

Improving Metaphor Literacy in Translator Training: A Case Study of a Specialised Metaphor Translation Workshop

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With a focus on translator training, many strategies have been proposed for the effective translation of metaphors in practice, yet these strategies have predominantly drawn on descriptive analyses of translation products. In comparison, experiments on the design and delivery of training sessions which incorporate contemporary metaphor theories are difficult to find. Against this backdrop, this paper reports on the findings from a one-day specialised metaphor translation workshop aiming to improve the metaphor translation literacy of trainee and professional translators in the UK. The workshop was provided for twenty participants working in the English–French or English–Chinese language pairs. All participants were asked to complete a pre-workshop task of translating a metaphor-rich source text from English into French or Chinese as preparation. The workshop itself comprised two parts. First, a morning session focusing on three topics: text analysis in translation, conceptual metaphor theory, and metaphor identification procedures. Second, an afternoon session involving one individual revision and one group revision. The systematic comparison of the pre-workshop, individually revised, and group translations shows that the workshop helped with the understanding of metaphors, leading to an overall improvement in translation quality. Additionally, insights shared by the participants through a questionnaire and a focus group revealed the necessity of and demand for incorporating metaphor theories into translation pedagogy.

Keywords: metaphor translation; metaphor literacy; translation competence; translation workshop; translator training.

1. Introduction

Preparing translation students for the challenges they may encounter in the language service industry has become a key focus of translator training programmes in higher education. In the current landscape, both the translation industry and the academic field of translation studies are experiencing a reformation driven by technological developments. As Gary Massey and Don Kiraly foresaw, and as has proven true to date, students entering and graduating from

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translation programmes will be “doing much more complex, creative and interesting work than the ever-growing mountain of less challenging translation work that is on the market today” (2019, 17). These challenges point directly to the need for a proactive approach to updating translation pedagogy. While much attention has recently been paid to the implications of machine translation on translator and interpreter training (e.g., Penet, Moorkens, and Yamada 2026), traditional linguistic phenomena should not be overlooked.

Among an array of possibilities, metaphor is pertinent in the development of translation pedagogy due to its pervasiveness in language (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 3; Knowles and Moon 2006, 4), its creative potential in generating meanings (Tercedor Sánchez et al. 2012, 38), and the lack of coverage in translation pedagogy research (Hastürkoğlu 2018, 469). Conceptually, it allows translation practitioners to reflect on and refine their overall understanding of translation (García Luque 2009; St. André 2010; Guldin 2016). Practically, metaphor has been studied as a problem of and a solution for translation as a practice (Schäffner 2004, 1257; Shuttleworth 2017).

A number of case studies of published translations have presented how metaphor has been translated in practice, usually accompanied by critical evaluations of these decisions. Incorporating these insights from the literature into the translator training curriculum has the potential to facilitate translators’ decision-making processes, detailing the factors that one can take into consideration when making metaphor translation decisions. Similar to what Alice Deignan, Danuta Gabryś, and Agnieszka Solska (1997, 353) argue in the context of language learning, reflection on the metaphorical nature of language can enable students to achieve more than acting without knowing. However, these valuable insights have been largely forgotten in pedagogical design, and experimental training sessions with a focus on metaphor translation are rare to find. Against this background, this paper presents an exploration of how translation trainees and professionals could benefit from metaphor translation literacy.

2. Literature Review

Early research on metaphor translation predominantly emphasised a prescriptive approach to translating metaphors, with an overarching focus on the analysis of source text metaphors and how they can be retained or removed in the target texts (e.g., Newmark 1980, 1988). In the 1990s, Gideon Toury (1995, 108–109) proposed a descriptivist framework

analysing the patterns of metaphor translation identified in both source and target texts by unveiling the possibilities of adding metaphors in target texts, completing the list initially proposed by Peter Newmark (1988). Widely recognised within translation studies as a key turning point, this shift among metaphor translation scholars has been characterised as a move from viewing metaphor as a “problem” to a “solution” (Schäffner 2004, 1257). In parallel, epistemological shifts also occurred in metaphor studies. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, seminal works advancing a cognitive view of metaphor were published (e.g., Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Ortony 1979; Sacks 1979), bringing increased scholarly attention to metaphor as a cognitive phenomenon.

Since the mid-1990s, the notion of “conceptual metaphor” proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) has opened up rich seams of research in descriptive translation studies. Viewing metaphor as a cognitive phenomenon tied to linguistic manifestations, Conceptual Metaphor Theory widens metaphor understanding beyond the linguistic level. It introduces the notions of “conceptual domain,” which reflects our conception of socio-physical reality, and “cross-domain mapping,” which guides the manifestation of linguistic metaphorical expressions. A classic example is the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR (written in small capital letters). This conceptual metaphor, operating at a higher level of schemas than linguistic metaphors, gives rise to metaphorical expressions such as “I am bound to win this argument.”

For the practice of translating metaphors, as Astrid Jensen (2005) rightly observes, a specific translation competence is most likely to be in place (184), comprising cross-cultural knowledge and awareness of the function of metaphors, as well as “an understanding of the duality of metaphors as both mental concepts and linguistic expressions” (204). Similarly, Shengxi Jin, Zhengjun Lin, and Todd Oakley argue that knowledge of rhetoric, specifically, of “identifying rhetorical devices and their competence of shifting rhetoric between languages” (2021, 1) is key to understanding metaphor. Along the same lines, Massey (2016, 79) notes that experience and/or training are vital for handling conceptual metaphors. In the follow-up research, Massey and Ehrensberger-Dow further point out the necessity of “systematically heightening awareness of conceptual metaphor and cognitive linguistics” (2017, 186) in translator education, supported by empirical evidence.

The topic of metaphor in translator training has received considerable attention in an arguably productive way. One frequent point of discussion is how professional and trainee translators handle metaphors differently. A large proportion of this body of research builds upon corpus analysis (e.g., Heaney 2017; Álvarez García 2019; Ashuja’a, Almatari, and Alward 2019). Using a corpus to analyse the translations of identical source text items serves as “a proxy providing evidence of translation strategies” (Nacey and Skogmo 2021, 214).

However, despite the popularity of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and relevant metaphor identification procedures in metaphor translation research (e.g., Merakchi and Rogers 2013; Shuttleworth 2017; He 2025), the rich information associated with these umbrella terms has yet to be integrated into translation pedagogy. The value of metaphor in translator training has somehow restricted itself to scholarly suggestions and observations made mostly on product-oriented research, taking an innately prescriptive stance. While much has been said about the performance or behaviour of translators handling various types of metaphors, little attention has been paid to the ‘training’ itself, not to mention the evaluation of training sessions.

One notable exception is Gökçen Hastürkoğlu (2018), who reports on her experience incorporating the teaching of metaphor literacy in translation pedagogy to undergraduate students over a period of four weeks (four two-hour sessions) and evaluates the efficacy of this training. The author tests the translation of similes with student translators before and after introducing the Conceptual Metaphor Theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). She demonstrates that studying Conceptual Metaphor Theory can enhance the students’ translation skills by evaluating translation accuracy in light of the notion of “cognitive equivalence” introduced by Mandelblit (1995). This study undoubtedly sheds light on metaphor translation education. Nonetheless, the lack of fundamental training in identifying metaphorical expressions and verbalising conceptual metaphors reveals the possibility of further development. To bridge this gap, this study aims to evaluate the extent to which metaphor translation literacy, developed through a one-day workshop informed by contemporary metaphor theories for professional and trainee translators in the UK, can benefit both groups.

3. Research Design

3.1 Participants

In total, twenty participants were recruited from across the UK, including ten translation

students (one final-year undergraduate student and nine postgraduate students) and ten professional translators. Of the participants, nine worked with the English–Chinese language pair and eleven with English–French, as summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of the workshop design

Setting	1-day workshop
Mode	In-person workshop
Participants	20 (10 students and 10 professionals)
Language Pair	Chinese ↔ English (9 participants, including 4 professional translators) French ↔ English (11 participants, including 6 professional translators)

3.2 Workshop Design

As Sonia Colina and Claudia V. Angelelli note, “translation and interpreting pedagogies are benefiting from dialogue with other disciplines” (2017, 5). This is also true for metaphor translation training. The metaphor-related content covered in the workshop was mainly sourced from relevant research conducted in metaphor studies.

The workshop was designed as a one-day training session certified by the UK Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certification service. The workshop comprised two parts, in addition to the introductory and concluding sessions. Part I—the morning session—had lectures on three different topics. The first lecture introduced the relevance of textual analysis to translation, providing an essential grounding to the importance of metaphor analysis in translation. The second lecture focused on the key concepts in Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the relevance of Conceptual Metaphor Theory to translation practice, with a focus on the cohesive role of metaphor in texts. The third lecture focused on metaphor identification procedures, introducing the MIPVU (Steen et al. 2010) framework and allowing students to apply this in practice. Each lecture lasted about one hour on average, including group discussions. Part two—the afternoon session—consisted of two reflective activities: one hour of individual revision and one hour of language-specific group revision.

A journalistic text was chosen as the source text because texts in this genre are reputed for being “an invaluable source for tracing intercultural variation” (Sidiropoulou and Tsapaki 2014, 34). To identify the metaphor-related segments in the source text, we first applied the

MIPVU metaphor identification procedure set out by Steen et al. (2010) to list the lexical items relating to metaphors. We then grouped these lexical items into words and phrases to serve our aim of analysing translation segments at a contextual level. In total, forty metaphor-related segments were identified in the source text, generating sufficient information for further analysis. The source text, abridged from O’Toole (2020) and including the target segments labelled sequentially in numbers, can be found in Appendix 1.

3.3 Data Collection

Ethical approval for this project was granted, and all participants provided consent prior to the collection of data. The workshop set-up allowed for the collection of three sets of data, namely, three versions of translation products (data set 1), responses to a questionnaire collecting participants’ general feedback on the workshop (data set 2), and a post-study focus group (data set 3).

Data set 1 is the most important one for the current study. The translations we collected are in three versions: pre-workshop translations, individually revised translations, and group-revised translations. First, before the workshop, participants were asked to translate the chosen source text into their working languages (i.e., Chinese or French). An introduction to the key concepts in Part I of the workshop was followed by reflective activities in the afternoon session. Participants were asked to reflect on their translations and provide two revised versions of their translations—one individual revision and one collaborative revision produced in four language-specific groups (2 French and 2 Chinese). As noted by researchers in the literature, a single translation product often fails to capture the development in the learning process (Philip 2019, 131; Nacey and Skogmo 2021, 212). By asking participants to translate a text before the conceptual metaphor training and then review their translations after the training had been delivered, we were able to track evidence of the impact that metaphor knowledge delivered in the training had on their translation decisions. Additionally, the group translations, giving insight into “the students’ evaluation of successful or appropriate translation solutions” (Nacey and Skogmo 2021, 218), were also collected, providing the possibility to investigate the impact at a group level.

Data set 2 consists of the answers to the questionnaire (Appendix 2) distributed at the end of the workshop. The eleven questions included in the questionnaire invited participants to

reflect on their expectations, lecture delivery and design, learning facilities, catering services, etc., to provide an overview of their feedback on the one-day workshop as a whole. The questionnaire included five-point Likert-type questions with options provided, as well as open questions.

Data set 3 consists of the information gleaned through the non-language-specific focus group conducted online with six participants. The focus group was two hours in length, and it was conducted based on the insights identified in data sets 1 and 2.

These three data sets enabled us to evaluate the learning achieved in this workshop through both objective analyses of the translation products and the participants' subjective evaluations.

3.4 Analytical Framework

For the analysis of data set 1, comparisons were made among the three versions. In summary, forty metaphor-related segments were identified in the source text, with additional metaphor-related segments identified in the translations. Among the forty segments, five main conceptual metaphors were identified, which are listed as follows:

- STATES ARE PEOPLE
- BREXIT IS DEATH
- STATE RELATIONSHIPS ARE MARRIAGE / FRIENDSHIP
- THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A HOLY ENTITY
- BRITAIN IS A CLOD

Specifically, the pre-workshop translations were analysed to identify the strategies implemented by the translators. They were then compared to the individual and collective revisions produced by participants to identify any changes made after engagement in the core learning activities. Taking the pre-workshop translations as the baseline for comparison enabled us to monitor the influence of any prior knowledge held by participants before the workshop, especially for translating highly conventionalized metaphorical expressions such as 'waste of time.'

The metaphor-related segments were analysed in relation to the five main conceptual metaphors listed above, with a focus on the rendition of non-conventionalised metaphors and several other obvious patterns identified in data set 1. Conventional metaphors, also called

'lexicalised' metaphors in the literature, are metaphors that have been commonly used in everyday language in a culture (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 66). At a glance, they are seemingly easier to translate compared to less conventionalised metaphors. Notably, however, metaphors conventionalised in one language are not necessarily conventionalised in the same way as in another language. Therefore, an examination of this type of metaphor is essential when it comes to translation studies.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 Translation Products

By comparing the pre-workshop translations with the individually and collaboratively revised translations, it is clear that many of the changes made relate more to grammar and syntax rather than specifically to metaphor. Although the lexical, grammatical, and syntactical changes have an impact on the overall quality of the translation, in the following analysis these will only be considered in light of metaphor-related segments. The data analysis allowed for the identification of the following trends:

1. Conventional metaphorical expressions were generally well-handled in the pre-workshop activity, and minor to no changes were made to these during the individual or collaborative revisions.
2. Less conventional metaphors such as BREXIT IS DEATH and THE EU IS A HOLY TRINITY were more problematic in the translations, as exemplified by the modifications the participants made in their individual and group translations.
3. Corrections were made in the revisions regarding misunderstandings of the source text.
4. Interchanges between metaphors and similes were found.
5. Deletions and additions of metaphors were found.

The following sections illustrate these trends through representative examples drawn from the Chinese and French translations. Together, these examples demonstrate how participants revised their translations after engaging with the workshop content and provide insight into the role of metaphor literacy in translation decision-making.

4.1.1 Treatment of Conventional Metaphors. The source text contains several metaphorical segments which have been conventionalised in English, Chinese, and French. For example, the TIME metaphor embedded in the expression “It has not all been a waste of time” was translated consistently into Chinese as 时间 (*shijian*, time) and French as *temps* (time) in the pre-workshop activity, and no modifications were made in the revised individual or collective translations. This is also true of the conventional STATES ARE HUMANS metaphor, generating instances such as “member,” “relation,” and “reconciliation,” which were translated consistently and uncontroversially.

4.1.2 Treatment of Less Conventional Metaphors. In some of the pre-workshop translations, participants modified the metaphorical segments of the source text at both the linguistic and conceptual levels in their translations and did not make any changes during the individual review. One prominent feature is that the modified conceptual metaphors tend to show an obvious link to the dominant conceptual metaphors in the source text, especially the STATES ARE HUMANS metaphor. The following example illustrates how participants revised metaphorical expressions by aligning them more closely with the dominant conceptual metaphors operating in the source text. The source segment “the evil *lives* on; the good *rots* in the earth” (THE GOOD IS A PHYSICAL ENTITY, no. 16 coded in Appendix 1) was translated by one participant into 与人俱亡 *yuren juwang* (to die together with the person). In this context, “the evil” denotes the negative side of the relationship between the UK and the EU, whilst “the good” denotes the bright side of the story. This translation specifies the element of “human,” indicating that the good is gone alongside the death of a person. The person here refers to Britain and the death refers to Brexit, which further falls into the STATES ARE HUMANS metaphor dominating the overall narrative of the source text. In comparison, in the French translations, participants maintained the metaphor of burial for the good in the individual revisions *le bien pourrit* (the good rots).

Another example is no. 18, “Britain could never *sit* comfortably in the place it was offered.” This segment was rendered in the pre-workshop individual translations by Chinese participants as 对自己的身份也颇感不适 *dui ziji de shenfen ye pogan bushi* (feeling uncomfortable about their identity) or 感觉很不舒服 *ganjue hen bu shufu* (feeling very uncomfortable). A similar shift was also found in the French group translations. Whilst both

French groups opted for the same linguistic metaphor *s'asseoir* (sit), one of the two groups opted for the metaphor *n'a jamais été à l'aise* (has never been comfortable) in the group revision. Interestingly, one of the two groups implemented a lexical change in the collaborative revision—*enterré* (buried) was replaced with *putrifié* (decomposed). This change can be seen as a stylistic modification, since both expressions belong to the source domain of death and the conceptual metaphor is maintained. Additionally, the segment ‘interred with their bones’ was rendered as *enterré avec les cendres* (interred with the ashes), which indicates a partial change to the conceptual metaphor since the burial process here is interpreted according to cultural and personal beliefs (ashes indicating cremation rather than burial). This shift was maintained in the individual revision, but participants agreed on the addition of *les cendres enterrées avec les os* (ashes buried with the bones) in the collaborative revision. Such a shift can be attributed to cultural differences since both processes (burial of the ashes or the bones) are common in France, but the burial of ashes is not common in the UK. It could only be explained by personal experience, which may account for the agreement on the “with the bones” in the collective revision.

4.1.3 Correction of Misunderstandings. In the individually edited translations, some mistranslations were corrected. Mistranslations were commonly made due either to misunderstandings of metaphors in the source text or to simple typographical errors. For example, “disinter” was rendered as 掩埋 *yanmai* (to bury) by two Chinese participants, and “EU’s holy trinity” was translated into 多国一体 *duoguo yiti* (multi-nation unity). These mistranslations were corrected in the individual revisions. Additionally, some idioms used in the pre-workshop translations were changed to more culturally appropriate ones.

One interesting example is the modification of a less suitable idiom to a new metaphor which works better in the context. One participant translated “Before we throw the last handful of earth on the corpse of Britain’s membership of the European Union” (no. 9) as 尘归尘土归土 *chenguichen tuguitu* (ashes to ashes, dust to dust) in the pre-workshop task and modified it into another metaphor as 还尚未定案 *hai shangwei ding’an* (the case has not been closed) in the individual activity. The pre-workshop translation “ashes to ashes, dust to dust” conveys a different meaning from the information that the author intended to convey by “the last handful of earth.” In the individual reflection, however, the participant turned to a different solution,

which is more in line with the overall tone and logic of the source text. These examples indicate that knowledge of analysing metaphors can help the translators to better grasp the broader meaning of metaphors and thus their overall understanding of the source text.

4.1.4 The Interchange between Metaphors and Similes. Another set of changes relates to the interchange between metaphors and similes. In some cases, a metaphor-related segment identified in the pre-workshop translation was revised into a simile in the individual translation. And in other cases, a simile found in the pre-workshop text was reverted to a metaphor in the revisions. Taking the French translations of segments no. 4 and no. 5 as an illustration, “Now that a deal has been done, *the end of Britain’s life as a member of the European Union can be decently mourned*” was generally rendered into the same linguistic and conceptual metaphor in French with the expression *la fin de vie* (the end of life), except in one case, where it was rendered as a simile *la fin comme pays membres* (the end as a member state). The rhetorical effect of a simile and a metaphor is arguably different. The unsystematic pattern of this group of changes is probably due to the lack of coverage of this topic during the training. While weighing up the different options, the translators’ decision-making process is framed within their individual understanding of the source text and the translation brief; hence, the outcomes of choices can be different.

4.1.5 Deletion and Addition of Metaphors. Finally, the deletion and addition of metaphors in the individual activity were also observed. The deletion of metaphors is related to the change from active to passive voice in some cases. For example, in one individual revision, example no. 33 “the frustration and rancour of the past four years have wiped our memories...” was translated as 让我们忘记 *rang women wangji* (allowed us to forget), replacing the 抹去了 *moqu le* (wiped out) rendition in the pre-workshop activity. When comparing the group translations with the pre-workshop and individual translations, it can be observed that each group translation demonstrated greater inter-textual consistency. For example, among the two Chinese groups, the participants of Group 1 decided to remove certain metaphorical expressions such as “divorce” and “marriage.” In Group 2, by contrast, the decision to retain the original metaphors preserved the original rhetorical effect and achieved consistency in another way. For cases where new metaphor-related segments were introduced in translations where there was no hint of metaphor in the source text, the new metaphors are linked to the dominant metaphors,

such as STATES ARE HUMANS. For example, among the Chinese translations, “in its [Britain’s] decades of membership” was rendered as 在其数十年作为欧盟成员的生命中 *zai qi shushinian zuowei oumeng chengyuan de shengming zhong* (in its decades of life as a member of the EU). A case in point among the French translations is “Before we throw the last handful of earth on the corpse of Britain’s membership of the European Union...” This segment was rendered with a change from “membership” in the source text to *que membre* (as a member) in one of the two group translations.

The analysis of the translation products indicates that the training did yield some results in raising awareness of the role of metaphors in the text, as some of the changes made both individually and collectively to the translations after the training were more coherent and tended to preserve the conceptual metaphors, even when the linguistic expressions were changed.

4.2 Questionnaire and Interview

While the translation products provide an objective measure of the effectiveness of the training, the end-of-workshop questionnaire and follow-up focus group give direct insights into the participants’ experience of the workshop. Careful consideration of the feedback provided will enable the workshop design to be adapted for future training, either in a continuous professional development course or as part of the higher education curriculum.

In general, the design of the workshop was satisfactory, and the structure, examples and activities covered were appreciated by participants, although a minority found that the materials did not match their expectations. Specifically, the results show that 70% of the participants strongly agree that the workshop met their expectations, with 20% opting for somewhat agree and 10% strongly disagree. Regarding the relevance of the workshop materials, 80% strongly agree that the materials are relevant, with 10% choosing somewhat agree and 10% strongly disagree. Ninety percent of the participants strongly agree that the content of the workshop was organised and easy to follow, and 10% of them somewhat agree. As for the examples and activities, 75% of the participants strongly agree that they are relevant, with the other 25% indicating they somewhat agree.

Moving on to the open questions, sixteen out of the twenty participants mentioned that they enjoyed the group discussions most, which was also strongly emphasised in the focus group interview. Four participants highlighted their enjoyment of the content covered during

the three lectures. Three participants mentioned the networking opportunity. This lends support to the inclusion of group activities in the workshop, which not only helped to consolidate their understanding of the content covered during the lectures but also provided an opportunity for sharing intercultural and interpersonal insights, which is a key element in metaphor translation. When asked about the things that they enjoyed the least, in relation to the design and delivery of the workshop, four participants mentioned the individual text revision because they were “biased towards our own text so it was hard to review it.” Five respondents mentioned the lack of time in producing group translations, and one wrote ‘the theory.’ The message that came across most clearly from participants was that they found the collaborative activities to be both the most enjoyable part of the workshop and the aspect that contributed most to their learning.

In order to develop the workshop for future training, we propose five adaptations in response to the analyses:

- **Expectations:** although we provided a detailed description of the workshop content in all advertising materials, this could be reviewed to ensure it is fully aligned with the workshop activities.
- **Individual revision:** this was essential to generate translation products for the research evaluation, and we chose to avoid prescriptive guidance in order to provide a neutral basis for the evaluation. However, some participants did not find this activity beneficial. In future training, more support could be provided on the metaphor identification step, enabling students to focus their efforts on translating metaphor-related segments that they collectively identify.
- **Time designated for the group discussion:** from the group discussions and responses, it is clear that a one-hour group discussion is rather limited for the participants to reach a consensus and produce a version of translation that they are confident to share. Many interesting discussions were taking place in the groups. With more time, participants would be able to work on the text at a deeper level and polish the translation to a higher standard. This issue can be addressed in two ways: using a shorter source text or extending the group discussion time. While both approaches may be beneficial, the use of a shorter source text is likely to be more practical in most translator training settings, where teaching hours and workshop schedules are often constrained. Reducing the length of the text would allow participants to devote

more time to discussing metaphor-related challenges and reaching a consensus on translation decisions without increasing the overall duration of the training. In contexts where greater scheduling flexibility is available, extending the discussion period may further enhance opportunities for collaborative reflection.

- **Materials used:** in the questionnaire, some participants wrote “[I] like the combination of theory and practice,” “I found the slides used for lectures were useful” and mentioned “I found some insightful points in the theory; I definitely take away a lot from the theory part.” However, one participant shared that they enjoyed theory the least. This seems to reflect individual preferences, and all tastes and preferences cannot always be accommodated in a single workshop or training session, but materials could be reviewed to ensure the right balance of theory and practice. From the revised translations, we conclude that the coverage of metaphor-related content could be expanded. For example, similes, which are usually considered a subcategory of metaphor in contemporary metaphor scholarship, seem to have caused confusion among the translators, evidenced by the edits they made during the individual revision. In addition, although translation studies have moved away from the prescriptive end of research, translation strategies derived from descriptive research on metaphor translation can be used as examples in class. These lists of strategies, situated within certain contexts and genres, can give students an overview of the options available. Future workshops could introduce such strategy frameworks after an initial translation activity and use them as a basis for individual reflection and group discussion. Participants could compare their own solutions with alternative renditions produced by peers, classify the strategies employed and critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of different approaches in relation to the translation brief, genre, and target audience. Such discussions may also facilitate intercultural exchange among participants working with different language pairs, shedding light on how cultural and linguistic factors shape metaphor translation decisions. By analysing specific translation strategies in context, participants would be in a better position to critically evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of using certain strategies in certain contexts and make informed decisions on metaphor translation.

- Directionality of translation: this was mentioned during the interview by two participants. While the Chinese group worked from English (L2) into Chinese (L1), the French group had a mixed directionality with a combination of native English speakers and native French speakers. The combination of native speakers of the source language and the target language in one group, as reported by a participant, was helpful in solving translation challenges by “bouncing off questions to native French speakers so it was going into their native language” and in “validating my translation so that I know it is not as bad as what I think.” Having language groups with translators working in different directions can provide strong peer support in making translation decisions, which is especially important for metaphor translation because of the tangible meaning that these segments can convey.

5. Concluding Remarks

In the tradition of translation studies, metaphor has been regarded as a translation problem, either explicitly or implicitly. Recent studies have shown that metaphor can in fact be a solution to various translation problems, which can be used by translators as a tool to bridge various gaps. For the skills and knowledge that translators need to meet the demand of the changing landscape in the translation industry, incorporating metaphor into the curriculum can be a meaningful activity.

It has been demonstrated that a specialised workshop can enrich the participants’ understanding of metaphor and therefore their overall translation competence. Receiving training in metaphor identification, the cultural aspects of metaphor, and conceptual metaphor theory enabled the participants to better understand metaphorical expressions and to analyse a metaphor-rich text at a whole-text level. With a better understanding of the source text, the translation products produced by the participants after the lectures showcase an enhancement in the overall quality of their translations.

The relevance of metaphor literacy may become even greater in an era increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence and machine translation technologies. As routine aspects of translation become progressively automated, professional translators are likely to play a greater role in evaluating, refining and justifying translation decisions involving culturally and conceptually complex texts. Metaphor literacy contributes to these higher-level competences

by enabling translators to identify underlying conceptual structures, assess rhetorical effects and make informed choices across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In this sense, metaphor training does not merely address a traditional translation challenge; it also helps prepare translators for the more complex, creative and critically reflective work anticipated in the future language services industry.

While the workshop was effective in facilitating translation, some improvements could be made in order to adapt the design for future training activities. These include a review of advertising materials to ensure alignment with the workshop content; a review of the mini-lectures to ensure the right balance of theory and practice, to cover similes as well as metaphors, and to analyse some prescriptive metaphor translation strategies from the literature; a review of the activities to give more time for collaboration and more support for individual activities; and a review of recruitment in order to facilitate cross-cultural and linguistic collaboration.

Last but not least, metaphor is a rich topic in its own right, and the development of metaphor research, including metaphor translation research, has yielded many helpful insights into metaphor translation practices. These insights should be considered in the development of translation pedagogy. This one-day workshop has demonstrated the benefits of short training for both students and professionals. A more holistic approach with a longer training period is highly recommended for translation programmes for trainee and professional translators.

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Declaration of interests

There are no relevant financial or non-financial competing interests to report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The Source Text

Source: Abridged from O'Toole (2020)

Title: **So long, we'll miss you – we Europeans see how much you've helped to [1] [shape us](#)**

History will [2] [judge](#) that the near 50-year [3] [relationship](#) between the UK and Europe has been good for both. Best to forget the rancorous ending.

Now that a deal has been done, the end of [4] [Britain's life](#) as a [5] [member](#) of the European Union can be decently mourned. As [6] [funeral](#) orations go, the one William Shakespeare put into the mouth of Mark Antony in Julius Caesar is, well, world-beating: "The evil that men do [7] [lives](#) after them. The good is oft [8] [interred](#) with their bones." Before we [9] [throw the last handful of earth](#) on the [10] [corpse of Britain's membership of the European Union](#), we might briefly [11] [disinter](#) the good things about the relationship.

A bad ending gets projected backwards. [12] [A messy divorce obliterates the years of reasonably happy marriage](#). Brexit has projected into the future a [13] [sour](#) story of resentment and rancour. Almost 50 years of history are [14] [squeezed](#) into a deterministic story of irreconcilable incompatibility. The evil [15] [lives](#) on; the good [16] [rots](#) in the earth.

No one doubts that Britain's European years were often [17] [marked](#) by reluctance and sometimes by resistance. For all sorts of reasons, Britain could never [18] [sit](#) comfortably in the place it was offered in [19] [the EU's holy trinity](#), alongside France and Germany.

But that should not obscure the great reason for sadness about the way it has all ended: Britain [20] [did much good](#) for Europe and Europe [21] [did much good](#) for Britain. This half-century has not been [22] [mired](#) in futility. It has not all been [23] [a waste of time](#).

When Britain and Ireland joined together in 1973, [24] [relations](#) between them were very poor, under constant strain from the pressure of the Troubles. It was through [25] [working closely together](#) in the EU that the two countries [26] [learned](#) to [27] [behave](#) as [28] [friends and equals](#), without [29] [resentment](#) on the one side or [30] [condescension](#) on the other. It was the assumption of continuing common EU [31] [membership](#) that made it possible, in 1998, to

construct a peace agreement that could build political [32] **reconciliation** on a foundation of economic and social integration.

The tedium, frustration and rancour of the past four years have [33] **wiped** our memories of the historic and hopeful things that British [34] **membership** of the EU allowed to happen. Anti-EU rhetoric in Britain has [35] **encouraged** a notion in Europe that the EU will be [36] **better off** without these surly and obstreperous malcontents.

But, as another great English poet, John Donne, put it, also in funereal mode, “If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less”. Britain may have been [37] **cloddish** at times in its decades of [38] **membership**, but Europe is the less for its [39] **being washed away**. And Britain is the less for [40] **allowing** itself to be so.

Appendix 2: The Questionnaire

Questions with options: “Strongly disagree,” “Somewhat disagree,” “Neither agree nor disagree,” “Somewhat agree,” and “Strongly agree”:

- Q1: The workshop met your expectations.
- Q2: The presenters were engaging.
- Q3: The workshop materials were relevant.
- Q4: Information and instructions received before the workshop were useful.
- Q5: The content of the workshop was organized and easy to follow.
- Q6: The examples/activities were relevant.
- Q7: The facilities were suitable for the event.

Question with options: “Extremely dissatisfied,” “Somewhat dissatisfied,” “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,” “Somewhat satisfied,” and “Extremely satisfied.”

- Q8: How satisfied were you with the catering service provided?

Open questions:

- Q9: What did you enjoy the most?
- Q10: What did you enjoy the least?
- Q11: Any additional comments?

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