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Factors Influencing EFL Learners' Comprehension to Conceptual Metaphors in John Donne's "*Death Be Not Proud*"

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ABSTRACT:

Metaphor comprehension has always been discussed by scholars for several decades. Metaphor comprehension is difficult for both native and non-native learners namely in literature. The current study aims to investigate the factors that affect EFL learners' comprehension in interpreting conceptual metaphors in John Donne's *Death Be Not Proud* based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory of Lakoff and Johnson 1980. The data were extracts selected from John Donne's poem *Death Be Not Proud*. The participants were 10 Iraqi university EFL learners whose major is English; they have been selected from fourth year students at university of Anbar, college of Education for Humanities. The participants were asked in a form of questionnaire to interpret conceptual metaphor in the extracts selected and to explain how they understood the given text. The findings revealed that EFL learners faced difficulties in comprehending conceptual metaphor. They were affected by several factors in comprehending conceptual metaphors in the selected poem. These factors were external or internal. It has been concluded that varying levels of comprehension among the participants might be attributed and affected by some factors that may lead to non-understanding or misunderstanding. Some of these factors are: cultural and background knowledge, lack of exposure to literary devices, cognitive biases, emotional states, social and ethnic context, teaching and learning style, interest and motivation and critical thinking skills.

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Introduction:

In recent years, there has been increasing attention towards the use of metaphorical expressions at learning level due to their pervasiveness in everyday communication. Many scholars have extensively studied metaphor from different aspects in various languages. Scholars such as Lapasau, Setiawati and Mayasari, (2020), Littlemore, Chen, Koester and Barnden, (2011), Marugina, (2014), Aardal, (2014), Namiq, (2019), Abdulla, (2019), Zibin, A. (2016), investigated the metaphorical language using conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) as a theoretical framework of their works.

Metaphors are often used in literary texts to create an imaginative description of a character, place, or idea. Metaphors can be used to convey extended meanings and to make reasonable comparison between two unlike entities. Comprehending metaphors in literary texts can be a challenging task for EFL learners, as it requires them to understand the figurative language used by the poets. EFL learners may struggle to fully understand the meaning of a metaphor, as it requires them to interpret the underlying meaning and symbolism behind the comparison. Littlemore, Chen, Koester and Barnden (2011) studied metaphor comprehension by international students whose first language is not English, while attending undergraduate lectures at a British university. The study emphasized the importance of conceptual fluency, which refers to how concepts are metaphorically encoded in a language. Consequently, the transference of concepts from the L1 to the target language can lead to errors for many EFL learners. Additionally, Aardal (2014) investigated whether metaphorical expressions are more difficult to comprehend than ordinary lexical expressions and to what extent Norwegian EFL

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students are able to understand metaphorical expressions in texts representative of the expected level of English in LK06 at Vg1.

This can be especially challenging for EFL learners who are not familiar with understanding metaphors in metaphysical poetry; a cause related to the unique and complex use of language and metaphorical imagery employed by poets of the metaphysical movement. These poets, including John Donne, Andrew Marvell, and George Herbert, used elaborate metaphors and conceits to explore abstract ideas such as love, death, and spirituality. Abdulla (2019) clarified the meaning construction and meaning conception aspects involved in metaphysical poetry, which could account for literary creativity within a cognitive semantic framework. The study showed that, there is no fundamental difference between poets and non-poets in terms of the use as well as comprehension of the conceptual metaphors. Moreover, poets and non-poets are basically similar in their basic use of the mental ability that helps humans construe one single event or situation from different perspectives. Accordingly, the study aims to answer the following question: What are the factors that influence Iraqi EFL learners' comprehension to conceptual metaphors contained in John Doone's *Death be not proud?*

By investigating these factors, the study would provide insights for educators, curriculum developers as well as EFL learners at teaching-learning universal level to enhance and facilitate their understanding of the cognitive processes involved in the complex literary texts.

Methodology:

This section is concerned with the methodology adopted in this study. It includes the following sub-sections: research design, participants, and questionnaire.

Research Design and Data Collection:

The main objective of this qualitative study is to find out the difficulties faced by Iraqi university EFL learners in comprehending metaphor in John Donne's *Death be not proud.* The poem was downloaded from: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44131/a-valediction-forbidding-mourning. The analysis of data was based on Lakoff and Johnsons's (1980) model of CMT. Ten metaphors were selected randomly from Donne's poem under investigation. These metaphors were administered in a questionnaire and distributed to ten participants. The participants [P(s)] were required to respond to two open-ended questions. The participants were ten Iraqi EFL university learners from university of Anbar.

Participants:

The participants of the current study were 10 Iraqi EFL fourth year learners of morning studies in the Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Anbar. The learners were asked in a form of questionnaire to interpret the conceptual metaphors in the data selected and to explain how they understand them. The setting of the study is Alnbar University, College of Education for Humanities, Department of English, during the second semester of the academic year (2022-2023). The reason behind choosing forth stage students is that they have acquired a suitable educational knowledge in English literature and they are able to explain how they understand the metaphors in a literary text.

Questionnaire:

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Based on the objective of the study, an open-ended questionnaire was designed to examine the participants' difficulties in comprehending metaphors in a metaphysical poem by Donne, *Death be not proud,* from cognitive semantic perspectives. The questionnaire involved two open-ended questions for each one of the selected ten metaphors: *What do you understand from ---X metaphor------------- in line ---x--? How do you understand that---- X metaphor --- in line----x---?*. For the reliability of the questionnaire, it has been sent to a specialist in applied linguistics. It has been verified after doing the amendments recommended.

Data Analysis:

The aim of this section was to analyze the participants' answers to the questionnaire to find out the factors influencing their comprehension to conceptual metaphor contained in the poem under investigation. The analysis was based on Lakoff and Jonson's CMT (1980).

The following table illustrates the conceptual metaphors contained in the poem under investigation. The analysis of participants' answers was based on these conceptual metaphors.

Table (1) The Conceptual Meaning of the Metaphorical Expression

Metaphor no.	The metaphorical expression	The conceptual meaning
M1	*Death be not Proud* though some called thee	DEATH IS DEPARTURE
M2	For those whom thou think'st thou dost *overthrow*	ARGUMENT IS WAR
M3	From *rest and sleep*, which but thy pictures be	DEATH IS A REST and DEATH IS A SLEEP
M4	And *soonest our best men* with thee do go	LIFE IS A JOURNEY
M5	And soonest our best men with thee *do go*	DEATH IS A FATE
M6	Rest of their bones, and *soul's delivery*	BODY IS A CONTAINER
M7	Thou'rt *slave to fate*, chance, kings, and desperate men	LIFE IS A FATE
M8	And *poppy or charms* can make us sleep as well	DEATH IS A SLEEP
M9	And better than thy *stroke*: why swell'st thou then?	DEATH IS A STROKE
M10	And death shall be no more: *Death, thou shalt die*!	DEATH IS A MUST

M=Metaphor

Analyzing the participants' answers revealed that EFL learners face various difficulties; of which were: *Cultural and background knowledge, Lack of exposure to literary devices, Cognitive biases, Emotional states, Social and ethnic context, Teaching and learning style, Interests* and *motivation, and Critical thinking skills.* They are exposed below:

A. Cultural and background knowledge:

The comprehension of conceptual metaphor in Donne's poem *Death be not Proud* can be influenced by learners' cultural backgrounds in various ways. Conceptual metaphors are figures of speech that associate an abstract concept with a concrete or more familiar one,

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shaping the way learners think and understand the world around them. For instance, Donne's poem heavily draws on Christian beliefs and biblical references to portray the concept of death. Learners with a Christian cultural background or knowledge of biblical stories may find it easier to understand the deeper meanings and symbolism embedded in the poem. As an example, P3 responded to M7 saying: " Donne invites the audience to leave their fear through calling them slave to many aspects in this life." If the participants were more aware of the Christian cultural, they would recognize that Death is personified as a human that became a slave to fate and the speaker challenges the power of death based on religious beliefs about life after death. Different cultures have diverse attitudes and beliefs about death. Some cultures may view death as a natural part of life's cycle, while others may fear it or associate it with negative connotations. According to Littlemore's (2001) study, learners face difficulties in interpreting metaphors due to different factors like cultural and background knowledge.

Furthermore, learners' cultural backgrounds may influence their emotional response to the poem and shape their understanding of the metaphors used to describe death. Cultural background impacts language proficiency and exposure to idiomatic expressions. Donne's poem utilizes metaphors that might be more easily understood by those with a shared linguistic background. For instance, the phrase *rest and sleep* as metaphors for death may be more accessible to learners whose native language contains similar conceptual expressions. This happened with most participants who were able to understand M3 correctly and explained the connection between the phrase *rest and sleep* and death. Other participants did not fully understand M3 due to the fact that different cultures assign symbolic meanings to certain animals, objects, or concepts. For example, M3 as a metaphor for death could be viewed differently. In some participants' attitude, *sleep* might be seen as peaceful and refreshing practice; for other participants, it could be associated with dreams or nightmares. As in a case, P3 assumed that: "Donne returns to insult death in common scene. He says we should not fear of death as we daily coexist with different picture of it, like sleep." The participant suggested that Donne insulted death, but in metaphysical poetry, the exploration of profound themes such as death, love, and spirituality is often done through intellectual expressions. Donne's approach is not one of insult but rather a profound exploration of human emotions and experiences.

B. Lack of exposure to literary devices:

Exposure to poetic devices can considerably influence learners' comprehension of conceptual metaphors in literary texts. Donne's *Death be not Proud* employs various poetic devices to convey its message and develop the central conceptual metaphor of death as a powerless entity. These devices, when interpreted correctly, enhance the learners' ability to understand the depth and complexity of the metaphor and the overall meaning of the poem.

Poetic devices like imagery, simile, and metaphor evoke strong emotions and create vivid mental images in the reader's mind. Learners become emotionally engaged with the poem's content, making it easier for them to relate to and comprehend the abstract concept of death personified as a proud and feared entity. The symbolism of M2 in Donne's work refers to an image of a person who can defeat others in the line *For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow*. Understanding these symbolic references enriches learners' comprehension of the metaphorical layers in the poem. Donne's metaphysical poetry reflects the intellectual and philosophical currents of his time. His work engages with complex theological and philosophical ideas, and his metaphors often serve as vehicles for these discussions. Ignoring such facts may limit the participant's ability to grasp the depth of the poem's meaning.

According to Zibin (2016), the participants come across considerable difficulty in clarifying the accurate metaphorical expression due to their lack of vocabulary or recognizable knowledge in English.

However, some participants did not understand the meaning that M2 denotes, because of the unfamiliarity with literary devices. As an example, P6 answered to M2 saying that: "This refers to people who will die, as well as that death is just a transition from this life to external life." The participant's interpretation about death being a transition to eternal life suggests a literal and straightforward reading, missing the metaphor's symbolic aspects. Though the poet contrasts traditional views of death as a fearsome force with an argument that death is powerless in the face of eternal life, but the participant's answer was incorrect and it was influenced by the lack of exposer to literary devices. Donne employs a metaphysical conceit (i.e. an extended and elaborate metaphor) in this poem. Participants' lack exposure to this literary device made them struggle to recognize the intricate and unconventional comparisons. Their interpretation, focusing solely on death's transition, neglects the complexity of the conceit.

C. Cognitive biases:

Conceptual metaphors are rhetorical devices used to convey abstract or complex ideas by mapping them onto more concrete and familiar concepts. In Donne's *Death be not Proud*, the concept of death is metaphorically portrayed as a personified entity with the intention of challenging its power and authority. The nature of cognitive biases may affect learners' understanding, consequently, they may encounter challenges in interpreting the intended meaning of metaphors. Examples of cognitive biases are confirmation bias, availability bias and securing bias.

With confirmation bias, learners may already have preconceived notions or beliefs about death and its nature. When encountering the metaphorical portrayal of death as *Death be not Proud*, they might selectively interpret and remember aspects of the poem that confirm their existing beliefs. This could lead to a narrow and biased understanding of the poem, missing the broader message Donne intends to convey. As an example, P2 answered to M6 assumed that: "That description makes death seem like a welcome friend who comes to offer rest and peace and the deliverance of one's soul from an earthly body where pain and suffering abide." The participant's answer gave the impression of revealing confirmation bias, as he focused on aspects of the metaphor that associated with his preexisting beliefs or expectations. He emphasized the idea of death as a welcome friend and soul's deliverance, ignoring other possible interpretations that might be more aligned with the intended meaning of the poem. The participant's interpretation employed positive framing bias, where he emphasized the positive and comforting aspects of the metaphor while ignoring any potential negative or complex implications. Donne's use of the metaphor might not be solely about a comforting deliverance, but could also involve more complex themes related to love, separation, and connection.

With availability bias, learners might rely on readily available examples or common conceptions of death when trying to understand the poem. If the conceptual metaphor of death as a proud and arrogant being does not align with their usual mental representation of death, they may struggle to grasp the intended meaning. As in a case, P4 answered to M1 assumed that: "The speaker talks about death which is mighty and dreadful in the eyes of people. But it

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isn't to the poet himself." The participant's answer overlooked the possibility that the metaphor could convey more complex themes, such as a defiance of conventional fear of death or an exploration of the power dynamics between life and death. The participant's interpretation may be influenced by prevalent cultural attitudes toward death, which often emphasize its fearsome nature. Availability bias might lead them to align learners' interpretation with the dominant cultural narrative, rather than engaging in a more independent analysis of the metaphor within the context of the poem.

Finally, securing bias refers to being inclined to primary facts. That is; when learners encounter the metaphorical portrayal of death as *Death be not Proud*, they may become fixated on the traditional image of death as a fearful presence. This fixation can act as a refuge, preventing them from exploring alternative interpretations or fully appreciating the deeper meaning behind the conceptual metaphor. As an example, P1 answered to M5 saying: "I think that it (the phrase) means the good persons go with their deeds." The participant's answer might prioritize a comforting view of the metaphor, linking it to the idea of good people being rewarded with their good deeds. Security biases can lead individuals to gravitate towards interpretations that align with their desire for positivity and emotional reassurance. Security biases often lead people to avoid interpretations that introduce ambiguity or challenge their sense of certainty. The participant's answer simplified the metaphor's meaning by reducing it to a straightforward and easily digestible idea. This simplification might not fully encompass the complexity and multi-layered nature of metaphors in Donne's poetry. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) states that metaphors are not necessarily based on bodily experience, many are based on cultural considerations and cognitive processes of various kinds. According to Xu (2015), social and cognitive factors affect our interpretation of any novel expression, especially novel metaphors.

D. Emotional states:

Metaphysical poetry often embraces ambiguity and multiple layers of meaning. Learners who are more emotionally open and comfortable with uncertainty are more likely to embrace the ambiguity inherent in metaphors. Their willingness to explore different interpretations enhances their comprehension and appreciation of the poet's craft. Additionally, emotional state can influence a learner's level of attention and focus. When a learner is emotionally engaged or invested in the poetry, they are more likely to pay closer attention to the language, imagery, and metaphors used. This heightened attention improves their ability to decode and interpret the metaphors effectively.

Emotional states can trigger memories and personal experiences in learners. These experiences and associations can be related to the themes presented in the poetry, leading to a deeper connection with the metaphors and a more profound understanding of their significance. For instance, the following answer revealed P5's misunderstanding of M10: "The speaker addresses someone who is not there. By the end of the poem and through logical argument, the speaker use proved that Death is powerless." The vocabulary of the answer is irrelevant. The participant seems to be distracted and might question whether the speaker's logical argument truly proves that death is powerless. The participant might interpret the metaphor as a bold statement that challenges the inevitability of death, but still remain unconvinced by the argument presented in the poem. Emotions can impact cognitive processes such as memory, attention, and pattern recognition. According to Dennis (2008), as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), one of the factors that affect learners' understanding is the

complex concepts within a text. This factor is due to leaners' lack of familiarity to literary devices. It can be stimulated by the students' competence in language as well as their emotional and psychological states.

Positive emotions have been shown to enhance creative thinking and problem-solving, which are essential when decoding complex metaphors and symbolic expressions in metaphysical poetry. That is, learners with optimistic feelings may explain metaphors correctly even when the concepts that a metaphor denotes are gloomy. On the other hand, personal experiences related to loss, grief, or negative situations could strongly influence the learners' emotional response. If they have recently experienced a loss, their emotional state might guide their interpretation of the poem. They might empathize with the speaker's sentiments or find resonance with the idea of overcoming death, even if the logical argument did not fully sway them.

E. Social and ethnic context:

The comprehension of conceptual metaphor in Donne's *Death be not Proud* can be influenced by the social and ethnic context of the learners. Conceptual metaphor theory, popularized by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, suggests that abstract or complex ideas are understood in terms of more concrete and familiar concepts. In this poem, Donne personifies death and addresses it as if it was a human. The understanding of these metaphors can be shaped by the learners' social and ethnic context and experiences. For instance, different cultures have varying attitudes and beliefs regarding death. In some societies, death is viewed as a natural part of life, while in others, it might be considered as a topic to be avoided. Learners from cultures where death is openly discussed and seen as a natural process may find it easier to understand the metaphors used in the poem.

Learners from different religious backgrounds and different historical events or social norms may interpret the metaphors in the poem through the lens of their own faith and previous knowledge, leading to varying degrees of comprehension. Metaphors often draw on culturally specific concepts that might not be universally understood. Certain metaphors can be deeply rooted in a specific language or culture, making it challenging for learners from different backgrounds to realize their intended meanings. For example, P10 answered to M7: "The speaker talks on a stronger tone and begins to taunt death with more ferocity than he did at first." In this example, Donne addresses death with confidence, denying its might and dreadfulness. The participant misunderstood the meaning of M7 because his attitude about Death being personified as a slave to fate was insufficient to make a clear comparison between the social concept of the domain Death and the historical norm of the domain slave to fate. The participant might relate the metaphor to the struggles for liberty and see the speaker's taunting tone as a form of resistance against oppressive forces. According to Lapasau, Setiawati, Mayasari and Virgana (2020), conceptual metaphors are limited to a specific social and ethnic community because emotions are usually private and heavily culturally dependent experiences that are inaccessible to others and inherited tradition and regional customs usually have great influences on the way of people's thinking.

F. Teaching and learning style:

Different teaching and learning approaches can either enhance or hinder students' ability to comprehend these metaphors successfully. In a traditional lecture-based approach, for

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example, the teacher might simply explain the poem's meaning, including its metaphors, without much engagement from the students. This style could lead to passive learning and students may struggle to recognize the depth of the metaphors. M1 presents Death as a character, described as being proud. The teacher might explain this metaphor as an abstract representation of Death's perceived power, but students may have difficulty connecting with the concept on a deeper level. Interactive and discussion will encourage active participation and open discussions among students. This style allows students to share their interpretations and ideas about the metaphors, fostering a deeper understanding of the poem.

The universal teaching methods in most universities do not encourage the method of engaging the learners in discussions based on real life. Relating the metaphors to real-life situations or personal experiences can create meaningful connections for learners. For example, P8 answered to M9 saying that: " The speaker questions Death asking (why swell'st thou then?) He is asking him why he is so puffed up with pride, when he cannot even do his job as well as others can." The answers revealed that the participants who misunderstood the metaphor meaning might be affected by the teaching and learning style. Being passive learners who lack the open discussions and involving the metaphors to real-life situations can reduce their comprehension and lead to misinterpretation.

Additionally, encouraging students to creatively express the poem's metaphors through creative writing can enhance their comprehension and appreciation of the text. Teachers who engage students in role-playing to present the poem from different perspectives can extend their understanding of the metaphor's underlying notions. For instance, the line *And soonest our best men with thee do go* contains M5 that symbolizes death in terms of a walker in the road of life that will go with everyman towards departure. The conceptual metaphor DEATH IS DEPARTURE is the dominant concept in Donne's *Death be not Proud*, but some participants did not recognize the thematic idea of the poem. Consequently, they misunderstand M5. As in a case, P2 answered to M5 stating that: " without having to endure the agonies of a long life on the earth." P2 could not understand the metaphorical implications and reflect on how death is often associated with such references. The participant may not have fully understood the metaphorical context of M5. In this context, the phrase likely carries a poetic or symbolic meaning rather than a literal one. If the teaching approach didn't emphasize the metaphor's figurative nature or provide enough context, the participant might have interpreted it literally and responded accordingly. Littlemore, Chen, Koester and Brandon (2011) believe that students are unexperienced with a particular expression in case that they indicated never being encountered it at any circumstance.

G. *Interests and motivation:*

Interest and motivation play a crucial role in learners' comprehension of complex literary devices such as conceptual metaphors. In the case of Donne's poem Death be not Proud, a conceptual metaphor is used to convey the idea of personifying death as a character or entity with certain attributes. This poem explores the theme of death and its power over human beings. When learners are interested in a topic or a piece of literature, they are more likely to engage actively in the learning process, which can lead to better comprehension and retention. If students find the concept of death interesting, they will be more motivated to analyze and interpret the poem. However, when students are not interested in such topic. For instance, P7 answered to M1 saying: "The poet speaks to death and paints death as an arrogant being needing humility tell him not to be so proud." Although M1 is very clear, but some participants

face difficulty in analyzing it simply because they are not concerned with extracting the meaning of CM from a metaphysical poem. The participant lacked interest and motivation to invest significant mental effort into deciphering the metaphor, he might have settled for a straightforward and uncomplicated explanation. According to Dennis (2008), as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) students' interest and motivation are significant in improving their comprehension.

Furthermore, in the context of poetry analysis, students who are motivated will actively seek to understand the poet's message and the literary devices employed. For example, the line *And death shall be no more*; *Death, thou shalt die*, was misunderstood by 12 participants. It can be said that, motivation is the drive that pushes learners to explore, question, and seek answers. As an example, P9's answer to M10 was: " Death is powerless and is just a transition to the afterlife." Most answers where either incorrect or incomplete. It can be said that participant was not interested in exploring the metaphor or its symbolic implications. He might have provided a literal interpretation. The participant's response about death being a transition to the afterlife focused solely on the surface-level meaning of death as a physical event, rather than delving into the metaphor's deeper meaning.

The metaphor Death, thou shalt die! employs paradoxical language to convey the idea that death itself will eventually cease to exist. If the participant wasn't motivated to delve into the historical and literary context of the metaphor, he/she may have missed its intended meaning and instead offered a general and unrelated interpretation. On the other hand, if learners are motivated to explore the philosophical implications of life, death, and the afterlife, they may be more determined to comprehend the metaphorical language used to convey Donne's philosophies.

H. Critical thinking skills:

Learners with developed critical thinking skills can understand the concept of a conceptual metaphor more effectively. They can discern that Donne's poem uses the idea of death as a personified entity and employs it metaphorically to explore deeper meanings about mortality and the afterlife. Critical thinking enables learners to infer information not explicitly stated in the poem and make meaningful connections between various elements of the text. They can relate Donne's metaphors to other literary works, historical events, or personal experiences, enriching their comprehension and appreciation of the poem. In *Death be not Proud,* recognizing phrases such as Mighty and dreadful or rest and sleep in the context of discussing death helps learners appreciate the metaphorical representation of death as something different from its conventional interpretation.

Conceptual metaphors often carry multiple layers of meaning. Skilled critical thinkers can delve deeper into Donne's poem and explore the various dimensions of the metaphor. For example, they might recognize that the metaphor of Death being proud is also an exploration of human spiritual beliefs and the insolence of mortality. Critical thinkers are more likely to question their assumptions and explore alternative interpretations. They may challenge their initial understanding of the poem's metaphors and be open to considering different viewpoints or potential ambiguities, leading to a more profound engagement with the text.

However, lack of critical thinking may prevent learners to infer information not explicitly stated in the poem and make meaningful connections between various elements of the text.

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They can relate Donne's metaphors to other literary works, historical events, or personal experiences, enriching their comprehension and appreciation of the poem. As an example, P7's answer to M6 was: "description make death seem like a welcome friend who comes to graciously offer rest." The answer revealed that the participant interpreted death as a comforting and friendly figure, offering rest like a friend. On the other hand, the metaphor of soul's delivery contrasts the notion of death as a welcome friend, emphasizing that death is not something to be feared or glorified. Instead, it is merely a transition to an afterlife, and the soul triumphs over death. This interpretation reflects a misunderstanding of the poem's central theme. According to Xu (2015), metaphor interpretation includes both cognitive or critical thinking and socio-cultural factors. He implicates that understanding innovative metaphor is partially determined by an expected qualification of critical thinking and cultural knowledge.

Conclusion:

The analysis showed that there are several factors that affect learners' comprehension. These factors might be external or internal. Considering the factors that affect learners' comprehension, it appears that the varying levels of comprehension among the participants might be attributed and affected by some factors that may lead to non-understanding or misunderstanding. These factors are: cultural and background knowledge, lack of exposure to literary devices, cognitive biases, emotional states, social and ethnic context, teaching and learning style, interest and motivation and critical thinking skills.

Most languages are metaphorical in nature, but what it is a metaphor in a language might not be so in another language. In everyday language use, metaphors are sometimes used unconsciously by people; they are unaware of using them in their everyday language use, while poets are more aware of metaphors and use them more skillfully than non-poets. In metaphysical poetry, a metaphor that may seem unlikely or implausible, can be better understood in the light of cognitive semantic perspective by comparing the metaphor with other poetic devices depending on their conceptual similarity between them. For instance, some metaphors can be understood in terms of other poetic devices such as images, personification, analogy or symbolism because of the conceptual similarity between metaphor and these poetic devices.

Metaphors in literature are not novel in terms of their underlying concepts, but what makes them innovative is the way they are expressed in a metaphorical manner. In metaphysical poetry, for instance, a metaphor is used extensively that may seem unlikely or implausible in this case, it can be better understood in the light of cognitive semantic perspective taking in to account the factors that affect comprehension. This is what makes conceptual metaphor difficult to understand and learners resort to use comprehension strategies randomly. For example, a metaphor that needs a clarification might be understood by other strategy. And this is what most of the participants have done; they use inappropriate strategy with the inappropriate conceptual metaphor.

It became evident that conceptual metaphors are fundamental to create and comprehend the meaning of a poem. Therefore, metaphors should not be seen as merely decorative devices, but rather as essential elements for constructing meaning in both literary and non-literary texts. It's important to note that understanding metaphors can be a complex task, as metaphors often involve symbolic and indirect language, requiring readers to make connections and interpret the implied meanings. The fact that the participants in this study were able to extract meaning

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from the metaphors, despite the lower percentage on the scale, indicates that they had some level of comprehension and were able to engage with the poetic devices employed by Donne. Donne's most significant and remarkable poetic technique involves using a compositional method where he blends two or more conceptual metaphors to create a complex metaphor and transfer the meanings and messages he intends to convey in his poems.

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ملخص البحث:

لطالما ناقش العلماء فهم الاستعارة لعدة عقود حيث يصعب فهم الاستعارة من متعلمي اللغة الأصليين وغير الأصليين خاصة في حقل الأدب. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى استقصاء العوامل التي تؤثر في فهم متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للاستعارات المفاهيمية في قصيدة أيها الموت لا تكن فخوراً لجون دون. استنادا الى نظرية الاستعارة المفاهيمية للاكوف وجونسون 1980. وكانت العينة مقتبسات من قصيدة جون دون أيها الموت لا تكن فخوراً. اما المشاركون في الدراسة هم 10 طلاب جامعيين عراقيين في تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حيث تم اختيارهم من بين طلاب السنة الرابعة في كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية في جامعة الأنبار حيث يتوجب عليهم الاجابة على الاستبيان المعطى لفهم الاستعارة المفاهيمية وايضاح كيفية فهمها في المقتبسات المختارة. كشفت النتائج أن متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية واجهوا صعوبات في فهم الاستعارة المفاهيمية وفقا لعدة عوامل مؤثرة في فهم الاستعارات المفاهيمية في القصيدة المختارة فقد تكون هذه العوامل خارجية أو داخلية. وقد تم التوصل إلى وأن الاختلاف في مستوى فهم المشاركين يمكن أن يعزى الى ببعض العوامل التي قد تؤدي إلى عدم الفهم أو سوء الفهم. بعض هذه العوامل هي: المعرفة الثقافية والخلفية المعرفية، وعدم التعرف على الادوات الأدبية، والتحيزات المعرفية، والحالات العاطفية، والسياق الاجتماعي والعرقي، وأسلوب التدريس والتعلم، والاهتمام والتحفيز ومهارات التفكير النقدي.