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## THE IMPACT OF METAPHORICAL FRAMING: A STUDY ON COGNITIVE PROCESSING OF HEROIN METAPHORS

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to define the functions of conceptual metaphors for heroin in Canan Tan's *Eroinle Dans* (2009) [Dance With Heroin] and demonstrate whether such metaphors can shape people's thought and give rise to attitudes and patterns of behavior in terms of heroin addiction. In order to do so, forty participants were included in this study, half of which were designed as the control group and were asked to list associations with heroin in a neutral context; whereas the experimental group was presented with the same task, but before and after reading the novel. The latter group was also asked to report on their attitudes toward heroin after reading *Eroinle Dans*. The results revealed that the conceptualizations for heroin were overwhelmingly negative when probed in isolation; however, positive associations were observed after being exposed to positive conceptual metaphors. The answers for the question gauging the attitudes toward heroin also demonstrated that the participants were affected by the author's description of heroin making them think less critically as regards heroin use. These findings suggest that writers' way of defining certain concepts can affect their readers' attitudes towards these concepts, and metaphorical framings have the power to influence individuals' views on social issues.

**Keywords:** Conceptual Metaphors, Heroin, Conceptualization of Heroin, Persuasion, Metaphorical Framing, Impact of Metaphors.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Drug use has been on the rise worldwide and, according to World Health Organization (WHO), by 2020, mental disorders and substance abuse will surpass all physical diseases and become a major cause of disability worldwide (WHO, 2008). As stated in the World Drug Report published in 2018, approximately 450,000 people died in 2015 as a result of drug use, in most cases of opioids (2018, 1). Heroin, known to be a highly addictive substance group of opioids is regarded as one of the most dangerous substances leading to negative individual and social consequences (Weiss et al., 2014). Given the seriousness of this social scourge, the importance of increasing public awareness on the dangers of heroin is increasing.

To raise public awareness, authors, considered as opinion leaders of their societies, can assume a very crucial role in the society with their fantastic or realistic worlds illustrated in their works such as novels, short stories, poems, film scripts, etc. They have the opportunity to use such language, through which they can provide necessary information for the target group in an alluring way with the power to affect their readers, persuade them, and raise sensitivity on a certain issue. More specifically, authors use various stylistic and linguistic tools in order to create more attractive and persuasive pieces of writings. Among such elements, metaphorical expressions are specifically influential for affecting target readers and driving their attentions on a specific issue.

Especially with the advent of cognitive linguistics, the metaphorical language has no longer been regarded as a mere rhetorical tool, rather it has been thought to include the conceptualizations of its user which are produced and collected since birth. In Lakoff and Johnson's work *Metaphors We Live By*, it was revealed that "Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system; thus, plays a central role in defining our everyday realities" (1980, 3). Considering metaphors as a tool used in everyday language, their influential nature has been studied by many researchers mainly in the cognitive field. These studies have paved the way to the point that metaphors have pragmatic values and can be considered as "loaded weapons" (Bolinger, 1996), which can be used in order to make others believe, think, or behave in the way it is desired.

For proving how effective the use of metaphors is for persuading people, empirical investigations have been conducted for metaphors' persuasive role (Sopory and Dillard, 2006; Boeynaems, et al. 2017; Cao, et al. 2018). For instance, in terms of the drawbacks of using any kind of substance, Ronald Reagan's case can be taken as an example to clearly demonstrate the benefits of using effective metaphorical expressions in discourses. In the 1980s, Reagan started 'a war on drugs' and the rate of drug use decreased tremendously in the United States. In his speeches, he described smugglers, dealers, and users as "the enemy to be fought" and, through new regulations and policies, harsher sentences were given for drug-related crimes (qtd. in Thibodeau and Boroditsky, 2011, 1). Similarly, on June 18, 1971, Nixon asserted that "America's public enemy number one in the United States is drug abuse. In order to fight and defeat this enemy, it is necessary to wage a new, all-out offensive" (qtd. in Sharp, 1994, 1). Similarly enough, in 2004, U.S. President George W. Bush has called North Korea part of an "axis of evil" with Iran and Iraq, as it is highly likely that North Korea has been dealing with trade in heroin as a matter of state policy (CNN, 2004). Through such discourses, and with the help of such conceptual metaphors such as "HEROIN IS AN ENEMY" and "HEROIN IS EVIL", people can recognize the dangers and consequences of their addictions more effectively and become more familiar with and get used to the conceptualization of heroin as an enemy to be defeated.

For the purpose of the present work, the literature review revealed that only a limited number of works have empirically demonstrated the influence of metaphors in language on how people think about social issues and solve them. For instance, Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011) investigated the role of metaphors in reasoning about social policy on crime, and aimed to establish whether metaphors play a role in how people do such reasonings. Similarly, as for Kelling, "Crime-control ideology is rife with metaphor: "Wars" are fought against crime; detectives solve cases using Sherlock Holmes-like ratiocination; Justice is a robed, blindfolded woman bearing a scale; the police are a "thin blue line" protecting innocent civilians from criminal marauders." As a criminal justice scholar, Kelling sees bad metaphors as the root of failure against crime prevention by stating that people can fall victim not to a criminal, but to a metaphor (1991, 1). On the contrary, it can be put forward that the use of metaphors can appropriately lead people to think and reason about crimes negatively and act accordingly. In their latest study, Flusberg, Matlock, and Thibodeau (2018) analyzed the function of war metaphors in public discourse and focused on the issue of when the war frame is very effective and what the potential benefits and costs to using war metaphors for important social and political contexts are.



Despite such studies revealing the power of metaphors for social issues, there has not been a concrete inquiry into the potential of conceptual metaphors' as an influential tool in literary works. As they are not only created for providing pleasure or relief for readers, but also for creating public awareness and giving information on a certain issue, the analysis of metaphors involving in such discourses is of utmost importance. For the sake of demonstrating the effect of metaphor use on readers in literary works, this study aims to demonstrate how Tan uses metaphorical framings for heroin and heroin use in her novel *Eroinle Dans* (2009). By analyzing the relationship between the linguistic metaphorical expressions of heroin and the underlying conceptual metaphors within the framework of cognitive linguistics, this study initially targets at defining the conceptual metaphors used in the novel and then, more specifically, it aims at revealing the change in the reader's conceptualizations of heroin after reading the novel, defining the functions and communicative and persuasive power of conceptual metaphors, and providing a compelling illustration of the way metaphors powerfully shape how people reason about using heroin and give rise to attitudes, beliefs and patterns of behavior.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Conceptual metaphor theory

After the studies on the cognitive perspectives of metaphors in the 1980s, metaphors have no longer been regarded as parts of stylistic language. Since then, more researchers have focused and studied on metaphors as a tool in human communication. Within the framework of cognitive linguistics, Lakoff and Johnson proposed Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which emphasizes the metaphorical structure of the human mind and stresses that meaning-making is a process of structuring abstract concepts in terms of more concrete concepts (1980, 109). Specifically, conceptual metaphors, expressed in the formula 'A IS B', consist of a source and a target domain. As Kövecses (2010, 27) put forward: "Source domains include the human body, animals, plants, buildings, machines, games and sports, heat and cold, light and darkness, movement and many others. Target domains can be put into categories such as psychological and mental states and events (emotion, morality), social groups and processes (economy, human relationships) personal experiences and events (time, life, death)". In other words, the source is often a more physical domain, while the target is a more abstract one.

In order to demonstrate how metaphorical expressions used in everyday language can provide insight into the metaphorical nature of the concepts that structure people's everyday activities, in *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson provided a number of conceptual metaphors as examples, one of which is the conceptual metaphor "ARGUMENT IS WAR". This metaphor is reflected in various expressions such as "He attacked every weak point in my argument", "Your claims are indefensible", "I have never won an argument with him", and "I demolished his argument", people understand and experience argument as the kind of thing that can be attacked, demolished, won, etc., (1980, 4-5). This demonstrates that the metaphors people use tend to reveal their conceptualizations and their way of reasoning and thinking about a specific topic or issue.

### 2.2. Effects of metaphors

The hypothesis that metaphors can affect target groups has been acknowledged since antiquity (qtd. in. Boeynaems, et al., 2017, 119). However, as provided by Steen (2008), the way about how metaphors' influence on people has changed with the increase in the studies on the effective nature of metaphors. As proposed by Entman, metaphors can fulfill one or more of the functions of framing: "Frames, then, define problems- determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; diagnose causes- identify the forces creating the problem; make moral judgements- evaluate causal agents and their effects; and suggest remedies- offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects" (1993, 51).

The influential nature of metaphorical language has also been described as a brainwashing processes. In terms of the persuasive power of conceptual metaphors, Kövecses, for instance, points out, "Part of the selling power of an advertisement depends on how well-chosen the conceptual metaphor is that the picture and/or the words used in the advertisement attempt to evoke in people. An appropriately selected metaphor may work wonders in promoting the sale of an item" (2002, 59). Thus, the working mechanism of metaphors should never be underestimated in the field of advertising, which is also the case when dealing with social issues in which there is the need for raising awareness or diverting people's attention on a certain issue, as observed in the subject of heroin use in this study.

The communicative power of metaphors within the framework of drugs or, more specifically, heroin use, can also be observed through the analysis of language of literary writers. Bearing in mind the persuasive



power of metaphors, through their way of using language, - in other words, by saturating their discourse with metaphors, authors can assume a very important role in teaching public the dangers of drug use and in leading people to reason logically about the subject.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Participants

The participants of the study were 40 students who had taken the courses of 'Text Studies for Translation' and 'Language Use in Various Fields' in the Department of Translation and Interpretation, Atılım University, Ankara, Turkey. In these two courses, the students are expected to acquire information on metaphors and how to approach metaphorical language in terms of translation. The participants were divided into two groups: 20 for the control group and 20 for the experimental group.

#### 3.2. Data analysis

With the aim of revealing the influence of the conceptual metaphors of heroin in *Eroinle Dans* on the readers' conceptualizations, initially, the conceptual metaphors in the novel were identified. In collecting the data, this research utilized the observation method with some techniques, such as reading and classifying. The novel was read intensively by the researcher several times to identify the conceptual metaphors, which were later classified in accordance with Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The results were presented through tables including the frequencies and percentages of these conceptual metaphors. In addition, the descriptive analytical and content analytical methods of research were employed to demonstrate the underlying conceptualizations of the metaphors for heroin. Some of the instance sentences appear in this study to explain the conceptual categories.

Then, in order to put forward the differences between the conceptualizations of the control group and the experimental group, as a pre-test 20 participants in the control group and 20 from the experimental group were asked to list only one metaphor they associate with heroin prior to reading the novel. As a post-test, each participant in both groups was again asked to provide a metaphor related to heroin after the experimental group had completed reading the novel. Furthermore, the latter was asked to report their attitudes toward heroin after reading the novel. The results were presented through tables demonstrating the associations of each participant in the control and experimental group in the pre-test and post-test separately.

#### 3.3. Data analysis

*Eroinle Dans* is a novel about two girls 'performing a death dance' with heroin. On the back cover of the book, the author highlights that *Eroinle Dans* is the first novel written on heroin addiction 'in a real sense' in Turkey despite a number of scientific genres and informative text types produced on heroin and also diaries written by heroin addicts (Tan, 2009; trans. mine). The main characters in the novel are two girls studying at Boğaziçi University whose journey with drugs begins with cigarettes and alcohol, continues with cocaine and marijuana, and ends up with heroin. Although one of the main characters, Eylül, is from a well-educated and high-income family, she falls into the trap of heroin after her friendship with Dünya, who is a child of divorce and a girl-friend of a heroin-addict. Even this brief information about the characters gives readers the message that drug addiction does not discriminate social classes, and that drug use by a close friend is likely to trigger tendencies toward substance use, especially among teenagers. The two main characters see heroin as a way of socialization among peers, a tool for entertainment, and an escape from their stressful university days. The novel ends when Dünya dies after a so-called 'golden shot' and Eylül witnesses the dangers of drug use and quits substance use with the support of her parents.

In terms of language use, Tan chooses metaphors to make the novel more vivid, specifically, those related to heroin and collocated with that concept help readers imagine how it is to use this substance and make analogies. Alongside the negative metaphors for heroin, Tan also adopted positive conceptualizations in terms of this drug, especially at the moments when the characters use heroin, which not only warn on the dangers of heroin, but at the same time have the potential to encourage the reader to give it a try.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1. Conceptual metaphors in the novel

After analyzing the novel, it was found that there are 56 conceptual metaphors used for heroin which can be categorized into 14 different conceptual metaphors as illustrated in Table 1.





Table 1: Conceptual metaphors for heroin in the novel, their frequencies and percentages

Conceptual Metaphors	Frequency	Percentage
HEROIN IS WAR	17	30.35%
HEROIN IS A HUMAN BEING	15	26.78%
HEROIN IS A FILTH	4	7.14%
HEROIN IS A MARSHLAND	4	7.14%
HEROIN IS A MONSTER	3	5.35%
HEROIN USE IS A JOURNEY	3	5.35%
HEROIN IS A MAGIC	2	3.57%
HEROIN IS A HARBOUR	2	3.57%
HEROIN IS MISERY	1	1.78%
HEROIN IS DEATH	1	1.78%
HEROIN IS A POISON	1	1.78%
HEROIN IS FLYING	1	1.78%
HEROIN IS A BLUE SEA	1	1.78%
HEROIN IS A DIFFERENT FREEDOM	1	1.78%

As it can be observed in Table 1, “HEROIN IS WAR” is the most frequently used conceptual metaphor in the novel. Words such as ‘saldırmak’ (to attack), ‘asker’ (soldier), ‘savurmak’ (to disperse) (283), ‘ele geçirmek’ (to capture), ‘düşman’ (enemy), ‘anlaşma yapmak’ (to reach an agreement) (279), and ‘yenilmek’ (be defeated) are related to the concept of war, and heroin is depicted in the novel as an enemy and a warrior. The “DRUG IS WAR” conceptual metaphor is pervasive in public discourse, and it can be an effective way of creating a destructive image in terms of heroin in the minds of the reader and can have a strong deterrent effect. Using heroin symbolizes taking part in a dangerous battle between the main characters and heroin, and in the end one of the heroines wins, while the other loses in this war. As it can be observed in the following statement, “Ama eroin, hiç ummadığım bir anda karşıma dikiliveriyor. Ondan ayrılmaya kalkışımı cezalandırmak ister gibi, en acımasız yüzüyle üzerime saldırıyor...” (But out of the blue, heroin stands up in front of me and attacks me as if he wanted to punish me for breaking up with him) (Tan, 2009, 279, trans. mine), through war metaphors, the author achieves to present the destructive nature of heroin usage to the readers and, thus, to create an effective message to promote behavioral change.

The mapping from the source domain human being to the target domain heroin is the second most frequently used category in the novel. The effect of “HEROIN IS A HUMAN BEING” conceptual metaphor, also called personification, is described by Lakoff and Turner as “personification permits us to use our knowledge about ourselves to maximal effect, to use insights about ourselves to help us comprehend forces of nature, common events, abstract concepts and inanimate objects” (1989, 72). Lakoff and Turner emphasized that personification has an immense power because it can create new ideas from simple conventional ideas, as human beings can understand each other most effectively through their own terms (ibid.). Thus, it can be stated that by involving the “HEROIN IS A HUMAN BEING” conceptual metaphor into the narration, the author clearly aims to make the reader imagine, visualize, and foresee how it is to become a heroin addict.

Nevertheless, there are some metaphors which can have an adverse effect on the reader, especially used in the context when the main characters take this dangerous drug. Heroin turns out to be a compassionate friend embracing the person using it, as well as a dance mate as observed in the sentence “Tarık ve ben bulutların üzerinde uçarken şefkatli elleriyle okşuyor bizi Eros” (While Tarık and I were flying on the clouds, Eros was petting us with his compassionate hands) (279, trans. mine). As another instance, heroin becomes a weekend friend accompanying the main character, especially on Saturday nights, when she is taking a break from studying (230). Such positive connotations attributed to using heroin can have a negative effect, can be attractive for the reader and raise curiosity. However, there are also negative conceptualizations in terms of heroin constructed with “HEROIN IS A HUMAN BEING” conceptual metaphor. For instance, in the sentence “Eros değil kanımdaki, eroin! Aşk yaşamıyoruz artık onunla. İntikam alır gibi, hüznüleri en koyusunu tattırıyor bana” (It is not Eros in my blood, it is heroin! We are not in love with each other anymore. Just like taking revenge, he makes me feel the deepest sadness) (Tan, 2009, 331, trans. mine), the reader observes the humanizing pattern and shares the emotion of sadness resulting from using heroin. Similarly, in the sentence “Cansız ruhsuz kuklalarımız gibi, dilediğinize oynuyorsun bizimle” (You are playing with us as you wish, as if we are all lifeless, emotionless puppets) (289, trans. mine), heroin is depicted as a cruel person playing with people’s fate.

The other negative conceptualization depicted in the novel in terms of heroin is filth. “İçindeki pislikleri döktün mü banyoya?” (uttered when she is vomiting) (Did you spill out the filth in your body in the



bathroom?) (90, trans. mine), “kirlenmişliklerden sıyrıлма arası” (break time to dispose of the filth) (232, trans. mine), “Şartlar ne olursa olsun, asla kirlenmeyecek bir yapıdasın sen” (No matter what happens, you are filth-proof) (250, trans. mine), “Kirleniyordun beni, farkındaydım” (I was aware of the fact that you were making me filthy) (p. 390, trans. mine) are the instances of the conceptual metaphor of “HEROIN IS FILTH” which promotes a cognitive processing in order to make the reader beware of using this drug.

The “HEROIN IS A MONSTER” conceptual metaphor is also used by the author deliberately for the sake of warning the readers about the potentials of the heroin to cause danger. “Uzanan el, gerçekte canavarın pençesidir.”, (The hand is, in reality, a monster’s claws.) (63, trans. mine), “Karşı duramadım eroine. Hepimizden güçlü o! Kıskaçına aldığı avını asla bırakmayan, amansız bir canavar,..” (I could not resist to heroin. He is stronger than all of us! He is a cruel monster which never lets go of his prey.) (314, trans. mine) are the statements in which heroin is clearly depicted as a dangerous monster threatening the lives of the abusers.

As presented in Table 1, heroin is also conceptualized as a marshland, misery, death, and poison creating negative associations in the minds of the readers. On the other hand, Tan also used the target domains of harbor, freedom, magic, blue sea, flying, and adventurous journey which have all positive connotations. In statements such as “Sığınacak tek bir limanımız vardı: uyuşturucu! Haplar, esrar, eroin...” (We had only one harbour to shelter: drugs! Pills, marijuana, heroin...) (193, trans. mine), “Bambaşka bir özgürlüktü bu” (It was a very different kind of freedom) (390, trans. mine), and “... çekici, vazgeçilmesi güç bir büyü.” (... an attractive, irresistible magic) (390, trans. mine), heroin is depicted as a shelter that can protect people, especially when they are in trouble or when they have no one around them, and as a temptation that can give a sense of freedom. Such conceptual metaphors can be dangerous in genres which are consumed mainly by teenagers, as they can wonder about the feeling that such drugs are said to provide users. That is why, metaphors can be used selectively in discourses prepared for the public, especially written in order to raise awareness on social issues.

#### 4.2. Associations listed in pre and post-test

The heroin conceptualizations of the 20 participants who did not read the novel are presented in Table 2, while the associations of the other 20 participants who read the novel appear in Table 3 in order to observe the difference.

Table 2: Pre and post-test results of the control group

Participant	Association in the pre-test	Association in the post-test	Conceptual Metaphor/Metonymy in Post-test
1	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
2	black	black	HEROIN IS BLACK
3	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
4	filth	filth	HEROIN IS FILTH
5	enemy	death	HEROIN IS DEATH
6	marshland	marshland	HEROIN IS A MARSHLAND
7	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
8	filth	filth	HEROIN IS FILTH
9	darkness	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
10	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
11	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
12	death	death	HEROIN IS DEATH
13	marshland	marshland	HEROIN IS A MARSHLAND
14	death	death	HEROIN IS DEATH
15	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
16	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
17	black	death	HEROIN IS DEATH
18	death	death	HEROIN IS DEATH
19	death (white death)	death (white death)	WHITE DEATH STANDS FOR HEROIN
20	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR

As it can be observed in Table 2, all of the participants who did not read the novel provided negative associations related to the concept of heroin, and there were slight changes between the conceptualizations of heroin in the pre-test and post-test which demonstrates that there is no time effect in the results.

Table 2 shows that, as it is the case in the novel, the conceptual metaphor of “HEROIN IS WAR” is the most frequently listed one among the control group in the study which was followed by the conceptual



metaphor of “HEROIN IS DEATH”. Although it was not found in the novel, the colour black and darkness were also associated with heroin by the participants who did not read the novel, as black is a colour which signifies death in the Turkish culture, similar to many others. For instance, there are idioms constructed with black colour such as “kara deve” (black camel) and “kara toprağa girmek” (to go into black soil) signifying death, “kara yer” (black place) connoting grave, “karalar bağlamak” (to bind blacks) used to indicate feeling sad due to someone’s death, “karalı kağıt” (paper with black) which is a piece of paper with news related to death (Hastürkoğlu, 2017, 115-120). Relatedly enough, there is one participant who has the conceptualization of ‘white death’ in terms of heroin, as “beyaz ölüm” (white death) is a metonymy in the Turkish language standing for heroin.

Table 3: Pre and post-test results of the control group

Participant	Association in the Pre-test	Association in the Post-test	Conceptual Metaphor/Metonymy in Post-test
1	monster	adventure	HEROIN IS AN ADVENTURE
2	filth	unknown	HEROIN IS UNKNOWN
3	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
4	filth	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
5	darkness	darkness	HEROIN IS DARKNESS
6	enemy	adventure	HEROIN IS ADVENTURE
7	black	adventure	HEROIN IS ADVENTURE
8	enemy	dance mate	HEROIN IS A DANCE MATE
9	filth	filth	HEROIN IS FILTH
10	filth	marshland	HEROIN IS A MARSHLAND
11	nightmare	adventure	HEROIN IS ADVENTURE
12	black	sometimes a compassionate friend	HEROIN IS A COMPASSIONATE FRIEND
13	enemy	death	HEROIN IS DEATH
14	black	object of curiosity	HEROIN IS AN OBJECT OF CURIOSITY
15	death	sometimes an agent of socialization	HEROIN IS AN AGENT OF SOCIALIZATION
16	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
17	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
18	enemy	enemy	HEROIN IS WAR
18	enemy	marshland	HEROIN IS A MARSHLAND
20	death	white death	HEROIN IS DEATH

Through Table 3, the differences between the associations of the experimental group before and after reading the novel can be clearly observed. Although there were no positive conceptualizations for heroin in the pre-test, there were students who had the conceptualization of adventure, a dance mate, a compassionate friend, a way of socialization, an object of curiosity, a one-night stand, and an unknown entity which can be regarded as either positive or neutral. It was revealed that there was 45% of change in the conceptualizations in terms of being positive, negative, or neutral. Nevertheless, there were still negative conceptualizations such as war, death, filth, nightmare, darkness, and marshland, all of which are identical to the associations of the participants in the control group.

#### 4.3. Answers conveying the attitudes of the experimental group

After reading *Eroinle Dans*, the participants in the experimental group were also asked to explain the reasoning behind the metaphor they provided for heroin in the post-test, which was thought to be useful in order to reinvestigate and determine the effect of the metaphors on the recipients.

Out of twenty participants in the experimental group, five clearly emphasized the fact that the author of the novel described heroin in such a way that they were tempted to try it. One of these comments reads as follows:

“Although I was 100% sure that it was impossible for me to even think about using heroin in my life, after reading the novel, I felt that I can try it once, and it can change nothing in my daily life. It can be a different experience for me. That is why I provided the metaphor ‘adventure’ for heroin now (for post-test).”

It is obvious that the participant changed the quality of the metaphor from negative to positive after reading the novel. Similarly enough, one answer was:



“Now, I am curious about using heroin. I was afraid of using heroin or having friends who are addicted to it, but I learned from the novel that one can give it up whenever he/she really wants. It does not scare me anymore.”

Such comments clearly revealed the fact that metaphors can provide attitudinal response or change in the target group by suggesting the perspectives of their users. Relatedly, there are three answers which admitted that the author used attractive descriptions for heroin; however, they did not change their minds and wrote negative metaphors in the post-test. One comment rejected the author’s statements at the back cover of the novel as she says the novel is the one which can be recommended by educators at primary and high schools (Tan, 2009). One comment was:

“Heroin is depicted as a cigarette. I will not recommend this novel for people who are under 18 years of age. Heroin is called Eros by the main character and they are in a passionate relationship, which can be encouraging for especially teenagers. It is still an enemy for me.”

Furthermore, there are also participants in the experimental group who maintained their previous opinions related to heroin without mentioning the positive associations of heroin in the novel, and emphasized that heroin is identical to death and it has the potential to destruct one’s life, which is similar to the end of the novel in that one of the main characters dies because of heroin addiction.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study was an attempt to demonstrate that metaphors, rather than mere tools of stylistics, are elements that can produce effective messages by promoting cognitive processing on recipients. As they have the power of persuading people or have the potential for attitude and behavioral change, they should be used carefully, especially when they are chosen to be adopted for social issues such as drug use. As literary authors are the ones in a community who can use such elements in order to raise awareness in the public and produce cultural sensitivity on drug use by providing necessary information for the target group, the case of Canan Tan and her novel *Eroinle Dans* can be a good illustration of investigating the use of metaphors in this social issue.

Moving from the fact that “metaphorically rich language is regarded highly influential” (Strzalkowski, et. al, 2014, 44) and, taking into account the fact that metaphors can influence the way human beings reason about complex and abstract issues, Tan’s use of a number of metaphors in relation to such a delicate issue as heroin use deserves to be studied and can be a tool in order to reveal the power of metaphors in providing attitudinal response in recipients.

As analyzed in the novel *Eroinle Dans*, Tan used many conceptual metaphors in terms of heroin and heroin use, the majority of which can create a negative image in the minds of the readers. Through the metaphorical use of language, Tan, in some way, manages to draw a picture of heroin as a cruel individual, a powerful and horrendous monster, an enemy that should be fought against, a filth, a one-way irreversible journey, etc. On the other hand, the readers are exposed to positive source domains for heroin such as journey, flying, freedom, blue sea, compassionate friend, dance mate, etc., which can affect the conceptualizations of the readers and end up in a negative behavioral change. This negative influence was revealed in this study by comparing the associations of the control and experimental group in the pre and post-test. It revealed that the associations people brought to mind for the term heroin differed depending on whether they had read the novel: attributions for heroin were overwhelmingly negative when probed in a neutral context; however, positive associations with heroin were added after being exposed to positive conceptual metaphors in the novel.

This result was also made stronger by taking the comments of the experimental group gauging their attitudes towards heroin after they read the novel. This demonstrated the fact that language the author used for describing heroin and heroin use shaped their thought and tempted them towards using heroin, which resulted in their change of the metaphors they provided in the post-test.

Thus, the strong influence of metaphors on people should not be underestimated especially by the authors of literary works, which are considered as the reflections of our everyday lives. Authors should be very selective in their way of using language and be in full awareness of the fact that metaphors are not solely rhetorical tools, and that conceptual metaphors underlying these elements should be carefully selected. For further studies, conceptual metaphors underlying the metaphorical expressions used within the context of important social problems such as drug use can be investigated in the public genres as newspapers, public information leaflets, public speeches, etc. in order to emphasize the significance of the use of metaphors on effecting the target readers.





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