphors, but adds “not much is to be expected of this schema.” Thus, although he recognizes the validity of a tripartite typology of metaphor, Black feels justified in conflating the **extinct** and **dormant** metaphors into the single (for him, uninteresting) category of **dead** metaphors in favor of focusing his energies on **active** metaphors alone, the “metaphors needing no **artificial respiration**” and thus the only ones he deems worthy of study. ... Goatly (2011: 29–38) posits a five-fold cline, ranging from ‘**active**’ to ‘**dead and buried**’, the stages in between characterized by the supposed ease with which the metaphorical source is evoked – although exactly how one goes about identifying the degree of metaphorical evocation when confronted with metaphor in actual discourse is left unsaid. ... [A specific] portrayal of the **life** of a metaphorical expression is also reflected by the terminology of researchers who refer to conventional metaphors as ‘**dying**’ (e.g. Traugott 1985) or ‘**moribund**’ (e.g. Alm-Arvius 2006), indicative of the apparently unidirectional nature of a metaphor’s progress from **birth to death**. (Nacey, 2013, pp. 24–25; emphasis added)

The quotation above is saturated with metaphors. I highlighted the lexical items characterizing metaphor in bold type to show that they are in fact metaphoric themselves, and that metaphor researchers do not really shy away from metaphoric metalanguage to address metaphor(ization). In a way, what we see above may be viewed as a good example of a metatext—it is *about* and *in* metaphors.

Metaphor-related metalanguage is also an issue raised by applied linguists in the context of numerous aspects, such as teaching/learning foreign languages, and metaphor application, perception, and awareness. The importance of metaphoric language as regards teaching and learning is stressed by Block (1992) and later by Cameron (2003), and Boers (2000) specifically highlights metaphor awareness as being conducive to vocabulary retention; in turn, Littlemore (2005) concentrates on metaphor in more academic settings, whereas Gabryś-Barker (2017) in her research addresses the issue of metaphor application and perception in the context of multilingualism. The

common denominator in the case of the abovementioned strains of research is that they raise awareness (among students and teachers alike) concerning the role of metaphor that may be treated as a tool with which to accomplish specific educational goals.

Thus, metaphor-as-tool can be considered in the context of learners' L2 language competence, or specifically, in the context of the so-called metaphoric competence. Space constraints prevent me at this point from discussing the topic in detail, but a few aspects need to be mentioned, as they correspond with the study that follows. Metaphoric competence is basically an array of skills to be mastered by learners for them to be competent users of the (second) language (see Low, 1988), and it also consists of certain components (see Littlemore, 2001). MacArthur (2010), delving deeper into the production of metaphors by foreign language learners, suggests that, just as the metalanguage of syntax to discuss grammar is taught to students, so should be taught the metalanguage enabling students to discuss metaphor in the classroom (see also Nacey, 2013, p. 34). This should be done with a view to improving students' metaphoric competence, further specified by Littlemore as the "ability to acquire, produce, and interpret metaphor" (Littlemore, 2001, p. 459, as cited in Nacey, 2013, p. 32). The rationale behind the present study is somewhat different, as I ask the philology students to provide me with information that is, in a way, 'next to' (though related to) Littlemore's definition quoted above. Thus, in the questionnaire provided they rather attempt to define, capture, and contextualize metaphor in the world around them, so they basically strive to establish its position in this world and specify how they relate to metaphor(ization).

This purpose seems to dovetail more with the communicative ingredient added by Steen (2011) to the contemporary theory of metaphor, and new (or rehashed) meta-words appear to structure this new paradigm, namely, antonymous *non-deliberate* and *deliberate*. The former is associated with processing the language that is potentially metaphorical but perceived as literal or conventional, whereas the latter with more conscious and active processing of the language, a search for metaphor seen as such. Deliberateness of metaphor for Steen (2008, 2011) is not merely intentional (just like all communication), but is linked to "the clear intention of using one entity to think about another [...] [and it] refers to an express strategy of molding one's message in a certain way to achieve a certain effect" (Nacey, 2013, pp. 28–29). I did not specifically include the adjectives *non-deliberate* or *deliberate* in any part of my questionnaire as potential metaphor descriptors since I assumed that without further clarification these items may be misleading and confusing; instead I suggest some other metaphor qualifiers that may more overtly point to metaphor's non-deliberateness or deliberateness (e.g., implicit/hidden and explicit/obvious respectively).

To clinch the considerations of this section, it is worth referring to six dimensions of metaphor highlighted by Cameron (2010), and, again, couched in adjectival terms. Thus, according to Cameron, metaphors in use are “linguistic” (employed by people engaged in specific social interactions involving language), “embodied” (connected with our bodies participating and interpreting, and also reflecting certain aspects of physical experience), “cognitive” (in the light of the cognitive processes of connecting two concepts, see Lakoff, 1993), “affective” (carrying evaluations, attitudes, values, perspectives, or beliefs), “socio-cultural” (emerging from social interaction), and “dynamic” (specifically connected with language use and broadly understood interaction between participants). I use these terms as an inspiration while structuring a specific portion of my questionnaire, not necessarily incorporating all of them in it, but instead employing words that I believe are functionally synonymous yet more self-explanatory. The issue of using specific descriptors (words and phrases alike) to help the philology students present what is for them the essence of metaphor(icity) is pursued further in this paper (for details see the sections: Instrument and Results and Discussion, and the discussion following Table 5).

The Theory and Background—An Overview

The intention of the previous sections was, as already implied, to signal certain theoretical issues related to metaphor, since I may draw from specific tenets of some of the abovementioned theories while analyzing students’ considerations concerning metaphor(ization). For this reason, particular aspects of these theories were not discussed in detail, as they will be only selectively highlighted when I consider them to be pertinent to and illustrative of my analysis. Also, the scholarly deliberations indicated above provided me with certain typologies, classifications and ‘labels,’ elements that I have readily (though selectively) woven into the questionnaire structured for the purpose of my study. This means that the theoretical section ending here not only correlates with subsequent empirical sections in terms of a (hopefully) well-received review of relevant literature and justification for this paper (provided above), but—first and foremost—that it to a large extent merges into my analysis in terms of being a crucial and extensive part of a methodological tool I employ below. More details concerning this correlation and ‘merger’ are discussed in the Participants, Research Procedure, and Instrument section that follows.

The Study

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the ensuing study is to first match and juxtapose the data obtained from what I call the Metaphor Perception and Awareness Questionnaire (given to students, henceforth referred to as MPAQ, described in detail in the Instrument subsection) with what various strains of research on metaphor offer, and then to draw conclusions concerning the ways in which, and the degree to which, these variably subjective and idiosyncratic students' views on metaphorization converge or diverge with those more objective and scientific ones (stemming from the scholarly world). This is perhaps a good moment to clarify the wording of the title of the article at hand, as its first part may be somehow enigmatic to the reader. What I have in mind in the context of this investigation when I refer to metaphors we *academicize* the world with is that the philology students in question may be endowed with a certain type of metaphoric awareness and perhaps even metaphoric competence (cf. Nacey, 2013, pp. 32–34). It is my initial premise that this type of awareness and competence may enable budding philologists to describe and process the world around them via metaphors, and to do so not only in the academic world (where metaphorization is assumed to be inherently present, at least in certain realms of this world), but in the world at large.

In short, I wish to check the awareness and perception of metaphoric realizations/conceptualizations among various groups of English philology university students (both freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors; full-time and part-time).

Research Questions

Certain research questions have already been implied in the previous part of this paper, but they need to be formulated more precisely.

1. Considering that the philology students interviewed have been exposed on a regular basis to numerous language classes since at least secondary school (both Polish and foreign language lessons), what impact could these language- and linguistics-oriented classes have on the perception and functioning of metaphors in their lives? To put it more specifically, will philological students lean towards the more traditional Aristotelian pole, and then place metaphor in the realms of the ornamental, the poetic, or the extraordinary (apparently the view traditionally promoted and embraced by teachers in

Polish schools)? Or will they rather gravitate towards the more modern¹ Platonist pole, and for this reason position metaphor in the realms of the quotidian, the interactive, or the ordinary (ideas introduced and highlighted during linguistics classes at philological departments)? The above can be broken into two subquestions, namely:

- a. Do the students highlight metaphor's novelty and its conscious use?
 - b. Do the students emphasize metaphor's automaticity, the fact that we hardly ever notice metaphors as they are so entrenched/conventional(ized)?
2. For the participants of the study, does metaphor reside in language, or rather in thought, or in some different realm?
 3. To their way of thinking, in what areas of life is metaphor to be found?
 4. Which opinions on (the role and usefulness of) metaphor were prevalent, positive or negative?

Participants, Research Procedure, Instrument, and Methodology of Data Analysis

Participants. A total of 115 English philology university students from the English Department (University of Silesia in Katowice) filled out MPAQ (see the Instrument subsection below) during the academic year 2017/2018. They were both freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors; full-time and part-time, and there were 86 female students and 30 male students among them, and their age range was quite broad, between 19 and 48. Their exposure to English ranged between eight and 40 years. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, I grouped them into six categories, every six years, with the last category spanning eight years (33–40 years of exposure). Eight participants did not provide any data concerning their exposure to English; In each of the groups—27–32 and 33–40—there was only one student; the group 20–26 included only six students (mean exposure: 22), 31 subjects put themselves in the group 8–13 (mean exposure: 12), whereas the largest number of the participants, namely 68 students, declared that they belong to the group 14–19 (mean exposure: 15). It may be safely assumed, then, that their level of English oscillated between B1 and C2, according to the criteria present in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001). A high level of proficiency in English attributed to the majority of the interviewed students is confirmed by the language they employ while addressing the open-ended parts of MPAQ.

Research Procedure. While Nacey (2013) conducts a qualitative and quantitative research on the presence of metaphors in students' writing (both

¹ What I mean by 'modern' here is that the students often acquire linguistic knowledge within the broadly understood Platonist tradition, as they are exposed to notions concerning modern theories of metaphor (e.g., the Conceptual Metaphor Theory promoted by cognitive linguistics).

natives and non-natives), I approach the problem from a more meta-linguistic and even meta-conceptual perspective, attempting to gauge students' understanding of what metaphor(ization) is to them and how these views work against the background of both the academic (university) environment in which they have been functioning for some time as well in other non-academic settings. Thus, the purely academic and objectivized (linguistic, philosophical) views on metaphor will be juxtaposed and confronted with more every-day and individual perceptions of metaphors by philologists in the making. It is intriguing to observe which of the poles discussed earlier (the Aristotelian or the Platonist one) they actually gravitate towards, also bearing in mind that the informants in this study in a way straddle the non-academic, folk, intuitive realm, on the one hand, and the academic, intellectual, learned one on the other. As already stressed, in my questionnaire I do not employ (meta-)terminology (presented in the Theory and Background section) in its entirety, as I was afraid that some of the interviewed students may find a large number of these terms and formulations at best oversophisticated and intimidating, and at worst confusing and incomprehensible (even though I assume, as stated above, that numerous of them represent an advanced, if not proficient, level of English).

The concept of metaphor was not discussed with the participants as, in my view, this would have distorted the purpose of the present study. My intention was not to suggest anything, and thus to elicit from the students responses concerning metaphor(ization) based either on their intuition or, even more so, on their knowledge they acquired either in primary and secondary school, or both. For this reason, I specifically instructed the students to *not* make use of any Internet sources or other materials and rely solely on what they 'have in their heads.' The questionnaire was administered at the beginning of academic writing classes, and all necessary instructions were given and potential problems clarified. I also warned the participants that filling in MPAQ (The Metaphor Perception and Awareness Questionnaire, described in detail in the subsequent section) would be a time-consuming and challenging task, and that the issues involved may appear to many participants rather abstract, regardless of their academic immersion. This is why I asked them to deal with it at home, at a leisurely pace, and fetch the completed questionnaire for the next class. Consequently, the students had about one week to address it. It turned out that they approached this task very seriously and conscientiously, and only two respondents did not for some reason tackle the part devoted to selecting words/expressions characterizing metaphor, a thing that can be considered negligible.

Instrument. The Metaphor Perception and Awareness Questionnaire (MPAQ) is divided into two parts, and both parts contain open-ended and multiple-choice questions. The language of instructions is English, and the in-

structions, in my view, are quite detailed and precise. In the open-ended parts the interviewees are allowed to express their views not only in English, but also in their mother tongue, or a mixture of English and Polish, if for some reason they feel at a loss for words. At some point in Part 1 of MPAQ the students are also asked to enumerate a few examples of metaphors they know and use, but metaphor elicitation and production as such are not the objectives of the presents study.

As already signalled towards the end of the theoretical part of this paper, the Cameron's (2010) classification of various dimensions of metaphor is echoed in the list of 94 descriptors included in Table 5. Thus, I do employ a semantically spacious term 'linguistic' and many other words that can be subsumed under this term in the light of metaphoricity, like, for example, 'verbal,' 'grammatical,' 'poetic,' 'novel' or 'conventional,' which corresponds with Cameron's (2010) conviction that "what counts as linguistic metaphor includes the full range from novel through to the most conventionalized" (p. 4). Further, 'embodied' is replaced with more transparent 'bodily' or 'experiential,' the last lexeme being the reflection of the idea that metaphor is embodied when it is based on "memories of physical experience" (2010, p. 4). 'Cognitive' (not employed in the questionnaire) is still implied by being broken into more specific *mental* and *conceptual*, the latter in accordance with the assertion that the idea of conceptual metaphor hinges on "the cognitive processes of connecting two concepts (Cameron, 2010, p. 5 referring to Lakoff, 1993). *Affective* in the context of metaphorization implies that certain elements of linguistic metaphors infrequently "carry evaluations, attitudes, values, perspectives or beliefs, [and] when metaphor is used to talk about 'something in terms of something else,' it seems that people choose that 'something else' so that it expresses how they feel about what they are saying" (Cameron, 2010, p. 5 referring to Lakoff, 1993). In the questionnaire employed here, these overarching terms are reflected by 'evaluative' or 'emotional', but also by 'religious', 'ideological', 'political' and 'stereotypical.' The idea of 'metaphor as sociocultural' may be more specifically characterized as dialogic, (socially) interactive, and as something shared by people belonging to certain discourse communities (Cameron, 2010, p. 6). Thus, this aspect of metaphor may be found in such questionnaire items as 'academic,' 'scientific,' 'professional,' 'specialist,' 'used in business and commerce,' 'medical,' 'culture-specific.' Finally, the sixth facet of metaphor stressed by Cameron is 'dynamic,' which is also interactive, "as one participant in a conversation responds to another, or from the development of ideas, as a speaker or writer builds an argument, clarifies a position, or constructs a description" (Cameron, 2010, p. 6). In my questionnaire, this dimension is potentially embraced by such lexemes as 'descriptive,' 'informative,' 'illustrative,' 'persuasive,' 'theory-constitutive,' 'diagnostic,' 'pedagogic,' 'educational,' or

even ‘therapeutic.’ It is, however, highly probable that the participants of the study did not necessarily understand and interpret them exactly in the same manner as Cameron (2010) or Lakoff (1993). For this reason, the students had the chance to elaborate on their choices in the Justification for Your Choices section and additionally come up with other overarching categories (for which they could invent ‘labels’ of their own) and thrust in them the selected descriptors (see Part 2 in Figure 1). In sum, all 94 descriptors were either inspired by or accessed from the current literature of the subject, and while selecting them I had in mind aspects and dimensions which are most representative of metaphor (research).

As to the metalanguage, it is a crucial element of MPAQ as it facilitates the characterization of metaphor in my questionnaire. I consider the language present in the questionnaire a compromise between an academic register and a less academic one. Thus, some of the words/phrases presented earlier in this work may be given to the students as prompts, with the aim to encourage, trigger, and facilitate them to divulge their views on metaphor more precisely. Still, it is important to stress here that they are not forced to opt for one specific approach, as the questionnaire offers numerous words and formulations originating from all possible ‘camps’ of understanding metaphor. Thus, the participants are not imposed anything, and they can select these items that best reflect their convictions on metaphoric language. Also, I believe that, alongside the ‘metaphor meta-words’ at their avail, drawn from the literature of the subject, the students have their own metaphoric baggage, that is, their own experiences with and convictions concerning metaphoricity still from the pre-university period of their lives, ones that may be expressed by different words, their own words, not necessary included in MPAQ and suggested by myself. Generally, the questionnaire is structured in such a way that it combines open-ended with multiple-choice questions, and they are supposed to complement one another when it comes to eliciting information from the respondents.

The names of registers employed in MPAQ are inspired by the study carried out by Steen and his team of linguists, who were identifying linguistic metaphors in Dutch and English texts, and the registers they settled for were news texts, conversations, fiction, and academic discourse (Steen et al., 2010). To this group I added the category *Other types* in case some students decided that some other register types was/were not included in the list.

The structure and the content of MPAQ are presented in Figure 1. For the sake of saving space, I made the font smaller and removed spaces and some other elements.

Methodology of Data Analysis. The results of data analysis emerging from MPAQ are presented in seven tables, each illustrating a different mode or level of the usage of metaphoric language. Table 1 shows the number/percentages of respondents who position metaphor in certain social environments (e.g., in family or university environments, among peers, and the like) in terms of frequency of metaphor use in these settings. Table 2, in turn, reveals the frequency of metaphor use at specific levels of linguistic organization (pragmatics, semantics, discourse, morphology, syntax, lexis) according to the participants of the study. Table 3 contains the quantitative data concerning the presence of metaphoric language in specific registers (news texts, academic discourse, conversation, fiction) in the opinion of the interviewed students. In Table 4 I include the results reflecting the respondents' choices concerning the frequency of metaphor use among/by themselves and others, with an additional variable being the setting (everyday settings and the university setting). Table 5 summarizes the results concerning the frequency of the students' choices from the list of 94 metaphor(icity) descriptors; these descriptors are ordered in the table from the least frequent to the most pervasive. Table 6 is summative in nature as it contains students' sample definitions of metaphor(ization) grouped according to the 'saturation' of certain features, elements, or relations. It should be noted at this point that the names of these features/elements/relations appearing in the left column of the table have been arrived at as a result of prior analysis of the definitions put in the right column. Also, these 'labels' are mentioned in the order reflecting their frequency—from the least to the most common. Obviously, in numerous definitions provided by those interviewed we can discern the overlap of these 'labels,' but the criterion selected for placing specific definitions into a given category is the predominant presence of a particular feature/element/relation. In parenthesis I also provide the sex and age of the participants. Finally, Table 7 is the continuation of Table 6 in that it presents the frequency of occurrence of features/elements/relations characterizing metaphor in the students' definitions from the most to the least numerous (numbers of respondents and percentages are provided).

In sum, my intention was to analyze the data while proceeding from the (quantitatively) most graspable, general, and concrete aspects to the ones which are (qualitatively) more specific, detailed, but also more unwieldy in terms of measuring them. In my view, the order of introducing and discussing the tables described above reflects this train of thought.

Data Presentation and Analysis

As already indicated, I divided the data that I elicited with the help of MPAQ into seven areas. The quantitative data are presented in Tables 1–7

and commented upon underneath. The quantitative results in fact stem from the qualitative analysis of the participants' discourse and will also be presented selectively in the raw data, that is in the students' authentic examples/accounts (taken from MPAQ) which I classified as representative on the basis of the frequency of responses. Thus, the areas explored are the following:

1. Students' initial exposure to metaphor.
2. Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency in certain environments.
3. Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency at certain levels of linguistic organization.
4. Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency in specific registers.
5. Frequency of employing metaphors (by students themselves and by others).
6. Qualifying metaphor(ization) by means of descriptors (words/expressions).
7. Identifying features/elements/relations present in and emergent from the students' definitions of metaphor(ization).

The total number of participants was 115 ($N = 115$, 100%). However, in all areas formulated above (except for point 1), the students were allowed to make a few choices (provided they were logical and not contradictory), which means that their views and preferences may in fact be reflected simultaneously in various rows and columns of the tables. Also, in some tables I emphasize crucial elements by employing capital letters.

1. Students' initial exposure to metaphor. At the beginning of MPAQ, I check when the students heard of and learned about metaphor for the first time. As it emerges from the questionnaire, a considerable number of the respondents (76 students; circa 66.09%) claimed to have had the first 'contact' with metaphor as children (either in elementary or junior high school), while 32 participants (27.83%) admitted that they did not remember the moment they had heard of/learned about metaphor; finally, only seven students (6.09%) asserted that they had encountered metaphor as late as in secondary school. It may be conjectured that many of those from the 'don't remember' group may have come across or experienced (the use of) metaphor early in their lives, and so they have 'known' metaphor since time out of mind. 76 other students 'discovered' metaphor a long time ago, back in their childhood, so it appears reasonable to merge these two groups—the 'childhood' group and the 'don't remember' one—into one group of the students who have had a long exposure to metaphor (108 students; 93.91%).
2. Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency in certain environments. The distribution of metaphoric language in specific milieus as perceived by the philology students is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency in certain environments

Environment	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)
In DIFFERENT SETTINGS	14	12.17
WHENEVER people COMMUNICATE	25	21.74
In my contacts with FAMILY MEMBERS	27	23.48
In the UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT	28	24.35
In my contacts with PEERS	38	33.04

Fourteen students (12.17%) ticked off metaphor's presence in different settings without providing specific examples. However, a certain percentage of the respondents (16 students; circa 13.93%) did specify some different settings in which, in their view, metaphor may be present. Thus, they enumerated the following settings where metaphors may feature: at work, in videos, in TV series, films, stand-up shows, books, literature, and poetry, among writers and poets, in the Bible, in advertisements and commercials, in mass media in general, on the Internet, in social media communication, while explaining something to another person, as well as among friends and co-workers (some of them also coincide with 'other types' discussed below in Usage of metaphoric language—its popularity/frequency in specific registers). Twenty-five students (almost 22%) claimed that metaphoric language is employed whenever people communicate, which would indicate that for them metaphor is something pervasive in communication and ubiquitous. This conviction is, in fact, confirmed by the choice of descriptor 78 ('pervasive/popular in language') by 31 respondents, which constitutes almost 28% of those interviewed (27.43%, to be more precise; see Table 5).

While analyzing students' personal definitions of metaphor, I also established that 24 of them (21.23%) point to metaphoric ubiquity, which is again in line with the above findings (see Tables 6 and 7). A comparable number of those interviewed consider family and university to be very popular settings for using metaphoric language (27 and 28 participants respectively, which is roughly 24% in each case). Finally, the largest number of the interviewees (38 students; 33.04%) assert that they make use of metaphors while conversing with peers, in this way also suggesting that metaphor is common, informal, ordinary, and down-to-earth. This result does not appear to tie in with the usage of descriptor 6 ('ordinary') and descriptor 47 ('down-to-earth'), which were ticked off by only one respondent (0.88%) and 11 respond-

ents (9.73%) respectively to capture a characteristic of metaphor (see Table 5). In the same vein, I found only three definitions of metaphor highlighting its daily and down-to-earth character (three respondents, which is 2.65%; see Table 7).

3. Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency at certain levels of linguistic organization. Table 2 illustrates the ‘visibility’ of metaphor at certain levels of language structure according to the interviewed group of students:

Table 2

Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency at certain levels of linguistic organization

Level of linguistic organization	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)
Others (PRAGMATICS, SEMANTICS, DISCOURSE)	13	11.30
MORPHOLOGY	15	13.04
SYNTAX	24	20.87
LEXICAL UNITS/WORDS	79	68.70

A relatively small number of the students would perceive metaphor as being associated with the category ‘Others’ (13 students, constituting 11.3%). Here, I did not suggest any specific area of language or linguistics, so those who marked this category specified it as ‘discourse’ (only one person), ‘pragmatics’ (two students), and ‘semantics’ (ten students). This is comparable to 15 students (13.04%) stating that morphology is the area where metaphors are mainly to be identified. However, by far the highest proportion of the students opted for lexical units (words) as the main source of metaphor. This does not come as a surprise in the light of more traditional views on metaphor (within the Aristotelian tradition) within which metaphor is perceived as an element of figurative language and just as an ornament. Thus, the Platonist tradition, basically stressing the idea that metaphor is present everywhere in language (so also at the semantic, pragmatic, and interactive levels) seems to be less popular among the students (see also the Metaphor in Research—The Aristotelian vs. the Platonist Tradition section, earlier in this paper). To make the above interpretation more complete, it is also worthwhile to look at language- and linguistics-related descriptors from Table 5 and to check which of these the students filling in MPAQ chose and in what numbers. That metaphor generally belongs to language and is conveyed by such descriptors as ‘linguistic’ (descriptor 49, 13 students, 11.5%), ‘verbal’ (descriptor 71, 26 students, 23%), and ‘pervasive/popular in language’ (descriptor 78, 31 students; 27.43%). There are also descriptors that point to the idea of metaphor being sporadic or not present in language—these are ‘rare in

language' (descriptor 28) and 'non-verbal' (descriptor 43) respectively. These were, however, selected by a relatively insignificant number of participants (five students, 4.42%, and ten students, 8.85% respectively).

Finally, the students had the chance to select certain descriptors that may characterize a specific manner in which metaphor functions in language, such as 'precise,' 'ordinary,' 'deviant,' 'anomalous,' 'oversophisticated,' 'vague,' 'literal,' 'ornamental,' and 'poetic.' The last nine descriptors are enumerated in the order reflecting their growing frequency (and percentages) among the interviewees (in my view, exact numbers are not so relevant here; see Table 5).

4. Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency in specific registers. Apart from linguistic organization, I was also interested in finding out what specific registers were considered by the philology students as the most metaphorical. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Usage of metaphoric language—its frequency in specific registers

Register	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)
Other types	12	10.43
NEWS TEXTS	14	12.17
ACADEMIC DISCOURSE	21	18.26
CONVERSATION	38	33.04
FICTION	62	53.91

There were 12 respondents (10.43%) who decided to mark 'Other types' option and specify what they had in mind. The 'labels' have already been mentioned in one of the previous sections (Usage of Metaphoric Language—Its Frequency in Certain Environments) as they coincide with various 'metaphoric environments,' but it appears that some of these names can be in fact subsumed under one of the four main categories as a specific subregister (e.g., poetry, the Bible, romance, drama, and books are labeled as fiction). Apart from these, the students also came up with TV series, films, stand-up shows, commercials, and advertisements. A comparable proportion of respondents opted for news texts being the most metaphoric register (14 students; 12.17%), but a considerably higher percentage of those interviewed claimed that it is in conversation (38 students; 33.04%) and in fiction (62 students, 53.91%) where metaphor is mainly to be found. The outcome presented in Table 3 is contrary to that of Steen et al. (2010), who found that English academic discourse is the register containing the greatest number of metaphor-related words, followed by news discourse, fiction, and conversation being the least metaphorical of them all (for details see Steen et al., 2010, pp. 201–208). Thus, when we compare the

tendencies concerning metaphoricity of the four analyzed registers in Steen et al.'s study and the ones emerging from MPAQ, one may see that they are to some degree reversed: for the students news texts do not abound in metaphors, but in the light of the study by Steen et al. they are quite rich in metaphors, being the runner-up after academic discourse, which in turn is not teeming with metaphors for the philology students filling in MPAQ; conversely, conversation and fiction are perceived as markedly metaphorical by those interviewed (the former selected by one-third of the students and the latter by more than a half of them), and according to Steen et al.'s conclusions fiction and conversation score very low when it comes to metaphoricity. These results may appear surprising at first sight, but what may account for these discrepancies are two different perspectives involved—one is methodological, precise, objective and scientific (represented by Steen and his colleagues), whereas the other is more impressionistic, intuitive, subjective and 'folk'—it is the one that, as I argue, should be ascribed to the interviewed philology students, perhaps some of them scientists-to-be, but still rather scientists in the making.

The choice of metaphor descriptors from Table 5 below also seems to reflect the perception of metaphoricity present in various registers (Table 3). The words/expressions related to academic metaphoricity to a variable degree are selected by a relatively small number of respondents: 'professional' (descriptor 8, one student; 0.88%), 'scientific' (descriptor 14, two students; 1.77%), 'carrier of crucial meaning in scientific/academic texts' and 'academic/scientific' (descriptors 17 and 20 respectively, each selected by three students; 2.65%), 'specialist' (descriptor 26, four students; 3.54%), 'research tool' (descriptor 30, five students; 4.42%), and 'ornament used mainly in scientific/academic texts' (descriptor 38, nine students; 7.96%). On the other hand, the ones related to metaphoricity in fiction score quite high: 'carrier of crucial meaning in literary texts' (descriptor 83, 40 students; 35.4%), 'imaginary' (descriptor 86, 44 students; 38.94%), 'ornament used mainly in literary texts' and 'ornamental' (descriptors 88 and 89 respectively, with 50 students choosing each item, and this constitutes 44.25%), 'imaginative' (descriptor 90, 54 students; 47.79%), and finally the three top descriptors, namely 'artistic' (descriptor 92, 70 students; 61.95%), 'creative' (descriptor 93, 71 students; 62.83%), and 'poetic' (descriptor 94, 79 students; 69.91%). The two words feasibly related to metaphoricity in the news, which are 'political' (descriptor 40) and 'informative' (descriptor 41) still score very low, each of them accounting for 7.96% (nine students). As to conversational metaphoricity, it is difficult to capture unequivocally on the basis of the descriptors offered in Table 5.

5. Frequency of employing metaphors (you and others). Another aspect worth exploring was the perception of metaphor usage by the students themselves and by people around them in every-day situations and in the academic (university) setting. The results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency of employing metaphors (you and others)

You-every day	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)	Others-every day	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)
All the time	1	0.87	All the time	0	0.00
Never	3	2.60	Never	4	3.48
Almost always	4	3.48	Almost always	4	3.48
Very often	12	10.43	Very often	16	13.91
Hardly ever	38	33.04	Hardly ever	31	26.96
Often	57	49.56	Often	57	49.56
You-university	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)	Others-university	Number of respondents	Percentages (115→100%)
All the time	0	0.00	All the time	0	0.00
Almost always	1	0.87	Almost always	1	0.87
Never	4	3.48	Never	2	1.74
Very often	10	8.70	Very often	20	17.40
Hardly ever	43	37.39	Hardly ever	39	33.91
Often	48	41.74	Often	42	36.52

When it comes to the frequency of employing metaphors by students themselves and other people both in everyday and academic situations, the proportions are comparable. Almost half of the respondents (49.56%) argued that both themselves and others use metaphors often on a daily basis. The opposite tendency is encapsulated by ‘hardly ever,’ and again the figures are comparable, as 43 students (37.39%) admitted that they hardly ever make use of metaphors every day, and 39 students (33.91%) attributed a very low usage of metaphors to others in the same everyday setting. As to the academic setting, the discrepancies between the ‘hardly ever’ and ‘often’ choices (in both ‘you’ and ‘others’ categories) are not so significant, since ‘hardly ever’ is ticked off by 37.39% (43 students) and 33.91% (39 students) of all interviewees in the ‘you’ and ‘others’ categories respectively, whereas ‘often’ is marked by 41.74% (48 students) and 36.52% (42 students) of all participants in the ‘you’ and ‘others’ categories respectively. The choices of the expression ‘very often’ to refer to the frequency of employing metaphors by the students themselves and others in every-day settings are quantitatively comparable, as the results yield 12 students (10.43%) and 16 students (13.91%) respectively. However, the situation is different in the context of the university setting, as ten students (8.7%) declare that they use metaphors very often in this academic habitat, whereas twice as many of them (20 students; 17.4%) claim that it is others that very often plunge into metaphorization at university. At this point one may speculate that ‘metaphoric

self-monitoring' is present among philological students, but what appears to be more important among them is paying attention to the ways *other* students (or members of the academic community in general) express themselves in the university setting, a setting that stresses the importance of not only the content, but also—perhaps to an equal degree—of the form in which the message is conveyed. If we sum up the percentages of the 'often' and 'very often' groups in the context of the university setting, it transpires that more than a half of the participants (58 students: 50.44%) discern the metaphoric flavor of the university discourse, employed both by themselves (58 students: 50.44%) and other members of this community (62 students; 53.92%). This tendency is in line with the research on metaphor in sciences and in the humanities (cf. Cameron & Maslen, 2010; Haase, 2009, 2010; Hermann, 2013). Finally, extreme declarations, like 'all the time,' 'almost always,' and 'never' were selected by a very small group of respondents, oscillating between null and 3.48% (four students).

Altogether, the results seem to reveal that the students acknowledge the presence of metaphor in their lives and that of others, but what attributes these metaphors are endowed with according to the philological students may be glimpsed by analyzing the results yielded in Table 5.

6. Qualifying metaphor(ization) by means of descriptors (words/expressions).

Table 5 illustrates the distribution of choices of suggested metaphor descriptors made by the interviewed students of the English philology.

Table 5

Metaphor(icity) qualified by descriptors

No.	Descriptor of metaphor(icity)	Number of occurrences	Percent Targe [%]	No.	Descriptor of metaphor(icity)	Number of occurrences	Percent age [%]
1	precise	0	0.00	48	explicit/obvious	13	11.50
2	boring	1	0.88	49	linguistic	13	11.50
3	insignificant	1	0.88	50	random	14	12.39
4	useless	1	0.88	51	novel (= new)	14	12.39
5	objective	1	0.88	52	universal	14	12.39
6	ordinary	1	0.88	53	practical	14	12.39
7	theory-constitutive	1	0.88	54	specific	15	13.27
8	professional	1	0.88	55	extraordinary	15	13.27
9	concrete	2	1.77	56	persuasive	15	13.27
10	deviant	2	1.77	57	literal	16	14.16
11	compact	2	1.77	58	pedagogic (tool)	16	14.16
12	realistic	2	1.77	59	mental	17	15.04
13	systematic	2	1.77	60	experiential	18	15.93
14	scientific	2	1.77	61	conceptual	18	15.93

15	diagnostic (tool)	2	1.77	62	stereotypical	18	15.93
16	medical	2	1.77	63	cinematic	18	15.93
17	carrier of crucial meaning in scientific/academic texts	3	2.65	64	exaggerated	19	16.81
18	evaluative	3	2.65	65	ideological	19	16.81
19	structural	3	2.65	66	shocking	20	17.70
20	academic/scientific	3	2.65	67	subtle	20	17.70
21	bodily	4	3.54	68	elegant	21	18.58
22	derivative (=not original)	4	3.54	69	used in business and commerce	21	18.58
23	conventional	4	3.54	70	intuitive	22	19.47
24	predictable	4	3.54	71	verbal	26	23.00
25	grammatical	4	3.54	72	educational (aid)	26	23.00
26	specialist	4	3.54	73	musical	26	23.00
27	other	4	3.54	74	useful	27	23.90
28	rare in language	5	4.42	75	implicit/hidden	28	24.78
29	neutral	5	4.42	76	misleading	30	26.55
30	research tool	5	4.42	77	pictorial	30	26.55
31	impractical	6	5.30	78	pervasive/popular in language	31	27.43
32	anomalous	7	6.19	79	original	32	28.32
33	oversophisticated	7	6.19	80	ornament used in all types of texts	34	30.09
34	inexplicable	7	6.19	81	philosophical	35	30.97
35	general	8	7.08	82	descriptive	36	31.86
36	irregular	8	7.08	83	carrier of crucial meaning in literary texts	40	35.40
37	therapeutic/useful in therapy	8	7.08	84	culture-specific	40	35.40
38	ornament used mainly in scientific/academic texts	9	7.96	85	emotional	43	38.05
39	carrier of crucial meaning in all types of text	9	7.96	86	imaginary	44	38.94
40	political	9	7.96	87	illustrative	45	39.82
41	informative	9	7.96	88	ornament used mainly in literary texts	50	44.25
42	religious	10	8.85	89	ornamental	50	44.25
43	non-verbal	10	8.85	90	imaginative	54	47.79
44	subjective	11	9.73	91	abstract	63	55.75
45	controversial	11	9.73	92	artistic	70	61.95
46	vague	11	9.73	93	creative	71	62.83
47	down-to-earth	11	9.73	94	poetic	79	69.91

For the sake of clarity, I do not refer to these parts in this section and only concentrate on the percentages attached to each descriptor. The information following the list of descriptors may in fact complement the discussion on students' own definitions of metaphor(ization), which follows after Table 6 below.

What is striking when one starts to analyze the results presented in Table 5 is that not a single person selected the adjective 'precise' (descriptor 1) to characterize metaphor. This implied a conviction of all interviewed students concerning the lack of precision of metaphoric language (evocative of the Aristotelian stance on metaphor) seems to be consistent with the choice of descriptors scoring very high on the list, like 'misleading' (perhaps this descriptor being incongruous in this group as scoring high yet having a negative ring), 'emotional,' 'imaginary,' 'ornamental,' 'imaginative,' 'abstract,' 'artistic,' and finally 'poetic' (they range between 26.55% and 69.91%). On the other hand, the adjectives (c)overly suggesting certain imprecision, like 'useless,' 'deviant,' 'impractical,' 'anomalous,' 'oversophisticated,' 'inexplicable,' 'irregular,' 'controversial,' 'vague,' 'random,' 'exaggerated' or 'intuitive' scored very low or relatively low on the list, ranging from 0.88% to 19.47%. A possible explanation for this tendency might be that many of these adjectives are evaluatively negative or at least not very positive, and if so, in students' view they may not be associated with the decorative function of language, which in fact cannot reasonably be considered inherently negative. Still consistently, numerous descriptors indicating the Platonist attitude towards metaphor (according to which metaphor is inseparable from language as such) yielded rather low percentages, even though many of them are evaluatively positive, for example, 'objective,' 'ordinary,' 'theory-constitutive,' 'concrete,' 'compact,' 'realistic,' 'systematic,' 'realistic,' 'scientific,' 'diagnostic,' 'medical,' 'structural,' 'predictable,' 'grammatical,' 'specialist,' 'informative,' 'down-to-earth,' 'linguistic,' 'universal,' 'practical,' 'persuasive,' 'practical,' 'literal,' or 'verbal' (the percentages ranging between 0.88% and 23%). In the same breath, one can enumerate three descriptors, namely 'mental' (15.04%), 'experiential' (15.93%), and 'conceptual' (15.93%), which point to the cognitive view of metaphor, apparently not so readily recognized by budding philologists.

On the whole, the conclusion that may be drawn on the basis of analyzing the data from Table 5 is that the students participating in the survey predominantly identify with the more traditional Aristotelian manner of viewing metaphor (as figurative, ornamental, literary, poetic, and the like) rather than with the more 'modern' Platonist way of treating metaphor (as popular, ordinary, ubiquitous, and something to this effect).

7. Identifying features/elements/relations present in and emergent from students' definitions of metaphor(ization). As many as 113 respondents formulated their own definitions of metaphor(ization). Some of them are only slightly modified as it concerns their form—any interventions like spelling and grammar corrections, impromptu elaborations, my own comments, and the

like are italicized and placed in square brackets. Otherwise these definitions are left unaltered, with apparent inconsistencies and inadequacies of stylistic and logical character. These are, in my view, valuable in their own right as it makes it possible for the researcher to glimpse the process of structuring these definitions by students, and thus it gives insight into the dynamic, processual, often still-uncrystallized models/conceptions of metaphor(ization).² Additionally, these definitions are often complemented and ‘fine-tuned’ by a corresponding ‘justification for your choices’ section, where the students elaborate on reasons why they have chosen specific (groups of) descriptors to characterize metaphor(ization). This means that these two sections of MPAQ are correlated and make the picture more complete.

Due to space constraints, it is impossible to present all 113 definitions and analyze each of them one by one. However, what is needed here for the sake of clarity is the synthesis of the key elements and tendencies emerging from the students’ deliberations on metaphor, and these are illustrated by sample definitions in Table 6.

The analysis and discussion of some of the definitions in question is crucial as some of these definitions are, in my view, not fully self-explanatory and need elaborating on. As to the twelve categories of features/elements/relations that I mention in Table 6 (and later on in Table 7, calling them also ‘labels’), they emerge as a result of analyzing *all* participants’ definitions and sometimes may be perceived by the reader as imprecise mental shortcuts. For this reason, I also relate them to the sample definitions themselves to show how I understand the link between the ‘label’ and the content of a given definition. While referring to them, I shall use the abbreviations that I attached to each of these ‘labels’ and are to be found in Tables 6 and 7 (namely D, P, F, UN, I, U, DE, T, C, O, EF, and E).

The sample definitions grouped in category D highlight the idea that since metaphors are present in numerous every-day contexts, they are not readily recognizable to the point of being almost invisible; yet it is implied by those formulating the definitions that they are practical and useful. Additionally, metaphors are perceived as rather enigmatic, as they may contain hidden meaning, but the last wording is not clarified by the ‘definer.’ Category D also overlaps with U and C categories, since metaphors pervasiveness (ubiquity) is stressed, and so is the process of comparing certain entities with others while structuring metaphors.

² The value of students’ definitions-in-flux seems to a large extent corroborated by the difference-deficiency dichotomy discussed by Nacey (2013) in the context of bilinguals’ creativity and their ‘mixing’ of languages. She notes: “Kachru (1985: 25) airs the idea of a cline of bilingualism where ‘what is at one stage of language use an error, may, at another stage, be a conscious innovation.’ In so doing, he raises a key issue: how to differentiate difference from deficiency, creative innovation from error” (Nacey, 2013, p. 161).

Table 6

Identifying features/elements/relations present in and emergent from students' definitions of metaphor(ization)—sample definitions

Feature/element/relation	Sample definitions
D DAILY/ DOWN-TO EARTH	<p>"I can't enumerate them [<i>metaphors</i>] due to how automatic and instinctual they are. I don't pay attention to them." (male, 23)</p> <p>"Metaphor is expressing some, usually abstract concepts by the use of other concepts. Metaphors are widely used in literature, but also in everyday language; they are often based on comparing one thing/concept to another." (female, 21)</p> <p>"Metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon used for saying something in other words. It sometimes contains hidden meaning. Metaphorisation is a process visible in slang, literature, and everyday language." (female, 23)</p>
P PROCESS	<p>"A process of stating something that is not straightforward" (female, 24)</p> <p>"A process in which we try to describe a situation, event, or an object in an original way." (female, 24)</p>
F FEELING	<p>"A 'lexical device' which enables us to express our feelings, opinions, statements in an interesting and original way." (female, 24)</p> <p>"Metaphor [...] is imaginative [<i>and</i>] its vision depends on emotions of the person describing or explaining [<i>employing?</i>] it." (female, 30)</p> <p>"Used when one does not want to say something straightforwardly, or when one wants to picture better their feelings or emotions or emphasise something. It cannot be taken literally." (female, 23)</p>
UN UNDERSTANDING	<p>"A creative way to make people think, and it brings out topics that normally don't appear." (female, 20)</p> <p>"Metaphors help us to understand the world, they put abstract concepts into concrete ones, they are useful because they create familiarity; some of them are original and funny—that's the point—they're easy to remember and recall later, and they draw our attention..." (female, 23)</p> <p>"...they [<i>metaphors</i>] are not very obvious but commonly understandable." (female, 22)</p>
I INCONGRUITY	<p>"An extraordinary combination of words that usually do not occur together." (female, 24)</p> <p>"Saying something using words that do not relate to a particular action/feeling." (female, 23)</p> <p>"Metaphor is a linguistic tool in which the meaning is not directly presented, but rather abstract—it occurs when the elements do not function together in every-day language, e.g. the evening of life, meaning 'old age.'" (female, 24)</p>
U UBIQUITOUS	<p>"... a stylistic device used both in written and spoken utterances." (female, 23)</p> <p>"... in poems, but also in casual language." (female, 23)</p> <p>"Metaphorisation is the way of comparing things, situations from every-day life to art, science, literature, and describing them by the use of terms and phrases found in other disciplines, also in science. Mostly and most commonly poetry is used as metaphor." (female, 32)</p>
DE DEVICE	<p>"A way of expressing oneself." (female, 23)</p> <p>"... a metaphor is a stylistic device ..." (female, 23)</p> <p>"A combination of words that cannot be translated word for word, but it has its literal meaning that has to be developed." (female, 24)</p>

T TRANSITION	<p>“A word or phrase which refers to one thing but means another.” (female, 20)</p> <p>“Metaphor is [used] to describe things that cannot be described in a way tangible things are [described]. We use metaphor to give the expression to these intangible things as if they were tangible.” (male, 23)</p> <p>“Applying concepts from a not physical domain to the concepts of the physical one, e.g. love in order to understand it better. One thing is represented by something else.” (female, 25)</p>
C COMPARISON	<p>“Metaphor occurs when one object denotes another, and its most characteristic feature is comparison.” (female, 19)</p> <p>“Depiction of something as something else” (male, 24)</p> <p>“Metaphor is a phrase that is used to refer to another thing. They are built on similarity ...” (female, 22)</p>
O ORNAMENT	<p>“For me people who use metaphors too often want to sound smart.” (female, 23)</p> <p>“Metaphor is the way to express the meaning of something in a way different than academic, using counterparts related to the world of nature, fairy-tales, poetry.” (female, 48)</p> <p>“A sophisticated or poetic way of presenting another idea, e.g. ‘a blue lake with an endless depth’ can be used for a description of someone’s beautiful blue eyes.” (female, 23)</p>
EF EFFORT	<p>“When we think about a meaning of the word and it’s not so obvious on the surface; the word means something, but we think about it longer and we can indicate that it has another meaning as well.” (No data concerning sex or age)</p> <p>“Metaphor uses words to express something indirectly, giving it a poetic value. It prevents the recipient [of the message] from perceiving the surrounding world automatically—it ‘stops’ his attention for a moment.” (male, 19)</p> <p>“A linguistic/literary device used for describing a thing in a non-obvious way and indirect way. It is tricky and sometimes ambiguous.” (male, 23)</p>
E ELITIST	<p>“Saying the same thing in a roundabout manner. Trying to sound intelligent. ... Metaphors are annoying, especially when you wake up and are not able to process information correctly. Usually they are hard to understand, but in texts they look quite good.” (male, 20)</p> <p>“It allows us to avoid saying something literally, helps us to attach deeper meaning to the words, messages; as a result, the language is more elegant and poetic.” (female, 23)</p> <p>“Metaphor is used very often in poetics or when someone wants to make their speech or text more elegant or to make a description easier. Metaphor is using one phrase instead of another one. Usually the meaning of these two phrases is not even similar, for example, ‘every cloud has a silver lining’ means that every situation has a positive aspect.” (male, 20)</p>

In the two definitions put into category P, the respondents specifically stress the notion of processuality as a pivotal element of defining metaphor (“a process of/in...”). Thus, in this way they imply that metaphorization is for them something dynamic.

In category F I placed three sample definitions according to which metaphor is employed when people want to convey more intangible content, namely, emotions and feelings. However, as one of the participants claims, emotion can

also be something that determines the way a metaphor looks like, especially in terms of its imaginativeness and originality. One of the selected definitions in this group also overlaps with DE category as it labels metaphor as a “lexical device.”

The definitions in UN category point to the conviction among some surveyed students that metaphors contribute to our better understanding of the world in a variety of ways. Thus, metaphors make us realize and/or highlight things that would otherwise be dormant; they also make abstract things more tangible. Again, as it was the case with some previous categories, UN category seems to overlap with a few other categories, like C, T, O, and D, as the authors of metaphor definitions placed in this section of Table 6 also stress the aspects of comparing and transiting (from one element to another) while structuring metaphors.

The definitions presented in category I concentrate on the presence of a mismatch as concerns the nature, structure, or mechanism of metaphor. This is revealed by using such formulations as words “not occurring together” or “not relating to a particular action/feeling,” as well as by “the elements not functioning in every-day language.” This category may also be said to have some overlap with EF group, as dealing with incongruity may put a certain ‘cognitive’ strain (effort) on those who are to process metaphors; however, this is not explicitly mentioned in the definitions discussed here.

According to the students defining metaphor, metaphoric ubiquity (U category) embraces both various modes of language (metaphor present in both written and spoken modes), and metaphors are omnipresent since they may be both conventional (entrenched phrases) and novel (poetry, idiosyncratic usages). One of the definitions considered here explicitly overlaps with C category (“the way of comparing...”).

There are numerous words and phrases employed by the interviewees to define the term metaphor. I only highlight but a few in the table, but a longer list of these employed in the definitions situated in category D are a means, measure, tool, way, phenomenon, method, figure, as well as a cluster/combination of words, a developed and extended term, and a concept or reference. The very word ‘device’ (which serves as the name of this category) also explicitly features in some of the definitions (e.g., a ‘stylistic device’).

The mechanism of transition, or moving from one place to another, is something noted in metaphor definitions by a considerable number of respondents (see Table 7), though the word itself is not necessarily employed. Thus, they will write about proceeding from literal to non-literal, abstract to understandable, literary to daily, ordinary to original, plain to semi-poetic, intangible to tangible, or non-physical to physical. As the idea of transition is conceptually rather schematic and general, it may be further specified with the help of some more detailed notions belonging to different categories (e.g., category I). There

is also a considerable overlap of T with C category, as transiting and comparing in the context of metaphoric mechanisms can be conceptually easily connected (comparison can be considered to be a special type of transition).

A significant number of definitions created by the respondents prompted me to form 'C' category, as the students associate metaphorization with comparison, either explicitly (using the words 'comparison' or 'comparing') or implicitly (using such wording as, for instance, 'something as something else,' or 'similarity'). As mentioned above, C is infrequently inseparable from T category.

In almost fifty per cent of the definitions constructed by the students one may find characteristics that may be embraced by the convenient umbrella term Ornament, hence the presence of O category. Conceptually, I contrast this category with D category, as ornamental aspects of metaphor are rather distant from its perception in terms of the daily and the down-to-earth. Thus, the words/expressions which I managed to discern as employed by the students in the sense of O category are 'poetic/poetry,' 'imaginative,' 'sophisticated,' 'symbolical,' 'literary/literature,' 'elegant,' 'creative,' 'original,' 'beautiful, and 'high' language'.

The claim that certain metaphor definitions constructed by the interviewed students belong to EF category can be strengthened by specific wording and, on the whole, the presence of (cognitive) effort in creating and/or processing metaphors is implied quite overtly. The words/expressions signaling effort in the context of metaphor(ization) employed by the students in their definitions are the following: 'no so obvious,' 'we think about it longer,' 'not so/less/not straightforward,' 'more abstract,' 'ambiguous,' 'tricky,' 'non-obvious,' 'indirect,' 'usually understood by people with a great imagination,' 'complicated,' 'difficult to understand,' 'confusing.' What transpires from this way of perceiving metaphor is that it is not automatized, it is more conscious, and it takes more effort to elicit it, to find, use, and process it. Also, metaphor is seen as something rather rare in language, as some kind of deviation from the normal. This category to a large extent coincides with UN category (due to cognitive processing being involved) and with E category, clarified in the next paragraph.

Finally, E category emerges as probably the most elusive and arbitrary out of all twelve categories employed in the present discussion. What I mean by 'elitist' in light of respondents' metaphor definitions is that they perceive metaphor(icity) as some exceptional, special construct, in the sense of metaphor being employed on some special occasions and for special purposes ('trying to sound intelligent,' 'attach[ing] deeper meaning to words,' they make our language 'elegant' and 'poetic'). Also, they may be 'elitist' in the sense of being hermetic and not (fully) grasped by everyone ('annoying,' 'hard to understand'), so in this respect a negative ring can also be detected. In short, according to the students the "elitist flavour" of metaphor may be positive or negative, so

this criterion is very evaluative and idiosyncratic. As this category is mainly characterized by the notion of uniqueness, it also quite naturally converges with O and EF categories discussed above.

At this point some further general and summative comments should be added. It seems that the ways in which the students approach and grapple the issue of metaphor(ization) indicate that the notion emerges as very elusive and often defies precise defining. Thus, respondents' definitions can be often characterized as imprecise, awkward approximations of what the concept in question is or may be.³ It should still be noted that quite a number of these definitions aspire to be rather precise and academic, but it is difficult to judge whether they drive the point home and are sufficiently effective. After all, even among researchers there is not a single definition of metaphor, and the plethora of classifications, divisions, stipulations are obfuscatory rather than clarificatory (it will suffice to return to the theoretical considerations of this paper).

However, on the basis of not only the content but also the form of the definitions, I still argue that the opposite tendency prevails, namely, that most of these definitions are made consciously and deliberately private and impressionistic, and in this sense the philology students augment the more traditional, 'official', academic and 'prescribed' construal of what metaphor(ization) is and enrich it with a new twist, with something intuitive that is sensed and felt rather than learned and acquired in the process of formal (university) tuition. It seems that defining metaphor is not so much the product but rather a dynamic process, during which the students, by relating it to the world around them, negotiate the meaning of metaphor 'within' themselves. They seem to highlight metaphor's affective, evaluative (positive and negative alike) and original potential, not losing sight of its utilitarian value, though the latter is also open to many interpretations (e.g., its usefulness is considered both in all areas of human activities and in very specific environments and genres, like poetry, literature, the world of academia, and others).

I was then particularly 'sensitive to' and on the lookout for elements and fragments that would depart from the most predictable, proscriptively academic definitions of metaphor, though it is still risky to claim that we have an array of generally acknowledged definitions of this concept as such. However, if we do adopt the Aristotelian and the Platonist stances on metaphor as the benchmark against which to analyze the definitions in question (as well as the data presented here as a whole), we may predict that the students' views on metaphor(ization) will oscillate between these two philosophy-inspired extremes, or perhaps will be the combination of these two approaches, even though somewhat inconsistently.

³ I tend towards the view also professed by Nacey (2013) that in many cases we can speak of difference (as something positive) rather than of undesired deficiency (See footnote 2).

The distribution of the ‘labels’/categories (in percentages) that I attach to the respondents’ definitions on the basis of analyzing these metaphor definitions is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7

Identifying features/elements/relations present in and emergent from students’ definitions of metaphor(ization)—percentages

Feature/element/relation	Number of respondents	Percentages (113→100%)
D DAILY/ DOWN-TO EARTH	3	2.65
P PROCESS	4	3.54
F FEELING	13	11.50
UN UNDERSTANDING	17	15.04
I INCONGRUITY	20	17.70
U UBIQUITOUS	24	21.23
DE DEVICE	28	24.78
T TRANSITION	31	27.3
C COMPARISON	44	38.94
O ORNAMENT	55	48.67
EF EFFORT	63	55.75
E ELITIST	67	59.29

Table 7 may be treated as the point of reference as the results presented in it have already been referred to in the previous sections of this paper. These results seem to correspond with the findings discussed earlier in this study, so as such the gleanings presented in Table 7 are summative in nature.

The daily/down-to-earth and processual perception of metaphor is represented by an insignificant number of those interviewed (2.65% and 3.54% respectively). 11.5%, 15.04%, and 17.7% of the participants of my study associate metaphor in certain ways with feelings, understanding, and incongruity respectively. The middle section of the table contains the ‘labels’ that point to the students’ conviction that metaphor is to be found everywhere (21.23% of those interviewed), that it is some kind of a device (24.78%, so almost one-fourth of the respondents), and that it also involves numerous types of transitions (27.43% of the students). The quantitative tendency concerning metaphor’s ubiquity emerging from Table 7 is roughly convergent with what is included in Table 5, namely, that the descriptive phrase ‘pervasive/popular in language’ was selected by 31 students, which constitutes 27.43% of all respondents (perhaps incidentally, exactly the same number of the interviewees was detected as having stressed some kind of transition as a crucial characteristic of metaphor, as can be viewed in Table 7). The mechanism of comparing certain constructs in

the context of metaphor(ization) is highlighted by a sizeable sample of those interviewed (38.94%). Finally, a high percentage of the students referred to or implied the ornamental character of metaphor (almost half of the respondents—specifically 48.67%), which again corresponds with the number of the participants who opted for the descriptor ‘ornamental’ to characterize metaphor (44.25%; see Table 5). Also, the assertion that metaphor in certain ways is to be linked with effort and that it is elitist is believed to be true by considerably more than half of the respondents (55.75% and 59.29% respectively). These notions, in connection with metaphor, will be clarified in the ensuing Answers to the Research Questions section.

Answers to the Research Questions

Certain mini-conclusions have already been drawn along the way in previous sections, but it is necessary to address the research questions and come up with more general final conclusions.

As concerns research sub-questions 1a and 1b, it appears that the majority of respondents subscribe to the view that metaphor is novel and consciously produced rather than automatic and conventional. Metaphor descriptors like ‘imaginative,’ ‘creative,’ ‘artistic’ or ‘poetic’ are selected by almost half and by considerably more than half of those interviewed. In turn, descriptors like ‘conventional’ and ‘down-to-earth’ would yield roughly 3 and 9% respectively.

While answering research question 2, it can be argued that the participants of the study claim metaphor to reside rather in language than in thought (the descriptors ‘mental’ and ‘conceptual’ from Table 5 ‘attracted’ merely around 15% of the respondents each), as more philology students would perceive metaphor as something verbal than non-verbal (23% versus 8.85% respectively), and generally the students would consider the ‘language environment’ (especially art-related environments) as the natural one for metaphors (see, e.g., Table 5). Still within the context of metaphoric language, for the students artistic ‘habitats’ are seen (perhaps somewhat predictably and stereotypically) as more appropriate than academic ones, and also, as the results seem to reveal, it takes some effort to produce and process metaphors, so they are not perceived as predominantly automatic (not direct and obvious); rather, they are to be discovered, as they are implicit and hidden, which again may lead to another conclusion that metaphors are elitist, by which I mean that it requires more knowledge, intelligence, sophistication, and creativity to deal with them (see especially Tables 6 and 7). Within the language itself, for the students it is predominantly lexis that constitutes the source of metaphors (almost 70% of those interviewed opted for lexical units in this respect; see Table 2).

According to the respondents, the most popular areas of life where metaphor is to be found (research question 3) are fictitious texts and conversations, which corresponds with the idea (and is also consistent with the students' assertion) of metaphor being to a large extent artistic/ornamental and present in interaction (see, e.g., Cameron & Maslen, 2010, and metaphor being searched for and analyzed in discourse).

As concerns the evaluation of metaphors' usefulness by the philology students, it can be glimpsed mainly either in their choice of overtly evaluative descriptors (Table 5) or in some fragments of the definitions that they structure. On the basis of the metaphor descriptors offered in Table 5, it is difficult to unequivocally state whether the students' assessment of metaphors is positive or negative, though the former option seems to prevail. On the one hand, negatively-loaded words like *boring*, *insignificant*, *useless*, *deviant*, *impractical*, *oversophisticated*, *inexplicable*, *irregular*, *controversial*, and *vague* score quite low among the students (between 0.88% and 9.73%). On the other hand, rather negative *random*, *exaggerated*, *shocking*, and *misleading* range between 12.39% and 26.55%, which is markedly more than it was the case in the previous 'negative group'. Still, overtly positive *practical* and *useful* are selected only by 12.39% of the students and by slightly less than one-fourth of the participants (23.9%) respectively, and certain descriptors that may be interpreted as positive score even higher—*original*, *descriptive*, and *illustrative* with 28.32%, 31.86%, and 39.82% respectively. If we consider the 'artistic bunch' of descriptors to be also positive (*ornamental*, *imaginative*, *artistic*, *creative*, and *poetic*), then these are absolute leaders and indicate that the students appreciate the value of metaphors (they range between 44.25% and 69.91%). If we take a closer look at the definitions of metaphor(ization) provided by the participants of the study, then it may be concluded that the overwhelming majority of those interviewed attach a positive value to metaphor, or at worst describe it in neutral terms (108 definitions), claiming that it enriches our language and makes it more effective, elegant, creative or imaginative. If there is some negative ring detected in merely five definitions, then it is usually moderately negative, in the sense of students finding it effortful and arduous to process metaphors. The excerpts from the few more negatively coloured definitions are the following:

Excerpt 1: Saying something simple in a very complicated way [...]. For me people who use metaphors want to sound smart if they do it too often.

Excerpt 2: [Metaphor] is tricky and sometimes ambiguous.

Excerpt 3: Metaphor is a phrase which seems to be ambiguous and difficult to understand.

Excerpt 4: A metaphor is the usage of, most likely, intentionally indirect words or phrases, that one, for one reason or another, wishes to convey in

a vague and/or less obvious manner. Metaphors are unclear (for the ones unaware of their true meaning) [...].

Excerpt 5: Metaphor [is something] complicated, [...] using a lot of adjectives and nouns.

The same tendency (mostly positive evaluation and vestigially negative one) is also discernible in MPAQ in the students' justifications following the part where they selected specific metaphor descriptors. Thus, out of 103 accounts, 94 of them are neutral or positive, whereas only nine fragments contain features of negative assessment, but I would argue that some of them are 'crypto-positive' (Accounts 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9) and/or bordering on sarcasm and wit (Account 8)

Account 1: They are not shown overtly, they are hidden and misleading; what is more, misunderstanding them may hinder the proper understanding of a text.

Account 2: When there are too many metaphors in a text, it discourages me to read it when a person uses too many metaphors. It intimidates me or makes me think that they want to show off.

Account 3: [...] [metaphors] very often carry some deeper or hidden meaning that sometimes is difficult to understand, and as a result they can be misleading [...].

Account 4: Not many people use metaphor because it is rather difficult, it is rare to use; most people read metaphor only in literary texts during classes at university or at school; metaphors are abstract and because of that they are difficult to understand and use in every-day life situations.

Account 5: [Metaphors are] implicit, hidden—meaning of the metaphor is not clear; misleading— meaning of metaphor can be confusing; abstract.

Account 6: Metaphors for language learners pose a great difficulty—they usually can be taken literally, which is why they are misleading and one has to be creative in order to get the meaning.

Account 7: Metaphors are abstract, they do not obey any system. People who use/create them tend to be creative and usually intelligent. Metaphors are misleading, especially for foreign language learners, as the latter treat them literally, like one of the characters from "Guardians of the Galaxy."

Account 8: Metaphors are annoying, especially when you just woke up and are not able [to] process information correctly. Usually they are hard to understand, but in texts they look quite good.

Account 9: I usually associate the usage of metaphors with artistic, sophisticated, intentionally vague and ornamental context.

In reverse order, I finally address the overarching research question 1. Taking into account the data analyzed on the basis of all tables presented in this paper,

the overall conclusion is that the philology students gravitate towards a more traditional Aristotelian understanding and perception of metaphor, and a smaller percentage of the respondents would identify with the ‘modern’ Platonist view on metaphoricity. Thus, even though the awareness of metaphoric processes and mechanisms among the said students is high (from how they characterize metaphor, one can gather that they do seem to be endowed with university-acquired knowledge of metaphor), the more traditional (primary and secondary) school knowledge concerning metaphor seems to persist in those students.

Another thing is that occasionally the students structure their definitions awkwardly, imprecisely, or even intuitively, in this way oscillating between the Aristotelian and the Platonist poles, and this is only the matter of degree. It appears that irrespective of the formal schooling they received, the students possess a kind of intuitive (meta-)knowledge—they have a certain idea of what metaphors are for them and they just ‘live by them’ without actually pinpointing them on every occasion. So, as signaled before, they may sometimes feel at a loss for words when it comes to talking/writing about metaphors (though they rarely do), but they certainly do not behave like Drax the Destroyer, implied by a male student in Account 7 above:

Rocket Raccoon: [about Drax the Destroyer] His people are completely literal. Metaphors go over his head.

Drax the Destroyer: *Nothing* goes over my head...! My reflexes are too fast, I would catch it.

An excerpt from the script of *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014)

It appears that the students (and possibly other members of the academia) not necessarily academicize the world via metaphors, but they certainly metaphorize their world, and they also have diverse perceptions and variable awareness of metaphoric constructs.

Conclusions

The purpose of the present study was to gain insight into the perception and awareness of metaphors by the students of English philology. In my view, the study has met its purpose in revealing certain tendencies among budding English philologist as regards their *perception, knowledge/awareness, and application* of metaphor(ization).

However, potential limitations of the study should be mentioned. Firstly, the length of MPAQ may constitute a problem to some students since they may

consider it to be excessively long, and thus unwieldy, time-consuming, and overwhelming. Secondly, open questions in MPAQ may be also discouraging for the interviewees as they are asked to provide much detailed information on the subject that many of them may find arcane (even though they are told to rely on their 'feel' and intuition and express themselves informally, or even resort to their mother tongue if they are not able to convey some complex ideas in English). Thirdly, the list of 94 metaphor descriptors (see Part 2 of MPAQ in Figure 1) may also be regarded as unnecessarily long, and the choice of these descriptors as arbitrary. One of the possible caveats could be that the number of the descriptors could be reduced as some of them are nearly synonymous and convey the same idea. Still, I wanted them to point to subtleties and shades in terms of characterizing metaphors and decided to include so many adjectives and formulations. Besides, I analyze these words/expressions in tandem with more descriptive parts of MPAQ (especially definitions) as, in my view, only then can the picture be (more) complete. All in all, the saving grace in the case of MPAQ (even though post-factum) is that my students took pains to fill it in to the best of their abilities (as I understand it—to the best of their knowledge and intuitions), and they acted in accordance with my instructions given prior to the distribution of the metaphor questionnaire.

As regards students' perception of metaphor, the most general conclusion that seems to emerge from the present analysis is that future philologists are on the whole attached to a more traditional 'embellishing' model of metaphor than to the one promoted by cognitive researchers, according to which metaphor is a mental construct pervasively reflected in language (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The research at hand altogether indicates that for the surveyed philology students metaphor is not so automatic and instinctual, but rather it is created and/or processed consciously, with a considerable amount of cognitive effort put into these processes. By far, the most significant number of students' responses (and definitions) reveal that metaphor is in many ways abstract, artistic, creative, and poetic, and a rather small percentage of the participants acknowledge metaphors' concrete, daily, and down-to-earth dimensions (see Tables 5, 6, and 7).

On the other hand, in terms of students' knowledge of metaphor, it also transpires from the study that there is a certain percentage of the philology students who think of metaphor in line with the tenets of the cognitive model of metaphor, as circa 15% of the students who filled in MPAQ characterize metaphor as mental, experiential, and conceptual (see Table 6). Also, the (meta-linguistic) formulations detected in their metaphor definitions may suggest that they have some prior academic knowledge of metaphor and are familiar with terminology with which to capture precisely various aspects of metaphorization. (e.g., they employ expressions such as "a lexical/linguistic/literary/stylistic device," "a stylistic figure," "a linguistic construct/measure/phenomenon/tool,"

‘a figure of speech,’ “(non-)figurative language,” “abstract and less abstract notions/words”).

Finally, as regards the issue of applying metaphors by students themselves and by others, the respondents claim on the whole that metaphors are pervasive in specific genres, settings, and communicative situations and decidedly less ubiquitous in others. According to more than half of them, metaphoric language is to be found predominantly in the language of fiction (see Table 4), and also more than half of them would admit to employing metaphors in rather informal environments, like in contacts with peers and family members (circa one-third and one-fourth respectively; for details see Table 1). As concerns the presence and frequency of employing metaphors in informal (every-day) and formal (university) situations, the students were asked to evaluate these criteria taking into account two more variables, namely, the application of metaphors by themselves and by others. Again, 50% of the philology students are of the view that they and other people use metaphors *often*, whereas circa one-third of the respondents maintain that both themselves and others *hardly ever* employ metaphors (in each case this applies to both ‘every-day’ and ‘university’ variable). Thus, when we conflate students’ perception of metaphor with their application of metaphoric language, we may conclude that a significant number of those interviewed purports to make a frequent use of metaphor(ization) even though, or maybe because metaphoricity is in many ways more challenging and special (artistic, ornamental, requiring effort while being created and processed, and the like).

In the present research I was employing specific parts of MPAQ as a springboard from which to depart to discussing certain aspects of metaphor perception and awareness among philology students (see Figure 1). Due to time and space constraints, I was not able to elaborate on everything that is worth exploring. In supplementary part 3 of MPAQ (not attached here) the students provided me with extensive and often insightful definitions of metaphor(ization), also illustrating them with examples. Here I embrace these definitions holistically, presenting only a few of them almost anecdotally, to validate my claims and results along more general lines. Still, a detailed analysis of 112 definitions, in terms of their contents and form (type of discourse, style, meta-language employed, and the like) is something that I shall embark on in a separate study (Palka, forthcoming). I hope to fully use the potential of these gleanings and not only to ‘fine-tune’ present results/conclusions, but also to shed more light on the role of metaphor in students’ lives and careers.

As a linguist with cognitive leanings, I support and promote the conviction that metaphor is an integral part of language and thought, and that students (if not people at large) should be fully aware of what metaphor is and how it works in their lives. Thus, in my view it is important to make people realize “why metaphors are necessary and not just nice” (Ortony, 1975, p. 45) as well as to check whether and to what degree they realize that fact.

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**„Akademisieren' wir die Welt durch Metaphern?
Metapher (Metaphorizität) aus der Sicht der Akademie
(Fallstudie von künftigen Philologen)**

Zusammenfassung

In diesem Artikel werden die Ergebnisse einer Studie diskutiert und zusammengefasst, die im Studienjahr 2017/2018 unter 115 Studierenden der englischen Philologie an der Schlesischen Universität durchgeführt wurde. Ziel der Studie war es, die Rolle der Metapher im Leben dieser Studierenden sowohl im akademischen als auch im allgemeinen Kontext zu verfolgen. Ich konzentrierte mich hauptsächlich auf das Bewusstsein (des Auftretens) von Metaphern und deren Wahrnehmung durch die Studierenden, wobei ich mich auf verschiedene Ebenen der sprachlichen und außersprachlichen Realität bezog. Das Instrument, das mir einen Einblick in die oben genannten Aspekte gewährte, war der von mir erstellte Fragebogen, der sowohl geschlossene als auch offene Fragen enthielt. Die Schlussfolgerungen werden auf den einzelnen Etappen der Studie formuliert, aber das allgemeine Fazit, das aus den durchgeführten Analysen resultiert, scheint darauf hinzudeuten, dass künftige Philologen im Allgemeinen mehr an das traditionelle („verschönernde“) Metaphernmodell als an das von Wissenschaftlern immer häufiger durchgesetzte konzeptionelle/kognitive Modell gebunden sind, obwohl viele von ihnen das Wissen um dieses letzte haben.

Schlüsselwörter: Metaphorisierung, akademisches Umfeld, Metaphern im Sinne der Studierenden, Bewusstsein für Metaphern unter Studierenden

Reviews

