

Abstract

This study is a conceptual metaphorical study of the concept of a “good teacher” in the learning cultures of Finland and Thailand. It follows the Jin and Cortazzi (2008) research “Images of teacher, learning and questioning in Chinese cultures of learning” (Berendt 2008). To make this comparative study of contemporary cognitive metaphoric values regarding a “good teacher”, first traditional proverbs of learning in each country are examined and then for the contemporary values of a “good teacher” essays on “What is a good teacher?” are collected from university students in each country. The most frequently mentioned items from the students’ essay responses are selected and culturally distinctive proverbs from each culture are identified in order to create a questionnaire. The questionnaire lists sentences showing a range of values about the “good teacher” and the results are analysed using the five point Likert scale. The total number of valid responses was 176 from Thailand and 176 from Finland. The results were statistically evaluated with the F-test and Mean score to show the similarities and the differences between cultures of learning related to the role of the teacher in Finland and Thailand. The research discovers many significant differences in conceptual patterns, for example, THE TEACHER IS A PARENT (Thailand) and THE TEACHER IS PROFESSION (Finland), but it also shows some shared patterns between these cultures, for example THE TEACHER HAS THE KEY TO KNOWLEDGE. The conceptual patterns are important in understanding the expectations and values of a good teacher in the student-teacher behaviour in teaching and learning in cross-cultural situations. The implications for teaching, in Finland and in Thailand are discussed in a way to help the teachers to become more aware of their own teaching and their students learning expectations.