Eating Is Not an Easy Task: Understanding Cultural Values via Proverbs

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ABSTRACT

Conceptual metaphor theory has become a promising approach to analyzing cultures (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980/2003; Kövecses 2007; Gibbs 2008). This paper aims to investigate cultural values via the use of metaphors in proverbs, with a special focus on the eating frame. Our data cover Taiwanese proverbs, Japanese proverbs and English proverbs. Basically there are two approaches to comparing cultural frames. One takes a bird's eye, presenting a whole picture of cultural frames for each culture. On the other hand, the other compares the same frame and sees how it is used in different cultures. This study mainly takes the second approach. Eating is such an easy task in most cultures. While being used as a metaphor, eating event can represent different cultural values. After a careful scrutiny, the following metaphors/cultural values are found in Taiwanese proverbs: MAKING A LIVING IS EATING; RELYING ON SB/STH IS EATING; CONSUMING IS EATING; LIVING IS EATING (AGE AS FOOD); TAKING ADVANTAGES IS EATING; INVADING IS EATING(OR INVASION IS EATING); CAUSAL CHAIN IS EATING (AND EXCRETING); CURING IS EATING (FOOD AS MEDICINE). However, in English proverbs, only two metaphors are found: CONSUMING IS EATING and CAUSAL CHAIN IS EATING. In Japanese proverbs, four extra metaphors are found. They are REWARDING IS EATING, EXPERIENCING/ REALIZING IS EATING, COMPETING IS EATING and DEFEATING IS EATING. As shown above, by using the framework of conceptual metaphor theory, we can identify these cultural values in different languages. This finding has several implications. Firstly, we confirm what Kövecses has claimed that the metaphorical entailment potential appears to be utilized differently in different languages and cultures, even based on the same source domain (Kövecses 2007:128). Secondly, the conceptual metaphors found in the proverbs can be a clue to recognize the polysemies of a particular lexeme, such as *eat* as exemplified in this paper. Finally, we suggest that analyzing conceptual metaphors in proverbs would be helpful and useful in language teaching as the result could be a material to present the cross-cultural issue and facilitate language learning.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor; cultural value; frame semantics; proverb; eating event

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary cognitive linguists believe that metaphor is not merely rhetoric but also can reflect our cognition and shape our thought. This has been most fully exemplified in the groundbreaking work *Metaphors We Live By* written by Lakoff & Johnson (1980/2003). Since then, the conceptual metaphor theory has become a promising approach to probing our mental world as well as analyzing cultures (cf. Kövecses 2007; Gibbs 2008). More specifically, we can say that metaphor reflects some cultural values, be it positive or not. This paper aims to investigate cultural values via the use of metaphors in proverbs. As a case study, we focus on the eating frame. By focusing on the same event cross-culturally, we can tackle complicated problems such as the universality and variation of metaphor in cultures, and the polysemy of a given word realized as different metaphors in the culture.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Culture

What is *culture*? How can we observe and describe culture that is shared by a certain group of people? According to anthropologists, culture can be defined as the following: culture as distinct from nature; culture as knowledge; culture as communication; culture as a system of mediation; culture as a system of practices and culture as a system of participation (Duranti 1997). For instance, Lèvi-Strauss views culture as a sign system. He analyzes cultural myths by decomposing them into a set of existing characters, metaphors, and plots. Moreover, he transformed Roman Jakobson's phonetic triangle into a cultural one.
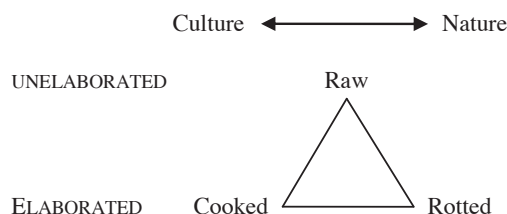

Figure 1. Lèvi-Strauss's culinary triangle (cited from Duranti 1997:35)

In figure 1, as a cultural activity such as cooking, Lèvi-Strauss pointed out the relation between the elaborated and the unelaborated, represents the line drawn

between culture and nature. The raw material, such as some fruit or *sasimi* on the dining table in Japan, once they are put on the plate with some decoration, they can be seen as a dish and as delicious as the cooked ones. In this sense, culture is a symbolic system. As a cultural symbol, metaphor, can play an important role in this system. Since there are so many definitions concerning culture, this paper adopts a rather general view on culture, that is, culture can be taken as a set of shared understandings that characterize smaller or larger groups of people (Kövecses 2007:1). What we want to present here is to show that by making a painstaking investigation on the metaphors, especially conceptual metaphors, used in a given culture or its proverbs, we can get a better understanding of this 'shared understandings' or 'culture.' The following section will give a brief introduction to metaphor and conceptual metaphor.

2.2   Conceptual metaphor theory

Since Aristotle, metaphor has long been taken as a figure of speech, a means of rhetoric, and decoration of thought. However, since the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), the status of metaphor has changed. They effectively showed that metaphor is pervasive, natural, embodied, structurally organized and truly cognitive. It is not merely a rhetoric means. In their own words, "metaphor does not occur primarily in language but in thought" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Below we will give a brief account of how conceptual metaphor works.

Kövecses (2007:5) has given an overview of the components of conceptual metaphor theory. They are listed in (1).

(1)
  a. Source domain
  b. Target domain
  c. Experiential basis
  d. Neural structures corresponding to a and b in the brain
  e. Relationships between the source and the target
  f. Metaphorical linguistic expressions
  g. Mappings
  h. Entailments
  i. Blends
  j. Nonlinguistic realizations
  k. Cultural models

In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is defined as being motivated by similarity between two domains, i.e., source domain and target domain. Source domain is usually more concrete and touchable. Target domain contains the subject matter that we want to convey. We will illustrate this by using a well-known example. Note that as a research convention, the conceptual metaphor is written in a small capital form.

(2) ARGUMENT IS WAR
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!*
If *you* use that *strategy,* he'll *wipe you out*. He *shot down* all *of my* arguments.   (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:5)

In (2) the italic parts denote metaphorical expressions that are usually taken for granted by most people when talking about argument but those expressions originate from a *fighting* domain. When we argue with someone, *shoot* does not mean *shooting someone with a gun*, rather, it means 'go ahead, just speak out.' Table 1 shows the mappings between the target domain and the source domain.

Table 1 – Mappings between argument and war.

	Target domain	Source domain
Theme	Argument	War
Paticpants	The persons involved	Soldiers
Instrments	Words/argument	Weapons
Place	The place involved	The battle zone
Manner	Fiercely; sometimes rationally; sometimes irrationally	Fiercely; cruelly; mercilessly; usually irrationally

Compared to the verbal dispute, 'war' is something more real. The damage is visible. The way to attack and defend is apparent. That is way we say the source domain is more concrete than the target domain. People use the reasoning of the source domain to imagine or reason about the target matter. In this sense, there are three fundamental bases of metaphor, i.e., similarity, structure and embodiment. In other words, metaphor emerges because of the similarity of two domains. The structure of the mappings is the base for a conceptual metaphor. Our embodied experiences provide reasonable sources to support further metaphorical thinking.
Another example is TIME IS MONEY.

(3) TIME IS MONEY
You're *wasting* my time.
This gadget will *save* you hours.
I don't *have* the time *to give you*.
How do you *spend* your time these days? That flat tire *cost me* an hour. I've *invested* a lot of time in her.
I don't *have enough* time to *spare* for that. You're *running out of* time.
You need to *budget* your time.
Put aside some time for ping pong. Is that *worth your*

while?

Do you *have* much time *left*?

He's living on *borrowed* time.

You don't *use* your time *profitably*. I *lost a lot of* time when I got sick. *Thank you for* your time.

(Lakoff and Johnson 1980:7-8)

Time is such an abstract notion for us to grasp. In order to talk about time, we take time as an object (an ontological metaphor itself) and further use a familiar thing such as money to discuss how you deal with time. Although money may be an abstract concept itself, by the experiences in which we own money and feel the power of money when we purchase something, we come to understand the concept of money. In this sense, using money is a real/embodied experience for us, compared to time.

Embodiment is also the fundamental reason for the emergence of orientational metaphors and primary metaphors. Orientational metaphors use our understanding of the correlation between our spatial position and our own feeling of whether we feel comfortable or not. They are so basic for us that we seldom think they are metaphors. Such examples are listed in (4).

(4) Orientational metaphors

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

I'm feeling *up*. That *boosted* my spirits.

CONSCIOUS IS UP; UNCOUNSCIOUS IS DOWN

Get *up*. Wake *up*. I'm *up* already.

HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP; SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN

He's at the *peak* of health. Lazarus *rose* from the dead.

HAVING CONTROL OR FORCE IS UP; BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL OR FORCE IS DOWN

I have control *over* her. I am *on top of* the situation.

MORE IS UP; LESS IS DOWN

The number of books printed each year keeps going *up*.

FORESEEABLE FUTURE EVENTS ARE UP (AND AHEAD)

All *up*coming events are listed in the paper.

HIGH STATUS IS UP; LOW STATUS IS DOWN

He has *a lofty* position. She'll *rise* to the *top*.

GOOD IS UP; BAD IS DOWN

Things are looking *up*.

VIRTUE IS UP; DEPRAVITY IS DOWN

He is high-minded. She has *high* standards.

RATIONAL IS UP; EMOTIONAL IS DOWN

The discussion *fell to the emotional* level, but I *raised* it back *up to the rational* plane.

(Lakoff and Johnson 1980:16-18)

As to primary metaphors, Grady defines them as those "directly grounded in the everyday experience that links our sensory-motor experience to the domain of our subjective judgments." The mostly cited example is AFFEC-TION IS WARMTH. The earliest experience that a baby has through the interaction with his/her mother, correlates affection with warmth so tightly and unconsciously. In the case of primary metaphors, the similarity between two domains does not trigger metaphors, but the correlation between two experiences does. The correlation between two sensory-motor domains is taken as real neural correlations in our brain. Besides, many researchers have shown that primary metaphors can construct much more complex metaphors (cf. Yu 2008).

Now let us turn back to the conceptual metaphor. How do we identify conceptual metaphors? Or does there exist such a metaphor? The answer relates to the structural mappings of the conceptual metaphor. Usually in a text, we can find a lot of linguistic metaphors and many metaphorical expressions. They may be randomly organized. Only those metaphorical expressions that construct a theme can be called a *conceptual metaphor*. As mentioned above, a conceptual metaphor takes the form like *A is B*, like what we have seen in the cases of ARGUMENT IS WAR and TIME IS MONEY. The conceptual metaphor appears in the mind of the speaker so that he can produce any kinds of novel expressions or innovative ways to describe his idea. This is the flexible aspect of the use of metaphor. In this paper, we take the conceptual metaphors shown in proverbs as the cultural values of a given culture. Sometimes they are known to the speakers; sometimes they are the covert reasoning shared by the members of that culture unconsciously. So in that case conceptual metaphors we find can be a hint to probe that culture.

There is another issue concerning metaphor and culture, to which Kövecses (2007) has drawn a lot of attention. That is, the universality and variation of metaphor when evaluated cross-culturally. On the one hand, since the source domain is based on embodied experiences, and most of the people share the same experiences, some metaphors tend to be universal. In other words, universal primary experiences produce universal primary metaphors (Kövecses 2007:3). On the other hand, since the environments are different, it is quite possible to form the unique metaphor as their unique cultural thought. This leads to the conclusion that metaphors can vary in different cultures.

After a careful scrutiny, Kövecses has reached the following conclusion as listed in (5).

(5)

i.   Universal experiences do not necessarily lead to universal metaphors;

ii.   Bodily experience may be selectively used in the creation of metaphors;

iii.   Bodily experience may be overridden by both culture and cognitive processes;

iv.   Primary metaphors are not necessarily universal;

v.   Complex metaphors may be potentially or partially universal;

vi.   Metaphors are not necessarily based on bodily experience — many are based on cultural considerations and cognitive processes of various kinds. (Kövecses 2007:4)

For the current purpose of introduction, it is sufficient to mention what points Kövecses has made. We will return to this issue in the section of discussion.

2.3   Conceptual Metonymy

If we say metaphor is constructed based on similarity, then metonymy is achieved via contiguity. That is, people tend to connect two things together because of their proximity, be it spatial or temporal. In other words, metaphor relies on the mappings between two domains, but metonymy relies on within-domain inference, or domain highlighting (Croft 1993). To illustrate, some common examples of metonymy are provided in (6).

(6)
a. THE PART FOR THE WHOLE
   We don't hire longhairs. Get your butt over here.
   The Giants need a stronger arm in right field.
b. PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT
   He's got a Picasso in his den. I hate to read Heidegger. He bought a Ford.
c. OBJECT USED FOR USER
   The sax has the flu today. The buses are on strike. The gun he hired wanted 50 grand.
d. CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLED
   Nixon bombed Hanoi. Napoleon lost at Waterloo. The Mercedes rear-ended me.
e. THE PLACE FOR THE INSTITUTION
   Washington is insensitive to the needs of the people. Paris is introducing longer skirts this season. Wall Street is in a panic.
f. THE PLACE FOR THE EVENT
   Pearl Harbour still has an effect on our foreign policy. Watergate changed our politics. Let's not let Thailand become another Vietnam.
                                           (Geeraerts 2009:214)

As (6) shows, metonymy is such a fundamental and naturally occurring phenomenon that we use it to reason about the world without any consciousness. Although the basic idea of metonymy, which says it occurs as the within-domain inference, concurs with the traditional definition of metonymy, the organization of metonymy is seldom addressed. Up to date, concerning this issue, there are two models proposed by contemporary linguists. One is the domain-based model, and the other is prototype-based model.

Croft (1993) proposes the domain-based model. In this model, basically each lexeme or word involves a domain

matrix. For example, how to define a knife? We not only know the shape of a knife, we also know the function of a knife (for *cutting*) and its position as a regular member in the silverware. The understandings of a knife are encyclopaedic and they form the domain matrix of knife in our knowledge system. In this sense, Croft argues that there is no such notion as 'basic' meaning for a knife. All metonymic meanings are present in the encyclopaedic semantic representation. As (7) shows, the word 'cat' can be a type of the entity (=7a), a token for the entity (=7b) or the token of the name (=7c and 7d). All of these examples show that our understandings of the word 'cat' vary in different contexts. Each time when we refer to the word 'cat,' a specific aspect (or domain) will be highlighted according to the context. This facilitates our understanding of the whole situation.

(7)
a. A cat is a mammal.
b. His cat is called Metathesis.
c. "Cat" has three letters.
d. "Cat" here has a VOT of 40 ms. [referring to a spectrograph of an occurrence of the word]
                            (Croft 1993; Geeraerts 2006:284)

The model that Croft proposed above is called the domain-based model of metonymy. In contrast with this model, Geeraerts has argued that the content of the concept 'metonymy' itself is not a uniform one and it forms a prototypical organization. Generally speaking, the fixed (unmovable) part and whole relation constructs the typical case of metonymy as when we say *We need more hands tomorrow*. Since *hands* are parts of the body, *more hands* refer to *more people*. This is the typical case of metonymy. If we take a closer look at examples shown in (6), we can distinguish various distances between the 'referer' and the 'referee.' Table 2 shows the gradience of the prototypicality of metonymy. The more upper left the category is positioned, the more prototypical it is. The lowest cell of the right column 'piece of clothing & people' refers to the most unstable relation between the clothes and the people who wear them. The relation in such case is usually provisional and decided on an ad hoc basis.

Table 2 – A prototype-based classification of metonymic patterns (cf. Geeraerts 2009:218).

	constituency	containment	proximity
space	spatial part & whole	container & contained	location & located
time	temporal part & whole	temporal containment & contained	--
events	subevent & complex event	action & participant, action &	cause & effect, producer &

		instrument	product, location & product
functional wholes	characteristic & character-ized member, entity & col-lection	possessor & possessed, controller & controlled	piece of clothing & people

In this paper, we agree with these two insightful mod-els of metonymy and take them as our research analytical tool. Furthermore, we find that in order to construct a proper conceptual metaphor, metonymy also plays an important role in interpreting the metaphor.

2.4   Frame semantics

In addition to metonymy, the knowledge of the frame in question is also essential to constructing and under-standing a conceptual metaphor. Frame semantics is proposed by Fillmore (1982). The central tenet of frame semantics is the belief that a lexeme or word does not exist independently of other words. Rather, they are in-terconnected, correlated with each other, and embedded in a larger scene. One classic example given by Fillmore is *on land* vs. *on the ground*. If one writes home saying, "I spent three hours *on land* this afternoon," we immedi-ately know that he had spent some time *at sea* before. On the other hand, if he says he spent some time *on the ground*, it implies that he had spent some time *in the air*. How on earth do we know the difference between these two? The answer lies in that fact that we do not remem-ber words alone. What really happens is that we remem-ber the scene in which the words appear. We remember the whole as a gestalt. Furthermore, we remember the sense relations among those words. Fillmore used to ap-ply the term 'scene' to refer to the situation, and the term 'frame' to refer to a specific perspective way to describe the scene. Usually it reflects the corresponding gram-matical relation it denotes. However, as the term 'frame' is used in many fields and becomes widely known, Fill-more gradually tossed away the distinction between scene and frame. Nowadays the term 'frame' refers to a set of background knowledge that characterizes a word or a concept. [1]

Another well-known classic example of frame seman-tics is the way we understand and use the terms concern-ing the commercial event. In the commercial event, we have some important elements such as the buyer, the seller, goods, and money. Figure 2 shows the frame ele-ments proposed by Fillmore.
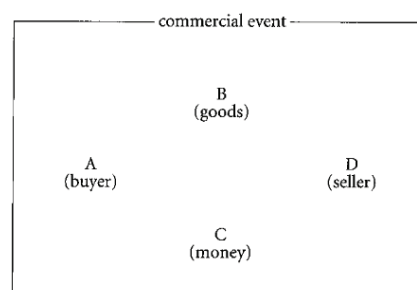

Figure 2. Elements in the commercial event (cited from Fillmore 2003:229)

Based on the same commercial event, in English there are many grammatical and lexical devices to profile the element we want to communicate. For instance, *buy* is the verb that focuses on the buyer and the goods. *Cost* is the verb that focuses on the price. In this way, those verbs such as *buy*, *sell*, *charge*, *spend*, *pay*, and *cost* are not unrelated to each other. Rather, all of them are the frame elements of the commercial event. Table 3 is the summary of the related expressions.

Table 3 – The grammatical relations shown in the commercial frame (cf. Geeraerts 2009:226).

	buyer	seller	goods	money
buy	subject	(to)	direct object	(for)
sell	(to)	subject	direct object	(for)
charge	(indi-rect ob-ject)	subject	(for)	direct object
spend	Subject	--	for/on	direct object
pay	subject	(indirect object)	(for)	direct object
pay	subject	(to)	for	direct object
cost	(indi-rect ob-ject)	--	sub-ject	direct object

In the present paper, we use the framework of frame semantics as an analytic tool to examine the eating frame used in Taiwanese proverbs, English proverbs, and Japanese proverbs. Later on, we will show that frame semantics gives us a clear contour of the eating frame, in which components of the frame represent parts of the whole. The elements can be inferred via frame metony-mies, and result in a semantic change.

2.5   Mental Spaces and Blending theory

The last and most widely applied theory we want to introduce here is mental spaces and blending theory. As a

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[1]   The term 'frame' is used as a cover term for 'schema,' 'script,' 'scenario,' 'ideational scaffolding,' 'cognitive model,' or 'folk theory' (cf. Fillmore 1982).

metaphor theory, conceptual metaphor theory is valid for describing the mappings of the two domains involved. However, as many researchers have pointed out, it is not clear (and sufficient) to account for how metaphor is constructed online and gets an immediate comprehension. In order to address the issue of online meaning construction, Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (1994, 1998) have proposed the notion of mental spaces and blending theory. In this theory, some words can trigger mental spaces in our mind. As the communicative flow goes, in a standard case, usually there are four spaces involved, namely a genetic space, two input spaces and one blended space, as shown in figure 3. The mechanism includes selective projection, composition, completion, elaboration, and the emergent structure.

To illustrate, consider the well-known example *My job is a jail*. *My job* triggers input space 1, and *a jail* builds input space 2. In input spaces, many attributes concerning a jail and my job will be mapped onto each other. Furthermore, their common features such as the agent, the space occupied, or time spent in work and jail, etc. will be mapped onto the genetic space. From the two input spaces, only those attributes involved in the current context will be mapped onto blended space. The mapping is selective according to the target domain.
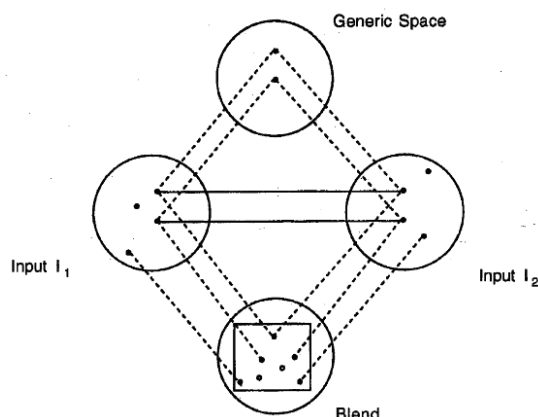

Figure 3. Mental spaces and the counterpart connections between them (cited from Fauconnier and Turner (1998:143)).

Composition occurs when elements are introduced into the blended space. After that, we impose one background conceptual structure (in this case, *the jail*) onto another different structure (*my job*). This operation is called *completion*. Then, *elaboration* develops the blend through imaginative mental simulation based on the logic and principles in the blend. All of these lead to the *emergent structure*, illustrated as a square in figure 3, in the blend. In the job example, the likely interpretation will be that my job is boring, unpleasant and maybe con-

fined in a small space (office). The mechanism introduced by the blending theory is powerful in explaining the online meaning construction and comprehension. We will use this theory to explain the metaphors in proverbs, too.

2.6 Proverb

Since we use proverbs as our materials to comprehend a particular culture, we give an overview of what proverbs look like. Proverbs have long been taken as words of wisdom which contain everyday experiences and common observations in concise and formulaic language, as well as in figurative language[2]. Concerning their formal features, Mieder (2004) has mentioned some such as **alliteration**: "*Practice* makes perfect," "*Forgive* and forget"; **parallelism**: "Nothing *ventured*, nothing gained," "Easy *come*, easy go"; **rhyme**: "A little *pot* is soon hot"; and **ellipsis**: "More *haste*, less speed," "Once *bitten*, twice shy." As to the internal features of proverbs, they can be classified as **hyperbole**: "All is *fair* in love and war"; **paradox**: "The longest *way* around is the shortest way home"; **personification**: "*Love* will find a way," and **metaphor** such as "A watched *pot* never boils." Non-metaphorical proverbs are also very common, for example, "*Knowledge* is power" (Mieder 2004:7-8).

As the above examples show, people use proverbs to summarize experiences and present their observations into a string of words that are easy to remember. Moreover, as ready-made packages, people use them to comment mostly on personal relationships and social affairs. Furthermore, many researchers have pointed out that proverbs are significant cultural products that codify important kinds of information in and about a culture (Honeck and Temple 1996:218). Because of this strong cultural disposition, proverbs must be used in contexts (or cultural contexts), and understood in a given culture. The abstraction of proverbs from their cultural context of use will be considered as unnatural, and problematic. Although the study of proverb is plenteous, usually categorized into two fields such as cultural values of proverb and proverb processing problem, this study focuses mainly on the cultural view issue.

3. METHODOLOGY

Our data cover English proverbs, Taiwanese proverbs as well as Japanese proverbs, all collected from proverb dictionaries. For constructing the cultural frames, we adopt frame semantics, the conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980 and others) and mental spaces

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[2] After reviewing others' definitions, Mieder has given proverb a definition as the following: "A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorisable from and which is handed down from generation to generation" (Mieder 2004:3).

and blending theory (Fauconnier and Turner 1994, 1998) as our framework.

In this paper, we chose three familiar but typological different languages to investigate. They are Taiwanese (a Sino-Tibetan language), Japanese (a Japonic language), and English (an Indo-European language). It is expected to find some distinct features across these languages since they are from different families and also quite distant geographically. In this present study, what we can find may be limited due to the small scale of the languages investigated. However, it is still worth probing into the issue of metaphor, proverb and culture in different languages.

In order to conduct a cross-cultural study, basically there are two approaches to comparing cultural frames. One takes a bird's eye, presenting a whole picture of cultural frames for each culture, and comparing each culture. On the other hand, the other utilizes the same frame as the starting point and sees how it is used in different cultures. Due to the time limitations and the small scale, this study mainly takes the second approach. The event we currently focus on is eating event since eating is such a pervasive event in most cultures, and is essential to human living.

4.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we present our results and proceed to discussion. Since our topic is the eating event, first we consider the elements present in the eating event.

4.1   Eating frame

First of all, we identify frame elements of the eating frame by consulting the FrameNet website developed by Charles J. Fillmore at ICSI/Berkeley.[3] Eating is a subordinate category to ingestion so we first sketch the definition of ingestion as a larger frame. The definition is shown in (8).

(8)
The definition of ingestion:
An Ingestor consumes food or drink (Ingestibles), which entails putting the Ingestibles in the mouth for delivery to the digestive system. This may include the use of an Instrument. Sentences that describe the provision of food to others are NOT included in this frame.

In addition to the definition, we can list both the core frame element and non-core elements in table 4.

Table 4 – Frame elements of ingestion.

Core	
Ingestibles	The Ingestibles are the entities that are being consumed by the Ingestor.
Ingestor	The Ingestor is the person eating or drinking.
Non-Core	
Degree	The extent to which the Ingestibles are consumed by the Ingestor.
Duration	The length of time spent on the ingestion activity.
Instrument	The Instrument with which an intentional act is performed.
Manner	Manner of performing an action.
Means	An act performed by the Ingestor that enables them to accomplishes the whole act of ingestion.
Place	Where the event takes place.
Purpose	The action that the Ingestor hopes to bring about by ingesting.
Source	Place from which the Ingestor takes the Ingestibles
Time	When the event occurs.

The core elements usually will be encoded into the grammatical slot in the language. Their presence is obligatory, not optional. However, the non-core elements may be present in the sentence, and sometimes maybe not. They are optional. For this eating frame, many English verbs are ready for use as shown in (9).

(9)   Lexical Units concerning the eating frame:
breakfast.v, consume.v, devour.v, dine.v, down.v, drink.v, eat.v, feast.v, feed.v, gobble.v, gulp.n, gulp.v, guzzle.v, have.v, imbibe.v, ingest.v, lap.v, lunch.v, munch.v, nibble.v, nosh.v, nurse.v, put away.v, put back.v, quaff.v, sip.n, sip.v, slurp.n, slurp.v, snack.v, sup.v, swig.n, swig.v, swill.v, tuck.v

The frame elements are important because they can become a cue to indicate the whole event by the metonymic link.[4] That is why we have to mention them in the first place. In the next section, we present what we have identified as food in an eating frame shown in proverbs in these three languages.

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[3]   https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/home

[4]   One well-known example of this coercion of meaning comes from Mandarin example 吃 *chi* 'eat.' In Mandarin, the following expressions use the same grammatical slot, namely VO construction, yet the type and the content of the O varies in order to the proper situation. For example, 吃飯 *chi fan* 'to eat, have meal or eat rice,' 吃餐廳 *chi canting* 'eat restaurant,' 吃麥當勞 *chi maidanglao* 'eat McDonald's,' 吃大餐 *chi dacan* 'eat big meal,' 吃免費 *chi mianfei* 'eat for free,' and so on. Without the understanding of the eating frame, it is difficult to obtain the appropriate meaning of this construction.

4.2 Food shown in Taiwanese proverb

We have collected those foods mentioned in Taiwanese proverbs as listed in (10). The number shown in the parenthesis represents the tokens of the item.

(10)

sugar cane(6), sweet potato(5), rice cake(4), alcohol(3), rice(3), Taiwanese pickle(3), dog(2), fieldsnail(2), fish(2), garlic(2), ginger(2), glutinous ricegourd(1), black beans(1), braised pig knuckles(1), cake(1), chicken(1), a fresh-water turtle with a softshell(1), Chinese Chive(1), cucumber(1), duck(1), fermented soybean paste(1), grain(1), king crab(1), leaf mustard(1), medicine(1), noodles(1), peanuts(1), persimmon(1), pork(1), Rice tube pudding(1), salmon(1), shit(1), shrimp(1), snake(1), taros(1), tea(1), water melon(1), wine(1) (sum=72)

Since food is highly culturally dependent, it is not easy to identify what kind of food they really are even though we provide their names. To illustrate, we use pictures to demonstrate how they look. Figure 4 is the attempt that shows the pictures of top ten foods used in Taiwanese proverbs.

Note that the picture of dog with a cross mark listed in figure 4 means that in Taiwanese proverbs, it declares a negative judgment concerning the dog meat. For example, one proverb goes like 偷食狗，有罪 *(thau-tsiàh káu, ū tsuē* 'It is a crime to eat dog meat') . It is clear that Taiwanese proverbs do not encourage people to eat dog meat.

Figure 4.Top 10 foods in Taiwanese proverbs

4.3 Food shown in English proverb

In English proverbs, few foods are found, compared to Taiwanese proverbs and Japanese proverbs. They are listed in (11).

(11)

wine(17), bread(5), cake(3), apple(3), dish(3), pudding(2), fruit(1), salt(1)(sum=35)

Again, we present some pictures of them to illustrate how they look like, as show in figure 5.

Figure 5. Top 10 foods in English proverbs.

It is clear that what to eat and how to eat is completely a cultural thing that can vary from culture to culture. Like an English proverb goes, *You are what you eat*. By looking at those food used in the proverbs, we can imagine the life style of the people. Interestingly, out of 2,845 English proverbs, only eight types of foods, 35 tokens of them are found. The low percentage of food in English proverbs can be considered as an indication of low degree of prominence the role foods play in that culture. Compared to Taiwanese or Chinese culture, foods are more frequently mentioned in daily life.

4.4 Food shown in Japanese proverb

Example (12) shows the foods mentioned in Japanese proverbs.

(12)

alcohol(25), rice cake(17), rice(9), miso(5), persimmon(4), sea bream(4), tofu(4), Japanese apricot(3), bamboo shoot(2), dried bonito(2), duck(2), eggplant(2), fish guts pickled in salt(2), konjak(2), octopus(2), pumpkin(2), sweet bun(2), vinegar(2), abalone(1), azuki(1), azuki rice(1), bean(1), boiled rice with tea(1), bonito(1), bread(1), Chinese yam(1), cigarette(1), clam(1), cooking(1), crushed rice(1), deep-fried tofu(1), dove(1), dumpling(1), eel(1), fermented soybeans(1), field snail(1), fish(1), globefish(1), globefish soup(1), honey(1), Japanese pepper(1), licorice(1), long green onion(1), meat(1), miso soup(1), salt(1), mustard(1), noodle(1), peach(1), pear(1), pepper(1), potato(1), rice bran(1), rice cracker(1), rice gruel(1), salt(1), sardine(1), squid(1), sugar(1), loach soup(1), tea(1), white radish(1), vegetable root(1), water melon(1), tuna(1), barracuda(1), mackerel(1), Pacific saury(1)(sum=141)

Compared to English proverbs, the number of foods and the variety of foods is much more abounding. Figure 6 show some pictures of the top ten foods found in Japanese proverbs.

Figure 6. Top 10 foods in Japanese proverbs.

The foods shown in figure 6 are really Japanese style. Interestingly, the top one item is *sake* (Japanese alcohol). It outnumbers rice by almost three times. It indicates that alcohol is highly mentioned in this culture and may be also an important tool for social interaction.

4.5   Conceptual metaphors based on the eating frame
After a careful scrutiny of Taiwanese, English, and Japanese proverbs, we figure out some conceptual metaphors that underlie these three languages. Firstly, we look at the conceptual metaphor MAKING A LIVING IS EATING.

(13) MAKING A LIVING IS EATING
[Taiwanese]
13a.
看　　天，　　食　　飯
khuànn-thinn　　tsiàh-pn̄g[5]
look at sky　　eat　rice
'One has his/her meals (= makes his/her living) depending on weather/the heaven above.' [6]

13b.
十　巧，　　無　可　　食
tsàp khiáu　　bô thang tsiàh
ten　finesse　not able　eat
'Tens of tricks make nothing to eat.'
(A Jack of all trades and master of none.)

In (13a) and (13b), *tsiàh-pn̄g* does not mean eating rice literally. Rather, it means *making a living* or *living*. We know that to survive or to live on the earth, one has to eat. To eat represents to live. Obviously it is a metonymic effect. Or we can say we understand the proverbs because of the inference from the common knowledge.

(14) RELYING ON SB/STH IS EATING
[Taiwanese]
14a.
五　十　歲食　爸，　　五十　年食　子
gōo-tsàp hè tsiàh pa,　　gōo-tsàp nî tsiàh kiánn
fifty　age eat　father　fifty　age eat　son
'Relying on [one's] father for fifty years, [and] relying on [one's] children for [another] fifty years.'

If one looks at the literal meaning of *tsiàh pa 'eating father'* in (14a), he will be horrified completely. However, the real meaning of this proverb is not physically eating his father, it means *relying on* his father. This is also a metonymic link between the means and the result. If you eat something your father provides, then you can survive. Again, we understand this proverb through the eating frame and the metonymic model. The conceptual metaphor RELYING ON SB/STH IS EATING underlies the Taiwanese culture. More examples are provided in (14b) to (14e).

14b.
歹　　歹　　尪，　　食　(勿會) 空
pháinn pháinn ang　　tsiàh　buē　khang
bad bad　husband　　eat　not　empty
'[Even] a bad husband is [sometimes] reliable'
(lit. A bad husband cannot be eaten up).

14c.
外　甥　食　母　舅，親像　　食　豆　腐
guā seng tsiàh bó-kū　　tshin-tshīunn tsiàh tāu-hū
nephew　eat　uncle　is like　eat　tofu
'A nephew/niece relies on his/her maternal uncle, [which is] quite [as natural/easy] as eating tofu.'

We use (14c) to illustrate how the blending theory works in the process of constructing the meaning of this proverb. Due to the space limitations, the generic space is not drawn in the figure 7, although in this case, it would include the generic elements 'agent', 'action' and so on. The word 'nephew' triggers the input space 1 and 'eating tofu' triggers the input space 2. Because we know tofu has a soft texture, it is usually very easy to eat, and as a food, people eat it for a living, we blend these pieces of information in the blended space and then obtain the meaning that the nephew can rely on his uncle easily.

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[5] We use Tailo unicode phonetic system to annotate Taiwanese pronunciation, which is now the standard phonetic system used in Taiwan. All the glossing is mine.
[6] About the annotations: [] Brackets for grammatical repairs or semantic complements; () Parentheses for extra information; / A slash for translation alternatives.
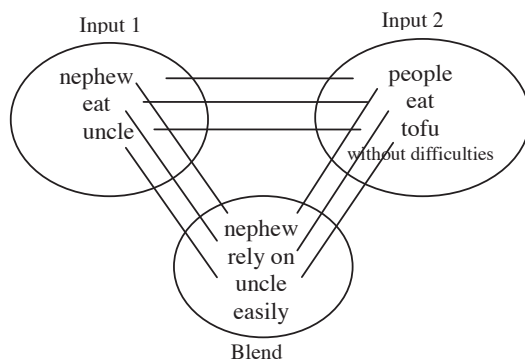
Figure 7. The blending model for *nephew eating uncle* example.

Example (14d) is an analogy between the situation of people eating fish and fish eating water, although fish does not really 'eat' water. Instead, they depend on water naturally and will die without water. Therefore, this proverb highlights the significance of the fish as a food (or resource) for humans. In actual use of context, the fish may imply something very important to the person involved.

14d.
人 食 魚，魚 食 水
lâng tsia̍h hî　hî tsia̍h　tsuí
people eat fish　fish eat water
'Humans need fish [for food]; fish needs water [for living].'

In Japanese proverbs, we find one that uses eating to denote *relying*, as shown in (14e).

14e.
[Japanese]
他人 の 飯　を 食う[7]
Tanin no mesi　wo kuu
'Through the experience of relying on meals provided by others [if they are willing to offer, you will learn a lot from it.']

Underlying (15a) and (15b) is the conceptual metaphor CONSUMING IS EATING. In (15a), it says *An old buffalo eats the fresh grass*. However, as we know that the old buffalo does not virtually rely on the fresh grass, what it really does is consuming the grass. Also, there is a contrast between the old and the fresh. The implicature here is to blame or tease the old buffalo who dare desire (or consume) the fresh grass. It calls for an attention on the unbalanced situation between the old and the young. If we use it in the real world, usually it is used to say a

pretty aged man 'consumes' a rather young body (females) in a sexual way. Likewise, (15b) is an English proverb, in which *eating* emphasizes the final stage of the event, namely *consuming*. It means that it is impossible to eat up (consume) your cake but still have it at the same time. In these two cases, CONSUMING IS EATING.

(15) CONSUMING IS EATING
[Taiwanese]
15a.
老 牛， 食 嫩 草
lāu-gû　　tsia̍h tsínn-tsháu
old buffalo eat　fresh grass
'An old buffalo feeding/feasting on fresh grass.'

15b.
Eat one's cake and have it too.

Example (16) is an example of another conceptual metaphor LIVING IS EATING (AGE AS FOOD). 食老 *tsia̍h lāu* literally means *eating old*. But it is apparent that oldness is not something we can eat so *eating old* means *getting old*. In addition to this proverb, we have a common expression such as　食百二 *tsia̍h pah-jī* 'eat/become 120 years old' which takes ages as food.

(16) LIVING IS EATING (AGE AS FOOD)
[Taiwanese]
16a.
自 細　不可　 無 母， 食 老　不可　 無婆
chū- suè　m̄-thang bô-bú　　tsia̍h lāu　m̄-thang bô pô
from young not able no mother eat old not able no wife
'One needs a mother since the infant stage; one needs a wife while eating (=passing) his/her old age.'

Eating in (17) means *taking advantages*. In (17a) and (17b), the general idea is that if you benefit from others, then you have to do something (usually more than what you get from them) in return. The imbalance schema between *a bite* and *7 kilograms* is at work here to trigger a sense of *giving more to repay*. These examples transfer the moral value regarding the preferred human social interaction.

(17) TAKING ADVANTAGES IS EATING
[Taiwanese]
17a.
食 人 一口， 報 人 　一斗
tsia̍h lâng　it-khóo　pò lâng　　it-táu
eat　people one mouth return people one tau
'Having grabbed a bite, giving one *tau* (about 7 kilograms) in return.'

17b.
食 人 一斤， 也 著 還 　人 四 兩
tsia̍h lâng　it- kun　iā tio̍h hîng　lâng　sì-niú

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[7] If we explain this proverb in Japanese, it means '親もとを離れて、他人の間で苦労を味わい、社会の経験を積むこと'according to an online proverb dictionary.

eat people one kun   should return people four niu
'Having eaten for one *jin* (about 600 grams), at least giving four *liangs* (about 150 grams) in return.'

Examples (17c) and (17d) represent a slightly negative situation. In (17c) it implies that if one takes advantages of others with secrecy, and intends to avoid notice, then he should destroy the evidence (like wiping his mouth clearly after stealthily having eaten something). (17d) describes a shameless attitude resembling what (17c) tries to describe. In (17d) it describes someone has eaten Japanese pickled shallots stealthily but pretends nothing happened. What he forgot is that *Rakkyou* is something that emits a special smell after you have it. So the ploy of concealment obviously fails.

17c.
會 曉 偷   食，(勿會)曉 拭   嘴
uē-hiáu thau-   tsiàh   buē- hiáu tshit-tshuì
be able stealthily eat   not able   wipe mouth
'Knowing how to eat secretly, [but] not knowing (=remembering) to wipe mouth.'

[Japanese]
17d.
らっきょう食うて 口   を 拭う
Rakkyoo   kuute kuti   wo nuguu
'After having eaten pickled shallots (which cause bad breath), [how dare you] wipe your mouth [and pretend nothing happened].'

Example (17e) denotes a somehow sophisticated aspect of Japanese culture of marriage and human relationship. In a family, the relation between the wife and the mother-in-law is always a difficult matter to deal with. (17e) represents the belief of a mother-in-law who tends to bully the wife by not treating her well. Because the barracuda is extremely tasty in the autumn, the wife is not allowed to eat them.

17e.
秋 梭魚   は 嫁   に 食わすな
Aki kamasu wa yome   ni   kuwasu na
'As for the barracuda tasty in season (autumn), don't let your wife have it.'

Example (17f) is a truncated proverb but says a lot. *Settin* is the old fashioned toilet in Japan. Imagine someone who has the change to eat *manzyuu* (a kind of Japanese sweet cuisine) and wants to enjoy it alone, the toilet is the only place for him to hide himself and have the cuisine. However, the toilet is definitely full of bad smell so actually he cannot completely enjoy the pleasure of eating tasty cuisine. We have the inference that he may feel guilty for enjoying the cuisine exclusively. *Eating* here denotes *taking advantages stealthily*.

17f.
雪隠   で 饅頭
Settin   de manzyuu
'[Enjoy] sweet buns [alone] in the toilet.' (About the guilty feeling over what one should not have. This uncomfortable feeling is here expressed by eating snacks alone in a smelly toilet.)

Example (18a) illustrates the conceptual metaphor IN-VADING IS EATING (OR INVASION IS EATING) especially in the context of Chinese chess game. *Chut-á* is ranked as the lowest soldier in the traditional army. In the chess game, there is a line lying in the middle of the Chinese chess board, which represents the river dividing 楚河 *Chuhe* and 漢界 *Hanjie*. These are the two camps in the chess. When *chut-á* 'eats' across the river, it means he invades the opposition camp. Therefore, it represents INVADING IS EATING (OR INVASION IS EATING). In addition to this proverb, there is a common expression in Taiwanese, saying 食人夠夠 *tsiàh-lâng kàu kàu* which means invading others and taking advantages in a forceful or crafty way. It accords with this conceptual metaphor nicely.

(18) INVADING IS EATING (OR INVASION IS EATING)
[Taiwanese]
18a.
卒 仔，食   過 河[8]
tsut-á   tsiàh   kè- hô
pawn   eat   cross river
'A pawn eats his way across the river.'

Examples (19a) and (19b) depict an interesting episode to represent the causal relation, which is based on our daily life, namely the excretion.

(19) CAUSAL CHAIN IS EATING (AND EXCRETING)
[Taiwanese]
19a.
無 食   黑豆，   叫 伊 放   黑豆   屎
bô- tsiàh oo-tāu   kiò-i   pang   oo-tāu   sái
not eat   black bean ask him excrete black bean feces
'Expecting a person who has not eaten any black beans to produce feces with black beans.'

19b.
無 彼號   屁 股， 食 彼號   瀉藥
bô- hit-hō   kha- tshng tsiàh hit-hō   ià-ioh
no that kind of buttock   eat that kind of laxative
'Without that kind of buttocks, [but] taking that kind of laxative.'

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[8] The river here means the boundary between the two camps on a Chinese chessboard.

In English proverbs, we find three sayings that describe the causal relation based on the eating frame. They are shown in (19c), (19d), and (19e). Although they are not directly related to the process of eating in the way (19a) and (19b) do, since they describe either the manner of the eating or the purpose of the eating frame as mentioned in section 4.4, surely they should be included in the eating frame.

19c.
He that will *eat* the nut must first crack the shell.

19d.
He that will not work shall not *eat*.

19e.
He that would *eat* the fruit must climb the tree.

In Japanese proverbs, (19f) and (19g) describe the effort one should make or the price one should pay in order to eat. They can be taken as the concrete examples under the conceptual metaphor CAUSAL CHAIN IS EATING.

[Japanese]
19f.
枝先　に行かねば 熟柿　　は　食えぬ
Edasaki ni ika-neba jukusi wa kue-nu
'You can't have a ripe and soft persimmon if you don't climb up trees to get it.'

19g.
一　日　　作さざれば　　百日　　　　食わず
Iti zitu nasaza-reba hyakuniti kuwa-zu
'If I have not worked for one day, I won't eat for [the next] one hundred days.'

In both Taiwanese proverbs and Japanese proverbs, we find the wisdom of how to eat and what to eat. They reflect the belief in the alternative medicine and traditional folk therapy deeply rooted in these two cultures. In other words, it also represents that a conceptual metaphor CURING IS EATING (FOOD AS MEDICINE) is at work. (20a) emphasizes that unless one eats the right kind of grass[9] which has the effect to cure, one will not recover even though he eats the expensive medicine *jîn-som*.

(20) CURING IS EATING (FOOD AS MEDICINE).
[Taiwanese]
20a.
食　對　藥，青　草　　一葉，　食　無 對藥,
tsiȧh tuì iȯh, tshinn-tsháu tsȧt hiȯh, tsiȧh m̄- tuì iȯh,
eat right medicine green grass one leaf　eat wrong medicine

人 蔘　一　石
jîn-som tsȧt-tsiȯh
Ginsom one tsioh

'Taking the right medicine, [even] a leaf of herbs [would do]; taking the wrong medicine, [even] one *dan* (about 5 kilograms) of ginseng [has no effect].'

[Japanese]
20b.
酒　は 百薬　　の 長
Sake wa hyakuyaku no tyoo
'[A little something] to drink is the best medicine.'

20c.
秋刀魚が 出ると 按摩 が 引っ込む
Sanma ga deruto anma ga hikkomu
'As long as the Pacific saury comes out, massagists have to go back home (for their customers eat well and are healthier now).'

20d.
冬至 に南瓜　　を 食べると 夏病 みせぬ
Touzi ni kabotya wo taberu-to natu yamise-nu
'If you eat pumpkins at the winter solstice, you won't be sick in the next summer.'

Although examples (20b) and (20c) do not overtly mention the verb *eat*, foods are mentioned. Since food is the indispensable element in the eating frame, it invokes the whole frame. That is why we can construct the metaphor CURING IS EATING (FOOD AS MEDICINE) from these two examples. The same reasoning applies to examples (21a), (21b), (23a), (23b), and (23c) as well.

Despite there are some common values expressed by the eating frame via conceptual metaphors in these three languages, we do find some culture specific metaphors in Japanese proverbs as shown in (21), (22), (23), and (24). In (21), *eating* is taken as an event of *rewarding*.

(21) REWARDING IS EATING
[Japanese]
21a.
鰯　　で　精進[10]　落ち
Iwasi de syoozin oti
'Because of using [such an ordinary fish like] sardine, the [quality of] Shojin cuisine is degraded.'

21b.
有る時 は 米　の 飯

9　Actually, in Chinese medicine, we do not 'eat' grass. We drink the soup made from the grass instead. *Eat* here represents the hypernym for *drink* via the metonymic link.

10　*精進落とし Syoozin-otosi*, a thank-you party held at the end of a funeral in order to thank those who have helped and had a vegetarian diet during the funeral. Such a party is expected to be a sumptuous feast, so ordinary dishes like sardine naturally cause disappointment.

Aru toki wa kome no mesi
'When making a fortune, [it is about time to eat] rice.'

In addition to REWARDING IS EATING described in (21), another conceptual metaphor is EXPERIENCING/ REALIZING IS EATING as shown in (22a) to (22d). It is a self-evident truth that if one has not eaten something, one is not possible to know the taste of it. The interesting point lies in the fact that the Japanese use eating event as a means to explore the world.

(22) EXPERIENCING/ REALIZING IS EATING
[Japanese]
22a.
雁も　鳩も　食わねば　味知れぬ
Ganmo hatomo kuwa-neba azi sire-nu
'Having not eaten wild geese and doves once, you won't know how they taste.'

22b.
隣　の 餅　　を　食って見 よ
Tonari no moti　wo　kutte　mi yo
'You won't know how your neighbor's rice cake tastes unless you try one.'

As to (22c) and (22d), we find a primary metaphor which acts on the interpretation of the proverbs, and which can be called ANALYZING IS DECOMPOSING. The theme of (22c) is pepper. In (22d) the theme is licorice. Both of them have strong flavour and should be masticated in order to enjoy the taste. If one swallows them without chewing, then he cannot really know the taste. In sum, there are two conceptual metaphors combined together to form the interpretation for (22c) and (22d). For a more detailed discussion of the decomposition method of metaphor, see Yu (2008).

22c.
胡椒　　の 丸 呑み
Kosyoo no maru nomi
'Swallowing pepper without chewing' (you won't know the taste)
22d.
甘草　　の 丸　呑み
Kansoo no maru nomi
'Swallowing licorice without chewing' (you won't know the taste)

丸呑み *marunomi* describes the manner of eating, and may be taken as *devouring*. Since *devour* is one of the lexical units in the eating frame (cf. (9)), these two examples can be included here. Likewise, example (23) provides a vivid image of Japanese culture value, that is, COMPETING IS EATING. Many anthropologists have pointed out that (most of) the Japanese care so much

about what others think about them. This is a well-known phenomenon. However, in addition to the awareness of others' opinions, there is a more general mental state underlying the Japanese minds, namely the competing drive. We argue that minding others and competing with others are like twins that cannot separate from each other. To put it in a more specific way, one minds others, compares with them and then competes with them. Interestingly, in Japanese proverbs, they use the eating event (or food) as the base for competing, as shown in (23a) to (23c).

(23) COMPETING IS EATING
[Japanese]
23a.
内　の 米　の　飯　より 隣　　の 麦　飯
Uti no kome　no mesi yori　tonari no mugi mesi
'[It looks like] the barley rice next door is better than the rice at home.'

23b.
他人　の 飯　　は 白い
Tanin no mesi　wa siroi
'Others' rice is bright and shining.'

23c.
隣　　　の 柿 は おいしく見える
Tonari no kaki wa oisiku　mieru
'The persimmons next door look more delicious.'

Finally, in (24) we find another conceptual metaphor DEFEATING IS EATING. If one eats up something, the object (or the food) is gone and vanished. The conceptual metaphor employs the final result of the eating frame to generate the inference of *defeating*. What has been eaten is under controlled.

(24) DEFEATING IS EATING
[Japanese]
24a.
鬼 を 酢 にして 食う
Oni wo su ni　site　kuu
'Make vinegar from *oni* (Japanses ogres), and eat it.' (There is nothing to be afraid of.)
24b.
わわしい 女　は 夫 を 食う
Wawasii onna　wa otto wo kuu
'A scolding wife devours her husband.'

Table 5 is the summary of the conceptual metaphors we have discussed so far in the proverbs of these three languages. We have identified twelve conceptual metaphors. Eight of them exist in Taiwanese proverbs and Japanese proverbs. Only two of them can be found in English proverbs.

Table 5 – Summary of conceptual metaphors shown in three languages

Eating metaphor	Taiwanese	English	Japanese
MAKING A LIVING IS EATING	v		
RELYING ON SB/ STH IS EATING	v		v
CONSUMING IS EATING	v	v	
AGE AS FOOD	v		
TAKING ADVAN-TAGES IS EATING	v		v
INVADING IS EATING (OR INVASION IS EATING)	v		
CAUSAL CHAIN IS EATING (AND EXCRETING)	v	v	v
CURING IS EATING (FOOD AS MEDICINE)	v		v
REWARDING IS EATING			v
EXPERIENCING/ REALIZING IS EATING			v
COMPETING IS EATING			v
DEFEATING IS EATING			v

There are three implications we can draw from this table. Firstly, the eating event is more frequently mentioned in Taiwanese culture and Japanese culture than that in English culture, which may signify the relative weights these three cultures put on it. The food culture in Taiwan and Japan is much richer than that in English culture. As a result, as a fundamental role that *eating* plays in our daily lives, the Taiwanese and Japanese tend to use it more as the source domain to express ideas. Secondly, different cultures tend to highlight different aspects of our experiences to express ideas and communicate with others. This conclusion corresponds to what Lakoff (1987) has mentioned that the occurrence of a metaphor is *motivated* but *not predictable*. Thirdly, we find that via the eating frame, the Taiwanese put more emphasis on personal behaviour such as making a living, consuming, getting old, reasoning causal relation and curing. In contrast with Taiwanese philosophy, the Japanese tend to use the eating event to reason the human relationship between him and others. The conceptual metaphors involve taking advantages of others, reasoning causal relation, curing, competing with others, and defeating. By analyzing the conceptual metaphors shown in Japanese proverbs, we have a better understanding of the Japanese way of thinking and their cultural values.

4.6   The relation between proverb and metaphor

What is the relation between proverb and metaphor? From the perspective of theoretical construction, this issue arises naturally as we proceed with our research. We all know that not all proverbs are metaphors or metonymic expressions. For example, *Knowledge is power* is a proverb but there is no special metaphor in it, unless one argues that we take *knowledge* as an object, in which case we have an ontological metaphor. Generally speaking, there exist a lot of proverbs which take the proposition form. Figure 8 represents this traditional view in which proverbs include metaphors and metonymy. They can be separated in a clear-cut way.
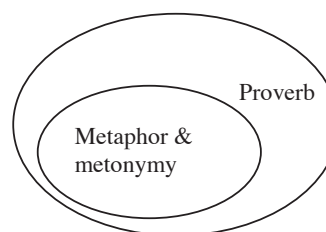

Figure 8. Traditional view on the relation between proverb and metaphor

However, this study has shown that no matter whether the proverbial expressions are metaphorical or not, they may be the realizations of one conceptual metaphor. This finding accords what Lakoff and Johnson have stated that metaphor does not occur primarily in language but in thought. Since proverbs are taken as an epitome of a given culture, the conceptual metaphors constructed from proverbs represent the essential cultural values which underlie the culture. The relation between proverb, metaphor, and conceptual metaphor can be newly depicted in figure 9.

Because proverbs represent the wisdom and lessons of the culture which have been carried down from generation to generation, the conceptual metaphors constructed from proverbs have a certain degree of representativeness. From a pedagogic perspective, especially in the classroom of foreign language learning, we believe students can learn more if this kind of cultural values can be presented for them to learn a foreign culture.
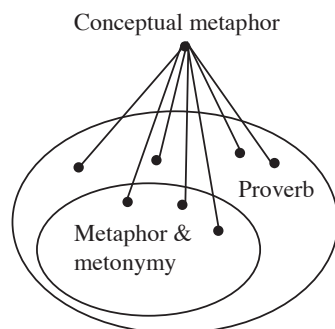
Figure 9. A new perspective to account for the relation between proverb, metaphor, and conceptual metaphor.

4.7 Polysemy

As we construct the conceptual metaphors from proverbs, we notice that the verb *eat* in those metaphors behaves differently. In other words, it can be considered as polysemous. *Eat* does not just mean *eat*. As many researchers have pointed out, metaphorization and metonymization are two the powerful mechanisms for semantic change (cf. Traugott & Dasher 2002 and many others). In order to investigate how conceptual metaphors relate to the issue of the lexical polysemy, we reexamine our examples. Then, to what extent the meanings of *eat* in the conceptual metaphors we found in proverbs correspond with the meanings of it compiled in the dictionary? To illustrate the point, we consult WordNet for the verb *eat*, and an online Taiwanese dictionary for the meaning of 食 *tsiàh*, as shown in (25) and (26) respectively.

(25) The definitions of *eat*
a. (v) eat (take in solid food) "She was eating a banana"
b. (v) eat (eat a meal; take a meal) "We did not eat until 10 P.M. because there were so many phone calls"
c. (v) feed, eat (take in food; used of animals only) "This dog doesn't eat certain kinds of meat"
d. (v) eat, eat on (worry or cause anxiety in a persistent way) "What's eating you?"
e. (v) consume, eat up, use up, eat, deplete, exhaust, run through, wipe out (use up (resources or materials)) "this car eats a lot of gas"
f. (v) corrode, eat, rust (cause to deteriorate due to the action of water, air, or an acid) "The acid eats through the metal"

(Retrieved from WordNet[11], modification mine)

As a result, out of these two conceptual metaphors in English data concerning the eating event, one of them, namely CONSUMING IS EATING, is taken as the common usage of *eat*. The metaphorical/metonymic expression

has been sematicized, entrenched, and become a well established sense in this linguistic community. Likewise, (26) is the definitions of Taiwanese *tsiàh*, out of which we find two of them correlate to the conceptual metaphors we find in Taiwanese proverbs. They are *relying on sb/sth*, and *living (age as food)*.

(26) The definitions of 食 *tsiàh*
a. (v) eat, e.g., 食果子 *tsiàh kué-tsí* 'eat fruit'
b. (v) drink, e.g., 食茶/燒酒 *tsiàh tê/ sio-tsiú* 'drink tea/ alcohol'
c. (v) smoke, e.g., 食薰 *tsiàh hun* 'smok a cigarette'
d. (v) depend on, rely on, e.g., 食頭路 *tsiàh-thâu-lōo* 'work'
e. (v) live, grow, e.g., 食甲老老老 *tsiàh kah lāu-lāu-lāu* 'live a very long life'
f. (v) take a bribe, misappropriate, e.g., 食錢 *tsiàh-tsînn* 'misapporopriate'
g. (v) bear, e.g., 食風 *tsiàh-hong* 'resist wind'
h. (v) add color to, e.g., 這塊布的色愛食較重咧，才會媠 *Tsit tè pòo ê sik ài tsiàh khah tāng--leh, tsiah ē suí* 'The color of this piece of cloth should be dyed deep in order to make it gorgeous'

(Retrieved from the Dictionary of Commonly Used Taiwanese Words[12], translation mine)

Due to the space limitations, we omit the presentation of the Japanese verbs 食う *kuu*/食べる *taberu* here but many of the meanings we find in the conceptual metaphors in Japanese proverbs do accord with their polysemies of these two verbs. How can we account for this phenomenon? One possible explanation is that since the conceptual metaphor is constructed in thought, little wonder it manifests itself in the linguistic level, and then crystallizes as a polysemous form.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study puts its focus on the issue of the relation between proverb, conceptual metaphor, and cultural value. We have shown that, by using the framework of conceptual metaphor theory, along with the blending theory, and frame semantics, we can identify these cultural values in different languages. This finding has several implications. Firstly, we confirm what Kövecses has claimed that the metaphorical entailment potential appears to be utilized differently in different languages and cultures, even based on the same source domain (Kövecses 2007:128). Secondly, the conceptual metaphors found in the proverbs can be a clue to recognize

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[11] http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn

[12] The online dictionary is developed by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan. (http://twblg.dict.edu.tw/holodict_new/index.html)

the polysemies of a particular lexeme, such as *eat* as exemplified in this paper. Finally, we suggest that analyzing conceptual metaphors in proverbs would be helpful and useful in language teaching since the result could be a material to present the cross-cultural issue and facilitate language teaching and language learning.

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