

# A Corpus-Assisted Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in K-Beauty Metaphoric Advertising

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## Abstract

Over the past few decades, the Conceptual Metaphor theory has attracted scholarly and practitioner attention in the construction of metaphoric advertising, which is driven by the claim that abstract concepts intended to be delivered are better communicated through a conceptual metaphor (Reddy 1979). Metaphoric advertising is a communicative mechanism that sends out intended messages while also provoking positive emotions and triggering attention from the recipient. In order to augment prior findings, this article aims to provide the metaphorical account of a conceptual mechanism delineated in K-Beauty metaphoric advertising by classifying their sub-types into structural, orientational, and ontological metaphors. To that end, this study compiled the K-Beauty metaphoric advertising corpora, which held over four thousand tokens of slogans and taglines extracted from beauty product advertisements generated in translated English, thus aiming to discuss primary instances of metaphorical mappings and conceptualizations, as well as their persuasive functions. Overall, the results evidenced that structural metaphors outperformed the other two sub-types, typifying systematic qualities and rich source domains. Of all the conceptual metaphor sub-categories, it was observable that the ENTITY and SUBSTANCE metaphors, which are a sub-type of ontological metaphors, were the most robust, signifying that ontological metaphors may adopt an imaging mechanism to transfer metaphorical mappings from a source domain to a target domain. The findings argue that particular metaphor choices in metaphoric advertising are closely linked to a cognitive mechanism triggered by cultural awareness pertaining to persuasion and promotion. Based on the current findings, implications and future research directions will also be discussed.

**Keywords:** conceptual metaphor, metaphoric advertising, K-Beauty, source domain, target domain, mapping

## 1. Introduction

A vast body of scholarly work has witnessed the prominent attributes of metaphors manifested in advertising discourses over the last half a century, whereby metaphoric advertising has been discussed with its positive roles differently from direct literal advertising (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996; Moriarty, 1987; Toncar & Munch, 2001, among others). Metaphoric advertising is a communicative mechanism that encompasses, either abstract or concrete, messages by triggering consumers' attention to elicit positive moods and even bodily actions during information transfer. Abstract concepts and ideas intended to be delivered are better communicated via a conceptual metaphor (Reddy, 1979). In particular, the efficiency of advertising is of paramount importance in that advertising discourse is a fundamental form of language communication adopted in business, thus making meaningful links between business purposes and linguistic attributes (Chen, 2016). More importantly, conceptual mechanisms, shaped in the form and process of conceptual metaphor, perform decisive roles in our thoughts and behaviors in the significant respect that marketing philosophy shifts are closely intertwined with metaphor on which marketing concepts have their cognitive basis (Chen, 2013).

In recent years, an array of empirical research endeavors have been motivated to make metaphorical associations between product advertising and its embedded meanings to date, but fewer have done so with translated versions of advertising slogans and taglines in the domestic context, though they have been the center of attention due to their positivity in persuasive functions of advertising discourse. More specifically, K-Beauty items such as cosmetics have become an advantage of the consumers' market in the cosmetics industry partly due to metaphoric advertising. According to the Cosmetics Industry Analysis Report (2019) produced by the Korea Health Industry Development Institute (KHIDI), since 2016, four representative Korean cosmetics companies,

which have vigorously invested in English advertising, have been listed among the world's leaders top 100s. As of 2018, Pacific Group ranked the twelfth, and LG Household & Health Care ranked the fifteenth, recording a surplus of \$4.63547 billion, leading to \$6.7678 billion in exports, a 26.5% increase compared to the previous year. In particular, exports to China topped the list at \$2.62 billion, thereby reaching 37.3% up year on year, followed by some major countries in the world's cosmetics industry, including Hong Kong, the U.S., Japan, Vietnam, France, and the U.K. As such, China has been keeping its position as the largest importer of Korean cosmetics thus far.

Little research into the cognitive mechanisms embodied in the translated versions of metaphoric advertising for K-Beauty products, however, has been tackled despite their critical roles in the global market. To better understand English versions of metaphoric advertising as a workable strategy to the success of the K-Beauty industry in the world market, this article aims to explore the conceptual metaphors represented in K-Beauty advertising alongside its persuasive functions by using the theoretical framework of Conceptual Metaphor hinged upon by Lakoff and Johnson (1980).

#### Conceptual metaphors grounded in embodied experience

Being grounded on the notion that language cannot function without metaphor, a theory of Conceptual Metaphor was put forward by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980. They made quite a radical claim that metaphor may not only be a linguistic phenomenon associated with words but instead a cognitive phenomenon involving how we think about the world around us (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). They argue that metaphor may characterize everyday language in day-to-day discourses where people think about one thing in terms of another implicated by metaphorical linguistic expressions represented as individual words, fixed phrases and sentence forms (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Stefanowitsch 2005). Their understanding of metaphor differs from conventional definitions thought to be only salient in the artistic device of language in literature, which is incurred with unconventional meaning. Their speculation thus leans in the opposite direction, not only being limited to literary or poetic works of art trying to help readers better understand one form of concept in terms of another form of concept, but also integrating ordinary everyday language in a cultural setting in order to construct some part of that culture's conceptual system.

Human beings' experiences construct a system of metaphorical concepts and are inclined to use concrete or simple concepts to understand abstract and complex concepts by mapping properties from the source domain to the target domain. They conceptualized metaphor from the perspective of thinking mode and emphasized its cognitive role, whereby figurative meanings can be further interpreted by the interplay of mapping between abstract notions in the target domain and concrete ones in the source domain (Ekaterina, Devereux, and Korhonen 2013; Fauconnier and Turner 2002; Lakoff 1992; Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Lakoff's assertion shifted the research scope from representation to concept and ultimately relocated the entity of metaphor study from language to human cognition, eventually contributing to the growth of cognitive linguistics

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Three research frames provide the theoretical background for the thesis, namely 1) the conceptual metaphor cognition schema; 2) conceptual metaphor categories by cognitive functions; 3) conceptual metaphors in metaphoric advertising.

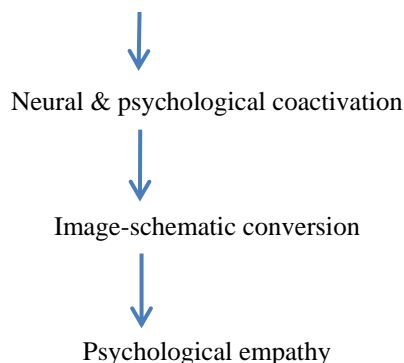
### 2.1 Conceptual Metaphor Cognition Schema

According to Gibbs (1994) the use of metaphorical language may reduce processing difficulties and primarily function as giving 'conceptual support' to our understanding of complex concepts through the awakening of embodied experience by cross-domain language symbols thus triggering psychological stimulation and achieving hinted image-schema empathy, which was also mentioned by Lakoff & Johnson (1999) and Stefanowitsch (2005). Subsequent studies extended this to an explanation of a form of neural coactivation that influences a good deal of how people think, reason, and imagine in everyday life (Tendahl and Gibbs 2008; Lakoff, 2009). Accordingly, this cross-domain image-schematic cognitive mapping transmission process inspired by conceptual metaphor can be inferred through the chain reaction form as follows:

Conceptual metaphoric expressions + Embodied experience



Cross-domain image-schematic mapping



Metaphorical mappings are based on perceptual experiences and make symbolic and metaphorical links between two different conceptual domains. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) assert that metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon and, at the same time, a way of thinking and cognition. The essence of metaphor pertains to understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In this cognition process, empirical experiencing functions as a bridge connecting and reflecting a similar human sense of the two different conceptual domains in each side by metaphorical mappings, as well as metaphorical languages.

### 2.2 Conceptual Metaphor Categories by Cognitive Functions

An array of earlier studies suggest that conceptual metaphors can be divided into a range of organized conceptions depending on a variety of criteria (e.g., Lakoff, 1980, Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, Kovecses, 2002). Thus, there can be a varying set of conceptual metaphors dependent upon a distinctive categorical grounding, some of which include conventionality, function, nature, level of generality, complexity, to name a few (e.g., Kovecses, 2002). Hindged on a cognitive linguistic view, in particular, Kovecses (2002) claims that the cognitive functions of metaphor are intertwined with specific roles of metaphor that play in ordinary people's thinking and experiencing the world, thereby distinguishing conceptual metaphors into three different types by their cognitive functions: structural, ontological, and orientational (Oxford, 2002; Lakoff, 1992; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). It has been asserted that through metaphor, the conceptual domain of a source domain can be transferred to the conceptual domain of a target domain, allowing the latter to be understood systematically following the structure of the former.

As a conventional metaphor, a structural metaphor refers to the "structured, sharply-defined" construction of another concept with the structure of one concept so that the two concepts are connected. Part of the words that describe one concept is used to talk about another, thus giving rise to the phenomenon of multiple uses of one word (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). Therefore, a structural metaphor is commonplace in language. Once a structural metaphor is fixed, multiple linguistic expressions based on the conceptual structure can be derived from this structure. For example:

- (a) It took me hours to wait in line for vaccination.
- (b) Do not waste your youth.
- (c) Give me some time to clear my head.

All three examples stated above are based on one of the representative conceptual metaphors: TIME IS MONEY. The entailments are: MONEY can be spent; MONEY can be given; MONEY can be exchanged for valuable things. Here a part of the perception toward MONEY in the source domain can be mapped to TIME in the target domain, and at the same time, TIME is given metaphorical meanings of being spent, wasted, and given.

An ontological metaphor is one in which abstract language such as BEHAVIOR, MOOD, and CONCEPT, is depicted as a fixed structure such as SUBSTANCE, CONTAINER, ENTITY, or PERSON (Cao & Zhao, 2020; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Shuo & Xuanyi, 2020; Delbaere, McQuarrie, & Phillips, 2011). To be more explicit, it is of necessity to use another element or substance as a foundation for perceiving more abstract and intricate notions in order to explore other concepts. As illustrated, it is observable that the concepts from the source domain are rather real and ordinary entities that individuals can encounter in their daily lives, whereas the concepts in the target domain are esoteric and obscure. To put it another way, we do so by mapping familiar, concrete concepts onto abstract, complicated ones that form the foundation of our sensory, perceptual life experiences. Understanding experiences in terms of entity or substance empowers us all to grab some of these perceptions and, in turn, accept them as the same sort. We may then classify, measure, and deduce from our

experiences once they have been regarded. Among the sub-categories of ontological metaphor, PERSONIFICATION, and CONTAINER are separately listed, together with ENTITY/SUBSTANCE making up of the three sub-categories as PERSONIFICATION, CONTAINER and ENTITY/SUBSTANCE (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

- (a) Life has lied to us.
- (b) He's empty-headed. (Lakoff 1980)
- (c) I'm a little rusty today. (Lakoff 2003)

### 2.3 Conceptual Metaphors in Metaphoric Advertising

Scholarly attention has recently been drawn to research into a metaphorical language in metaphoric advertising, with the premise that conceptual metaphors argument the persuasive effects and positive feelings in figurative product advertisements. In metaphoric advertising, particular target domains can better be articulated with the help of numerous source domains, whereby the choice of sources is highly affected by the advertiser's intention and the target audience and culture associated with the product advertisements. Likewise, the adoption and selection of metaphors should vary across cultures in order for intended messages in advertising to be more pertinent to target consumers (Chon & Joh, 2017; Delbaere et al., 2011). It has also been claimed that metaphors in promotional messages might set up a positive psychological impression of the products and services, encouraging customers to make additional purchases (Ward & Gaidis, 1990). Gaidis (1990) evaluated and outlined a wide range of metaphorical awareness from a psychological and linguistic angle. Metaphors in the study of social communication using advertisements. By studying the persuasive function of metaphors, they discovered that metaphors could significantly affect consumers and drive them to buy products or services, thereby concluding that metaphors can play a central role in advertising communication as a primary strategy in advertising design (Leiss, Kline, & Jhally, 1990; Homer & Kahle, 1988). For example:

- (1) Bring your lashes to full bloom. (Beauty is flower.)
- (2) Awakening of your inner beauty. (Beauty is life.)
- (3) Boost your skin's radiance. (Beauty is radiance.)
- (4) I glow in my Calvins. (Beauty is radiance.)
- (5) Easy. Breezy. Beautiful. (Beauty is ease.)
- (6) A smart serum. (Beauty is intelligence.)

Source domains of (1) and (2) are flower and personification respectively. The metaphoric expression will trigger an image-schema effects on the basis of human being experience and proves to be more impressive than literal language (Chon and Joh 2017). From the angle of metaphor's creativity, Lundmark (2005) posited creativity embodied in metaphoric advertising, where metaphors would be mirrored in the mixture of words and pictures or throughout the taglines rather than an individual word or phrase, typically involves a reshaping of the products advertised. She suggested that such creativity can be obtained by making the brands target an innovative, novel metaphor, but this new metaphor still depends heavily on a conventional metaphor for its construction and interpretation.

A range of studies on metaphors' persuasive influence or creativity in product advertising was also conducted in East Asian research contexts. Bai (2016) explored visual metaphors that can concretely and creatively convey complex and ambiguous concepts, particularly before consumers perceive the tangible effects of the promoted products, to mention a few. Consumers can thus feel as if they have an authentic experience thanks to visual metaphor advertising, whereby visual metaphors render the intention of advertisements more apparent, especially for cosmetics with specific functions assigned. By examining the three sub-categories of a conceptual metaphor applied in entirely verbal and visual English advertising. Quan and Joe (2020) also identified the persuasive functions of a conceptual metaphor exerting in product advertisements through three sub-categories, which claims a more systematic structural metaphor, an image schema leading orientation metaphor and ontological metaphor enriching the concepts in advertising. First, a structural metaphor turned out to be far more systematic than the other types of metaphor in that it shapes concepts from the source domain mapped onto the target domain. They found that the cognitive features of a structural metaphor figure out that it is intended to underscore specific terms of the aimed concepts while restricting others and dominating people's thoughts and behavior towards the products being promoted. Second, it was discovered that through an ontological metaphor, intentional meanings could be classified by having related experiences enrich the concepts in advertising. Third, it was revealed that the experiential foundations of an orientation metaphor could lead to image schema, forcing

advertisers to boost their advertising creativity to enforce its persuasive function.

It has long been assumed that the cognitive transmission method of metaphors could be one of the most underlying mechanisms of the primary mental experience of human beings. As such, metaphoric product advertising has remained a principal mode of marketing and promotion in capitalist societies. Consumers' brand and product perceptions have been shaped by a myriad of psycholinguistic styles used to impart promotional messages and interactive media imagery transmission strategies (Poturak & Softic, 2019). Nonetheless, few studies have adopted conceptual metaphors in translated advertising thus far, transitioning from text-based research to multimodal metaphor research. Worse, most earlier findings have centered mainly on the attributes of conceptual metaphors in conventional product advertisements, with only a few studies incorporating successful cases of particular product items and brands. The present study, which employs corpus-assisted analysis, aims to shed light on the cognitive and persuasive manifestations of conceptual metaphors portrayed in advertising slogans and taglines of K-Beauty cosmetic products, guided by the following two research questions:

- (1) What particular sub-types (represented by source domain classifications) of conceptual metaphors are observable across K-Beauty metaphoric advertising?
- (2) What salient functions of conceptual metaphors are discernible in K-Beauty metaphoric advertising?

By exploring the two research queries, we will pay particular attention to the goals of metaphoric advertising and the effects they may bring so. We will look further into whether particular metaphorical manifestations can help metaphoric advertising effectively convey its intended meaning while also ensuring that targeted addressees have better access to cognitive efficiency and grasp metaphorical advertisements.

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1 Corpus Data

To pursue the proposed research aims, we constructed purpose-end metaphoric advertising corpora formed of K-Beauty product advertisements whose slogans and taglines were extracted, leading to approximately over two thousand translated texts in English containing metaphorical phrases and structures from two representative cosmetics company websites as their primary sources. 33 high-end brands covering 85 products from the *Pacific Group* (ranked the first K-Beauty company among domestic companies and the twelfth in the international market), *LG Household & Health Care* and *ABLE C&C* (as considered the second among domestic firms but ranked the fifteenth worldwide) were primary resources for data collection. The following matrix in Table 1 outlines the textual statistics of the K-Beauty metaphoric advertising corpora compiled for this study.

Table 1. K-Beauty metaphoric advertising corpora: Textual statistics

Source	Text Type	Brand	Tagline/Slogan	Token	Type	STTR	MSL	SD	MWL	SD
Pacific Group	Translated English	1	18	2,079	700	81.71	12.45	8.80	5.05	2.55
ABLE C&C	Translated English	10	145							
LG Household & Health Care	Translated English	22	101	2,148	686	79.40	18.20	15.30	5.00	2.59
Total/average		33	264	4,263	1,156	80.52	14.85	12.27	5.03	2.57

#### 3.2 Data Processing

We employed three-tiered corpus-assisted analyses in this study. First, we conducted a preliminary analysis to better understand metaphorical expressions found in the context search using the 'word list' tool in AntConc 3.5.9 to grasp which words should be paid particular attention to. Then, by referring to some primary metaphors discussed in earlier works of literature (see Švažienė, 2010; Lundmark, 2005; Maalej, 2003), some prominent high-frequency words drawn from the word list were chosen to look through.

During the second-tier analysis, metaphorical searches were conducted using the 'collocates' tool. For the collocates settings, the parameters of a window span were filled from a zero to the left (0L) to three to the right (3R) from the search term, a minimum frequency was set at one due to the size of the corpus compiled, and finally selected the 'sort by stat' option for output display. Though a Mutual Information (MI) statistic was set as a default in the collocates in the AntConc suite, the MI measure was not selected as it can be overly sensitive to low frequencies; instead, the MI+ Log-Likelihood ( $p < 0.05$ ) option was selected as a collocate measure for this stage.

Finally, the third-tier analysis adopted the 'concordance' tool to examine individual examples and develop more profound thoughts on metaphorical mappings. By referring to empirical psychological findings by Boroditsky and Casasanto (2008), the third tier with the 'concordance' function adopted two different strategies for controlling parameters in the postulation that there is always 'reciprocal' triggering from a source domain to a target domain, and vice versa. In other words, metaphorical target domains can activate their respective source domains. Likewise, the source domain can also activate the target domain. Thus, the first concordance search settings for metaphorical mappings were manipulated to start from the source domain to look for abstract words that may have been activated by concrete concepts in the target domain. In order to start with the source domain, KWIC sorting was set to the first level to one to the left (1L), the second level to two to the left (2L), and the third level to zero (0). In addition, the second concordance search settings were adjusted to start from the target domain to screen more abstract words to check how they are being talked in the source domain. In order to start with the target domain, the KWIC was rearranged to the first level to one to the left (1L), the second level to two to the right (2R), and the third level to three to the right (3R).

Two text processing tools were used reciprocally: AntConc 3.5.9 (Anthony, 2020) for the concordance, word list, and collocates functions, and WordSmith Tools 7.0 (Scott, 2019) for textual statistics. Additional statistical processing was conducted using the Analysis ToolPak built in the Microsoft 365 statistics suite.

**4. Results and Discussion**

With the employment of a corpus-assisted analysis, the present study has taken the first attempt to delineate cognitive and persuasive manifestations of conceptual metaphors ingrained in the K-Beauty metaphoric advertising corpora. By referring to Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) classifications, conceptual metaphors across the corpora were grouped into three sub-categories: structural, ontological, and orientational. Then, the high-frequency words in the corpora were analyzed and classified. In turn, each metaphor category was grouped into primary metaphor types that have been highlighted in several earlier studies (e.g., Afrashi et al., 2012; Alejo, 2010; Lakoff, 1993). Overall, results showed that the K-Beauty corpora held all three types of such metaphors. More importantly, conceptual metaphors were ubiquitous across the K-Beauty metaphoric advertising corpora. It was observable that ontological metaphors took up the most considerable portion containing primary sub-typed metaphors like PERSONIFICATION, ENTITY, SUBSTANCE, and CONTAINER metaphors. Structural metaphors were signified with sub-types such as Argument/Fight, Harmony/balance, Secret/mystery and Journey. The third conceptual metaphor was orientational, with one sub-category of the UP-DOWN metaphor. Table 2 outlines the rate of occurrences of conceptual metaphors in the K-Beauty corpora according to the source domain classification. Table 3 is the classification of conceptual metaphors (structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors) in the K-Beauty corpora based on different types of source domain concepts.

Table 2. The rate of occurrences of conceptual metaphors in the K-Beauty corpora based on source domain classification

	Source domain	Numbers	Rates %
1	Energy/Nutrient/natural material	44	12.90
2	Sensation/mood	39	11.44
3	Intelligence/value/true	31	9.1
4	Radiance	27	7.9
5	Diamond/ Flower/Dew/silk/cloud	20	5.9
6	Argument/Fight	19	5.6
7	Creation	19	5.6
8	Health	18	5.3
9	Up	15	4.4
10	Harmony/balance	13	3.8
11	Creature to protect/with vitality	13	3.8
12	Youth	13	3.8
13	Strength/power/ Force/professional	12	3.5
14	Treasure/ Luxury	12	3.5

15	Journey	10	2.9
16	Secret/mystery	10	2.9
17	Container	6	1.8
18	Confidence/dare/bold	5	1.5
19	Personification	3	0.9
20	Problem to solve	3	0.9
21	Ease/basic	3	0.9
22	Complex System	2	0.6
23	Perfection	2	0.6
24	Transformation/ Revolution	1	0.3
25	Fame/Celebrity	1	0.3
	Total occurrence number	341	
	O (none)	22	

Table 3 classification of conceptual metaphors (structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors) in the K-Beauty corpora based on different types of source domain concepts.

Structural metaphor 18.5%	-Argument/Fight	5.6%	
	-Harmony/balance	3.8%	
	-Secret/mystery	2.9%	
	-Journey	2.9%	
	-Problem to solve	0.9%	
	-Ease/basic	0.9%	
	-Complex System	0.6%	
	-Perfection	0.6%	
	-Transformation/ Revolution	0.3%	
	-Sensation/mood	11.44%	
-Intelligence/value/true	9.1%		
Ontological metaphor 77.24%	-Creation	5.6%	
	-Health	5.3%	
	life metaphor 45.24%	-Creature to protect/with vitality	3.8%
		-Strength/power/ Force/professional	3.5%
		-Confidence/dare/bold	1.5%
		-Personification	0.9%
		-Fame/Celebrity	03%
Plant metaphor 12.90%	-Natural Energy/Nutrient/natural material	12.90%	
Entity and substance metaphor 19.1%	-Radiance	7.9%	
	-Diamond/ Flower/Dew/silk/cloud	5.9%	
	-Treasure/ Luxury	3.5%	
	-Container	1.8%	
Oriental metaphor 4.4%	-Up	4.4%	

The following sections will report on what particular types of conceptual metaphors were salient and perceptible among the three sub-categories (structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors) in an orderly manner. Then, we will discuss what metaphorical manifestations and meanings were noticeable across the K-Beauty metaphorical advertising corpora.

#### 4.1 Structural Metaphors in K-Beauty Metaphoric Advertising

Of all conceptual metaphors, the structural metaphors in K-Beauty advertising were the second vibrant, accounting for 18.5% of all conceptual metaphors. The structural metaphors embedded in K-Beauty advertising were sorted into nine basic classes of metaphorical expressions by referring to the prominent metaphor types derived from earlier studies. Among the nine categories, the Argument/Fight metaphor (5.6%) was the most prevalent, followed by the Harmony/balance metaphor (3.8%) in the second, and the Secret/mystery, as well as Journey metaphor (2.9%) in the third. The Problem to solve metaphor (0.9%) and the Ease/basic metaphor (0.9%) accounted for a similar percentage of the structural metaphor, as well as the same portion of Complex System metaphor (0.6%) and Perfection metaphor (0.6%). The portions of the Transformation/ Revolution metaphor (0.3%) was the least visible. Figure 1 illustrates the graphical representations of the structural metaphors derived in K-Beauty advertising, along with the error bars denoting data variability.

In the structural metaphors in K-Beauty advertising, target domain beauty is seen as an event or a state including Argument/Fight, Harmony/balance, Secret/mystery, Journey, Problem to solve, Ease/basic, Complex System, Perfection and Transformation/Revolution featured with varying degrees of difficulty to obtain. For example, War is a very familiar concept in our physical and cultural experience. In war, there are adversaries and challenging tasks at different stages. If we want to win a war, we must plan reasonable tactics and strategies to protect ourselves against enemies and avoid being attacked. Based on such physical and cultural experiences, the WAR metaphor represents abstract concepts (Boyd, 2003; Hu & Xu, 2017). Ranked the fifth (8.1%), the WAR metaphor was also found to construct the concept of skin protection from the enemies like wrinkles, aging, and stress in the K-Beauty corpora. In examples (a) to (f), metaphor words underlined indicate a war between esthetic products and enemies, including *emotional stress*, and *aging*, which are pernicious and cruel to our fragile and easily hurt skin. In order to protect our skin conditions from those enemies' persecution, we need effective weapons to defend ourselves, implying that cosmetics with specific functions are necessary. Though skin care is not a real war, concepts like defeating, damaging, and protecting are reflected to it, whereby the metaphor of war shapes our actions in skin care. Examples of structural metaphors in K-Beauty advertising are demonstrated as follows:

- 1) Fight like a woman.
- 2) Carezone is a shield.
- 3) We support your journey of discovering your most attractive self and boldly expressing yourself to the fullest.
- 4) Golden miracle, Moroccan Argan Oil Repairing!
- 5) Basic is enough.
- 6) Time revolution.
- 7) SagaXiu delivers the precious beauty secrets derived from modern interpretation of noble treasures and heritage.

#### 4.2 Ontological Metaphors in K-Beauty Metaphoric Advertising

An ontological metaphor in a language evolves in tandem with society's continual development and advancement. Ontological metaphors can aid individuals to perceive and appreciate some bizarre and unfamiliar notions. Ontological metaphors in K-Beauty advertising revealed to be the most vibrant, accounting for more than three quarters of all conceptual metaphors and contributing to 77.24 percent among the three sub-categories of conceptual metaphors in the present study. By sorting out the collected metaphors referring to the prominent metaphor types drawn from prior findings (Al-Hindawi 2016; Istiqomah 2018), the ontological metaphors found in the K-Beauty corpora were further separated into three primary subtypes with 15 types of source domain categories of metaphorical expressions by referring to the prominent metaphor types derived from earlier studies. Among the three classes, the life metaphor (45.24%) was the most evident, followed by entity and substance metaphor (19.1%) in the second, and the plant metaphor (12.90%) in the third. Among all the 15 types of source domain categories of metaphorical expressions the sensation/mood metaphor (11.44%) was the most prevalent, followed by intelligence/value/true metaphor (9.1%) in the second.

1. life metaphor



Life metaphor (45.24%) was the most evident with abundant variations of source domain. The meaning of life refers to the phenomenon of self-growth, reproduction, evolution, consciousness, perception, and interaction occurring naturally in the universe's development and shifts, as well as all characteristics embedded in life like emotion, intelligence etc. (Jin 2017). Man takes up the highest class in living systems. Where there are people, there is life. The LIFE metaphor often appears in people's language. Typically, it is thought that breathing creatures are alive, and cosmetics do not fall into such a category. In the K-Beauty corpora, however, it was observable that some specific cosmetics were metaphorically represented as living objects. The below examples illustrate some of the representative instances with the LIFE metaphor across the corpora.

- 1) Witty pretty: Blithe and playful, but also earnest and sincere, like glowing.
- 2) A'pieu is for the bright, energetic, bubbly, and passionate
- 3) Uncomplicated and effortless, while being true to oneself.
- 4) A cream that fortifies skin's original strength to create a moisturized protective layer.
- 5) Beauty meets joy.
- 6) The joy of extracting blackheads began here!

## 2. plant metaphor

Nearly all the raw materials of K-Beauty products come from natural plants, and the natural ingredients and energy contained in natural plants become the origin of the source domain for the target domain beauty. From the below excerpts taken from the K-Beauty corpora, we can see metaphorical expressions like *delivering energy*, *giving healthy energy*, and *strengthening energy* that describes energy transferring properties, but here they are used to understand cosmetic products' quality.

- 1) Deliver energy to your skin with the amazing vitality of snails.
- 2) The minerals and poly saccharides of the Irish moss extract deliver rich moisturizing energy to dry skin.
- 3) Derma Lift provides skin with healthy energy to return to its initial status by enhancing the fundamental skin mechanism.

## 3. entity and substance metaphor

Particular types of metaphors in an ontology have their specific functions. In cosmetics advertising, some abstract concepts such as product qualities and efficacies are challenging to express directly or extensively while concisely. Advertisers thus tend to use physical or material descriptions of products to help consumers understand them by substituting those obscure concepts for visible, concrete ones in their lives. For instance, the solution to common skin problems is often mentioned in cosmetics advertisements. Metaphoric advertising of such kinds usually treats the ingredients and effectiveness of products as entities and substances that allow target readers to name explicit solutions to matters from ordinary life experiences. Likewise, in the present study, following earlier findings (e.g., Shuo and Xuanyi 2020; Delbaere et al. 2011), the current findings of the ontological instances were mirrored across the K-Beauty advertising corpora. Results showed that the ENTITY and SUBSTANCE metaphors (81.3%) outperformed the other two metaphors (10.9% in CONTAINER and 7.8% in PERSONIFICATION) in the ontological category. The following examples well prove several cases of the ENTITY and SUBSTANCE metaphors.

- 1) The first-step oriental herb boosting essence that awakens skin's natural strength, for bright, beautiful skin that glows like moonlight
- 2) Firm, dewy skin!
- 3) With powerful adherence and smooth application, it feels light as a feather!
- 4) It's your makeup code.
- 5) CAREZONE is a window.

### 4.3 Orientational Metaphors in K-Beauty Advertising

As the third sub-type of conceptual metaphors, the orientational metaphor addresses how people articulate themselves via directional words. The orientational metaphor centers on the most common spatial directional perceptions of the human body (Afrashi et al. 2012). It is commonly believed that perpendicularity is the fundamental spatial level both physically and psychologically. Thus, human beings are prone to construct a straightforward but profound awareness of the notions associated with vertical space due to the nature of the human body, neurophysiological organs, and the Earth's gravity. According to human being embodied experience,

being high is 'up' and vice versa being low is 'down' and this physical experience spread to the notion that happiness, health, life vitality, high social ranks etc. which represent for important characteristics of a good life can be conceptualized as being upward. Therefore, people acquire the psychological recognition that good quality of products is 'up' or of higher social ranks, bad is 'down' or of lower social ranks. In a similar vein, an array of such perpendicularity was also discernible across the K-Beauty metaphoric advertising, corroborating the assertions raised in earlier findings. Overall, it was found that the orientational metaphors accounted for 4.4% of the three sub-types of conceptual metaphors running across the metaphoric advertising corpora.

- 1) The peak of beauty presented by the special skincare secrets of legendary beauties
- 2) Experience a major grow-up with no effort!
- 3) Moisture king providing real moisturizing
- 4) We only create dazzling masterpieces.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study attempted to identify the working mechanism and manifestations of conceptual metaphors embodied in K-Beauty metaphoric advertising. To pursue the research goals stated, we built purpose-end metaphoric advertising corpora mainly composed of K-Beauty product advertisements. Over four thousand tokens of slogans and taglines were extracted, yielding approximately two hundred translated English texts from two representative cosmetics corporate websites. Results showed that the portion of ontological metaphors reached the highest, showing a more systematic characteristic and rich source domain. Among the three sub-types of ontological metaphors, life metaphor (45.24%) ranks top one, entity and substance metaphor (19.1%) in the second, and the plant metaphor (12.90%) in the third. These three kinds of ontological metaphors all convey the idea of positive energy through conceptual metaphor mapping. It is easier to convey the effects of products on improving consumers' lives, emotions, and values. Second, the ENTITY and SUBSTANCE metaphors ranked second among all the metaphors investigated, implying that the ontological metaphor transmits the mapping from the source domain to the target domain through an imaging mechanism. It can be ascribed that ontological metaphors are easier to understand, which is an excellent impetus for sales promotion. Third, the number of UP-DOWN metaphors ranked third overall. The vast majority of these metaphors show concepts of social status and wealth, which fit with the brand positioning of high-end cosmetics, giving the consumer the enjoyment of products in the value of quality, but also to experience a spiritual pleasure and enjoyment during buying and using. Different types of conceptual metaphors have thus different experience bases and cognitive functions in cosmetic advertisements. Structural metaphors can selectively construct the concept of the target domain from some concepts of the source domain, which is characterized by highlighting some aspects of the concept while ignoring others, thus affecting people's purchasing behavior. Based on people's experience of space, the role of positional metaphor in cosmetic advertising is mainly to organize the concept and serve the characteristics of cosmetic products. Ontological metaphor is the embodiment of abstract concepts so that these abstract concepts can be found, talked about, and quantified, supplying convenience for consumers to understand the specific information of products.

In addition, K-Beauty's advertising slogans and taglines were all English translations of Korean advertisements so that they could reflect the characteristics of the Korean language, culture, and way of thinking provoked in oriental culture. In this sense, further research can be extended to discuss conceptual metaphors in the aspects of translationese or translation universals (see Lee 2018, 2021). Furthermore, the implications from the present study for translators' training programs may cover that language features can be taught explicitly concerning the aspects of conceptual metaphors. In addition, future research directions can further discuss the current findings in the Chinese context to see if these findings are still valid in Chinese cosmetics products. A comparison of conceptual metaphors should also be made between oriental and western English advertising.

Finally, the present study only makes a preliminary exploration of the conceptual metaphors of K-Beauty product advertising marketized in China. Due to the limitations and inextricable subjectivity of cosmetic advertising data, it is of great necessity to compile more extensive corpus data to analyze the metaphorical mappings represented in advertising languages with an objective view. Also, the future study can further explore cosmetics advertisements of different genders, not by only gearing towards conceptual metaphors in female high-end cosmetics advertisements, thereby making a comparative study to discuss metaphorical similarities and differences.

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