Applying the Theory of Grammatical Metaphor to Two English Short Stories

Asst. Prof. Baidaa Abbas Ghubin AL-Zubaidy (Ph.D)
Dept. of English/College of Education / Ibn-Rushd
University of Baghdad
Email: baidaa.abbas@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq
Email: baidaaalzubaidy@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT:
This paper identifies and describes the textual densities of ideational metaphors through the application of GM theory (Halliday, 1994) to the textual analysis of two twentieth century English short stories: one American (*The Mansion* (1910-11), by Henry Jackson van Dyke Jr.), and one British (*Home* (1951), by William Somerset Maugham). One aim is to get at textually verifiable statistical evidence that attests to the observed dominance of GM nominalization in academic and scientific texts, rather than to fiction (e.g. Halliday and Martin (1993). Another aim is to explore any significant differentiation in GM's us by the two short- story writers. The research has been carried out by identifying, describing, and statistically analysing the frequencies of ideational GM structures in both fiction texts to get at their comparative textual densities in terms of word-counts. The obtained results have shown that GM structures – though used in both the American and British short stories – are statistically quite infrequent in both texts, accounting for a tiny (0.0064%) of the total text-wording in *T1*. against (0.0137%) for *T2*. Such very low rates of frequency (well below the threshold of even 1% of each text volume) corroborates the previously observed dominance of GM nominalization in academic and scientific texts, rather than in fiction. These same low densities of use does not allow drawing significant inference differentials in GM's use by the two writers.
Key Terms: Ideational Metaphor Frequency; Short American and British Stories.

1.1 Introduction

The Concept of Grammatical Metaphor

The notion of 'grammatical metaphor' (Hereafter: GM) was introduced by Halliday in an appendix chapter to the first edition of his *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1985). Unlike lexical metaphor – in which two different entities are compared by highlighting a certain similarity between them (e.g. *she is a rose*), GM involves an incongruent coding that changes the lexico-grammatical structure of a clause. In congruent coding, a thing is realized by a noun, an activity by a process, a quality by an adjective, loco-temporal and manner relations by a circumstance, relation by a conjunction, position by a preposition, and

judgment, opinion or comment by modality. Whenever one of the aforementioned congruent grammatical realizations is replaced by some incongruent lexico-grammatical structure, such a structure represents one example of GM.

(1)

   *a. Mary **came upon** a wonderful **sight**.*
   *b. A wonderful **sight met** Mary's **eyes***

Halliday (1985: 322) interprets both (1a.) and (1b.) as GMs for the congruent, non-metaphorical clause:

(2)

   Mary saw something wonderful.

Both of the two GMs in (1) are based upon nominalization; i.e. the replacement of the process verb 'saw' by the nominal 'sight', which congruently realizes a thing or an entity, not a process or an event. In other words: GM is a word used for something resembling that which it usually refers to (Halliday,1994: 340). The 'variation is essentially in the grammatical level forms', hence the epithet: 'grammatical' that qualifies this mode of metaphor (ibid. 342). Typically, congruent forms are "closer to the condition of things in the external world" (Thompson, 2014: 236). While, the congruent, non-metaphorical forms evolve "earlier in the language" and are "learnt earlier by children", the selection of GMs is acquired later for the purpose of adding certain extra condensed semantic features to the discourse (Halliday, 1994: 95; Halliday and Matthiessen 1999, 235).

Halliday (1985, 1994) classifies GM into two main types: ideational metaphor and interpersonal metaphor. Interpersonal metaphor involves the use of incongruent mood structures and modal elements in the expression of judgment, opinion, or comment. This type of GM is more common in speech, and falls out of scope of this paper. Ideational metaphor involves the incongruent coding of types of clause, process, and participant, as exemplified in (3) (Halliday, 1994: 342-3):

(3)

   a. He departed to the station immediately so that he was safe from the fatal accident. (Congruent, non-metaphorical)
   *b. His **immediate departure** to the station **saved** him from the fatal accident.* (Incongruent, metaphorical)

In (3b.), the process verb (*departed*) is transferred into a nominal thing (*departure*), while the circumstance adverb (*immediately*) is transferred into a quality (*immediate*). In addition, the quality adjective (*safe*) is transferred into a process verb (*saved*), with the deletion of the causal relator (*so that*). Such grammatical shifts render (3b.) more condensed than (3a.).

1.2 Paper's Questions and Aims

The theory of GM has proven to be one significant and rich contribution to systemic functional linguistics in that it has offered a valuable tool for a multitude of studies from various aspects within applied linguistics, including language teaching and discourse analysis which deal with different cultures and regions (Ravelli, 2003: 38). However, most GM studies have been geared to the analysis of academic and scientific texts, rather than to fiction, due to the observed and attested dominance of GM nominalization in such texts (e.g. Cavalieri 2014; Bhatia 1993; Graetz 1985; Hyland 2001; Johns 1992; Salager-Meyer 1990; Slade 2000; Taylor and Chen 1991). In fact, Halliday and Martin (1993) themselves, in their co-authored book: *Writing science: Literacy and discursive power* have highlighted this same dominant, genre-specific function of GM as a linguistic phenomenon. The question is: 'How frequent are GMs in fiction texts, particularly in the genre of short stories?' Another related question is: 'How do the relative densities of GMs contrast in one American short story from those used in one British short story?' The present paper attempts to offer empirical answers for each of these two important questions via the application of GM theory (Halliday, 1994) to the textual analysis of two English short stories: one British, and one American. To the best of the researcher knowledge, the genre of short stories has not been previously tackled within the framework of GM theory, nor from a contrastive perspective.

1.3 Data Selection and Method of Research

Two English short stories have been selected for data analysis (Cf. *The Appendix*):

- *The Mansion* (1910-11), by the American short-story writer: Henry Jackson van Dyke Jr. (November 10, 1852 – April 10, 1933), (Hereafter: T1) and
- *Home* (1951), by the British short story-writer: William Somerset Maugham (January 25, 1874 –December 16, 1965), (Hereafter: T2).
  Both of the selected stories centre around an old man's nostalgia to get into a certain mansion, one in Heaven, the other on Earth. Although the text of the first short story is four times larger than that of the second one, this difference in length is immaterial since the GM densities are computed in this paper relevant to each story's word-count.

The researcher will identify and tabulate all the ideational GMs used in each one of the selected two short stories. Then, their densities are computed and contrasted relative to the number of words found in each text in order to answer this paper's questions.

1.4 Data Analysis

1.4.1 T1 Analysis

The researcher has identified only (11) GMs in the whole text, whose total word-count stands at (8798) words. All these GMs revolve around the nominalization of an action or event. Three subtypes of such a nominalization are identifiable: mere, possessive, and embedded, as exemplified in (4):

(4) *a. It looked upon the swelling tide of business with <u>an expression of complacency and half-disdain..</u>* (Mere Nominalization GM)

a'. It looked complacently and half-disdainfully upon the swelling tide of business. (Congruent, Non-metaphorical Structure)

b. ..various apartments dimly reminiscent of <u>the styles of furniture</u> affected by deceased monarchs. (Possessive (PP) Nominalization GM)

b'. .. various apartments dimly reminiscent of furniture styles affected by deceased monarchs. (Congruent, Non-metaphorical Structure)

c. Look <u>what a position we have.</u> (Embedded Noun Clause GM)

c'. Look at our position. (Congruent, Non-metaphorical Structure)

The eleven GM structures identified in T1 add up to mere (57) words, constituting a tiny (0.0064%) of the whole Text's word-count. All GM examples, their congruent renderings, numbers, and rates are described in Table (1) below:

Table (1) GMs in *T1*

No	Underlined GM Structure	No of GM Words	Congruent Structure	Type
1	There was <u>an air of calm and reserved opulence</u> about the Weightman mansion.	7	The Weightman mansion was calm, with reserved opulence.	Nominalization
2	..it looked upon the swelling tide of business with <u>an expression of complacency and half-disdain..</u>	7	..it looked complacently and half-disdainfully upon the swelling tide of business..	Do
3	..a house that <u>had its foundations</u> in the high finance..	3	..a house that was founded in high finance..	Do
4	..various apartments dimly reminiscent of <u>the styles of furniture</u> affected by deceased monarchs.	4	..various apartments dimly reminiscent of furniture styles affected by deceased monarchs.	PP Nominalization

5	It <u>was a symbol of</u> his social position..	4	It symbolized his social position..	PP Nominalization
6	He had felt <u>his father's disapproval for</u> both of these forms of imprudence;	4	He had felt that his father disapproved of both of these forms of imprudence;	Nominalization
7	..but was never expressed <u>in a harsh or violent way</u>..	6	..but was never harshly or violently expressed ..	PP Nominalization
8	Look <u>what a position we have.</u>	5	Look at our position.	Embedded Nominalization
9	..and <u>a slight look of bewilderment came into</u> her face..	7	.. her face showed slight bewilderment..	PP Nominalization
10	..you <u>are at your journey's end</u>..	5	Your journey has now ended.	PP Nominalization
11	There was <u>something pitiful and shamefaced about</u> the hut.	5	The hut was pitiful and shamefaced.	Nominalization
Total	GM Structures' Words	57	Total T1 Word-count	8798
GM Textual Percentage	0.0064%			

1.4.2 T2 Analysis

There are just six GM structures in T2, involving either 'mere', or 'of possessive' (PP) nominalizations, as exemplified hereunder:

(5)

a. *They <u>came to the conclusion</u>..* (Mere Nominalization GM)

a'. *They concluded..* (Conguent, Non-metaphorical Structure)

b. ..<u>*With the simplicity of*</u> *a country woman..* (PP Nominalization GM)

b'. .. *Being a simple country woman ..* (Conguent, Non-metaphorical Structure)

Word-count of GM structures in T2 consists in just (25) words, out of the total textual word-count of (1823) words, i.e., at a meagre (0.0137%), which – though higher than that of T1 – is quite low. Full description of GMs found in this text, their numbers and rates are offered in Table (2), below:

Table (2) GM Structures in *T2*

No	Underlined GM Structure	No of GM Words	Congruent Structure	Type
1	*It had a completeness that gave it a beauty* as definite as that of a symphony by Beethoven or a picture by Titian.	5	It was as beautiful and definite as a symphony by Beethoven or a picture by Titian.	Nominalization
2	..it <u>had the savour</u> of an old ballad..	3	..it savoured of an old ballad..	PP Nominalization
3	..they <u>came to the conclusion..</u>	4	..they concluded..	Nominalizattion
4	..<u>to their astonishment</u>	3	..they were astonished..	Do
5	<u>With the simplicity of</u> a country woman..	4	Being a simple country woman…	PP Nominalization
6	but he <u>had made a success of life</u>	6	..but he had succeeded in his life..	Nominalization
Totals	GM Structures' words	25	T2 Total Word-Count	1823
GM Textual Percentage	0.0137%			

1.5 Discussion and Results

Data statistical analysis has shown that GM structures – though used in both the American and British studied short stories – are quite infrequent in the whole data, accounting for a tiny (0.0064%) of the total text-wording in *T1*. against (0.0137%) for *T2*. Such very low rates of frequency allows inferring that the relative densities of GMs are as low in the American short story as they are in the British short story. Given that the American short story is (4.8) times larger in terms of word-count than its British counterpart, the higher number of GM structures (11, at 64.7%) present in *T1*, in comparison with those of *T2* (6, at 35.3%), are too low to allow for drawing a statistically-backed significant comparative conclusion, since in both texts GM structures stand well below the threshold of (1%) frequency in terms of word-count, as summarized in Table (3) below:

Table (3) Total Data Analysis Results

T1						T2					
G M No	%	GM Word-Count	%	Total Text Word-Count	%	G M No	%	GM Word-Count	%	Total Text Word-Count	%
11	64.7	57	0.006 4	8798	82.8	6	35.3	25	0.013 7	1823	17.2

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تطبيق نظرية الاستعارة النحوية على قصتين قصيرتين انجليزيتين

ا.م. د بيداء عباس غبن الزبيدي

جامعة بغداد- كلية التربية ابن رشد – قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المستخلص

يشخص هـذا البحـث ويصـف الكثافـات النصـية للاسـتعارات النحويـة عبـر تطبيقـه لنظرية الاسـتعارة النحويـة لهاليـداي (1994) علـى التحليـل النصـي لقصـتين قصـيرتين انجليـزيتين تعـودان للقـرن العشـرين: القصـة الأمريكيـة "القصـر" (1910–1911) ، لهنـري جاكسـون فـان دايـك الإبـن ، و القصـة البريطانيـة "البيـت" (1951) لـوليم سومرسـيت مـوم . الهدف الأول مـن هذا البحـث هـو الحصـول علـى الـدليل الإحصـائي القابـل للتحقـق و الـذي مـن شـأنه أن يؤيـد مـا هـو ملحـوظ سـابقاً – علـى سـبيل المثـال : مـن طـرف هاليـداي ومـارتن (1993) – مـن هيمنـة اسـتخدام الاسـتعارة النحويـة الاسـمية علـى النصـوص الأكاديميـة والعلميـة ، علـى العكـس مـن نصـوص أدب الخيـال. و الهـدف الثـاني هـو استقصـاء مـدى وجـود التفاضـل المهـم احصـائياً فـي كثافـة اسـتعمال بُنـى الاسـتعارة النحويـة لـدى هـذين الكـاتبين للقصـة القصـيرة . و قـد تـم إجـراء البحـث مـن خـلال التشـخيص و الوصـف و التحليـل الإحصـائي لتـرددات الاسـتعارة النحويـة الـواردة فـي النصـين القصصـيين لاحتسـاب كثافتهـا النصـية المقارنـة مـن حيـث عـدد الكلمـات. ولقـد أظهـرت نتـائج التحليـل أن بُنـى الاسـتعارة النحويـة – علـى الـرغم مـن اسـتخدامها فـي كـل مـن القصـة القصـيرة الأمريكيـة والبريطانيـة – كانـت نـادرة الاسـتخدام جـدًا مـن الناحيـة الاحصـائية فـي النصـين المدروسـين ، حيـث تمثلـت كثافتهمـا فـي نسـبة ضـئيلة (0.0064%) مـن إجمـالي كلمـات الـنص الأول ، مقابـل نسـبة (0.0137%) للـنص الثـاني. هـذه النسـب المنخفضـة جـدًا لكثافـة التـردد (أقـل بكثير حتى مـن عتبـة نسـبة 1٪ مـن مجمـل كلمـات كـل نـص) تؤكـد مـا هـو ملاحـظ سـابقاً مـن هيمنـة اسـتخدام الاسـتعارة النحويـة الاسـمية فـي النصـوص الأكاديميـة والعلميـة ، ولـيس فـي أدب الخيـال. كمـا أن هـذه الضـآلة فـي الاسـتخدام لا تسـمح باسـتنتاج وجـود تفاضـل مقـارن ذي أهمية في استعمال الاستعارة النحوية بين الكاتبين المدروسين .

المصطلحات الاساسية: كثافة الاستعارة الفكرية ؛ القصص الانجليزية القصيرة.