

Contradictory Conceptualizations of teachers by Students in the Saudi Contextⁱ

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Abstract

This study is part of a larger project by the authors of the current article and their co-author on the role of metaphor in the conceptualization of the components of the learning processⁱⁱ such as learning per se, the student, and the teacher. The current article addresses the conceptualization of teachers by their own students at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University. In particular, the article elicits data from 173 students through the following prompt: “Write a narrative in which you describe student-teacher relations according to your experience as a student in higher education, giving your opinion based on concrete cases.” The objective of the study is to measure the weight of metaphor in teacher-student relations. The collected data is analyzed through the contemporary theory of metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), which allows for a search for the conceptual metaphors (CMs) underlying the narratives. Data analysis follows the qualitative method, which is confirmed with quantitative percentile counts. The findings reveal a set of conflictive student-generated metaphors, but mostly evaluating teachers positively according to affective style criteria such as familial, social, and interpersonal factors. Such findings should be used as an indicator to decision makers to consolidate what is positive and improve what is less positive to enhance learning.

Key words: conceptual metaphor, conflictive metaphors, evaluation of teachers, affective learning, cognitive learning.

Cite as: Alghbban, M. I., & Maalej, Z. A. (2017). Contradictory Conceptualizations of teachers by Students in the Saudi Context. *Arab World English Journal*, 8 (1).

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no1.28>