

Conceptual metaphor as a basic of language change-a case of English adjectives

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SVEUČILIŠTE JOSIPA JURJA STROSSMAYERA U OSIJEKU
FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET

Diplomski studij engleskoga jezika i književnosti i mađarskoga jezika i književnosti

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**Conceptual metaphor as a basis of language change- a case of English
adjectives**

Diplomski rad

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Osijek, 2012

Table of contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1. <i>Aim of the paper</i>.....	3
2. Theoretical Aspects of Conceptual Metaphor	4
2.1. <i>Conventional Metaphor</i>	4
2.2. <i>Metaphor and Metonymy</i>	4
2.3. <i>Conceptual Metaphor</i>	5
2.4. <i>Common Source and Target Domains</i>	6
2.4.1. <i>Common Source Domains</i>	7
2.4.2. <i>Common Target Domains</i>	9
2.5. <i>Kinds of Conceptual Metaphors</i>.....	10
2.5.1. <i>Structural Metaphors</i>	11
2.5.2. <i>Ontological Metaphors</i>	11
2.5.3. <i>Orientational Metaphors</i>	12
3. A short history of the English language	13
3.1. <i>Reconstructing the language: Proti-Indo-European</i>	13
4. Methodology	14
4.1. <i>Research Design</i>	14
5. Corpus Study	15
5.1. INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT.....	15
5.1.1. <i>Bright</i>	16
5.1.2. <i>Brilliant</i>	17
5.2. STUPIDITY IS DARKNESS.....	18
5.2.1. <i>Dull</i>	18
5.2.2. <i>Dim</i>	19
5.3. INTELLIGENCE IS SHARPNESS	20
5.3.1. <i>Sharp</i>	20
5.3.2. <i>Acute</i>	21
5.3.3. <i>Keen</i>	22
5.4. STUPIDITY IS BLUNTNESS.....	23

5.4.1. <i>Blunt</i>	23
5.4.2. <i>Obtuse</i>	24
5.5. INTELLIGENCE IS SPEED.....	24
5.5.1. <i>Quick</i>	25
5.5.2. <i>Agile</i>	26
5.5.3. <i>Nimble</i>	27
5.6. STUPIDITY IS LACK OF SPEED.....	28
5.6.1. <i>Slow</i>	28
5.6.2. <i>Retarded</i>	29
5.7. INTELLIGENCE/STUPIDITY IS SENSES.....	29
5.7.1. <i>Perceptive</i>	30
5.7.2. <i>Sagacious</i>	30
5.7.3. <i>Subtle</i>	31
5.7.4. <i>Blind</i>	32
5.8. INTELLIGENCE/STUPIDITY IS ANIMAL.....	33
5.8.1. <i>Foxy</i>	34
5.8.2. <i>Brute</i>	34
5.8.3. <i>Cuckoo</i>	35
6. The Application of Conceptual Metaphor in English Teaching	37
6.1. Introduction	37
6.2. The development of metaphoric competence	37
6.3. Conceptual metaphor in EFL	38
6.4. Methodology and research design	39
7. Procedure	40
7.1. Stage 1 (before input)	40
7.2. Stage 2 input	41
7.3. Stage 3 (after input)	42
8. Data analysis and interpretation	43
9. Conclusion	46
10. References	47
11. Summary and key words	48

1. Introduction

1.1. Aim of the paper

Communication plays a central role in our everyday life. We use language and thought in order to convey messages and we do it with automaticity. The key ingredients of successful interaction are mind, concepts and language. The role of conceptual metaphors in everyday language and communication is immense. Cognitive features and concepts shape coherent images adding new meaning to our utterances. We use and understand figurative meanings automatically, sometimes even unintentionally.

This paper deals with conceptual metaphors in three major units. The first part sets the theoretical framework for understanding conceptual metaphor as a part of cognitive linguistics. Metaphor is compared to metonymy, notions such as mappings, source and target domains, and types of conceptual metaphors make a significant part of the theoretical analysis.

The second part of this paper is the corpus-based etymological analysis of adjectives with respect to the specific time of the occurrence of semantic change. The research deals with the earliest metaphorical meanings of English adjectives related to intelligence and stupidity, with eight different source domains.

The final part discusses the application of conceptual metaphor in EFL learning, stages and the development of metaphoric competence with children and young adults. A brief research in EFL classroom detects competence, interests, and convenience of conceptual metaphors in vocabulary learning.

2. Theoretical Aspects of Conceptual Metaphor

2.1. *Conventional Metaphor*

Conventional metaphor is often generalized as a figure of speech used exclusively in poetic expression and expelled from everyday language and language lexicon. Traditional assumptions challenged by linguistic researchers come from the traditional division between literal and figurative language, with metaphor as a kind of figurative language:

All everyday conventional language is literal, and none is metaphorical.

All subject matter can be comprehended literally, without metaphor.

Only literal language can be contingently true or false.

All definitions given in the lexicon of a language are literal, not metaphorical.

The concepts used in the grammar of a language are all literal; none are metaphorical. (Lakoff 1992:2)

Lakoff and Johnson in their article *Conceptual Metaphor in Everyday Language* offer disambiguation of metaphoric expression in terms of language, thought and action. Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. The use of different abstract concept is natural in everyday communication. Therefore everyday language is an important source of evidence for linguistic research. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:454)

2.2. *Metaphor and Metonymy*

Both metaphor and metonymy represent cognitive phenomena, but they make different cognitive connections between two terms substituting one another. Metonymy operates within one conceptual domain, connecting two terms within the same domain, while metaphor uses one conceptual domain to understand another. “If an expression makes sense in the ‘X is like Y’ form, then it has metaphorical meaning. For instance the sentence *The boxer is like a creampuff* makes sense and thus

is metaphorical, while *The third baseman is like a glow* does not, and thus is metonymic.” (Panther and Radden 1999:62)

2.3. Conceptual Metaphor

Our conceptual system is not something that we are normally aware of. The key term is “understanding” and cognitive linguistics explores our ways of thinking and perceiving abstract concepts. Lakoff compares the automaticity of metaphorical comprehension to the automatic use of language “the system of conventional conceptual metaphor is mostly unconscious, automatic, and is used with no noticeable effort, just like our linguistic system and the rest of our conceptual system” (Lakoff 1992:40).

Conceptual metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain. The application is described in formulation *A is B*. CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN **A** IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN **B**. The conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain is called source domain (B), while the conceptual domain that is understood this way is the target domain (A). (Kövecses, 2010:4)

Lakoff and Johnson (1980:454) describe the concept of an ARGUMENT and the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. In an argument we can win or lose, we attack, defend, counterattack, we have opponents, lead battles, get injured, etc. All these items belong to the concept of war in the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. This metaphor is reflected in our everyday language by a wide variety of expressions:

Your claims are *indefensible*.

He *attacked every weak point* in my argument.

His criticisms *were right on target*.

I *demolished* his argument.

I’ve never *won* an argument with him.

You disagree? Okay, *shoot*!

He *shot down* all of my arguments.

In these examples it is clearly noticeable that speakers of English commonly use linguistic expressions related to war to talk about arguments. Kövecses states that the terminology of a source domain used in the metaphorical process, is one kind of evidence for the existence of conceptual metaphor. Conceptual metaphors typically employ a more abstract concept as target and a more concrete or physical concept as their source. Argument is a more abstract concept than war, so if we want better understanding of the abstract term we need to use more concrete, tangible concepts than the abstract term. This relation represents natural, logical foundation of the comprehension of more abstract domains. Therefore it is called the principle of unidirectionality; that is, a metaphorical process typically goes from the more concrete to the more abstract but not the other way around. (Kövecses 2010:7). From this principle, it is logical that we cannot use abstract expressions related to arguments in order to talk about war.

2.4. Common Source and Target Domains

Conceptual metaphor can be viewed as structured mapping from a source domain to a target domain. Kövecses (2010:10) uses a conceptual metaphor SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE PLANTS to illustrate mapping correspondences between source and target domains:

Source: plant	Target: social organization
(a) the whole plant	⇒ the entire organization
(b) a part of the plant	⇒ a part of the organization
(c) growth of the plant	⇒ development of the organization
(d) removing a part of the plant	⇒ reducing the organization
(e) the root of the plant	⇒ the origin of the organization
(f) the flowering stage	⇒ the best stage, the most successful

He works for the local *branch* of the bank.

Our company is *growing*.

The organization was *rooted* in the old church.

There is now a *flourishing* black market in software there.

His business *blossomed* when the railways put his establishment within reach of the big city.

2.4.1. Common Source Domains

Kövecses (Kövecses 2010:18ff.) explored metaphor dictionaries and used his own research in order to catalog the most common source domains. The main aim was to determine which sources are employed most commonly to understand some common targets.

1.) The Human Body

The “embodiment” of meaning is perhaps the essential idea of the cognitive linguistic view of metaphor and of the cognitive linguistic view of meaning. The examples are “the *heart* of the problem”, “to *shoulder* a responsibility”, “the *head* of the department”. Body parts most frequently used metaphorically include the head, face, legs, hands, back, heart, bones, shoulders, and others.

2.) Animals

Characteristics of human beings are often described in terms of properties of animals: someone being a *brute*, a *tiger*, a *dog*, a *sly fox*, a *bitch*, a *cow*, a *snake*, and so on. The metaphorical use of animal terms is not restricted to human beings. In the example “*It will be a bitch to pull this boat out of the water*” the term *bitch* denotes any difficult situation.

3.) Plants

We can use various parts of plants and various stages of growth in metaphoric conceptualization “a *budding* beauty”, “the *fruit* of her labor”, “He *cultivated* his friendship with her.” The comparison of plant cultivation with friendship has a purpose to emphasize the fragility of the friendship and difficulties in sustaining one.

4.) Buildings and Construction

Human beings build houses and other structures for shelter, work, storage, and so on. The building, its parts and the act of building serve as common metaphorical source domains “a *towering* genius”, “he’s *in ruins* financially”

5.) Machines and Tools

People use machines and tools on daily basis. They are essential for work, production, play, fight, and for pleasure. The machines, tools and the activities related to them serve as source domains in metaphorical expressions: “the *machine* of democracy”, “conceptual *tools*”, “she *produces* a book every year”.

6.) Games and Sports

People enjoy entertainment and exercise of various kinds. Certain properties in games and sports are frequently used for metaphorical purposes; “he *plays by the rules*”, “*to toy* with the idea”.

7.) Money and Business

From the beginning of humankind communities had the tendency to trade goods or money in order to survive or profit. Various processes, agreements, and outcomes can be included in trading. Different kinds of transactions and activities related to them are often used in metaphorical expressions: “*spend* your time wisely”, “she *invested a lot* in the relationship”

8.) Cooking and Food

Similar to trading, food preparation is one of the oldest activities known to humankind. Cooking is a daily activity involving complex processes of several elements: an agent, recipe, ingredients, actions, and a final product. An ever indulging activity makes a rich source domain for metaphorical expressions: “your *recipe* for success”, “a *watered-down* idea”.

9.) Light and Darkness

Like heat and cold, light and darkness represent basic human experiences and have different application in metaphorical expressions: “a *dark* mood”, “she *brightened up*” “a *cloud* of suspicion”. These examples represent moods with light and dark contrasts as source domains.

2.4.2. Common Target Domains

The term that we need to understand through the source domain comes from the target domain. Target domains are abstract and intangible, and as Kövecses illustrates, they “cry out ” for metaphorical conceptualization (2010: 23) Target domains used most frequently in conceptual metaphors are concepts of emotion, desire, morality, thought, society and nation, politics, economy, human relationships, communication, time, life and death, religion, events and actions.

1.) Emotion

As a superior target domain it entails concepts such as anger, fear, love, happiness, sadness, shame, pride, etc. The equivalent source domain involves forces: “she was deeply *moved*”, “he was *bursting* with joy”. (Kövecses 2010: 24ff.)

2.) Desire

In terms of metaphorical conceptualization, desire is similar to emotion. The equivalent from source domain is physiological force of hunger and thirst, or the domain of heat; “she is *hungry for* knowledge”, “he’s *burning* to go”.

3.) Morality

Moral categories such as good and bad, as well as honesty, courage, sincerity, honor, and their opposites, are largely understood by means of economic transactions, forces, straightness, light and dark, and up-down orientation; “I’ll *pay* you *back* for this”, “she *resisted* the temptation”.

4.) Thought

One of the ways to interpret a rational thought is through various manipulations of objects in a workshop; “she’s *grinding out* new ideas”, “he *hammered* the point home”.

5.) Society and Nation

Complex concepts of society and nation are often conceptualized through concepts of person and family, machines or the human body: “a *friendly* nation”, “the *machinery* of democracy”

6.) Economy

Most commonly used source domains for comprehending economy include building, plants, and journey; “Germany *built* a strong economy”, “they *pruned* the budget”

7.) Human Relationships

Notions of friendship, love, and marriage are metaphorically viewed as plants, machines, and buildings; “it’s a *budding* relationship”, “they had *to work on* their relationship”, “they *built a strong* marriage”

8.) Communication

In communication a speaker is transferring an encoded message to the hearer, through the channel; “you are *putting* too many ideas *into* a single sentence”, “that’s a *dense* paragraph”. In conceptual metaphor we comprehend communication through containers, objects, and sending respectively.

9.) Time

We perceive time as a moving object; “the time *will come* when . . .”, “Christmas is *coming up* soon”, “time *flies*”.

10.) Life and Death

In metaphorical conceptualization life is understood as a journey, day, light, warmth, etc. Death is viewed as departure, as well as night, darkness, and cold; “grandpa is *gone*”, “his father *passed away*”.

2.5. Kinds of Conceptual Metaphors

Lakoff and Johnson (1980:461) explore connections within conceptual structures in order to identify three basic domains-physical, cultural, and intellectual, while Kövecses (2010:37) classifies conceptual metaphors based on the cognitive functions they perform. Accordingly, three general kinds of conceptual metaphor can be distinguished: structural, ontological, and orientational.

2.5.1. *Structural Metaphors*

In structural metaphor one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another, and the source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target concept. Target A is understood by means of the structure of source B. ARGUMENT is structured in terms of WAR. In this example a cultural concept (war) is used to structure an intellectual concept (argument) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:461)

2.5.2. *Ontological Metaphors*

Ontological metaphors provide less cognitive structuring for target concepts than structural ones do. CONTAINER metaphor allows us to conceptualize abstract, non-physical concepts based on our knowledge on objects, substances, and containers, in general, without specifying exactly of what kind they are:

Since our knowledge about objects, substances, and containers is rather limited at this general level, we cannot use these highly general categories to understand much about target domains. This is the job of structural metaphors, which provide an elaborate structure for abstract concepts. (Kövecses 2010:38)

For example, mind is an abstract concept we understand easier if we conceive it through physical objects from source domain. (Kövecses 2010:38)

Source Domains

Target Domains

PHYSICAL OBJECT \Rightarrow NONPHYSICAL OR ABSTRACT ENTITIES (e.g., the mind)

In personification metaphor, a kind of ontological metaphor, human qualities are given to non-human entities, therefore source domain is *ourselves*. As Kövecses (2010) states by personifying nonhumans as humans, we begin to understand them a little better:

His theory *explained* to me the behavior of chickens raised in factories.

Life has *cheated* me.

Inflation is *eating up* our profits.

Cancer finally *caught up* with him.

The computer *went dead* on me.

2.5.3. *Orientational Metaphors*

Orientational metaphors provide less cognitive structuring for target concepts than ontological ones do. Their aim is coherency of target structures and unambiguous spatial orientation (upward/downward). Upward orientation tends to go together with positive evaluation, while downward orientation with a negative one.

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

I'm feeling *up* today. He's really *low* these days.

RATIONAL IS UP; NONRATIONAL IS DOWN

The discussion *fell* to an emotional level. He couldn't *rise above* his emotions.

Other examples of spatial orientation for positive evaluation; *whole, center, link, balance, in, goal, and front*. Their opposites, *not whole, periphery, no link, imbalance, out, no goal, and back* are seen as negative. Kövecses (2010:40)

3. A short history of the English language

The English language developed due to historical occupations and invasions. The Romanized Celtic language and Britain came under the tribal influence of Angles, Saxons and Jutes and the Germanic language. The Angles came from Englalund and their language was called Englisc - from which the words England and English are derived. The mixture of Germanic languages spoken by the invading tribes and Celtic resulted in Old English (450-1100 AD). Further historical and territorial occupations came from France, under the leadership of William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy (1066). The two languages came into contact and Middle English (1100-1500) became dominant in Britain, but with many French words. By the end of this period the Great Vowel Shift shortened the pronunciation of vowels. With the era of Shakespeare and the Renaissance of Classical learning new words entered the Early Modern English (1500-1800). The printing press popularized knowledge and the first English dictionary was printed in 1604. The next period was marked with Industrial Revolution and Late Modern English (since 1800) gradually became one of the world's most widely spoken languages. (<http://www.englishclub.com/english-language-history.htm>)

3.1. Reconstructing the language: Proto-Indo-European

The English language belongs to the Germanic languages of the Indo-European sub-branch of the world's language families. The common ancestor of all Indo-European languages is Proto-Indo-European language. PIE is a theoretical language and it cannot be related to any specific race or culture, but similar words appearing in the languages reveal the common ancestor: “Words which occur in a large number of Indo-European languages, and which cannot be shown to be loanwords, were presumably a part of the vocabulary of Proto-Indo-European” (Barber & Beal 2009:76). Swadesh proposed a method of dating the processes of development of language families- glottochronology. It is based on the idea that the language’s core vocabulary is highly resistant to change. Examples below show the words in Indo-European languages with corresponding meaning:

French	English	Danish	German	Cogation	
all	tout	all	al	alle	ABBB
animal	animal	animal	dyr	Tier	ABCC
ashes	cendre	ashes	aske	Asche	ABBB

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Design

The core of the study is a diachronic analysis of English adjectives in the metaphorical conceptualization of intelligence. The study provides a detailed corpus-based etymological analysis of adjectives with respect to semantic change over time. The corpus was searched manually. The main source of the diachronic part of the research was the online etymology dictionary (<http://www.etymonline.com/>).

The aim of the study is to establish whether in the initial conceptualization processes for particular personality traits there were some conceptual metaphors active in establishing the earliest meanings of the adjectives. Further examples of adjectives derived from the same conceptual metaphor will be offered and analyzed.

The adjectives are arranged in synonymic and antonymic clusters within the same metaphor. Each cluster of adjectives within one metaphor is organized in a table, representing the first occurrence of the meaning “intelligence/stupidity”, a dictionary entry and the year of the occurrence. In the final page of the research all adjectives are listed in a joined table according to their source domains. Target domains of this research are INTELLIGENCE and STUPIDITY. Source domains are LIGHT/DARKNESS, SHARPNESS/BLUNTNESS, SPEED/LACK OF SPEED, SENSES and ANIMALS. The semantic analysis of 21 adjectives includes denotative and metaphorical meanings with corresponding examples. The examples are followed by further elaborations of specific meanings. Due to the limited extent of this paper I have chosen variety over abundance in terms of number of the adjectives analyzed. Thus each conceptual metaphor has four or five different adjectives analyzed and the rest (equally important) are listed in the text.

5. Corpus Study

5.1. KNOWING IS SEEING (INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT)

Metaphor KNOWING IS SEEING connects visual perception to mental perception or understanding. Target domain KNOWING (knowledge, understanding, and intelligence) is understood through the concept of visual perception. We acquire knowledge of the world around us based on SEEING “I know you from somewhere, I must have seen you before”. Metaphor derived from KNOWING IS SEEING is INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT. It narrows the domain of SEEING to LIGHT EMISSION and gives more specific notion for UNDERSTANDING in terms of INTELLIGENCE. As Sullivan formulates SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE ARE LIGHT SOURCES and INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT-EMISSION (Sullivan 2006:6)

Light has always been perceived as a positive, life-preserving concept. The Sun supplies energy for plants to use in growing, fire provides warmth, discovery of electricity brought progress. During historical development of human thought, the period of Enlightenment revived education. It shed light to knowledge and reason. Therefore, it is not difficult to relate the concept of light to the concept of intelligence in metaphoric conceptualization.

The most frequently used adjectives for conceptualization of INTELLIGENCE come from the source domain of LIGHT. These are *bright*, *brilliant* in INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT and their antonyms *dull* and *dim* used in metaphoric formulation STUPIDITY IS DARKNESS. Source domain of LIGHT is originally related to emission of light and high saturation of lightness in colors.

Table 1. *Historical stages of semantic change (source domain of LIGHT/DARKNESS)*

Adjective	Meaning	Entry	Date
bright	quick-witted	<i>bright</i>	1741
brilliant	of wit, intelligence	<i>brilliant</i>	1779
dull	foolish, mad	<i>*dulaz</i>	Proto-Germanic
dim	stupid	<i>dim</i>	1892

5.1.1. BRIGHT

Adjective *bright* originates from Old English *bryht*, by metathesis from *beorht* denoting "bright; splendid; clear-sounding; beautiful; divine". These semantic units describe light, sound, beauty and godlike features. The meaning of Proto-Indo-European root **bhereg-* "to gleam, white" denotes emitting a high degree of light, and high saturation of lightness in colors. The same meaning extended to Proto-Germanic **berhta-* "bright". Figurative meaning "quick-witted" is from 1741. The term denotes "intelligent, quick to learn". This meaning is crucial for interpreting conceptual metaphors. (<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=bright>)

The *Action for Bright Children* is an association of parents for the education of gifted children, founded in 1972. It is clear that metaphorical meaning of the adjective *bright* is deeply rooted in everyday language. An example of semantic change occurred in 2003 when an entrepreneur Paul Geisert coined *bright* (noun) as positive-sounding umbrella term to describe various kinds of 'non-religious' and 'non-superstitious' people. Such notions leave possibilities for new figurative meanings and new metaphorical expressions.

(<http://www.websters-dictionaryonline.org/definitions/bright>)

(1) the moon is *bright* tonight

(2) a company that is always looking for *bright*, ambitious college graduates

(3) he always walks into work with a *bright* smile on his face

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/bright>)

Denotative meaning of *bright* in (1) 'giving off or reflecting much light' is non-metaphorical and etymologically subsisting in the language for the longest period of time. Metaphorical meaning of *bright* in (2) refers to 'having or showing quickness of mind'. Source domain of light is used to conceptualize intelligence. Concept of INTELLIGENCE is not solely related to humans but may also refer to abstract notions. Metaphorical expressions such as *bright idea*, *bright solution* belong to the same metaphor INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT. In (3) adjective *bright* signifies 'having or showing a good mood or disposition'. Source domain of light is used to comprehend happiness; HAPPYNESS IS LIGHT.

5.1.2. BRILLIANT

Online etymology dictionary traces the adjective *brilliant* to 1680s. The adjective originates from French meaning "sparkling, shining" in terms of brightness of light and colour, with present participle of *briller* 'to shine'. Italian adjective *brillare* "sparkle, whirl" originates from Vulgar Latin **berillare* "to shine like a beryl" with *berillus* denoting "precious stone". In reference to diamonds (1680s) it means a flat-topped cut invented in 17c. by Venetian cutter Vincenzo Peruzzi. Figurative meaning "of wit, intelligence" is from 1779. This meaning is crucial for interpreting conceptual metaphor INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=brilliant+&searchmode=none)

(1) a *brilliant* mind

(2) a *brilliant* solution to the problem

(3) a *brilliant* scientist

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/brilliant>)

Similar to the adjective *bright*, adjective *brilliant* is used in metaphorical expressions to describe both, abstract concepts (1,2) and people (3). A *brilliant* scientist is characterized by unusual and impressive intelligence. In order to characterize someone with this adjective, that person needs to surplus in excellence, mental ability and achievement. It is the same with abstract concepts in (1,2). Only extraordinary minds and solutions can be called brilliant. Everything else is satisfying or average.

The formulation of the metaphor for *brilliant* and *bright* is the same; INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT, but the degree of intelligence varies. Karen Sullivan explains that *brilliant* denotes higher degree of intelligence than *bright* "The adjective *bright* often refers to children or students, as in *bright child*, *bright boy*, or *bright pupil*. In contrast, *brilliant* is more likely to occur in *brilliant engineer*, *brilliant scholar* or *brilliant scientist*." (Sullivan, 2006:9)

5.2. STUPIDITY IS DARKNESS

Darkness is generally defined as absence of light. Throughout the history the concept of darkness was usually related to harmful and depressive events. In the Middle Ages literacy was solely under dominance of church, inaccessible to commoners. Therefore, the period was referred to as “Dark Ages”. Another example of historical conceptualization of darkness as death is the outbreak of pandemic plague that killed millions of people across Europe. The disease was named Black Death, directly linking two concepts in a threatening notion. Webster’s dictionary provides historical conceptualization for the adjective *black*: “In English heraldry, black means darkness, doubt, ignorance, and uncertainty” (<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/black>)

5.2.1. DULL

The earliest root from Proto-Indo-European **dheu* signifies "dust, vapor, smoke" thus indicating the presence of the CM in the very root of the word, i.e. in the original meaning of the adjective since the visibility is poor in the environment saturated by dust, vapor or smoke. The origin of metaphorical meaning for lack of intelligence developed gradually. In 1200 adjective *dull* denoted “stupid”, from Old English *dol* "dull-witted, foolish" or Middle Low German *dul* "slow-witted". Both originate from Proto-Germanic **dulaz* (in Old Saxon *dol* and Gothic *dwals* denoted “foolish”, in Old High German *tol* “mad, wild”). In the early 13th century another meaning came to use “blunt, not sharp”. The meaning “of color” originates from the early 15th century, “of pain” or “other sensations” from 1725. Sense of "boring" was first recorded 1580s.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=dull&searchmode=none)

(1) He really is *the dumbest* boy in the class.

(2) The importance of the discovery was lost on the *dull* minds of his colleagues.

(http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus/british/dull#dull_17)

Denotative meaning of *dull*, in the majority of dictionary entries, is “boring, not sharp, not bright in color/light”. Example sentences (1,2) depict the metaphorical use of *dull*. The meaning is “non-intelligent”, and Macmillan Dictionary thesaurus offers these synonyms for this metaphorical sense

for *dull*; silly, idiotic, unintelligent, simple-minded, slow-witted, slow, brainless, thick, empty-headed, stupid. (http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus/british/dull#dull_11)

5.2.2. DIM

Etymologically the adjective *dim* originates from Old English *dimm* "dark, gloomy, obscure". Proto-Germanic **dimbaz* extended to Old Norse *dimmr*, Old Frisian *dim*, and Old High German *timber*, all signifying "dark, black, somber". The adjective was not in use outside Germanic languages. Modern Age figurative meaning "stupid" is 1892.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=dim&searchmode=term)

- (1) a *dim* light beside the bed
 - (2) I always thought he was a little *dim*.
 - (3) a *dim-witted* child
 - (4) so *dense* he never understands anything I say to him
 - (5) a *dim* memory
- (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/dim>)

Denotative meaning of the adjective *dim* is "lacking in light" as in (1), while metaphorical meaning "slow to learn or understand; lacking intellectual acuity" is used to conceptualize lack of intelligence (2). Synonyms from the same source domain of LIGHT are *dim-witted* and *dense* as in (3,4) and both mean "stupid". *Dense* or *thick* substance blocks the light, i.e. creates darkness and thus indicates the same structural properties of the CM. While denotative meaning of *dense* is related to compactness and high mass, metaphorically *dense* and *thickheaded* are used to describe a person slow to understand. It is often used for people who do not understand jokes immediately. A *dim* memory (5) faded away, it is no longer clear in mind, thus obscure and faint, lacking enlightenment. Ability to retrieve an image or information stored in long-term memory is one of the notions of intelligence and thus a significant part of intelligence metaphor.

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/dim?s=t>)

5.3. INTELLIGENCE IS SHARPNESS

Sharpness is the quality of cutting objects and visual perception. The source domain SHARPNESS is a rich source for various metaphorical expressions for understanding INTELLIGENCE. Besides intelligence sharp can be used for flavor, music, fashion, wind or cold, etc. The focus of this research is the quality of cutting blades in interpretation of intelligence. Adjectives *sharp*, *acute*, *keen* describe high intellectual qualities in people.

(http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/sharp#sharp_41)

Table 2. *Historical stages of semantic change (source domain of SHARPNESS/ BLUNTNESS)*

Adjective	Meaning	Entry	Date
sharp	acute in intellect	<i>scearp</i>	Old English
acute	intelligent, cunning	<i>acutus</i>	Latin
keen	clever or wise	<i>cene</i>	around 1200
blunt	stupid	<i>blundra</i>	Late Middle Eng.
obtuse	stupid	<i>obtus</i>	1500

5.3.1. SHARP

In Old English adjective *scearp* denoted “cutting, keen, sharp” in terms of quality of cutting objects. In Proto-Germanic **skarpaz* had the same meaning as in Proto-Indo-European **sker* -“cut”. The figurative meaning "acute or penetrating in intellect or perception" is from Old English. This meaning is crucial for understanding target domain INTELLIGENCE in conceptual metaphor. The meaning "promptly" is first attested 1840. The musical meaning "half step above a given tone" is from 1570s.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=sharp&searchmode=term)

- (1) He's got a *sharp* sight.
- (2) Keep a *sharp* lookout.
- (3) The new high-definition TV offers *razor-sharp* pictures and digital sound.
- (4) Some of these kids are pretty *sharp* when it comes to maths.

Sharpness is a quality of cutting objects; a keen edge, or fine point. It is a first denotative meaning in most dictionary entries. The adjective *sharp* has several metaphorical meanings in describing human characteristics; a quality of perception, intellect and attention. In (1) a *sharp* sight describes visual perception, eyesight. In (2) *sharp* lookout means quick to notice, in terms of attention and good mental concentration. Sharp lookout can also signify “waiting for someone to make a mistake”. In (4) *sharp* denotes intelligence. A *sharp* kid is intelligent, but also resourceful and tricky. The sentence (3) is an example of sharpness of picture or sound.

(<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/sharp>)

5.3.2. ACUTE

In the late 14th century the adjective *acute* was used as an antonym for *chronic* disease or fever. The origin is from Latin *acutus* referring to sharp and pointed cutting objects, and also “shrill, penetrating, intelligent, cunning”. This meaning is metaphorical. In the early 15th the meaning was “sharp, irritating” and in 1727 “intense”.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=acute&searchmode=none)

(1) An *acute* ear infection.

(2) An *acute* triangle.

(3) *Acute* thinker.

(4) A man of *acute* eyesight, hearing, or feeling.

Acute can be related to severe illness or very strong pain. In (1) *acute* ear infection can become very bad very quickly. The antonym in medical application is *chronic*. An *acute* triangle (2) consists of three acute angles; measuring less than 90 degrees. The triangle is ending in a sharp end, as well as cutting objects that are not blunt, obtuse. In (3) *acute* has metaphorical meaning. An *acute* thinker is penetrating and clever, notices things very easily. Besides intelligence, acuteness can be used to describe sensibility; acting keenly on the senses; sharp; keen; intense as in (4).

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/acute>)

5.3.3. KEEN

In Old English *cene* described a “bold or brave” person, from Proto- Germanic **kan-* “be able to” and around 1200 a “clever or wise” person. It is obvious that the metaphorical meaning “intelligent” dates far back and it was used in different languages. Parallel to Old English, in Old Norse the adjective also denoted a “wise” person, in Middle Dutch *coene* “bold”, in Old High German *kuon* “pugnacious, strong” in German *kühn* “bold, daring.” The meaning “sharp” that refers to cutting objects, blades and edges, existed only in English. It was used first in the 13th century.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=keen&searchmode=none)

- (1) Lanced the boil with a *keen* scalpel.
- (2) Pilots with especially *keen* eyesight.
- (3) Readers who were *keen* enough to realize that the writer was being satirical.
- (4) That new digital camera sure is *keen*.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/keen>)

Denotative meaning of the adjective *keen* is related to sharpness of edges and cutting tools, as in (1). A *keen* scalpel has a thin edge, sharp enough to pierce through or cut different objects. Domain of SHARPNESS is a rich source for interpreting different concepts. In (2) VISUAL PERCEPTION is the target domain. Especially *keen* eyesight denotes ability to spot slight impressions or differences. Another metaphorical use has INTELLIGENCE for the target domain (3). *Keen* readers show quickness of mind, comprehend their readings easily and quickly. This metaphorical use is formulated in the INTELLIGENCE IS SHARPNESS metaphor. A keen brain is like a sharp blade, efficient and quick. We use this adjective to describe peoples’ penetrating mind and mental acuteness. A *keen* digital camera is of the very best kind, the latest high-tech gadgetry (4).

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/keen>)

5.4. STUPIDITY IS BLUNTNESS

Similar to sharpness, bluntness is the quality of blades and edges. The source domain BLUNTNESS is used to metaphorically express LOW INTELLIGENCE. The most commonly used adjectives are *blunt*, *obtuse*, *dull*, *thudding*, *dense*, *muted*, *etc.*

5.4.1. BLUNT

Denotative meaning of the adjective *blunt* was “dull, obtuse” around 1200. This meaning is similar as in Old Norse *blundra*. Meaning "directly" is from 1570s. Meaning "abrupt of speech or manner" is from 1580s. In the late 15 century, in Late Middle English the adjective was used to describe a person with low intelligence, “stupid”.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=blunt&searchmode=none)

- (1) A *blunt* knife won't open that package.
- (2) He is quite *blunt* about telling people what he doesn't like about them.
- (3) His isolation has made him *blunt* about the feelings of others.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/blunt>)

Example sentence in (1) represents denotative meaning of *blunt* dating back to the year 1200. It is a dull instrument “lacking sharpness of edge or point”. A meaning from 1570 is metaphoric and it describes direct, brief and rude speech or manner (2), without subtlety and evasion. Metaphorical use of *blunt* for target domain of INTELLIGENCE is represented in (3). In this example *blunt* means slow in perception and understanding the feelings of other people. Perceiving other peoples’ feelings is not the first definition of intelligence, but it belongs to the field of social skills. It is a faculty closely related to cognition and understanding, and therefore a part of metaphor related to intelligence.

5.4.2. OBTUSE

Adjective *obtus* originates from Middle French in the early 15th century. The Latin form of the lexeme is *obtus* and the meaning is “blunt, dull”. The past participle of *obtundere* is “to beat against, to make dull” as opposed to sharp or acute angles typical in knives and other sharp objects. It is related to Proto-Indo-European root **stud-* “to beat, strike, push, thrust”. The metaphorical meaning “stupid” is first found around the year 1500.

(1) It doesn't matter whether the angle joining them is *obtuse* or acute.

(2) He was either normally stupid or being deliberately *obtuse*.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/obtuse>)

As well as other adjectives from the domain of SHARPNESS, *obtuse* has several different metaphorical uses. Denotative meaning concerns the lack of sharpness in angles. *Obtuse* angle is an angle between 90 and 180 degrees (1). Objects that are not sharp, acute or pointed are also called *obtuse*. It is also used with indistinctively felt pain or perceived sound. In example sentence (2) *obtuse* has metaphorical meaning “stupid”. It is used for describing lack of ability to absorb ideas immediately. Obtuse people need to hear explanations more than once, they are slow to learn or understand. A great example of metaphorical use of *obtuse* for stupidity comes from A. Pavlovich Chekhov's “Tsars and slaves, the intelligent and the obtuse, publicans and pharisees all have an identical legal and moral right”

(http://quotes.dictionary.com/Tsars_and_slaves_the_intelligent_and_the_obtuse)

5.5. INTELLIGENCE IS SPEED

Speed is related to movement, rate of motion and ongoing activity. Speed is frequently related to the concept of efficiency. In figurative expressions, speed or the lack of speed is used to describe concepts related to the functioning of human mind. In the metaphorical formulation INTELLIGENCE IS SPEED, speed is the source domain for understanding quickness of mind. The most frequently used adjectives are *quick-witted*, *agile*, *nimble*, *etc.*

Table 3. *Historical stages of semantic change (source domain of SPEED/LACK OF SPEED)*

Adjective	Meaning	Entry	Date
quick	intelligent	<i>quick</i>	1520
agile	intelligent	<i>agile</i>	Modern Age
nimble	quick to grasp	<i>næmel</i>	Old English
slow	not clever	<i>slaw</i>	Old English
retarded	mentally slow	<i>retarded</i>	1895

5.5.1. QUICK

The Proto-Indo –European root **qwiwo-* denotes “to live”. The same meaning extended to Proto-Germanic **kwikwaz* and later to Old English *cwic* denoting “living, alive”. The adjective existed parallel in several languages having the same meaning. In Old Frisian *quik*, Old Norse *kvikr*, Old High German *quec* “lively” and German *keck* “bold”. The figurative meanings appeared later. Sense of “lively, swift, full of life” developed in 1300. The meaning related to intelligence appeared in 1520.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=quick&searchmode=none)

- (1) His *quick* reaction prevented an accident.
- (2) After the battle, there was a hurried accounting of *the quick and the dead*.
- (3) A *quick* lad, he immediately caught on to how the machinery operated.
- (4) The *quick-witted* child easily figured out the trick to making the toy work
- (5) A *quick-tempered* man who invariably utters threats at any kids who wander into his yard.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/quick>)

The first example represents the denotative meaning of quick. A *quick reaction* is a swift response, movement, and speed in this case prevents an unpleasant result. The need for *quick* reactions leaves no time for thinking things through. Therefore this example is non-metaphorical. If we accomplish things rapidly we are efficient, but not necessarily intelligent. In (2) *the quick and the dead* is an

expression denoting life or death, and it is often misused for speed. *Quick* means reckless with death as a result. The phrase has biblical origin, from King James' translation of the *Apostles' Creed*. (<http://public.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/quick.html>)

In (3,4) the use of *quick* represents the metaphorical use for intelligence. It represents quickness of mind, and the ability to understand easily and use that knowledge immediately. Speed and ability are related to some aspects of intelligence and their use in metaphors is habitual. In example sentences (4,5) *quick* is an element of compound adjective and in both sentences it is used metaphorically. The meaning of the compound in (5) is easily irritated and quick to react. Synonyms are *irritable*, *short-tempered*, *hot-tempered* or *hotheaded*.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/quick?show=0&t=1336844292>)

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/quick-tempered>)

5.5.2. AGILE

The adjective *agile* developed directly from Latin *agilis* denoting “nimble, quick” from *agere* “to move, drive”. In 1580, in Middle Frisian *agile* had the same meaning. Metaphorical meanings were coined in Modern Age.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=agile&searchmode=none)

(1) The ferret is an *agile* hunter.

(2) sleek and *agile* as a gymnast

(3) an *agile* mind

(<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/agile>)

In examples (1,2) the meaning of *agile* is the one taken from Latin “quick movement”. It represents the ability to move quickly and easily, the faculty of quick motions in the limbs. For that reason the term “agility” is often used in sports. Dog agility is a sport in which a dog runs through various obstacles with the guidance of its handler. Basic requirements are accuracy and speed, both descriptive elements of the adjective *agile*.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/agility>)

In the third example, *agile* suggests quick thinking and mental acuteness. It represents metaphorical use of the adjective from the source domain of SPEED, for understanding INTELLIGENCE. A person with an *agile* mind easily solves problems with new ideas. Macmillan's

dictionary gives synonymous expressions for metaphorical meaning of agile: *intelligent, wise, brilliant, clever, bright, brainy, discerning, clear-sighted, no/nobody's fool, have a good head on your shoulders*, etc.

(http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus/british/agile#agile_5)

5.5.3. NIMBLE

Proto-Indo-European root **nem-* denoted “to divide, distribute, allot”. Proto Germanic **nemanan* “to take” extended to parallel languages; Old Dutch, Gothic *niman*, Old Norse *nema*, Old Frisian *nima*, Germanic *nehmen*. Middle English *nymel*, earlier *nemel*, Old English *næmel* denoted “capable, quick to grasp”. This meaning is related to intelligence.

(1) Her *nimble* fingers make knitting look so easy.

(2) Possessing a *nimble* wit, he always has a cutting comeback for any intended insult thrown his way.

(3) She has a *nimble* mind and can improvise in any situation.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/nimble>)

(4) *nimble* chopsticks (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/nimble>)

In the first example *nimble* has the same meaning as *agile* and *quick*, denoting “fast movement or action”. It is the denotative meaning suggesting speed, and the ability to move with ease and in a lively manner. It is frequently used for body parts (*nimble fingers, legs, limbs, feet*) denoting flexibility, or in comparisons with animals (*as nimble as a spider, gazelle, deer, etc.*)

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/nimble>)

The metaphorical use of *nimble* presented in (2,3) suggests intelligence. In (2) *nimble wit* denotes quick thinking and response to insults. The person is clever, comprehends quickly and reacts immediately. An ability to improvise is one of the skills related to intelligence as in *nimble mind* (3). The synonyms are *alert, brainy, bright, brilliant, clever, exceptional, fast, hyper-intelligent, keen, nimble, quick, quick-witted, sharp, sharp-witted, smart, super-smart, ultra-smart*. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/nimble>)

Nimble chopsticks (4) are related to Chinese culture. In Chinese language, the word for chopsticks originally meant "quick sticks" or "nimble ones."

(<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/nimble>)

5.6. STUPIDITY IS LACK OF SPEED

Similar to speed, lack of speed is also used for movement and velocity. In metaphorical expressions LOW SPEED is a source domain for interpreting STUPIDITY. The most frequently used adjectives are *slow* and *stolid*.

5.6.1. SLOW

Proto Germanic **slæwaz* had the same meaning in historically parallel languages. In Old Saxon *sleu*, Middle Dutch *slee*, Old High German *sleo* the meaning was "blunt, dull" as well as in North Germanic languages (Old Norse *sljor*, Danish *sløv*, Swedish *slö*). Meaning "taking a long time" is from the early 13th century. Meaning "not clever, inactive, sluggish" is from Old English *slaw*.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=slow&searchmode=none)

(1) a *slow* train

(2) a *slow* pace

(3) a *slow* child.

(4) It's been a *slow* afternoon.

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/slow>)

In example (1) *slow* has denotative meaning of movement with little or less speed than usual, while in (2) *slow pace* denotes lack of speed. Any activity described as *slow* takes a long interval of time in order to be performed. It is the same with a long journey on a *slow train* or a walk at a *slow pace*. In the next example the meaning is not related to speed. A *slow child* (3) has dull perception and understanding; it is mentally dull or unintelligent. This meaning is metaphorically suggesting STUPIDITY. A *slow afternoon* (4) is related to slow passing of time. It can also stand for "dull, uninteresting" afternoon, with no motivation to perform any activities.

5.6.2. RETARDED

The past participle form of adjective *retarded* developed from the Latin verb *retardare*. In the 1788 the noun *retardation* denoted “delay”. The adjective *retarded* was attested in 1895 standing for “mentally slow” in the sense of child development. In 1970 the meaning became derogatory “retarded person”.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=retarded&searchmode=none)

(1) an herbicide to *retard* the growth of weeds

(2) a *retarded* child

(3) he started a school for *the retarded*

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/retarded>)

In (1) *retard* is used as a verb for slowing down the process of growth. *Retarded* is often used for delayed movement or process, occurring or developing later than desired or expected. A *retarded* child (2) is characterized by mental retardation with subnormal intellectual functioning. A medical meaning was substituted for derogatory meaning denoting stupid. In (3) *the retarded* is used for mentally retarded persons collectively.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/retarded>)

5.7. INTELLIGENCE/STUPIDITY IS SENSES

Our knowledge of the world that surrounds us is based on information gained through senses. Because of that connection it is not difficult to conceptualize intelligence with the help of adjectives related to vision (*perceptive, blind, wise*), hearing (*dumb*), taste (*sage, pudding-headed*), touch (*subtle*), smell (*sagacious*). Some of the most interesting are presented in the table:

Table 4. *Historical stages of semantic change (source domain of SENSES)*

Adjective	Meaning	Entry	Date
perceptive	to grasp with mind	<i>percept</i>	1650
sagacious	of quick perception	<i>sagaci(ty)</i> + <i>-ous</i>	1600
subtle	skilled, clever	<i>sutel, soutil</i>	1300
blind	unintelligent	<i>blind</i>	Old English

5.7.1. PERCEPTIVE

The adjective *perceptive* originates from Latin *percept-*, past participle of *percipere* "obtain, gather" and metaphorically, "to grasp with the mind". The verb was introduced in 1300 through the Anglo-French verb *parceif* and Old French *perçoivre*. The adjective is from 1650.

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/perceptive>)

(1) a *perceptive* eye

(2) a *perceptive* scholar

(3) A *perceptive* therapist was able to discover what was really troubling the youth.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perceptive?show=0&t=1337198370>)

In (1) *perceptive* denotes "responsive to sensory stimuli". In terms of senses, *perceptive* is used for vision. We rely on visual perception to get information about the world around us. In (2,3) the meaning is metaphorical "able to understand things quickly and easily". In the example sentences *perceptive* comes from the source domain of SENSES to depict INTELLIGENCE. A *perceptive therapist* is able to quickly notice and understand the problem.

4.7.2. SAGACIOUS

The adjective persists in English language since 1600, from Latin *sagacem* "quality of being acute". It is related to *sagacity*, "of quick perception" and *sagire* "perceive keenly". The meaning is related to animals' sense of smell. A proof of that can be found in Proto-Indo-European root **sag-*

"to track down, trace, seek" and Old English *secan* "to seek". In 17th and 18th century the adjective was mostly used for sense of smell in animals.

http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=sagacious&searchmode=none

(1) as a *sagacious* hound

(2) a *sagacious* mind

(3) an astute and *sagacious* statesman

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/sagacious>)

Humans have fully developed senses, but in some animal species some senses are more developed than others, and more developed than in humans. In example (1) *sagacious* is used for the sense of smell in dogs. Canine's sense of smell is 40 times greater than human's, "quick of scent, following the scent". These meanings are also related to P.I.E. **sag*- "to seek". The meanings "to seek" and "quick of scent" intertwine in describing hound's ability to trace relying on the sense of smell. Humans rely on canine sense of smell in rescuing and drug trafficking prevention. Besides the olfactory sense, *sagacious* denotes common sense. In describing human qualities, examples (2,3) indicate the use of adjective *sagacious* for conceptualization of INTELLIGENCE. A *sagacious statesman* is insightful and wise, skillful in statecraft or management.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/sagacious>)

5.7.3. SUBTLE

The adjective *subtle* originates from L. *subtilis* "fine, thin, delicate, finely woven" from *sub* "under" + *-tilis*, from *tela* "web" and *texere* "to weave". In Old French *soutil*, and in Middle Ages (1300) *sutel*, *soutil* was used to refer to things "of thin consistency" and craftsmen denoting "skilled, clever". Most non-material senses were present by late 14c.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=subtle&searchmode=none)

(1) a *subtle* diaper, soft to the skin

(2) a *subtle* flavor of ginger

(3) a *subtle* understanding

(4) a *subtle* liar

(<http://www.definitions.net/definition/subtle>)

The *sense of touch* helps us learn about our world by feeling it and learning the size, *texture* and shape of things as in (1). Babies' skin is sensitive and *subtle* and *soft* diaper is crucial to prevent rash. These two adjectives are obligatory in diaper commercials. Nowadays, besides for touch, *subtle* is used for the sense of smell and taste. It is related to fluid and fragrance expressing delicacy and refinement, and fineness and mildness as in (2). Expressions in (3,4) refer to intelligence. A *subtle* mind is capable of making fine distinctions, while *subtle* understanding is characterized by "mental acuteness or penetration". It is clear that one term used for various senses can be used to describe various distinctions related to "the functioning of mind". Similar to these examples, *subtle* liar is cunning, skillful and crafty.

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/subtle?s=t>)

5.7.4. BLIND

The Proto-Indo-European root **bhel-* denoted "to shine, flash, burn". The term in West Germanic *blinda* (Germanic *blind*, Old Norse *blindr*, Gothic *blinds* "blind") integrated through the notion "to make cloudy, deceive". In Old English *blind* "blind, sightless" also "dark, enveloped in darkness, obscure; unintelligent, lacking mental perception". Meaning "confused" is older than "closed at one end" as in *blind alley*. Another meaning is from 1840 "doing something without seeing it first" similar to flying a plane without instruments.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=BLIND&searchmode=none)

(1) *Blind* and sighted children attend the same school.

(2) As *blind* as a bat.

(3) *blind* to a lover's faults

(4) *blind* reasoning

(5) *Blind* leading the *blind*

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/blind>)

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/blind>)

Examples (1,2) have denotative meaning “unable to see”. Example (2) is a simile used to express visual impairment for people. Although bats are not *blind*, their vision reduces when they enter a well lighted room. For that reason this expression is often used in literature to imply blindness. Sometimes we choose to be blind, or we deliberately live in denial, as implied in next sentences. A person *blind* to the lover’s faults / turns a *blind* eye to the lover’s faults (3). Both expressions have same meaning “unable or unwilling to perceive or understand” or “to ignore something and pretend you do not see it”. If we do not choose to be blind deliberately, but have *blind* reasoning (4) that suggests lack of intelligence. People with *blind* reasoning find many things difficult to comprehend and pieces of puzzle are always missing from the picture. An interesting idiomatic expression is related to this meaning of “unintelligent”. In (5) *blind leading the blind* describes a situation in which the people who are giving advice or instructions do not know more than the people they are trying to help. A “stupid” person is giving “stupid” advice to another “stupid” person.

(<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/blind>)

5.8. INTELLIGENCE/STUPIDITY IS ANIMAL

Animal world, behavior, features, habits, differences and similarities to humans represent a rich source for metaphorical use on daily basis. Some of the adjectives related to specific animals are *aquiline*, *birdlike*, *bovine*, *canine*, *duck*, *equine*, *feline*, *foxy*, *horsey*, *leonine*, etc. All living creatures perform activities related to survival, reproduction, socialization and entertainment, and their faculties and behavior inspired the use of adjectives for understanding human INTELLIGENCE and STUPIDITY.

Table 5. *Historical stages of semantic change (source domain of ANIMALS)*

Adjective	Meaning	Entry	Date
foxy	crafty, cunning	<i>fox+-y</i>	1520
brute	irrational	<i>brute</i>	1530
cuckoo	crazy	<i>cuckoo</i>	1918

5.8.1. FOXY

Proto-Indo-European root **puk-* and Proto-Germanic *fuh-* stand for “tail”. The same meaning extended to West Germanic **fukhs* and Old English *fox*. Metaphoric meaning “clever person” is from early 13th century, “crafty, cunning” from 1520, sense “sexually attractive woman” is recorded in 1895 and “drunk” is from 1610. Meaning “of colors, stains, tints” is from 18c.

(1) a *foxy* scheme

(2) What a *foxy* dame!

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/foxy>)

Besides intelligent, *foxy* often stands for “marked by skill in deception”, as in (1). A *foxy* person is good at tricking or cheating people and easily comes up with *foxy* schemes for that purpose. In this sense *foxy* is used to describe people’s behavior, actions or ideas based on intelligence, resourcefulness and dishonesty, comparing their behavior to that of the real animal, famous for its cleverness and cunningness.. Sentence (2) can have two meanings. One is “sexually attractive”, usually of female sexuality, and the other is related to fashion “stylish, modern outfit”. Color is an integral component of fashion so another possible meaning is “having the color of a fox; of a yellowish or reddish brown color”.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/foxy>)

5.8.2. BRUTE

One of the first meanings of *brute* was related to stupidity. In Latin *brutus* denoted “heavy, dull, stupid” and the Proto-Indo-European root **gwer-* “heavy”. The meaning extended to Middle French *brut* “coarse, brutal, raw, crude” and before reaching English the meaning expanded to “of lower animals”. In early 15th century *brute* stands for “of or belonging to animals”. Metaphorical use related to human beings is from 1530, the noun is from 1610.

(http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=brute&searchmode=none)

(1) *brute* force

(2) *brute* beast

(3) A man of *brute* instinct, he deals with conflict the only way he knows how—by physical force.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/brute>)

All examples describe beastlike behavior in humans. An expression “to bring out the *brute* in someone” with *brute* connoting “savage, insensitive, irrational” describes all examples. In (3) human behavior is compared to instinctive reactions of animals in conflicts. In such situation a man’s physical power predominates over the mental power and reasoning. This example represents metaphorical use related to animal instincts in humans. *Brute* instinct and use of physical force represent lack of INTELLIGENCE.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/brute>)

5.8.3. CUCKOO

A noun *cuckoo* came from Old French *cocu* “echoic of male bird’s mating cry”. Figurative meaning of American English adjective (1918) is “crazy” and of noun (1580) is “stupid person”. Cuckoo clock is from 1789. Some historical data record the use of *cuckoo* for fear or adultery. (http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=cuckoo&searchmode=none)

(1) A *cuckoo* woman who wandered around town carefully gathering up useless trash.

(2) He offered a completely *cuckoo* suggestion for using the defunct strip mall.

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/cuckoo>)

The noun *cuckoo* represents a bird belonging to *Cuculus* genera. Figurative meaning is “stupid”. An adjective is used only metaphorically. In the first sentence *cuckoo* stands for “crazy, with abnormal or sick state of mind” perhaps from the bird’s tendency to repeat something incessantly and steal of other birds’ nests and eggs. It is often related to insanity, madness or dementia and it is much stronger term than in the second example. The adjective is normally used to describe a person whose behavior indicates abnormalities. In the second sentence *cuckoo* stands for lack of good sense or good judgment. It represents metaphorical use for conceptualization of STUPIDITY. *Cuckoo*

suggestion is a bad idea, with these synonyms; absurd, brainless, cockeyed, bubbleheaded, tomfool, featherheaded, fool, harebrained, half-witted, jerky, nutty, kooky, loony, silly, weak-minded.

(<http://www.websters-dictionary-online.org/definitions/cuckoo>)

Table 6. *Historical stages of semantic change (target domain of INTELLIGENCE/STUPIDITY)*

Source domain	Adjective	Meaning	Entry	Date
LIGHT	bright	quick-witted	<i>bright</i>	1741
LIGHT	brilliant	intelligence	<i>brilliant</i>	1779
DARKNESS	dull	foolish, mad	<i>*dulaz</i>	Proto-Germanic
DARKNESS	dim	stupid	<i>dim</i>	1892
SHARPNESS	sharp	acute in intellect	<i>scearp</i>	Old English
SHARPNESS	acute	intelligent	<i>acutus</i>	Latin
SHARPNESS	keen	clever, wise	<i>cene</i>	around 1200
BLUNTNESS	blunt	stupid	<i>blundra</i>	Late Middle Eng.
BLUNTNESS	obtuse	stupid	<i>obtus</i>	1500
SPEED	quick	intelligent	<i>quick</i>	1520
SPEED	agile	intelligent	<i>agile</i>	Modern Age
SPEED	nimble	quick to grasp	<i>næmel</i>	Old English
LACK OF SPEED	slow	not clever	<i>slaw</i>	Old English
LACK OF SPEED	retarded	mentally slow	<i>retarded</i>	1895
SENSES/VISION	perceptive	to grasp with mind	<i>percept</i>	1650
SENSES/SMELL	sagacious	of quick perception	<i>sagaci(ty) + -ous</i>	1600
SENSES/TOUCH	subtle	skilled, clever	<i>sutel, soutil</i>	1300
SENSES/VISION	blind	unintelligent	<i>blind</i>	Old English
ANIMALS	foxy	crafty, cunning	<i>fox+-y</i>	1520
ANIMALS	brute	irrational	<i>brute</i>	1530
ANIMALS	cuckoo	crazy	<i>cuckoo</i>	1918

6. The Application of Conceptual Metaphor in English Teaching

6.1. Introduction

Language learning does not refer to merely conventional language learning in terms of lexical items, grammar rules and phonetics. Therefore figurative language, idiomatic expressions, metaphors, political correctness as well as cultural aspects belong to the learning sphere of the language classroom. Metaphorical awareness is of significant linguistic interest in order to develop new approaches to vocabulary learning and teaching. The scope of linguistic research may comprise metaphorical competence and vocabulary acquisition. “Various studies have shown that second language learners can benefit significantly from activities that heighten their awareness of metaphor. The majority of these studies have investigated the impact of metaphor awareness on the *pace* and *depth* of learners’ vocabulary acquisition” (Kövecses 2010:239)

6.2. The development of metaphoric competence

Contrary to earlier beliefs, recent studies have proved that children possess figurative thought and are capable of understanding and producing figurative language. They are exposed to metaphorical language from the early childhood in forms of nursery rhymes, songs, riddles, tales and jokes. Primary school classroom example shows how they make sense of concepts such as *atmosphere* through the notion of “a blanket of gasses above us” (Rodriguez & Moreno 2004:5). The first steps in metaphoric conceptualization with young learners is related to familiar source domains such as their BODY, FOOD, OBJECTS and some easily comprehensible concepts as HAPPINESS and SADNESS (Rodriguez & Moreno 2004:5).

As the learners grow up, their field of interest changes. Therefore with advanced learners metaphorical awareness and competence continues developing through cartoons, comics and films. The state of being angry is generally depicted by steam coming out of the character’s ears or by the explosion of their head, representing the metaphor ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER. (Rodriguez & Moreno 2004:6). Based on these interpretations many researchers believe that conceptual metaphor should be an integral part of language acquisition from the early age.

A prominent linguist Howard Gardner conducted many studies in the field of metaphoric competence in early language development. Gardner was encouraged by the fact that metaphors are frequently noted in the speech of preschool children. Children's capacity for poetic or metalinguistic usage is generally considered as the last facet of language to develop. (Gardner 1974:1) His results indicate that younger children can succeed on a metaphoric task and that pre-adolescents are already performing at an adult level.

6.3. Conceptual metaphor in EFL

Application of conceptual metaphor in English language classrooms (EFL) is by function closely related to vocabulary learning. According to Boers the term vocabulary denotes both, words and phrases and that is the key to attaining high level of proficiency (2008:4). The learning process should include a diachronic perspective. Such analysis teaches the learners to appreciate the nature of words and phrases: "Etymological explanations of the meaning and/or form of words can serve as a type of intra-linguistic motivation and thus as a pathway for semantic and/or structural elaboration" (Boers 2008:24).

6.4. Research design

The research was conducted in the primary school Vladimir Nator in Đakovo in May 2012. Six eight grade learners of English, German and Hungarian language participated in the research. The learners had been learning English since the first grade and their achievements are correspondent to the A2 level of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

The aim of the research is to establish the connection of teaching conceptual metaphor in a foreign language class and the development of metaphorical competence on the receptive level. It is based on the assumption that the learners are capable of understanding figurative meaning and make distinction between connotative and denotative meaning of the same lexical item. The testing was based on three written tasks with different levels of difficulty. All written tasks are completed individually and elaborated orally. Cooperative work was introduced in discussions, elicitations of meanings and analysis.

The research was organized in three stages. The first stage was set to test their metaphorical competence on the receptive level without a prior input related to conceptual metaphor. The second stage was set around the language input and teaching conceptual metaphor with mind-mapping, example sentences and elicitation of meaning. The final step was testing the learners' metaphorical competence after the input. The lecture was closed with a brief discussion on the learners' view of conceptual metaphor in everyday language.

7. Procedure

7.1. Stage 1 (before input)

At the beginning of the lesson I wrote the word METAPHOR on the blackboard and asked the learners to give as many associations as possible to the given word. Some of the answers were related to the use of metaphors (*poem, reading, jokes*) and some were defining the term (*meaning something else, double meaning*). The learners mostly perceived metaphor as a literary mechanism. Only the answer *joke* can be related to the use of metaphor in everyday language.

Without further elaboration I distributed the first task and instructed the learners to organize the sentences in two groups according to their meaning. The aim of this task is to check the learners' ability to recognize different meanings of the same adjectives. The example sentences have adjectives *bright* or *brilliant*. Some sentences are related to their denotative meaning and in some the adjectives are used metaphorically, describing intelligence (INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT).

The moon is bright tonight.

Do you have any bright ideas?

He'd polished the table to a brilliant shine.

She is the brightest pupil in the class.

The following morning dawned bright and warm.

Our company is always looking for bright, ambitious college graduates.

He blinked in the bright sunlight.

What a brilliant idea!

She has one of the most brilliant minds in the country.

The child had beautiful red hair and brilliant blue eyes.

After completing the task, the learners read the sentences elaborating on the context and the meaning of each adjective in the table. I asked them to sum up in one word the overall meaning of each column and write the key words above the sentences. In that way, the learners set the source and target domains for the metaphor INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT. This concluded the first stage of the research and successfully set the framework for the theoretical input.

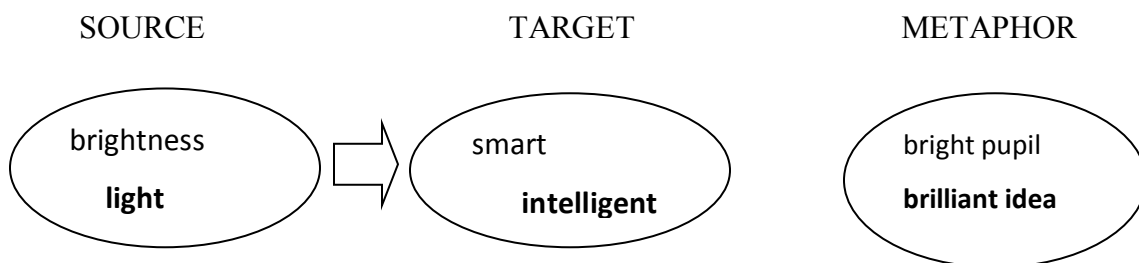
7.2. Stage 2 (input)

In choosing the methods and teaching strategies for conceptual metaphor my first choice was eliciting. The technique was used to elicit denotative, figurative and overall meanings of lexical items and sentences. The learners relied on their vocabulary and global knowledge. As an introduction to the theory of conceptual metaphor I used the sentences from task 1. The learners are familiar with the content and the context of the examples. I drew two circles with source and target domains on the board and asked the learners to write in key words related to metaphorical meanings of sentences in task 1. Individual learners analyzed the sentences with the formula INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT. They set the target and the source domains (scheme 1) and discussed the meaning of the sentences. Eliciting was successful; the learners recognized LIGHT as the source and INTELLIGENCE as “another meaning of bright”.

Scheme 1. Theoretical input

Source domain (denotative/overall meaning of the adjectives in task 1)

Target domain (metaphorical meaning of the adjectives in task 1)



7.3. Stage 3 (after input)

The next stage included more difficult exercises with six different source domains (*sharpness*, *bluntness*, *speed*, *lack of speed*, *darkness*, *animal*) in conceptualization of intelligence and stupidity. The task was to organize the sentences according to their denotative and metaphorical meaning in two columns of the table. The first column is provided for metaphorical meanings of intelligence and stupidity. The task is to identify the source domains for each metaphorical example. The domains were predetermined, so the learners were tested on the receptive level. All adjectives were italicized in order to help them identify the corresponding domains. The second column was provided for examples with denotative meaning and the task was to recognize the meaning and the domain.

A *sharp* knife makes a clean cut.

The police said he had been hit with a *blunt* instrument.

A *quick* lad, he immediately realized how the machinery operated.

Ferrari is the *fastest* car in the world.

He is deliberately *obtuse*, I just know it!

This herbicide will *retard* the growth of plants.

He offered a completely *cuckoo* solution to our problem!

I always thought he was a little *dim*.

The third task was to paraphrase metaphorical expressions without changing the meaning. Although the task is productive, it is not productive in terms of metaphorical competence. The aim is to check understanding of figurative language. The learners worked in pairs in order to exchange and discuss different ideas and possibilities. Afterwards each expression was discussed orally.

The lesson was concluded with questions about conceptual metaphors. The learners compared some of the concepts applicable in L1 and realized the similarities. They stated that these similarities helped them understand concepts in the target language. They discussed the usefulness of metaphoric expression. Individual learners discussed the frequency of use of metaphors, and compared literary metaphors to everyday metaphoric expressions.

8. Data analysis and interpretation

The first task is based on the assumption that the learners are capable of understanding figurative meaning and make distinction between connotative and denotative meaning of the same lexical item. The learners worked individually, because pair work or any other form of cooperative work reduces the measurability of the results in metaphoric competence. There were two possibilities for mistakes; misinterpretation of metaphorical expressions and misreading of the task. Only two of six learners (34%) misinterpreted two of ten sentences in the first task (*the child had beautiful red hair and brilliant blue eyes/smart, she has one of the most brilliant minds in the country/light*). The rest of the learners (66%) successfully recognized the meanings and correctly completed the whole task. These results prove that eight grade learners are capable of understanding metaphorical expressions and figurative meaning.

The next task was to sum up in one word the overall meaning of each column and write the key words above the sentences (determine the domains). The task was performed orally. The solution was achieved by examining the context of each sentence by means of elicitation. Learners gradually reached the conclusions and offered the correct terms without any theoretical or metalinguistic knowledge.

After clarification of the two domains one of the learners used the example *she is the brightest pupil in the class* to illustrate conceptualization. The learner explained that *bright* in this example does not stand for light. The term is used metaphorically, meaning *smart*. The learner noticed and stated that in the non-metaphorical example *the moon is bright tonight* the adjective *bright* stands for light, and the sentence has no other possible interpretations.

The next step was introducing the metaphoric formulation INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT. One of the learners noticed that it is related to all metaphors in task 1. The learner read the sentences used

metaphorically and compared the adjectives *bright* and *brilliant* to “light bulbs” of mind. This stage of the research resulted in the conclusion that the learners had no difficulty understanding the links between the concepts. They commented on the familiar notions and concepts in L1 and their everyday use of metaphors.

Prior to task 2 I introduced the new vocabulary (denotative meaning). Some learners were unfamiliar with the words *obtuse* and *cuckoo*. The aim of task 2 is testing the learners’ conceptualization after the theoretical input. The task was difficult because it had six different target domains. The domains were preset, so the learners had no problems in conceptualization. All learners (100%) correctly organized the sentences by meaning and set the corresponding domains. This result confirms the connection between teaching conceptual metaphor and the development of metaphorical competence on the receptive level.

During the analysis of task 2, the learners commented on the adjective *retarded*. They were familiar with the denotative meaning, but the meaning “to slow down” was revealed from the context. This leads to the conclusion that teaching metaphors as an integrative part of the EFL lesson contributes to vocabulary learning and understanding. This stage of the research confirmed the EFL learners’ metaphorical competence, the ability to understand figurative language, the ability to cognate, conceptualize, and learn new vocabulary from metaphorical contexts.

Task 3 was designed to check understanding of specific meanings by paraphrasing the metaphoric expressions. The learners restated the phrases by using synonyms. Correct paraphrase demonstrated understanding of connotative concepts. After completing the task the learners compared their sentences in pairs and elaborated on the meanings. The most difficult phrase to paraphrase and conceptualize was *blind leading the blind*. The learners discussed in pairs and commented on the senselessness of the utterance. I encouraged them to come up with another meaning for *blind*, and to change the verb *leading* to *explaining*. All the paraphrases resulted with the target domain STUPIDITY.

The final stage of my research was a brief discussion and feedback from the learners. My metaphor related questions were addressing the difficulty, frequency of the use, fondness of figurative language, understanding and new vocabulary. The learners reached a consensus on several ideas:

1. Conceptual metaphor is interesting because it is not related to literature.
2. We use it on a daily basis (L1) to express love/hate, to sound smart, etc.
3. It is not difficult to understand the figurative meaning.
4. This class was interesting and we learned some new words today.

Based on these results it is noteworthy that conceptual metaphor should become an integrative part of EFL teaching in order to establish better perception of concepts and polysemy in foreign language learning. Metaphoric awareness influences communicative skills, cross-cultural awareness and linguistic universalities.

19. Conclusion

Intelligence and stupidity are human traits frequently used in everyday communication. Adjectives describing these traits are often metaphorical and come from different domains. This research study analyzed adjectives from the source domains LIGHT/DARKNESS, SHARPNESS/BLUNTNESS, SPEED/LACK OF SPEED, SENSES and ANIMALS in conceptualizations of target domains INTELLIGENCE and STUPIDITY. The scope of the research was the change of meaning in the specific period of time. The study provides etymological analysis with respect to semantic change, connotative and denotative meanings of adjectives explained and used in sentences. Antonymic and synonymic adjectives are listed in a same metaphoric formulation and organized in a table. The results in the table display the first known metaphorical use of the adjectives, along with the dictionary entry.

Prior to the research and analysis, the theoretical framework was set. Linguistic research and the features of conceptual metaphor, comparisons of kinds of metaphors, ways of cognition, mappings and relations of concepts make an important introduction to conceptual metaphor. A brief history of the English language deals with the development, influences and far-reaching changes the English language underwent. It is a theoretical introduction to the main research.

The final research deals with the application of conceptual metaphor in EFL. The aim was to test the learners' ability to understand metaphorical expressions prior and after the theoretical input. The results proved their metaphorical competence before the input, and correct conceptualization and mappings after the input. The overall conclusion is that metaphors are amusing, powerful, and feed our brain.

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11. Summary and key words

This paper deals with conceptual metaphor in three ways. The first is the theoretical analysis and the importance of conceptual metaphor in contemporary cognitive linguistics and everyday interaction. Secondly, it provides a diachronic research of meaning change with adjectives employed in conceptual metaphor. Thirdly, it offers some possibilities of using conceptual metaphor in language teaching and learning.

The diachronic corpus study tracks back semantic change in adjectives used for conceptualization of INTELLIGENCE/STUPIDITY. The source of information for this diachronic research is the online etymology dictionary (<http://www.etymonline.com/>), as well as thesauri, dictionaries of synonyms and quotation sources. The research tracks back changes in meaning for adjectives describing intelligence and stupidity in conceptual metaphors. The semantic analysis of 21 adjectives includes denotative and metaphorical meanings with corresponding examples.

The final research tested the development of metaphorical competence on the receptive level (A2 CEFR level of eight grade learners). The testing was based on three written tasks with different aims and levels of difficulty. Testing their metaphorical competence prior to theoretical input resulted in 66% accurately solved tasks. After the input 100% of the learners solved the task completely and accurately. The lesson was dynamic and interesting, and their feedback on conceptual metaphor is positive and encouraging.

Key words: conceptual metaphor, connotative meaning, adjectives, semantic change, intelligence/stupidity, metaphoric competence, conceptualization, language learning

12. Appendix. Tasks with conceptual metaphors included in the research

Task 1.

1. Organize these sentences in a table according to their similarities.

The moon is bright tonight.

Do you have any bright ideas?

He'd polished the table to a brilliant shine.

She is the brightest pupil in the class.

The following morning dawned bright and warm.

Our company is always looking for bright, ambitious college graduates.

He blinked in the bright sunlight.

What a brilliant idea!

She has one of the most brilliant minds in the country.

The child had beautiful red hair and brilliant blue eyes.

?	?
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
5. _____ _____	5. _____ _____

Task 2.

2. Organize these sentences in groups according to their meaning.

A *sharp* knife makes a clean cut.

The police said he had been hit with a *blunt* instrument.

A *quick* lad, he immediately realized how the machinery operated.

Ferrari is the *fastest* car in the world.

He is deliberately *obtuse*, I just know it!

This herbicide will *retard* the growth of plants.

He offered a completely *cuckoo* solution to our problem!

I always thought he was a little *dim*.

intelligent, stupid	sharpness, bluntness, speed, lack of speed, darkness, animal
()	()
()	()
()	()
()	()

Task 3.

3. Paraphrase the sentences without changing the meaning.

He is *the brightest* student in the class.

It's been a *slow* afternoon.

Blind leading the blind.

He is deliberately *obtuse*, I just know it!

1. Organize these sentences in a table, according to their similarities.

The moon is bright tonight.

Do you have any bright ideas?

He'd polished the table to a brilliant shine.

She is the brightest pupil in the class.

The following morning dawned bright and warm.

Our company is always looking for bright ambitious college graduates.

He blinked in the bright sunlight.

What a brilliant idea!

She has one of the most brilliant minds in the country.

The child had beautiful red hair and brilliant blue eyes.

?	?
<p>1. <u>Do you have any bright ideas?</u></p> <p>2. <u>What a brilliant idea.</u></p> <p>3. <u>She is the brightest pupil in the class</u></p> <p>4. <u>Our company is always looking for bright ambitious college graduates.</u></p> <p>5. <u>She has one of the most brilliant minds in the country.</u></p>	<p>1. <u>The moon is bright tonight.</u></p> <p>2. <u>He blinked in the bright sunlight.</u></p> <p>3. <u>The following morning dawned bright and warm.</u></p> <p>4. <u>The child had beautiful red hair and blue eyes.</u></p> <p>5. <u>He'd polished the table to a brilliant shine.</u></p>

2. Organize these sentences in groups according to their meaning.

- A sharp knife makes a clean cut.
 The police said he had been hit with a blunt instrument.
 A quick lad, he immediately realized how the machinery operated.
 Ferrari is the fastest car in the world.
 He is deliberately obtruse. I just know it!
 This herbicide will retard the growth of plants.
 He offered a completely cuckoo solution to our problem.
 I always thought he was a little dim.

intelligent, stupid	sharpness, bluntness, speed, lack of speed, darkness, animal
<p>A <u>quick</u> lad immediately (speed) realized how the machinery operated.</p> <p>He is <u>deliberately obtruse</u> (obtrusiveness) just know it!</p> <p>He offered a completely <u>cuckoo</u> (animal) solution to our problem.</p> <p>I always thought he was a <u>little dim</u> (darkness).</p>	<p>A <u>sharp</u> knife makes a clean cut.</p> <p>The police said he <u>had</u> been hit with a <u>blunt</u> instrument.</p> <p>Ferrari is the <u>fastest</u> car in the world.</p> <p>He is <u>deliberately obtruse</u> (obtrusiveness) just know it!</p> <p>I always thought he was a <u>little dim</u> (darkness).</p>

3. Paraphrase the sentences without changing the meaning.

He is *the brightest* student in the class.

He is the most clever student in the class.

It's been a *slow* afternoon.

It's been a boring afternoon.

Blind leading the blind.

Stupid people explaining to some person who doesn't understand.

He is deliberately *obtruse*. I just know it!

He is pretending. I just know it!