

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, a summary of this research is given in section 5.1. Then, several directions for future study are pointed out in section 5.2.

#### **5.1 Summary**

In chapter one, the traditional view toward idioms is compared with the cognitive view in order to account for the adoption of a cognitive approach in analyzing heart idioms. By analyzing heart idioms, we intend to account for their figurative meanings by investigating what cognitive-semantic mechanisms exist behind these heart idioms and how those cognitive-semantic mechanisms interact to give rise to their figurative meanings. Although Niemeier (2003) has tried to explore the metaphorical and metonymic bases for the heart idioms in English, her analysis is not satisfactory and can not meet the goal of this current research. In chapter two, a recategorization of heart idioms is therefore performed to improve the drawbacks of Niemeier's (2003) study. Next, analytical tools from Lakoff (1993), Kövecses &

Radden (1998), and Ruiz de Mendoza (2003), are introduced in chapter three and adopted to facilitate the analysis of heart idioms in Chapter 4.

The analysis of heart idioms discovers that a full explanation of their figurative meanings requires the activation of all the types of metaphor proposed by Lakoff (1993). However, there is a tendency for hearts to be realized as other objects through novel metaphors, and the action or status related to hearts to be conceptualized as another action or status through conventional metaphors. One novel metaphor found in the analysis is the HEART IS MIND metaphor, which challenges Yu's (2003) assertion of a binary contrast between the heart and the mind in Western cultures.

Having discovered metaphor as one cognitive-semantic mechanism behind heart idioms, we have also discovered metonymy as another cognitive-semantic mechanism. It is observed that six out of the 15 types of metonymy-producing relationships exist behind heart idioms. Except for the metonymy THE MATERIAL CONSTITUTING AN OBJECT FOR THE OBJECT, all metonymies within the six types take the preferred route suggested by the cognitive principles proposed by Kövecses & Radden (1998). The unique metonymy above suggests that some cognitive principles may have lower rankings than others. Based on the summary in Table 4.7, a ranking of cognitive principles for metonymy behind heart idioms can be constructed as follows:

concrete over abstract & stereotypical over nonstereotypical > immediate over non-immediate, functional over nonfunctional, & important over less important > good gestalt over poor gestalt & bounded over unbounded > human over non-human

On the other hand, the two communicative principles, clear over less clear and relevant over irrelevant, proposed by Kövecses & Radden (1998) do not seem to have the same weight of importance as well. In heart idioms, relevant over irrelevant appears to be a much stronger principle than clear over less clear. The clear over less clear principle can be stated as a principle violated by any idiomatic expression.

Much effort of this research has been put into the explication of how metaphor interacts with metonymy in determining the figurative meanings of heart idioms. It is found that the three interaction models proposed by Ruiz de Mendoza (2003) are insufficient to cover all the possible interactions of cognitive-semantic mechanisms behind heart idioms. This research unveils four new interaction models that are not previously explored in other research, including target-in-source metonymy within the metaphorical source, target-in-source metonymy being the target of one metaphor and the source of another metaphor, target-in-source metonymy within the metonymic target, and source-in-target metonymy within the metonymic source. It has long been argued that most metaphors have a metonymic base; however, the analysis of heart idioms shows that sometimes metaphor has to be activated first so as to trigger the

realization of metonymy afterwards. In addition, some heart idioms concerning thoughts or feelings also favor metaphor to be the trigger of metonymy. For example, when hearts stand for the thoughts or feelings inside, the HEART IS MIND metaphor or the HEART IS A CONTAINER metaphor is already assumed in advance. In consequence, this research holds the view that metaphor can be the base of metonymy and vice versa.

## **5.2 Future Study**

After inspecting the cognitive-semantic mechanisms behind heart idioms, we suggest several directions for future study. First, the ranking of cognitive principles constructed in this research has to be scrutinized to see whether it applies to heart idioms only or to a broader scope of idioms. To reach this goal, more research on other idiom families has to be carried out. Second, more attention has to be paid to the discovery of interaction models behind idioms. Although four new interaction models are detected existing behind heart idioms, they are unlikely to be a comprehensive list of all possible interaction models. As a matter of fact, nine basic interaction models would be a logical speculation of all the possible interactions between metaphor and metonymy, between metonymy and metonymy, and between metaphor and metaphor. Table 5.1 shows all the possible basic interaction models:

Table 5.1 Possible basic interaction models

Mechanisms Involved	Possible Basic Interaction Models
One Metaphor & One Metonymy	(1) source-in-target metonymy within the metaphoric source (2) source-in-target metonymy within the metaphoric target (3) target-in-source metonymy within the metaphorical source (4) target-in-source metonymy within the metaphoric target
One Metonymy & Another Metonymy	(5) source-in-target metonymy within the metonymic source (6) source-in-target metonymy within the metonymic target (7) target-in-source metonymy within the metonymic source (8) target-in-source metonymy within the metonymic target
One Metaphor & Another Metaphor	(9) the metaphoric target being the source of another metaphor

The reason why the above models are described as basic interaction models is that other complicated interaction models can be derived from the combinations of two or more basic interaction models. For instance, the complicated interaction model shown in Figure 4.9, target-in-source metonymy being the target of one metaphor and the

source of another metaphor, can be seen as a combination of (4) and (3) in Table 5.1.

Although nine basic interaction models have been proposed in this thesis, it is not until all these basic interaction models are further testified and proved valid could we build up a complete theory of interaction models. Third, the issue of metaphor having a metonymic base has to be further examined and discussed. As seen in the analysis of heart idioms, metonymy may as well have its base in metaphor. The question left is whether metaphor-based metonymy or metonymy-based metaphor is more pervasive. Finally, the analysis of heart idioms would be more full-fledged with a historical account of the conventional knowledge that relates heart to feelings or thoughts.