Metaphors We Suffer By:

Conceptual metaphors in English language first person accounts of clinical depression

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Abstract

The present thesis investigates conceptual metaphors used by people dealing with clinical depression to describe their daily lives and experience with the disorder. Specifically, the project is concerned with discourse as it is conducted on online blogs. Studies on conceptual metaphors and depression have been conducted in the past, however, they have tended to focus on hand-written accounts of experience, produced specifically for the studies, interviews and recordings of therapy sessions as their data. Studies on the subject focusing on the Internet as a medium have been lacking. However, the relative anonymity, spontaneity and unmoderated nature of online communication could not only offer a rich ground for metaphor formation but also allow people to describe their experiences in an honest, detailed way. Studying it has provided new insights into the experience of depression as well as given those who deal with the disorder a voice by basing those insights in their personal, unfiltered accounts.

One of the core ideas behind the study is the Cognitive Linguistics belief that our experience in our human bodies influences the kind of language we use. Likewise, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) states that while metaphors can vary across and within different cultures, some metaphors are rooted in human bodily experience and could be considered universal among humans. However, mental health disorders, which can also manifest in physical symptoms, affect what constitutes one's bodily experience. The study thus investigates this influence and how it manifests through language.

The first area of interest is what unique conceptual metaphors are used to describe depression and its various aspects by people suffering from the disorder. Then, another question to be investigated is how are notions such as love and time, that are said to have strong and prevalent metaphorical models in the English language, conceptualised by people with depression and if those conceptualizations differ from what is commonly described in literature on conceptual metaphors. Additionally, the results of previous studies on conceptual metaphors used to communicate about depression in other mediums and languages are compared to the results of the present project in order to determine if and how the difference in medium influences how the experience is communicated as well as consider the nature of metaphorical meaning-making on a general level.

Keywords: *cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor theory, depression, embodiment, metaphor identification procedure, metaphors in psychotherapy*

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Our human experience is shaped by a combination of the properties our bodies have and the culture the experience takes place in. The nature of our bodies naturally varies and so do our cultures. One would expect this would lead to groups of people that differ in physical or cultural features having different ways of conceptualising the same world we all live in and different ways of talking about it. As mental health disorders can also manifest in physical symptoms and shape how an individual interacts with their culture, it would follow that the people suffering from them would see the world in a different way and even use unique linguistic features when describing their views. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) notion of metaphor, according to which metaphorical expressions are a reflection of conceptual metaphors that both shape and are shaped by our thoughts and actions, seems like a suitable feature to examine these potential differences in. So, what metaphors do people suffering from depression use to conceptualise their disorder and the world around them? Specifically, how do they talk about their experiences in an intimate, personal setting unfiltered by mental health professionals? And is it possible that even seemingly universal experiences are understood and talked about differently under the influence of depression?

That the body is our tool for navigating the world and determines the sort of experiences we are capable of having is the foundation of the embodied cognition framework within cognitive sciences. According to it, our bodies structure the way we think and the way we speak as well - we are only capable of conceptualising the sort of experiences that we have access to. The human experience is then the root of concepts and concepts are the basis of language (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 44-46). CMT contributes to the prism of embodiment the idea that the conceptual system which is grounded in the human bodily experience and which governs the way we think, speak and engage with the world is guided by metaphors. Metaphors themselves are often rooted in the human bodily experience, for example the metaphor HAPPY IS UP has its basis in the correlation between physical and emotional experience observed in the tendency of humans to have an erect posture when feeling well.

However, the human bodily experience does not take place in isolation - it co-occurs with a rich history of cultural presuppositions, values and attitudes (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 57-59). The

issue of which metaphors are universal and which are subject to cultural variation as well as what determines the variation has been much discussed in metaphor studies. Metaphors such as HAPPY IS UP are said to be near-universal. However, many other metaphors can vary across two dimensions: the cross-cultural and the inter-cultural; the latter of which includes regional, stylistic, subcultural and individual variation (Kövecses, 2008, p. 55-60).

Previous studies have found that depressed people are a subculture that exhibits metaphorical variation in their discussions of the disorder itself (McMullen & Conway, 2001, p. 171). However, these studies have tended to focus on therapy sessions which is significant as recent studies found that depressed people's conceptualizations of therapeutic institutions show mistrust (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 14). Studies focusing on first-person accounts have seemingly only been conducted using data in languages other than English. What has also not been investigated is if atypical experiences like depression lead to the emergence of atypical metaphors related to various other experiences in one's life. Such an investigation into the way people with unique cultural and bodily experiences use language could provide more insights into our understanding of the experiences themselves and further question what constitutes a universal human experience.

1.1 Aim of the study

The study aims to investigate the conceptual metaphors that people diagnosed with clinical depression use to describe their lives. The empirical data for the investigation is discourse as it is conducted in online blogs. This choice of data is based on the assumption that the medium of online communication, due to its relative anonymity, spontaneity and unmoderated nature, could allow people to describe their experiences in an honest, detailed manner and thus provide a rich ground for metaphor use. The assumption is further supported by research which shows that for people affected by physical and mental illnesses, the Internet has become a tool of empowerment that allows them to take control of the narrative around their condition (Kotliar, 2016, p. 1203). The results of previous studies on metaphors used by depressed people in other discursive contexts are compared to the results of the present project in order to determine if, and how, the difference in setting influences how an experience is communicated through metaphors. Ultimately, the research project aims to provide new insights into life with depression as well as give those who deal with the disorder a voice by basing those insights in their personal accounts. When it comes

to metaphor studies, as will be detailed in the Theoretical Background chapter, CMT is a subject of heavy debates. Using the CMT framework to analyse metaphors rooted in a unique experience and expressed in a unique medium of communication could potentially provide new insights not only into the experience but into the framework itself.

1.2 Research questions and hypotheses

The ideas that have been briefly presented so far - and that will be expanded upon in the following chapters of the thesis - have inspired two main research questions (RQs) guiding the present study:

RQ1: What metaphors are used to describe and conceptualise depression in the corpus of online blogs?

For this question, the starting point is the experience of depression as a whole, encompassing all the various symptoms and ways in which it manifests in. The hypothesis is that, much like in the studies that used therapy sessions as data, metaphors unique to depressed people will be found (McMullen &; Conway, 2002, Charteris-Black, 2012). However, there is an expectation that an unfiltered medium of communication will lead to metaphors previously unaccounted for in studies on metaphors used by depressed people.

RQ2: Do people who describe themselves as having been diagnosed with depression use different metaphors to describe and conceptualise the experiences of time and love than what is described in literature on conceptual metaphors and if yes, what are the main differences?

For this question, the starting point is metaphors in general, encompassing metaphors related to everyday life and experiences unrelated to depression specifically. Due to time constraints and in order to make the analysis more thorough, the RQ is limited to two experiences - that of time and that of love. The reasoning for this choice is first that these are universal experiences we all have access to through our human bodies and culture. Both are also areas that can be potentially influenced by depression - as is often discussed in blogs authored by depressed people. Finally, both time and love are much written about in literature on conceptual metaphors and are said to have deeply culturally entrenched metaphors in the West. The hypothesis is that if depression influences various aspects of a person’s life, the metaphors used to conceptualise one’s daily

activities and interpersonal relationships will show subcultural variation compared to those used by non-depressed people.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Introduction

The present chapter outlines the theoretical literature that provided the framework for the thesis. The chapter begins by presenting the concept of metaphor and tracing how this concept has been studied throughout history. As CMT is considered to be a groundbreaking yet controversial theory, both its origins, key ideas and supporting evidence as well as the debate surrounding it are discussed. The choice of CMT as a theoretical framework is then justified by showcasing how

CMT has been updated to address criticism. Finally, as the thesis is concerned with the concepts of depression, time and love, previous studies on metaphors that have explored them in ways that differ from those of the present thesis are summarised.

2.2. Metaphor studies

2.2.1 Origins of metaphor studies

The roots of metaphor studies extended to the Aristotelian rhetorical tradition when metaphor was defined as a comparison in which one word is substituted for another word with a similar meaning and highly prized as a feature of masterful public speaking, the primary purpose of which was capturing the attention of audiences and persuading them (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 5-6). Although some of Aristotle's own writing could be considered a precursor to the cognitive idea of metaphor, particularly, his view that metaphor as a substitution meant to create new understanding, metaphors were not viewed as a mechanism of cognition yet (Lynne & Low, 1999, p. 9). However, they were already distinguished for how one seemingly uses them without being consciously aware of it: "Metaphor is not only so natural to us, that the illiterate and others often use it unconsciously, but is so pleasing and ornamental, that, in any composition, however brilliant, it will always make itself apparent by its own lustre." (Quintilian VIII.6.4, as translated in Watson, 1856, p. 125).

The view of metaphor as a phenomenon of language was reinforced by formalist semantics which attempted to apply the mathematical system of logic to the study of linguistics. It saw language as separate from cultural or bodily context and meaning as the correspondence between a linguistic utterance and the real world (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 118-119). Under such a point of view, metaphors present an odd case as these are "expressions that speak about the world by lying" (Eco, 1984, p. 109). Paraphrasing a metaphor in the form of truth-conditional propositions does not reproduce its semantic contents which resulted in metaphor being relegated from either formal linguistics or linguistics as a whole and described as a matter of pragmatics instead (Searle, 1979, p. 110-111). Attempts to recognize metaphors as valid expressions within formalist linguistics were made, however, they were mostly focused on introducing metaphors into the framework of propositions rather than analysing how metaphors emerge or what is the relationship between the literal and metaphorical readings (Eco, 1984, p. 109-111). Ultimately, some theorists have concluded that

“only a fragment of a serious theory of metaphor can be covered by the formal semantics approach” and thus taking into account psychological research on the function and structure of metaphors is a necessity (van Dijk, 1975, p. 173-174).

Eventually, linguistic focus shifted towards the psychological aspects of language as a reaction against the formalist lack of attention to worldly context. The Cognitive Linguistics movement emerged which claimed that language is linked to the world not through truth conditions but experiential and perceptual knowledge (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 118-119). Metaphor studies questioned if the relationship between the objects of the metaphor is as uncomplicated as that of substitution based on pre-existing similarities. A view that was proposed instead was that of metaphor as a filter or a screen. The objects both evoke “systems of associated commonplaces” - backdrops of existing knowledge available to a layman speaker of the language. As the two networks interrelate, an entirely new system is born; one in which the metaphor suppresses, emphasises, organises or otherwise “filters” certain details (Black, 1962, p. 39-42). Linguistic ontologies released around that time have summarised metaphor as an integral part of the way humans comprehend information, a “catalyst for a change in understanding”, and thus a mental process that deserves to be investigated accordingly, with attention to when and how people use and gain awareness of metaphors and how these aspects differ from literal language use (Verbrugge, 1980, p. 101, Ortony, 1980, p.69-70).

2.2.2. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Among the renewed interest in metaphors, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson presented CMT as a new cognitive theory of metaphor. According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphors are not solely a matter of language but of thought as well - they are “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.3-4). Metaphor in language is then a “reflection” of metaphor in thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4). From that it follows that the reason for metaphor frequency in language and how well they lend themselves for rhetorical purposes is them being deeply ingrained in our cognition. In fact, it could be said that “human thought processes are largely metaphorical” and metaphors are how we perceive and categorise other people, objects and experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.6).

On the level of thought, metaphor involves a connection, referred to as a mapping, between two domains - the target domain, which is the immediate experience at hand that is being understood, and the source domain, the experience which provides information and concepts used to achieve understanding about the former (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p. 266). Generally, a conceptual metaphor will have a comparatively more abstract concept as the target domain and a more concrete concept as the source domain. This is, of course, a result of abstract concepts being more difficult for the mind to grasp, however, it also speaks to power of metaphors - it is hypothesised that without the possibility to conceptualise abstract notions in terms of an object or experience that is familiar to us, they would be impossible to reason about (Kövecses, 2010, p. 4, p. 25, Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p.119).

One has to return to the notion of embodiment as CMT acknowledges that the bodily experience is the source of many metaphors. While some may vary due to cultural influence, many metaphors rooted in bodily experience correlate interculturally and are referred to as "simple", "primary" or "generic-level". They are often assumed to be universal or near-universal (Kövecses, 2008a, p. 55). These sorts of metaphors are ones we learn as children and are guided by for the rest of our lives, for example, as infants, our parents will physically hold us as which will increase the temperature of our bodies and instil the metaphor AFFECTION IS WARMTH in our minds. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 52-53, 58).

The connection between metaphors, concepts and embodied experience can then be summarised as follows: metaphors are the basis of our conceptual system through which we structure the human experience. In turn, the embodied human experience serves as the foundation for metaphors. Concepts related to physical bodies and actions are naturally embodied, however, abstract concepts can also be considered embodied if they are the so-called cognitive primitives or "image schemas" (Lakoff, 2012, p. 3-4). Johnson (1987) defines the concept as "a recurring dynamic pattern of our perceptual interactions and motor programmes that gives coherence and structure to our experience" (xiv). Schemas concern universal aspects of cognition and characterise all actions and events. Examples include the source-path-goal schema, the containment schema, the near-far schema, etc. To illustrate: containment is an image schema grounded in the experience we have interacting with our physical environment: we know that being physically bound constricts our

movement and apply this knowledge when conceptualising abstract experiences that we feel somehow constrict our freedom, for example, one may speak of feeling *trapped* by depression.

Various research findings have been listed as evidence for the theory: similar metaphorical expressions involving life and death reappear poem after poem throughout Western literature (Lakoff and Turner 1989), spatiotemporal metaphors exist, in which relational structure from the experiential domain of space is transferred to the more abstract domain of time (Boroditsky 2000), some gestures could be considered non-linguistic metaphors (McNeill 1992, Taub 1997), semantic changes driven by mappings from the physical domain of perception to the abstract domain of reasoning have been observed (Sweetser 1990), neural computational models demonstrated that when inferences from the domain of motion are mapped onto the domain of economics they produce metaphorical inferences (Narayanan 1997), children will often initially not differentiate the two meanings of a metaphorical expression (C. Johnson 1999). All things considered, CMT has shown a not insignificant degree of interaction with other fields of study and amassed evidence.

2.2.3 Criticisms of Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Despite the supporting research, some areas where CMT is considered to be lacking in support or clarity have been brought to attention. First, it has been noted that no real formal procedure exists to determine the relationship between conceptual metaphors and their manifestations in language. For example, the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A FIRE could potentially be labelled LIFE IS SOMETHING THAT GIVES OFF HEAT or it could also be labelled LIFE IS A FLAME (Jackendoff & Aaron, 1991, p. 324). Also questioned by critics is CMT's lack of explanation for why a certain combination of a source and target domain is suitable whereas others are not - it is not examined if certain metaphors being chosen over alternate possibilities means that some metaphors influence our thinking to a greater degree than others (Stern, 2000, p. 179, Vervaeke & Kennedy, 1995, p. 278-279). Furthermore, the framework does not explain instances where several related conceptual metaphors at least partly contradict each other. Even if we assume that the metaphors structure different aspects of a concept it is still unclear how can a coherent structure be outlined in cultures with many different metaphors for the same concept (Murphy, 1996, p.186-187). This makes CMT's claims difficult to either falsify or prove.

On the one hand, CMT claims that we conceptualise the world largely thanks to our most basic bodily experiences. On the other hand, metaphorical thought is not uniform - Lakoff & Johnson themselves acknowledge that when they discuss, e.g., the fact that a culture could exist in which metaphorical expressions related to arguments do not make use of military language and the people would behave differently, possibly more collaboratively than combatively, during arguments (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 4). Critics of CMT see this as a paradox: "the supposed universality of directly meaningful concepts and kinesthetic image schemas is not consistent with the idea of culturally defined conceptualizations" (Rakova, 2001, p. 228). CMT literature fails to elaborate on the exact relationship between culture and embodiment as well as how and which cultural factors affect metaphorical thought (Kövecses, 2008b, p. 180-181).

Furthermore, some cases of what Lakoff & Johnson identify as metaphors could be attributed to polysemy. For example, the expression *inflation is rising* is considered a manifestation of the conceptual metaphor INFLATION IS A THING. However, one could easily analyse this expression with the assumption that *rise* is a polysemous word, the meaning of which is so general as to include both physical movement and the process when an entity undergoes a non-physical change that causes its value on a dimension to increases (Murphy, 1996, p.190). Similarly, in the case of ARGUMENT IS WAR, it is said that even if the words *attack* and *defend* have their origin in military discourse, they have entered conceptual relations with non-military terms and become more abstract. If it is the non-military senses we use when talking about arguments, then it becomes more difficult to argue that our conception of war influences our behaviour during arguments (Vervaeke & Kennedy, 1995, p. 280-282).

Circularity of evidence is a recurrent criticism against CMT - conceptual metaphors are identified based on various metaphorical expressions and then used to derive further possible linguistic manifestations. Despite CMT's proclaimed cognitive focus, linguistic evidence remains over-represented and actual evidence of the existence of conceptual structures is lacking (Murphy, 1996, p.184). The dangers of using linguistic data to make conclusions about the mental processes underlying them have been illustrated by experimental research on idiom transparency which has shown that once someone learns the meaning of an idiom, it is difficult to interpret it any other way and justifications can be made to connect an idiom to a historically incorrect meaning (Keysar

& Bly, 1995 p.103-104). Therefore a researcher could potentially write a convincing linguistic analysis that might not correctly uncover the underlying conceptual metaphor.

Ultimately, much of the criticism concerns vagueness in procedure and limitations of individual researchers. A common criticism along these lines is pointing out that many studies focus on metaphors that are isolated from the larger context of the text and specifically selected as being interesting examples. This can lead to bias and also overlooks potential contextual, social, cultural or ideological factors that might influence metaphorical language (Gibbs, 2009, p. 19). Depending on presuppositions about the discursive situation, the speaker and the domains involved, one might invoke different entailments for the same metaphorical expression. Overall, ignorance of context is described as a big oversight by CMT as it is said to be the very reason for variation in metaphor - "any semantic field - that is, any expression from one semantic field - can, in different contexts, metaphorically express different contents" (Stern, 2000, p. 183)

Finally, the lack of systematicity is evident in the very question of what constitutes a metaphorical expression. Lakoff & Johnson present no guidelines for deciding if a linguistic expression is metaphorical nor ways to determine how representative an expression is of a conceptual metaphor or order different expressions within a single metaphorical structure (Gibbs, 2009, p. 19-20). According to more extreme critics, these shortcomings mean CMT is difficult to take seriously as either a theory of language or a theory of the human cognitive system.

2.2.4 Alternative Theories of Metaphor

Following the criticisms of CMT, other theories of metaphor have been proposed. Perhaps one of the most famous is Deliberate Metaphor Theory (DMT) whose foundational belief is that most metaphors in discourse are indirect, conventional and as such interpreted through lexical disambiguation involving categorization, rather than a cross-domain mapping that involves comparison (Steen, 2011, p. 51). Thus the paradox of metaphor: the majority of metaphors might not be processed metaphorically (Steen, 2011, p. 54). To resolve it, the dimension of communication is introduced. When a metaphor is used deliberately in communication, the speaker and the hearer are aware of it and this awareness does not exist when using non-deliberate metaphor (Steen, 2011, p. 36-37). Deliberate metaphors are then understood through comparison

and non-deliberate metaphors through categorization. By suggesting that people do not activate metaphorical models in most instances of discourse, DMT implies that the power held by metaphors is not as great as believed by CMT (Steen, 2013, p. 193).

DMT itself is a subject of heavy debates, many of which surround the word *deliberate* that some see as synonymous with *deliberative*: *deliberative* implies consciousness and careful consideration and it is unclear how conscious deliberation in metaphor formulation and processing can be empirically observed (Gibbs, 2015, p. 73, Gibbs & Chen 2017, p. 118). However, these claims could be said to be not quite true to DMT literature which states that the notion of deliberateness has some connections with consciousness and intentionality but is more complicated than that (Steen, 2011, p. 29). This claim appears to be vague enough that even proponents of DMT have declared that the focus on consciousness is DMT's greatest contribution to metaphor studies (Xu et al, 2016, p. 439-441). Ultimately, some researchers reject the fundamental premise of DMT: the idea that only the rare deliberate metaphors can be called true metaphors has been criticised as regressive (Gibbs & Chen, 2017, p. 123-124).

The Career of Metaphor model, meanwhile, has attempted to integrate the comparison and categorization accounts. According to the theory, all metaphors start out as novel metaphors which "involve base terms that refer to a domain-specific concept but are not (yet) associated with a domain-general category." (Bowdle & Gentner, 2005, p. 199). At this stage, they are processed by comparison. As a result of repeated use, metaphors become conventional - ones that "involve base terms that refer both to a literal concept and to an associated metaphoric category" (Bowdle & Gentner, 2005, p. 199). They are polysemous and can be processed either via comparison or via a categorization. As metaphors become more conventionalized, so does processing by categorization become favoured over comparison.

The theory is supported by empirical research which found that people show preference for conventional figurative expressions when they are presented as metaphors while novel figurative expressions are processed faster when phrased as similes. (Bowdle & Gentner, 2005, p. 200-206). However, when replicated, the tests illustrated how the theory can fail - in a version of the study that utilised novel figurative expressions which were rated higher in aptness, it was found that the

novel categorization formulations had faster reading and responding times than the comparison formulations (Glucksberg & Haught, 2006, p. 366-367). Further empirical exploration of the theory, one that puts more focus on the aptness and quality of metaphors, is then needed.

A group of alternative theories that could be distinguished is discourse metaphor theories. Discourse metaphors are metaphors linked to a specific sociocultural context: "a relatively stable metaphorical projection that functions as a key framing device within a particular discourse over a certain period of time" (Zinken et al., 2008, p. 374). In addition to rectifying CMT's lack of focus on context, discourse metaphor theory proposes two possible explanations to account for the emergence of metaphors - members of a language community abstracting repeating uses of the same metaphorical utterance, or preconceptual intuition (Zinken, 2007, p. 448-449). The discourse metaphor framework was tested with a corpus study which found that "different lexical items with similar or overlapping conventional usages, which belong to the same superordinate category, function differently as metaphor vehicles" (Zinken, 2007, p. 451). The reason for this is that speakers will negotiate specific form–meaning pairings depending on the communicative situation. Thus metaphors are situated at the level of interactions between participants in a discourse (Zinken, 2007, p. 453-454).

However, the corpus study has been criticised as focusing on isolated examples and failing to establish how exactly do participants in a conversation negotiate the form and meaning pairings. Another drawback is that the analysis was limited to expressions coupled with signalling cues or "tuning devices" and, as DMT research showed, these types of metaphors are a minority in discourse. For these reasons, it is said that discourse metaphor theory "misses a key, intermediate level of analysis between abstract conceptual metaphors and local discourse interactions" (Gibbs, 2017, p. 126).

More recently, in the field of cognitive semiotics, a unifying theory of metaphor has been proposed. According to the Motivation & Sedimentation Model (MSM), metaphors are classified as a special type of sign containing the following features:

> (a) at least two different potential interpretations (giving rise to tension), (b) standing in an iconic relationship with each other, where (c) one interpretation is more relevant in the

communicative context, and (d) can be understood in part by comparison with the less relevant interpretation (Devylder & Zlatev, 2020, p. 274)

In this way, MSM avoids CMT's notion of "cross-domain mappings", and, consequently, the criticisms of being vague and static (Stampoulidis, 2021, p. 50). MSM also presents a model that outlines three levels of metaphorical meaning-making - the embodied level encompasses experiential and cognitive processes, the sedimented level, where one finds social and linguistic norms and the situated level, where spontaneous context-specific meaning-making takes place. These levels are in constant interaction as novel metaphors motivated by the embodied level move up to the sedimented level and become conventional (Devylder & Zlatev, 2020, p. 271-273, Moskaluk, 2020, p. 19-21). Thus, MSM aims to resolve the debate regarding which level metaphors arise by integrating the bodily, linguistic and social aspects. At the same time, although its claims of having reconciled seemingly contradictory previous theories are promising, MSM is still newly-emergent and supporting empirical evidence is lacking - for example, as MSM hopes to be a theory of metaphor applicable to all semiotic systems, further research utilising non-linguistic data is necessary (Zlatev et al., 2021, p. 68).

2.2.5 Innovation within Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Given the fact that many of the alternative theories are a subject of debate in their own right, it is no surprise that various researchers have been working on updating CMT and it has come a long way since its inception. Scholars within CMT have acknowledged that certain words have acquired new meanings that might no longer be considered metaphorical. However, their argument is that these should not be considered as completely separate meanings but rather as a "a "field" of meanings including the entailments, images, responses, and expectations evoked by the metaphor vehicle, as well as with the various topics to which the metaphor is typically or routinely applied." (Ritchie, 2003, p. 140). It then matters not whether the meanings related to war are always accessed when using the words *attack* and *defend* - what matters is that these meanings are an inextricable part of a metaphorical network. It can even be argued that it is not possible to firmly conclude that earlier meanings are no longer accessed once a word has been repeatedly used in novel contexts - metaphorical meanings are not fixed, thus "how any particular speaker intends a metaphor to be interpreted, and how any particular hearer does interpret the metaphor, can never be absolutely determined" (Ritchie, 2003, p. 138). This approach helps preserve the validity of CMT by uniting

potentially polysemous meanings under the definition of metaphor as a field of cognitive responses.

Another proposition is that embodiment and cultural variation do not have to be seen as irreconcilable opposites. Embodied experience itself could be heterogeneous and subject to cultural variation. This has been referred to as the "differential experiential focus" hypothesis, according to which an embodied experience can be divided into many smaller components that can be emphasised or de-emphasized by different cultures or individuals (Kövecses, 2005, 2010c, p.203). One example is anger - it is universal for the emotion to be accompanied by physical symptoms such as an increase in bodily temperature, breathing rate, blood pressure or heartbeat rate. Different cultures seem to focus on different aspects of the anger experience - in English, expressions related to heat and pressure are both prominent, whereas in Chinese pressure metaphors dominate. (Kövecses, 2005, 202-204). Research assuming the cognitive-cultural view of metaphor has also found variation in isolated discursive situations, depending on their specific context, the speaker's own social or personal history and the cognitive processes they utilise for metaphorical thought. Thus the reasoning behind the present thesis - individual and psychological factors should also be accounted for when investigating conceptual metaphors as "many of our metaphors vary because our experiences as human beings also vary" (Kövecses, 2008, p. 63).

As the lack of a formal procedure has been one of the most consistent criticisms against CMT, many possible means of empirical research have been tested as supplements to the framework. One of them is the addition of Corpus Linguistics methods which have generally been noted for the potential to introduce the element of falsifiability. Use of corpora has been demonstrated to help amend the criticism of seemingly arbitrary groupings and labelings of metaphors - a corpus can identify statistically significant patterns and determine what metaphors are the most salient in various domains, for example, studies have shown that anger is more commonly conceptualised as heat, rather than a fierce animal. It has also been found that anger is most commonly conceptualised as fire when describing groups of people, rather than individuals, and so some of the examples chosen to exemplify this metaphor by purely intuitive researchers were atypical - an example of CL helping to amend potential bias (Deignan, 2006, p. 94-96).

Entirely new approaches to identifying metaphors within the CMT framework have also been formulated. Perhaps one of the most notable is the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). MIP is described as "the first tool that can be reliably employed to identify metaphorically used words in discourse" (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 36). The Pragglejaz researchers propose to use real discourse data in the form of a corpus and, then, to search the corpus for metaphorical expressions using a methodology that can be verified using statistical tests and that explicitly employs contemporary empirical research in various related fields, from cognitive linguistics to discourse analysis as well a psycholinguistics (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, Steen, 2007, p. 12). Their methodology consists of the following steps:

> 1. Read the entire text–discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
>
> 2. Determine the lexical units in the text–discourse
>
> 3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
>
> (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be
>
> —More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste. —Related to bodily action.
>
> —More precise (as opposed to vague)
>
> —Historically older.
>
> Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.
>
> (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current–contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
>
> 4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.
>
> (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 3)

While CMT critics argue that it is not possible to be certain if lexical units investigated in linguistic analyses are truly motivated by underlying conceptual metaphors, the Pragglejaz Group explicitly draws from an experimental psycholinguistic perspective which provides support for the connection between verbal and conceptual metaphors. Studies in this field have shown that various abstract concepts are understood in terms of metaphor and many of these abstract concepts are also

part of conventional metaphorical expressions. Conceptual metaphors have also been found to play a role in children's as well as second-language learners' acquisition of metaphorical expressions (Gibbs, 2009, p. 22, 24-25). Thus, by offering a concrete way to study conceptual metaphors using real language data that is supported by previous research, MIP helps CMT bridge the gap from the purely theoretical to the empirical.

2.3 Previous studies in the field

2.3.1 Studies on metaphors and depression

One of the earliest studies exploring the topic, conducted by McMullen & Conway (2002), focused on uncovering which depression metaphors could be considered conventional as well as how and why they came to reach the status of conventionality. The researchers analysed audiotaped psychotherapy sessions and four main metaphors were distinguished: DEPRESSION IS DARKNESS, often manifested through expressions related to stormy weather, DEPRESSION IS WEIGHT, manifested through expressions in which the experience of having one's entire body burdened and freedom constrained is central, the personification DEPRESSION IS CAPTOR, also communicating the feeling of being restricted, and, finally, the most dominant metaphor, DEPRESSION IS DESCENT, in which depression was conceptualised as a progression downward that is almost impossible to stop or return from (McMullen & Conway, 2002, p. 169-173).

While important and influential, the study can be questioned in terms of method - although a formal procedure is used to identify metaphorical expressions, the study is vague on how the relevant metaphors were determined, stating only that the decision was based on explicit references and "culturally based knowledge of how we talk about depression" (McMullen & Conway, 2002, p. 170).

The McMullen & Conway study references William Styron's memoir *Darkness Visible* as a culturally important work on depression. Another study by Schoeneman et al (2004), meanwhile, used the text as its corpus to seek out depression metaphor from. Metaphors of the disorder itself were the most common and often overlapped with suicide metaphors - both were conceptualized

in terms of orientational metaphors with the directionality of *down, in,* and *away* and compared to physical pain and illness, a violent attack, darkness, bad weather, an abyss, a weight and paralysis. Metaphors of recovery, in contrast, had a directionality of *up, out*, and *through.* Depressed people were compared to victims, martyrs and zombies (Schoeneman et al, 2004, p. 326-327). Finally, recovery was conceptualised as a war or struggle with a personified depression that leads to a return to life, goodness and light. (Schoeneman et al, 2004, p. 332-335).

However, the study could be said to suffer from a similar problem in terms of method - although the potential bias was somewhat minimised by using multiple analysts and seeking out inter-rater agreement, the process of determining which expressions are metaphorical seems to be mostly intuitive. The researchers also dismiss the question of novel metaphors, stating that novel metaphors are unlikely to be used when describing depression as their novelty would make it difficult to clearly explain an already complex experience (Schoeneman et al, 2004, p. 338-339).
A study by Charteris-Black (2012) introduced several novelties: interviews were examined, as the informality and range in topics offered potential to uncover even more depression metaphors, and gender was a topic of interest, with a hypothesis that it could influence variation in depression metaphors. The study found a novelty in the form of a prominent metaphor in which depression was likened to an inanimate container (Charteris-Black, 2012, p. 206). In some linguistic manifestations, the self was both the prisoner and the container to be escaped from. Curiously, it was found that men and women showed a degree of agreement in terms of domains they drew from to describe the experience of depression - a finding that might indicate embodied experience being more of a factor when it comes to depression metaphors than culture and that needs to be tested in further studies, such as the present one.

A recent study that showcased the MSM framework as well as delved into metaphors related to mental health is the Devylder & Zlatev (2020) study on expressions in which the person describes themselves as being irreversibly separated, for example, broken or torn into pieces, even though no observable separation has occurred (Devylder & Zlatev, 2020, p. 263). What these expressions, labelled as “irreversible non-actual separation (INAS) expressions”, usually convey is a disruption in the experiencing subject’s emotional, mental, social, interpersonal or intellectual integrity (Devylder & Zlatev, 2020, p. 264-265). Sometimes, the expressions are used to describe an event

in order to stress its severity and impact. Although, following a hypothesis that traumatic events could be the reason why one would conceptualise their self as being separated into pieces, the research effort was focused on data related to PTSD, these types of expressions are highly likely to be relevant to discourse regarding variety of mental health conditions including depression, especially given the possibility of comorbidity (Devylder & Zlatev, 2020, p. 261).

A study that had a great influence on the present thesis, conducted by Coll-Florit et al (2021), examined metaphors of depression found in online blogs in the Catalan language. It is the first investigation into the topic to use such first-person accounts as data with the hypothesis being that direct description of experience might contain more intimate information and help uncover novel findings. The research indeed found both novel metaphors of depression and metaphors where medical practice and diagnosis are conceptualised as captors or prosecutors (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 14). The study also uses an innovative approach in which a specialised corpus was combined with a version of MIP, that is adopted in the present thesis, which the researchers have recalibrated to address criticisms of MIP.

Coll-Florit et al's findings can be summarised as follows: first, a novelty was observed in that prejudice and stigma are conceptualised as enemies in a battle and the experiencing self not as a victim or a martyr but a brave fighter (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 9-10). The study also found examples of the SPLIT SELF metaphor that was previously mainly discussed in research on metaphors and schizophrenia - these are similar to INAS expressions, however, they convey a sense of the self as split not into physical pieces but into distinct entities (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 12).

Overall, as the study was conducted using Catalan data, this necessitates the existence of studies examining other languages in order to further verify the findings as well as test the potential possibility of cultural or linguistic variation. This was one of the main motivating factors for the present thesis.

2.3.2 Research on metaphors of time

Many time metaphors emerge from the primary metaphor TIME IS MOTION as, unlike with time, "there is an area in the visual system of our brains dedicated to the detection of motion" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 139). The TIME IS MOTION metaphorical system has an order, at the most basic level of which is the TIME ORIENTATION metaphor. The metaphor presupposes a configuration featuring an observer located in a space that is considered to be the present, facing a space in front of him that is the future and who has behind him a space that is considered to be the past. Some expressions that have been cited as the linguistic manifestations of this metaphor include: *that's all behind us now*, *looking ahead to the future* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 140).

If movement is specified in the TIME ORIENTATION metaphor, this results in two related metaphors. In the MOVING TIME metaphor, the observer is stationary while time is moving past him in the form of a long sequence of objects (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 141). When activated simultaneously with the spatial TIME ORIENTATION schema, it conveys an understanding of time as moving forward. Linguistic examples of the metaphor include such expressions as *the time will come*/*has gone* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 143). In the other metaphor, meanwhile, it is the observer that is moving and each space he moves through is a time, giving the metaphor the labels MOVING OBSERVER or TIME'S LANDSCAPE. Together with TIME ORIENTATION metaphor it helps us understand the past as a location a traveller has left and the future as a location they are travelling towards. This is reflected linguistically through spatial and motional expressions conveying temporal meanings, such as *to stay a long time*, *halfway through the month* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 146).

Metaphors in which time is conceptualised as an object have also been documented. TIME IS A SUBSTANCE is a variation of the MOVING TIME metaphor in which time is not conceptualised as a moving sequence of separate objects but rather as a substance that flows like a river. We map our knowledge of substances, namely that they can be measured, combined and compared against each other, to our knowledge of time and produce utterances as *a lot of time* and *more time* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 145). In the TIME IS A RESOURCE metaphor, meanwhile, concepts defined relative to the resource schema, for example, waste, worth, efficiency and scarcity, are mapped onto our idea of time. Hence, the expressions *waste time* and *save time*. A special case of this

metaphor is TIME IS MONEY which makes use of cultural knowledge regarding money, including the concepts of budget, profit, and loss. This is the origin of expressions such as *spend time* and *invest time*. The close relationship between metaphors and experience is exemplified by the fact that people are paid their wages depending on the time they spent working and the concept of 'deadline' which rests upon treating time as something valuable and limited. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 161-166)

Finally, various commonplace instances of the personification metaphor can be observed and grouped together under the label TIME IS A CHANGER. This model could be attributed to a folk belief of time as being the cause of events that it is measured by. This is why many of its linguistic manifestations mention death and ageing - we might not be able to philosophically explain why these events must inevitably be a part of the human experience and so, a metaphor that places the concept of time in the agent slot emerges. Changes can also be seen as types of events and understood via the metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS which necessitates an agent - in other words, the existence of an agent the event could be attributed to is often required for us to be able to reason about abstract life changes (Lakoff & Turner, 1989 p. 40-43). Some subtypes of this metaphor include: TIME IS A THIEF (*time has stolen my youth*, TIME IS A DEVOURER (*time devours all*), and TIME IS A HEALER (*time heals all wounds*).

The research presented so far might make it seem as if little space for variation exists. The spatial conceptualization of time, for example, has indeed been found to be present near-universally in cross-linguistic studies. (Haspelmath, 1997, p. 140). However, cultural influence cannot be discounted - in the Aymara language, it is the past that is ahead in the TIME ORIENTATION metaphor, as motivated by the experience of someone being able to see the results of their past actions in front of themselves (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 140). Likewise, TIME IS MONEY is a metaphor prominent in the West while in many Native American tribes, rush and productivity are not prioritised (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 166).

2.3.3 Research on metaphors of love

To understand the metaphorical system that structures emotion concepts, one has to first understand the process of experiencing emotion as a type of event that involves causes, entities,

interactions and results: “the prototype of the concept [of emotion] has at least the following aspects: it has a cause, the cause produces the emotion, the emotion forces us to respond, we try to control the emotion but usually fail to do so, there is a response.” (Kövecses, 2000, p. 129) According to the EVENT STRUCTURE metaphor discussed by Lakoff (1990), causes of events are conceptualised as forces and, as emotions produce responses, emotions too can be understood as causes which leads us to apply force dynamics to emotional concepts and arrive at the superordinate metaphor EMOTIONS ARE FORCES. This metaphor then gives way to more specific subtypes: EMOTIONS ARE NATURAL FORCES, EMOTIONS ARE PHYSICAL FORCES, EMOTIONS ARE OPPONENTS/PHYSICAL STRUGGLES (Kövecses, 2000, p. 131-133). Many individual expressions of love metaphors, for example, the natural force metaphor LOVE IS A FIRE, can be traced back to the superordinate metaphor.

In addition, LOVE IS A UNITY (OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS) has been described as “the central metaphor in the love system” (Kövecses, 2000, p. 27). Linguistic examples include utterances like *we are one* and *my better half.* This metaphor follows the tradition of humans generally understanding non-physical unions, for example, social, political, legal or spiritual unions, in terms of physical or biological unions and can be traced back to the metaphor NONPHYSICAL UNITY IS PHYSICAL UNITY, particularly apt in the case of love as love is, to many, characterised by a desire for physical closeness (Kövecses, 1986, p. 62, 66, Kövecses, 2000, p. 119). The consequences of this metaphor on our thinking can be sensed in the fact that love is often viewed as an essential need: if love brings two parts of a whole together in perfect harmony, then it follows that one part alone is incomplete and dysfunctional. It also explains the idea of one true love - a whole can only be formed from two individual halves if they fit together perfectly (Kövecses, 1986, p. 66-67).

The unity metaphor exemplifies what could be called the ideal model of love. However, an alternative conceptualization of love has become more prominent in Western cultures - LOVE IS AN ECONOMIC EXCHANGE, linguistically realised through such expressions as *investing a lot into a relationship* and *giving all one’s love* (Kövecses, 2000, p. 178). While this conceptualization might initially appear cynical, a closer look reveals that it imbues the idea of love with many positive connotations. First, understanding love in terms of a commodity highlights that it is

valuable. The transaction conceptualization shows that our idea of love is that it is a mutual feeling and a loving relationship is one in which the partners both put in equal effort to sustain it (Kövecses, 1986, p. 95). Whereas in the unity metaphor it is the feeling of love that joins two otherwise incomplete parts, here, it is the process of the exchange that transforms the parts to be stronger and more complete. (Kövecses, 2000, p. 178-179).

A similar commonplace metaphor that emphasises love being a process that requires work and collaboration is LOVE IS A JOURNEY (e.g. *our relationship has come so far).* The journey metaphor imposes on the concept of love a structure, a beginning and an end, a destination, a path and a distance. Just like for a journey to be smooth the travellers need to travel along the same path to the same destination, for a relationship to be successful the partners must have shared goals and help each other reach them. Unlike the metaphors that focus mainly on harmony, the journey metaphor can be expressed through a variety of utterances describing relationship problems: *relationship at the crossroads, going separate ways.* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 214-215, Kövecses, 1986, p. 6-7).

It is said that "most people comprehend their love experiences and lead their love lives via such conventional conceptual metaphors" (Kövecses, 2010b, p. 87-88). However, cultural variation has once again been noted. For example, certain dialects of Chinese have a unique conceptualization of love as a flying kite (Kövecses, 2005, p. 3). Research on variation in metaphors of time and love shows that the same experiential basis can be conceptualised through different conceptual metaphors due to differences in framing and focus between various groups of people. That even such seemingly universal aspects of the human experience can be understood in different ways exemplifies why cultural influence needs to be discussed more within CMT research and justifies the need for studies like the present one.

Chapter 3. Methods

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methods of the empirical study outlined in the present thesis, including the kind of data gathered and the procedures used to analyse it. First, as the study is concerned with the medium of online blogging, what is described is how the blogs were seeked out and selected as well as the nature of the blogs that were included as part of the corpus. Accounts of depression are a sensitive matter and as such relevant issues of ethics will be discussed. The second half of the chapter outlines the metaphor identification procedure with a focus on how it was updated for the purposes of the present thesis. Throughout the chapter, there is an effort to operationalize the research questions and explain how the data and method chosen serve to answer them.

3.2 The corpus

The corpus investigated in the present study consists of blogs collected by the author specifically for the purposes of the study. The gathering of blogs was conducted by searching for the word *depression* as well as relevant keywords and phrases (e.g. *life with depression*) on popular blogging platforms such as Blogspot, Wordpress and Tumblr as well as the search engine Google. Some websites, for example, Tumblr, feature tagging systems that make it simple to find posts relevant to a particular topic and that was made use of during the collection.

The blogs found were manually examined in terms of content. Blogs in which the authors did not describe personal experience and instead, for example, discussed depression as a topic of curiosity were discarded. One potential downside of using online data is that it is usually not possible to verify if the information presented is true to reality. In order to minimise this downside, only blogs in which the author explicitly mentions being diagnosed, attending therapy or taking prescription

medications were selected. The study operates under the good faith assumption that these authors are being truthful, however, any conclusions must be presented with a hedge due to this ultimately being difficult to verify. Something that was noticed throughout the process is that, likely due to Internet literacy being more widespread in the younger population, among the bloggers who presented their demographic information, age tended to skew younger. Accordingly, it was decided that analysing blogs that describe similar lived experiences would allow for more precise comparison and the study scope was narrowed to young people's experience with depression. "Young people" here refers to people aged 18-25 as in many countries 18 is the age when one can receive an official mental health diagnosis. Blogs that did not include demographic information were also discarded. While the question of gender is too complex to cover in the present thesis, it is important to note that bloggers on this topic were more often female - something that also necessitates a hedge in the conclusions.

The finalised corpus then consists of a total of 56 blogs in the English language. Of various lengths, some of them consist of posts as concise as a few sentences, while others feature in-depth, diary-like entries. This brings the total corpus word count to 38 074. As the study aims to find if the experience of depression influences how one conceptualises aspects of their life not directly related to depression, the blogs were included in their entirety, even if not all the posts were on the topic of the disorder. Among the platforms represented, Tumblr presented a challenge as it allows users to share posts made by others. In order to focus only on the posts by the blog owner, the tagging system was once again used. Whenever possible, posts with the most general tag the blogger used to tag their own posts, such as "personal" or "text post", were included. In some cases only posts tagged with depression-related tags were available. As such, these blogs might have provided less data helpful for answering the research question regarding time and love. Finally, while the majority of bloggers were anonymous, some have elected to present their full names and photos. These individuals also tended to describe themselves as activists and their blogs had gained popularity. This is yet another hedge to be mindful of as such blogs are written with the purpose of educating the public and, as a result, certain aspects of depression might be emphasised or de-emphasized.

3.2.1 Ethics

The topic of ethics as it pertains to blog-based data analysis is a topic discussion within linguistic and ethnographic research. No clear consensus appears to have emerged as of the time of the present thesis, however, one seemingly uncontroversial guideline is respecting the wishes of the author of the blog. That is, blogs should not be examined for research if the blogger has explicitly stated on their website that they do not wish for their content to be replicated elsewhere. It is also preferable to sample public access blogs rather than posts from restricted access forums or platforms. Finally, the boundaries between a blogger's online identity and real life identity or between multiple online identities should be respected and the analysis should be limited to the blog itself, avoiding, for example, any other websites or accounts the author might have, even if they are linked on the blog (Kurtz et al., 2017, pp. 8). When it comes to anonymity, it is advised to defer to the authors as some state a wish to be cited correctly in any reproductions. However, blogs featuring such requests were not found during the data collection. As such, the present study follows Coll-Florit et al. (2021) in choosing to preserve anonymity. No names of the blog authors or any persons discussed in the posts are mentioned and no excerpts including information potentially revealing of one's identity are quoted. Both studies ultimately adopt as their ethical guideline the criteria formulated by Semino et al. (2018, p. 49): "there is some consensus that anything a person posts to a forum that is open to public view on the web can be used as research material without seeking informed consent from the individual contributor, as long as anonymity is fully preserved".

3.3 Metaphor identification

3.3.1. Updating MIP

Although the MIP methodology has been shown to lead to a high degree of inter-rater agreement in a number of reliability tests, some take issue with its vague use of certain terms. It has been noted that the guideline of using dictionaries to determine the "more basic" meaning of a lexical unit is not very precise - first, in order to be able to replicate and compare studies, it is necessary to agree on which dictionaries are used. There is also no guarantee that a meaning being related to bodily sensations or actions makes it so it is "more basic" as expressions exist in which the body is the domain being metaphorized. The terms "more concrete meaning" and "more precise

meaning" are similarly difficult to operationalize in empirical research (Moskaluk, 2020, p. 31). Throughout the course of the present study, another possible vagueness was found - the steps state that metaphoricity is decided based on "whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning". However, no formal way to determine when the contrast is significant enough to consider an expression metaphorical is suggested. Potentially debatable cases were found when trying to apply MIP to the corpus, for example, in the expression *[diagnosis] was my lifesaver* it is uncertain if *lifesaver* is used metaphorically in order to stress the impact of diagnosis or if the usage is more literal in the sense of e.g. soothing suicidal urges. The problem is deepened by MIP adopting the individual lexical item as its unit of analysis instead of longer stretches of discourse (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 2). The Group does note that not in all cases can metaphoricity be clearly established, however, it simply attributes this to "the complexities of metaphor and language use" (Steen, 2007, p. 14).

Finally, the practicality of MIP is questionable. The Group themselves admit that the utility of the procedure may be limited by it requiring several well-trained analysts, the way the analysts discuss their results and ability to reach an agreement (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 14-15). The steps being meant to be applied to each lexical unit in a text also makes the procedure time-consuming and potentially unsuitable for larger databases.

3.3.2. The current metaphor identification procedure

The MIP framework provides a strong foundation for empirical analysis of metaphors, however, it is clear that it needs to be updated to make the analysis more manageable and precise. Accordingly, following the Coll-Florit et al (2021) study, the corpus was analysed using a modified version of the MIP that is meant to make the procedure more efficient when working with large corpora, such as the present corpus, as well as bridge the gap between metaphors in thought and metaphors in discourse by simplifying the process of inferring source domains and target domains and formulating conceptual metaphors from metaphorical expressions, as discussed by Coll-Florit & Climent (2019). In order to amend the issue of vagueness in determining metaphoricity that was observed through the analysis, the study also adopted metaphoricity tests from recent relevant theses that have also provided updates to MIP - Moskaluk (2020) and Torssten (2019). The finalised steps utilised in the analysis are as follows:

Step 1: **close reading of the entire blog entry.** Both MIP as described by the Pragglejaz Group and the Coll-Florit & Climent methodology begin with a close reading of the entire text-discourse in order to establish a general understanding.

Step 2: **pre-select potential metaphorical expressions from the blog entry.** In traditional MIP order, this would be followed by dividing the text into lexical units and applying the MIP steps to each of them. The Coll-Florit & Climent method, however, follows close reading with a hypothesis. The analyst pre-selects clauses that appear to include metaphorical expressions. Coll-Florit & Climent's guidelines for pre-selection include seeking out "a word or a group of words that, in the context, seems to express some kind of comparison or resemblance between concepts in such a way as to make the discourse more expressive or understandable." (pp. 61). The justification for this step is that this could be considered a working hypothesis, a common practice in qualitative and quantitative research. Certain expressions potentially being overlooked does not ultimately impact the project, as the goal is to identify the most salient and representative metaphors. It is also offset by gains in time and any potential analyst bias is amended by verifying or rejecting the metaphorical expressions using MIP proper.

Step 3: **take into account what comes before and after the potential metaphorical expression and establish its meaning within the context of the text-discourse.** The analyst can note the author's language use, style and potentially relevant information. For example, information about the blog author's physical health conditions could determine if the expression *tightness in my chest* is metaphorical.

Step 4: **determine if the potential metaphorical expression has a contemporary meaning in other contexts other than the one in the given context.** Here, MIP's notion of "a more basic contemporary meaning" is used to mean the dictionary definition of the word. For this particular analysis, the online version of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), accessed through Lund University Libraries, was used. The analyst extracts what in this analysis was considered the most basic definition - the general definition at the beginning of the entry which is typically preceded

by a roman numeral, rather than any of the more specific sub-definitions that are preceded by arabic numbers and letters or any of the phrasal expressions given at the end of the entry.

Step 5: **compare the contextual and the dictionary meaning of the focus word**. This is done by employing a polysemy test involving formulating a sentence featuring two clauses where one clause is the basic meaning of the potential metaphorical expression while the other is the contextual meaning of the potential metaphorical expression. For the purposes of the test, one clause is assumed to be faithful to the truth conditions of the real world conditions while the other is assumed to be false. The sentence passes the polysemy test if it is not self-contradictory and it is plausible for both of the clauses to be faithful to the truth conditions of the real world at the same time. For example:

depression was a weight
Depression was a weight *(a burden, something that causes one to feel pressure and sadness)*, but it was not a weight (*measurement of quantity by means of weighing; quantity (in the abstract) as determined in this way* or *an amount determined or determinable by weighing; a definite quantity weighed or capable of being weighed*) - PASS, expression assumed to be metaphorical

therapy was a lifesaver
Therapy was a lifesaver (*a person or thing that saves or may save a person's life.)* but it was not a lifesaver (*something (esp. a quality, characteristic, or circumstance) that helps a person to endure adversity or to overcome a severe difficulty.*) - FAIL, expression assumed to not be metaphorical

As per, Torstensson (2019, pp. 42), metaphoricity can be further verified by applying the following criteria:

- an expression is considered to be not metaphorical, and rather an example of metonymy if it can be argued that a spatial, temporal or conceptual contiguity exists between the two readings
- an expression is considered to be not metaphorical, and rather an example of the way word meaning can change and develop by becoming either more specific either more generalised, if one of the readings is a hyponym of the other and the only difference

between the two readings is one reading having an additional semantic feature or, vice-versa, one is a hypernym of the other and the only difference between the two readings is one reading lacking a semantic feature

● an expression is not considered to be metaphorical if it cannot be said that one of the readings is understood in terms of the other, or, to paraphrase the MIP guidelines, the contextual meaning cannot be understood in comparison with the basic meaning.

Additionally, Moskaluk (2020, pp. 36) proposes the following test as a way to operationalize the criterion regarding comparison: formulate a question which asks if it is possible to understand the contextual meaning of the potential metaphorical expression without knowing the basic dictionary meaning. If the answer to the question is yes, it is assumed that the contextual meaning and the basic meaning are not understood in comparison with each other and the expression is not metaphorical. For example:

depression was a storm

Test: Is it possible to understand the contextual meaning of the expression (the uncertain, dangerous situation the author found herself in, namely living with unmedicated depression) without knowing that *storm* can mean *atmospheric disturbance, a violent disturbance of the atmosphere, manifested by high winds, often accompanied by heavy falls of rain, hail, or snow, by thunder and lightning, and at sea by turbulence of the waves*? NO, expression assumed to be metaphorical

I share what depression looks like for me, my symptoms, triggers and coping mechanisms.

Test: Is it possible to understand the contextual meaning of the expression (the fact that the author presents personal information about herself to others) without knowing that *share* can mean *to divide and apportion in shares between two or more recipients*? YES, expression assumed to not be metaphorical

An expression is then marked as metaphorical if it passes the polysemy test, is not excluded by Torstensson's criteria as being an example of metonymy, hyponymy or hypernymy and passes Moskaluk's test that verifies whether the basic and contextual meanings of the focus of the potential metaphorical expression can be understood in comparison with each other.

Step 6a: **if the expression is metaphorical and conventional, formulate the conceptual metaphor using theoretical literature.** In order to infer source and target domains, the metaphorical expression is compared to existing lists of metaphors as found in background literature and research. The step is justified by considering the use of previous work on metaphors as recourse to expert knowledge, similarly to use of dictionaries. The lists of conventional metaphors of depression, time and love that were used in the analysis can be found at the end of the present thesis, in Appendix A.

Step 6b: **if the expression is metaphorical and novel, formulate the conceptual metaphor using inference strategies.** Should the metaphorical expression not fit any existing models, the source and target domains are then inferred by the analysts. This is done by following strategies formulated by Coll-Florit & Climent which include substituting words in the metaphorical expression with other words that afford the expression a literal reading. When the focus word of the metaphor is a verb, it is substituted by a prototype argument of a metaphorically used verb:

> "The analyst determines the prototypical argument(s) for the verb and checks whether substitution of (any of) the argument(s) in the text by the prototype will make the semantic incongruence disappear. If yes, the prototypical argument is established as the SD and the word from the text is established as the TD." (Coll-Florit & Climent, 2019, pp. 55).

When the focus word of the expression is not a verb, the focus word is substituted with a key concept extracted from the dictionary definition of the word:

> "The analyst formulates an operational comparison between the contextual and basic meanings of the focus. If the contextual meaning of the focus is lexicalized (i.e., it corresponds to one of the meanings of the focus in the reference dictionary), the metaphor formulation is drawn from the contextual and basic dictionary definitions. A word representing the contextual meaning is annotated as the TD, and a word corresponding to the basic meaning is annotated as the SD. (Coll-Florit & Climent, 2019, pp. 56).

In their totality, the steps allow the analyst to determine whether a text-discourse contains metaphorical expressions, count and quantify them, formulate the conceptual metaphors believed to be their source, including determining their source and target domains, as well as compare them

to relevant previous literature and categorise them as either conventional and previously accounted for in existing research or novel and previously unaccounted for.

3.4. Study design

Having analysed the corpus using a modified version of MIP, the expressions that were deemed to be metaphorical were then narrowed down to the ones where depression, love or time are the target domains. An important hedge to add is that this categorization should not be considered definite - as will be elaborated on in section 4.1., the study assumes the point of view that depression influences many various aspects of one's life which means that metaphors of depression are considered to be not only metaphors in which the target domain is the disorder itself but also metaphors related to the societal context around depression, the disorder's influence on communication, relationships as well as treatment. Contextual knowledge that the corpus consists of first-hand accounts of life with depression could also possibly imbue some of the metaphors that could not be included in this study with connotations to depression. Ultimately, due to time and precision constraints, metaphorical expressions were considered relevant for this study based on analysis of target domains, manual keyword detection, contextual reading and recourse to what was considered metaphors of depression in previous research. A broader future study could potentially consider all the metaphorical expressions found in the corpus to be relevant to the topic of depression or at least indicative of a depressed person's view of the world.

The metaphorical expressions of depression, time and love found were then compared to the research on metaphors of depression in mediums other than online communication and languages other than English as well as theoretical literature on conventional metaphors of time and love in the English language. Any novel metaphors or differences and anomalies in previously recorded metaphorical models were noted. The study theme returned to the research questions and attempted to answer, first, what do the metaphors of depression found indicate about the way people who use online blogging to communicate about the expression of depression conceptualise their disorder and also if any findings that contrast with previous research could be attributed to differences in discursive medium or cultural and linguistic differences between English and Catalan. The study also attempted to answer what do the metaphors of time and love that were found indicate about the way depressed people conceptualise the experiences of time and love and if any differences

found to literature on metaphors could be attributed to depressed people being a group that exhibits subcultural metaphorical variation or, again, differences in discursive medium. Finally, the research moved from the empirical level to the theoretical and considered what do the findings say about depression and the way it influences one's lived experience and worldview, the Internet as a specific communicative medium and, finally, metaphors themselves - what kind of metaphors tend to be universal and which are subject to cultural variation as well as which cultural factors could be said to influence them.

Ultimately, the study follows the cognitive semiotics concept of the conceptual-empirical loop. It is an idea motivated by the philosophy of science that all research involves both theoretical and empirical considerations and these are engaged in a feedback loop - theoretical background and conceptual analysis motivates empirical research while the results of the empirical provides material for further advancements in theory, clarifications of concepts and reformulations of definitions (Zlatev, 2015, p. 1058). The conceptual-empirical loop is applied as follows: starting with theoretical considerations, metaphor is defined according to the definition provided by Lakoff & Johnson (1980). Then, the empirical research explores how metaphors manifest in interaction, are they novel and creative or conventional and static, and how does the experience of depression manifest itself in metaphor use. The loop closes as the results answer the research questions and these answers potentially result in new insights and clarifications about both metaphors and depression.

Figure 1: The process of the present study on the influence of depression on metaphorical meaning-making illustrated through the conceptual-empirical loop, adapted from Zlatev (2015, p. 1058), and Moskaluk (2020, p. 5).

Chapter 4. Results and discussion

4.1 Introduction

The following section presents and discusses the results of the corpus analysis that was conducted using the modified version of MIP detailed in the previous section and keeping in mind previous literature on conceptual metaphors, research on metaphors of depression as well as the research questions driving the present thesis. Through applying MIP analysis that had been updated with recent developments in metaphoricity tests, a total 952 expressions considered metaphorical were identified. More than a half of these, 612 metaphorical expressions, were considered to correspond to the domains of DEPRESSION, LOVE and TIME and thus relevant for the purposes of this study. It is worth noting that as this study posits a close connection between depression and many other aspects of the depressed person's life, metaphors are considered to fall under the domain of DEPRESSION not only if they are centred around the condition itself, but also if they discuss the societal context of depression, e.g. stigma and prejudice, the process of therapy and treatment as well as depressed people and their perception of themselves and other depressed people. This also allows for ease of comparison with Coll-Florit et al who discussed several kinds of depression metaphors: metaphors of the disorder, metaphors of life with the disorder and metaphors related to people with the disorder (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 8).

Given the broader definition of depression metaphors, it is not surprising that this is the most populous category with 406 (66.3% of all depression/time/love metaphors, 42.6% of all) metaphorical expressions belonging to it. Out of the remaining expressions, 109 (17.8% of all depression/time/love metaphors, 11.4% of all) were assigned to the domain of LOVE and 97

(15.9% of all depression/time/love metaphors, 10.2% of all) to TIME. However, the boundaries between the categories can be fuzzy - many of the TIME and LOVE metaphors overlap with DEPRESSION metaphors in such a way that they explicitly discuss how the experience of depression influences the experience of love and the passage of time. Upon close contextual reading, 83 LOVE metaphors and 39 TIME metaphors mention depression either as a part of the same metaphor (e.g. LOVE OF A DEPRESSED PERSON IS AN UNEVEN EXCHANGE) or depression is mentioned shortly before or after in the same passage. Even when depression is not explicitly referenced in the surrounding excerpt, it could still be said that these are metaphorical expressions describing the experiences of love and time as specifically coloured by depression, not simply love and time in the abstract. Contextual awareness of the corpus and the different blogs makes it possible to interpret, for example, an excerpt in which an author, who has previously discussed feeling isolated due to depression, shares their favourite depictions of romance in books and movies as an expression of a depressed person's longing for romantic connection. Likewise, stories about being unable to focus on work, hobbies and studies in a timely manner can also be seen as manifestations of depression.

To keep a structure and answer the research questions, the findings will nevertheless be divided into metaphors of depression, metaphors of love and metaphors of time. An expression metaphorically describing the experience of love will, for simplicity, be considered a LOVE metaphor, although some of them could also be considered metaphors of life with depression. For each of the domains, a brief general overview will be given to preserve objectivity and avoid a frequent criticism of "cherry-picking" in metaphor studies. Yet, as it is not possible to delve into each finding equally in-depth, the focus will then be directed towards findings that can be considered noteworthy - the noteworthiness is decided in recourse to existing research with novel examples, examples that either stand in contrast to or supplement previous studies and-or examples that have significant implications for future studies being discussed further. Keeping in mind the aforementioned overlap between depression metaphors and metaphors conveying other life experiences, the numbers of the different kinds of metaphorical expressions as well as the category division should ultimately be considered a rough estimation and the discussion will be unified by considering all findings in light of the experience of depression. What this all once again stresses is the importance of social, interpersonal and contextual factors in the experience of depression.

4.2 Metaphors of depression

As previously mentioned, the understanding of depression-related metaphors in the present study follows the broader conception also used by Coll-Florit et al (2021) which also includes metaphors of the social context around depression, specifically the stigma and prejudice, and metaphors relating to the treatment of depression (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 8-9). The distribution of the metaphorical expressions in the current corpus follows quite a similar pattern, with metaphors of depression being the largest category as it encompasses the target domains of the disorder itself, life with depression and depressed people as a group. However, unlike in the Coll-Florit et al (2021) corpus, metaphors of treatment and medicine have been found to be a much bigger category than metaphors explicitly mentioning the social stigma. As will be seen, a significant novelty is the representation of both metaphors that convey positive and also critical attitudes towards the medical system, when past research found one or the other of these attitudes to dominate. At the same time, while stigma and prejudice were found to be the target domains of fewer metaphorical expressions than in previous studies, as will be discussed, the idea of societal judgement could be traced back as the cause why many of the other novel metaphorical expressions found throughout the present study have arisen.

Target domains	**Metaphorical expressions**	**Percentage share, %**
Metaphors of depression	290	71.4 of all metaphorical expressions considered related to depression
Metaphors of medicine and treatment	60	14.8
Metaphors of stigma and prejudice	45	11.1
Other/blurry categorization	11	2.7

Total	406	42.6% of all metaphorical expressions found in the corpus

Table 1: All of the metaphorical expressions related to depression identified in the corpus.

Among general metaphors of depression, life with depression is the leading target domain, as in Coll-Florit et al (2021). Echoing much of the existing body of work in this area, this target domain was often seen conceptualised as a difficult process with a beginning and an end, much like a journey, battle or a war. However, the share of expressions with the target domain of people with depression were significantly higher.

Target domains	**Metaphorical expressions**	**Percentage share, %**
Life with depression	107	36.9
The disorder itself	103	35.5
People with depression	80	27.6
Total	290	

Table 2: Metaphors of depression (the disorder itself) in the corpus.

A potential reason for this increase is that in previous studies, such as the Schoeneman et al (2004) study of a depressed person's memoir or the Charteris-Black (2012) study of interviews with depressed people, the category of "metaphors of people with depression" could, perhaps, be more correctly referred to "metaphors of the depressed person". This means that the expressions would likely be mainly concerned with how the depressed person conceptualises their own self, although sometimes the qualities of the depressed person in question would be extrapolated to depressed people as a whole. For example, the depressed person could be compared to a zombie belonging to a horde of other zombies to express the sense of apathy and inability to take action that can be considered to be a result of depression. These sort of metaphorical expressions, often conveying a sense of low self-esteem and self-hatred, such as THE DEPRESSED PERSON IS A THING (1), THE DEPRESSED PERSON IS AN ANIMAL (2) were also found in the present study.

(1) I just lay depressed in my bed all day. I am furniture.

(2) Depression made me turn into a dog, I always feel so ashamed and dehumanized.

Metaphors describing people with depression as containers were also found in the corpus. Just as in the Charteris-Black (2012) and Coll-Florit et al (2021) studies, in some cases the sufferer is conceptualised in terms of the metaphor THE DEPRESSED PERSON IS A CONTAINER OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, in order to express how the sadness is felt heavily like a weight and emphasise the pressure it causes (3a) and the way it can seem impossible to escape, much like a tight physical container (3b). In the present corpus, it was also found that some containment the expressions convey a feeling of lacking a sense of self. People with depression often report losing interest in what was previously their hobbies, in relationships and life in general. This leads to many discussing that they are unsure what their identity is anymore or if they even have one. In metaphorical terms, this is described using the metaphor THE DEPRESSED PERSON IS AN EMPTY CONTAINER. Some examples will have depression in the role of an active agent that is making the person feel empty (4a), while in others, the depressed person appears to fully believe it as a fact that they are fundamentally empty (4b). The latter kind is the kind of metaphor that McMullen & Conway have warned about as a double-edged sword in their discussion of the implications of depression metaphors. On the one hand, it is a testament to the degree of self-hatred that a depressed person can feel and thus, an important means of self-expression. On the other hand, use of such metaphors can further reinforce and validate the self-hatred. It could then be interesting for a future study to compare self-descriptions of depressed people as EMPTY CONTAINERS and as CONTAINERS EMPTIED BY DEPRESSION and verify if there is any correlation with different stages of recovery or outcomes for the sufferers.

(3) a. My heart is heavy with all the pain and sadness trapped inside it

b. The fear you have in you locks you in

(4) a. [Depression] makes you feel like your soul spilled out of you

b. I'm playing at being a person and everyone who looks at me can see that there's fucking nothing inside

METAPHORS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEPRESSION - DEPRESSED PEOPLE ARE A GROUP/BAND/FAMILY

However, what appears to be quite new among depression metaphors is the appearance of "metaphors of people with depression as a (social) group". In the current corpus, depressed people are sometimes described using exclusive in-group language, even going as far as placing them in an "us vs. them" opposition with people without depression, e.g. via usage of the terms neuroatypical, to refer to people suffering from depression and mental disorders in general, and neurotypical, to refer to people without a diagnosed mental health condition. Some examples show the depressed being discussed as a coherent close-knit subculture or a social group with shared goals, interests and experiences of marginalisation. In this way, some blog authors have drawn explicit comparisons to LGBT community and minority racial communities *(5)*.

> *(5) Listen, I'm gay so I'm allowed to say that it [being depressed] makes you queer in society in a way*

Metaphorically, this is expressed by conceptualising depressed people as a TRIBE (6), FAMILY (7), ARMY/BAND OF BROTHERS (8).

> *(6) Anybody else out there who's suffering, just don't hesitate to reach out to me, ok? We're from the same tribe, I got you.*
>
> *(7) The people in my therapy group are my family. I feel so much kinship with them, actual kinship. It's not like with my blood family.*
>
> *(8) [Depressed people] are all side by side in this war and I don't mean just versus depression. It's us against the world*

It is notable that examples (7) and (8) showcase the "us vs. them" opposition - between the depressed and their non-depressed family members as well as society as a whole. Thus, although the present study found fewer metaphors that explicitly mention prejudice and stigma than Coll-Florit et al (2021), the findings of these two studies could be seen as naturally following each other. Coll-Florit et al (2021) found a heavy focus on the experience of prejudice with prejudice being conceptualised AS A WEIGHT, A FORCE and A MARK, society conceptualised as a container that excludes the depressed person and the distance between the depressed person and the rest of society compared to a physical distance. It is then natural that some sufferers who feel weighed down by judgement and excluded on the outskirts of society would attempt to search safety in insular in-groups with others in the same position, rather than attempting to cross what they feel is a much longer distance between them and the non-depressed.

METAPHORS OF DEPRESSION/METAPHORS OF STIGMA - DEPRESSION IS WAR/SOCIETY IS THE ENEMY

Example (8) showcases another novel finding - a new target domain for WAR. Depression being conceptualised as a WAR has been a consistent finding in depression metaphor studies, from McMullen & Conway (2002) to Schoeneman et al (2004) and Charteris-Black (2012). Of course, many examples of DEPRESSION IS WAR metaphors have also been found in the present corpus as well and they generally follow the same pattern as in previous studies, with the disorder itself expressed in terms of THE ENEMY/ARMY/ATTACKER (9), episodes of depression as FIGHTS/BATTLES (10) and the depressed person as either a BRAVE FIGHTER (11a) or a MARTYR/VICTIM (11b), as such, the different examples will be only briefly presented.

(9) Depression can totally sneak up on you and strike

(10) Each flare-up is it is own battle

(11) a. Depression is a tough fighter but I'm tougher

b. During my battles with depression, I fell so many times

More recently, Coll-Florit et al (2021) have found not only more examples of WAR metaphors where the target domain is the illness but also new metaphors where it is the stigma and prejudice that are the enemies being fought. Their conclusion is that when the target domain being conceptualised in terms of WAR is depression, the metaphor that goes hand-in-hand is usually that of THE DEPRESSED PERSON IS A VICTIM/MARTYR. However, when it is the stigma being conceptualised as WAR, the depressed person's agency will often be emphasised with empowering metaphors such THE DEPRESSED PERSON IS A HERO who successfully fights the prejudice (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 9-10). That it is perhaps easier to imagine dismantling pervasive social stigma and deep-seated negative attitudes says a lot about how formidable and difficult to overcome depression is conceptualised as.

A new enemy target domain can be found in the corpus for the present paper and, as the previous section on prejudice implies, it is PEOPLE WITHOUT DEPRESSION and, in some cases, SOCIETY AS WHOLE. This is the extreme end of the "us vs. them" opposition where the "them" group is portrayed as the aggressor. If in previous studies the non-depressed societal majority was a steady container excluding the depressed, it is now more of an actively moving INVADING

ARMY (12a) that is looming large (12b) and occupying society solely for themselves in a way that is akin to CONQUERING LAND (12c, 12d).

(12) a. There are always people invading our personal space. We are attacked and mocked. Ooooh have you tried to just stop being depressed?

b. Neurotypical people really have no clue how they make themselves into this big loud shadow huh

c. It's annoying as hell cause if [depressed people] have an inch for ourselves, you want to barge in and take it. Always isnerting [sic] your uninformed opinions into everything.

d. Any space we have to vent, to share our story (ok, maybe whine too but you need that sometimes lol), it gets occupied by ppl [sic]who don't even know what it's like!!

The stigma surrounding depression is invoked as justification for such a polarising conceptualization - the depressed person is not merely FIGHTING STIGMA anymore but ENGAGING IN SELF-DEFENSE (13). The conceptualizations of VICTIM and BRAVE FIGHTER are thus almost merged into one picture of the depressed person as a RETALIATOR (14) who, after having been victimised many times, fights back, the extremeness of the hostility towards larger society is seen as proportional to the disdain society shows for the depressed person.

(13) I argue with my therapist a lot sometimes (...) I know it's not good maybe but if even professionals refuse to get it I need to bite back somehow. What am I supposed to sit and take it or what

(14) I'm striking right back when I hear neurotypical bullshit from now on. (...) You think I'm faking it? Alright, you will hear ALL the gritty details from now on. Happy now?

However, at least in the passages quoted, the form that the "fighting back" takes seems to be trying to correct the impression people have of the experience of living with depression. Even if it is done in an argumentative manner, the ultimate "victory" in the war is still dismantling the stigma, rather than any extreme acts aimed at the rest of society. The metaphor can be described as ultimately rooted in exasperation than any real hostility.

METAPHORS OF DEPRESSION - DEPRESSION AS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE/THING

Given that depressed people have been found to be conceptualised as a close group and sometimes one that is heavily polarised against the rest of society, it is perhaps not so surprising that in one

more novel example of metaphors, depression is conceptualised by comparison to source domains that carry generally positive connotations. In this way, depressed people seek a positive way to conceptualise their experience in order to cope with it or a way to imbue the in-group label of depressed people with positive connotations and remove the stigmatised connotations. Accordingly, this type of metaphorical language could be divided into two kinds: the first kind denotes the experience of living with depression as a process that is difficult and painful but overcoming which ultimately bears rewards. This is exemplified by such metaphors as DEPRESSION IS PHYSICALLY STRENUOUS ACTIVITY (15), during which you may get hurt and which will leave you exhausted but which will also strengthen you and build resilience, DEPRESSION IS A SUPERPOWER (16) the experience of which can make you better-equipped to deal with other life problems and DEPRESSION IS A TRANSFORMATION that can lead to RE-BIRTH (17) or METAMORPHOSIS (18) - a new self can emerge that will be changed by the experience of depression, in ways both negative and positive.

(15) Depression is a tough marathon and you will be tired as shit and it will fuck you up. But when you cross the finish line, boy, will you be ready for whatever comes.

(16) In many ways, I was reborn. I lost so much that in the end it was a different me who left therapist's office. I will say though, I learned so so much. (...) I would not have grown up and become me without it.

(17) Depression is my superpower. Ability unlocked: survive whatever comes after.

(18) Seven years of stupor later I emerged as a beautiful kickass butterfly

Ultimately, depression is still largely conceptualised as a negative experience but one that can be imbued with a positive meaning through recovery. As it is explicitly stated in one example (19), the positive connotations can only be unlocked by the depressed person themselves, if they are able to put in the work to recover, overcome the pain and learn lessons for the future from it.

(19) Depression can be the toughest class to pass in your life BUT you have to be willing to see it that way.

In the second kind of metaphors, depression itself is conceptualised as an experience that is positive by virtue of separating the sufferers from other people. It is another heightened example of the "us vs. them" polarisation in which people attempt to find a shared identity and community by closely assuming the label of "depressed people" and distancing themselves from what they see as the rest of society, which they view negatively. Due to past experiences of being shunned or perhaps

fear of it potentially happening, some depressed people describe understanding depression as an opportunity to seclude themselves away and protect themselves from pain. While depression might make it difficult for one to open up and connect with other people, opening yourself up to the world entails the risk of being judged or hurt. Depression then becomes A SHIELD *(20).*

> *(20) To think I spent so long hating myself thinking my condition was a barrier keeping me away from Normal People lol fuuuck that, it was shielding me all along. I was never meant to be a part of their world anyway.*

By isolating themselves before they can be isolated by others, depressed people can also feel like they are asserting a degree of agency over their situation. Here, depression is seen as an active WEAPON *(21)*, aimed against perceived unjustness of society - defence in the form of offence.

> *(21) People treat me like shit because of a condition I have no control over and then act shocked that I can hurt them too? (...) Like yeah I can aim that arrow at you too. (...) I make sure to mention my diagnosis just to see the reactions and if you're weird about it? Bye bye you got cut.*

Likewise, having been ashamed or made to feel shame about their disorder and its symptoms, some sufferers choose to regain control by conceptualising it as the other end of the spectrum - something to be proud of instead of ashamed. In this case, if depression is understood in terms of war - against the disorder itself and even against society - then, manifestations of it are not seen as lost fights or battle wounds but as WAR MEDALS *(22).* or BADGES *(23)*.

> *(22) Sorry that I let myself go cause I was uh busy fucking SURVIVING (...) I spent a year rotting in bed, my teeth are rotten, my skin is never gonna be the same, so what? (...) If you're not shallow then you should be happy I won that war, you should respect my medals.*
> *(23) I refuse to see my past as a source of shame anymore. If anything, I wear it on my lapel with pride because I overcame.*

Additionally, the experience of depression is conceptualised as a superpower, just as the experience of overcoming it was. Only in this case, the special ability that people feel they have acquired from the experience is not as much resilience but a deeper understanding of the world. In some examples, this understanding is empathy *(24)*. The depressed person understands the pain they experienced as something that helped them become more aware of and sympathetic to pain in general. If experiencing hardship is considered a lesson in understanding it, then under such a

view it follows that people who have not experienced the pain of depression cannot sympathise with it - the polarisation deepens again.

> *(24) This is gonna sound batshit insane but everything that I went through was a blessing straight from God. (...) I got blessed with empathy and I learned bettrr [sic] than anyone how many people lack such a blessing…*

In other examples, depression is a superpower that helps someone understand the world as it really is *(24)*. Such a metaphor structures depression not as a mental health condition that clouds one's judgement but a natural reaction to the very real hardships of life (25a, 25b)

> *(25) a. Depression is just glasses to see reality with. You lose the rose glasses most people have on. (...) You just see the world as it is and what is there to be happy about?*
>
> *b. I honestly think most people are not depressed cause they're in denial (...) Every other supposedly clinically depressed person I have ever met did not feel insane or anything to me. They are our shamans with a supernatural sensitivity to the world. (...) If you're not depressed, you're not paying attention.*

METAPHORS OF DEPRESSION - DEPRESSION LEAVES A PHYSICAL IMPACT ON THE BODY/DEPRESSION IS A PHYSICAL PHENOMENON

Examples 25a and 25b bring us to a topic of extensive debate in mental health research - whether the cause of mental health conditions lies in biogenetic reasons or in psychosocial reasons. While the full extent of this discussion lies beyond the scope of the present paper, to summarise it in brief, the biogenetic explanation posits that mental illness is "like any other illness". This means that it can be compared to physical illnesses and the cause is also a bodily one - a chemical imbalance in the brain. Accordingly, the treatment is SSRI medication. The so-called 'brain disease' model is said to decrease the stigma by removing the culpability from the sufferer and placing the condition beyond their control, in the realm of unpredictable genetic factors. However, it can have the opposite effect as well - create the impression that suffering from mental illness makes one impossible to reason with or control. The inevitability of genetic factors may inspire pessimism and lead to worse prognosis. Conversely, the psychosocial explanation traces mental disorders to environmental factors, childhood trauma, daily stressors. The treatment includes therapy and coping strategies to manage the problems in one's life. This explanation affords the sufferers more agency which might afford dignity and inspire sympathy, yet it may also put the blame for their

condition on them. (Deacon & Baird, 2009, Pescosolido et al. 2010, Walker & Read, 2002). As the debate seems to be only growing with more new research, it is no surprise that, unlike in previous studies, it has come to be reflected in the type of depression metaphors found in the present corpus. Depression is metaphorically structured in terms of a physical condition to both reinforce and debunk the similarities between the two.

First, depression can be conceptualised as a force that physically hurts and marks the body. War or battle metaphors, in which depression is personified as an attacking force or enemy, could also be said to be examples of this - by comparing the pain of depression to physical pain and structuring depression as an experience that can leave a tangible physical impact on the human body, these metaphors too reinforce the view that depression is not a simple mental phenomenon but an illness like any other (26 a, b).

(26) a. Over the years depression ravaged my body

b. Years later after my battle, I still feel traces of pain

Expressions quite similar to the "irreversible non-actual separation (INAS) expressions" researched by Devylder & Zlatev (2020), which structure the way a person can be changed by the experience of depression in terms of physical acts of being torn apart or broken, can also convey the sense that DEPRESSION IS A PHYSICAL PHENOMENON/ILLNESS. Some of the examples found in the present corpus go further than comparing the emotional pain of depression to physical pain in order to stress its severity - rather, depression is the agent causing both kinds of pain. One feels that their body is being broken, torn and otherwise hurt by depression, the same way that their psyche is (27 a, b).

(27) a. It wasn't just I feel so sad inside bla bla, depression was a real ache in my body. (...) I did not make that up, it really broke all of me.

b. My mind, my body, my EVERYTHING was torn apart, flipped a million times and clumsily put back together

This is even more clear in examples that discuss the act of physically harming oneself - the feeling that one's sense of self is being broken or cut up leads to breaking or cutting the skin, a cycle which in turn causes the sufferer more pain, physically and emotionally. The mutually reinforcing emotional and physical kinds of pain are metaphorically structured in terms of each other and both are understood as being a part of the experience of depression (28 a, b, c).

(28) a. Depression sliced me up. I mean who I am will always be cut into the 'before' and the 'after' (...) But I mean it very literally too if you know what I'm hinting at. Not gonna spell it out cuz [sic] I know it's triggering

b. If I ever forget what the sadness felt like, the scars depression drew on my arms will remind me.

c. I keep forgetting I need to wear long sleeves to school lmfao (...) For me it's just funny to hide the scars cause they're who I am. My insides are all ugly and broken so my outside is too.

While acts such as cutting oneself are commonly referred to as self-harm, it is notable that in examples 28a and 28b it is depression that is the agent causing the harm - depression harms, depression leaves scars. Following the 'brain disease' model of depression, the agency is removed from the sufferer and we can see in the example 28c how this seems to decrease shame and guilt for the depressed person - causing physical harm to the body is understood as a natural consequence of depression. On the other hand, example 28c can also exemplify why a model of depression that affords agency to the disorder itself and not the depressed person might lead to worse outcomes - if self-harm is seen as an inevitable expression of depression, this might incentivize the depressed person to continue engaging in it.

Many depressed people also describe a feeling of lethargy that makes it difficult to perform daily tasks - this can lead to inability to take care of one's hygiene and appearance (29 a, b) and to a lack of physical activity (30), which all can change the body. These changes were also found to be structured in terms of the DEPRESSION IS A PHYSICAL PHENOMENON metaphor, that is to say, they are described as physical symptoms of an illness and the agent causing them is understood to be the disorder itself, rather than the sufferer and their own actions or lack thereof.

(29) a. When I say that depression can erase your smile, people think I'm being poetic about the sadness. There's a symptom of depression that many people don't consider: depression paralyses your body. Normal things like brushing your teeth become feats of strength.

b. Sorry I haven't been on here much, I'm just so bummed about how depression turned me to a fucking ugly monster :'(*(...) I made myself go to a hairdresser for the first time in ??? because I thought it would cheer me up (...) She took one look and just went "I'm so*

sorry, I don't know how we can save this". I might need to get it buzzed (...) Depression knotted my hair into a nest

(30) I can't get over how depression made me into a fucking whale idk [sic] what to do (...) I was so fit I used to play basketball every week, now it made me a beached whale laying in bed all day, I hate it I hate it so much

Finally, there are expressions which do not only imply that depression can have an impact on one's body or have symptoms like a physical illness, but explicitly structure the experience by comparing it to another physical condition. This can be done to underscore the severity of the disorder (31) or as a way of combating social stigma (32 a, b).

(31) Depression is a cancer on the mind. It attacks your brain how cancer attacks the cells.

(32) a. When my leg was broken, people did not tell me to just get up and walk it off. (...) When my brain was broken, nobody really understood why I could not just get up and walk away.

b. Broken bones inspire more pity than broken minds and hearts

Much as in medical literature on the biogenetic explanation for mental illness, the physical condition metaphor ultimately aims to bring depressed people, who we have already seen often conceptualise themselves as an underprivileged social group, the kind of sympathy and grace that they imagine sufferers of physical conditions are afforded. The view embedded in this metaphor is that physical illnesses are understood better than mental ones. Therefore, by comparing the two, the depressed person hopes that their mental condition can be understood the same way.

However, just as the biogenetic explanation is not an uncontroversial one, the DEPRESSION IS PHYSICAL PHENOMENON metaphor was found to be invoked in order to criticise the lack of agency and feeling of helplessness it can arouse in those suffering from the condition (33). Some examples have overtly invited blog readers to consider if such a metaphor, that seems to be quite common in English-language depression blogs, is not one that reinforces depressive thinking and sabotages the recovery process (34 a, b). In these examples, there is an explicit denial to personify depression and the role of the active agent is transferred back to the actual person with depression.

(33) I don't know about you guys but I really hate the "my brain is broken" thing. That's just learned helplessness, I'm sorry. (...) My man, you're not a brain in a jar.

(34) a. When this girl in my group keeps talking about chemical imbalances in her brain it's like make it stooooooopp (...) Chemical imbalance is not holding people hostages preventing them from going out. (...) Humans are not animals and have a duty to overcome their worst impulses.

(b) I'm a little worried that lack of serotonin is now this big boogeyman. (...) Everything you don't like about yourself, you can now say that your brain forced you to do it lol

The full extent of the debate about the roots of mental illness lies beyond the scope of the present paper, however, the division between DEPRESSION IS A PHYSICAL ILLNESS metaphors (exemplified in expressions 31-32) and explicit disavowal of such metaphors (33-34) as well as any potential correlation with treatment outcomes could be a potential venue for future research in depression metaphors.

METAPHORS OF TREATMENT AND MEDICINE - PSYCHIATRIC PRACTICE AS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE/PSYCHIATRIC PRACTICE AS A NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE

Metaphorical expressions of what sort of disorder depression is bring us to the metaphorical expressions of how this disorder should be treated. Previous literature on depression metaphors found psychiatric practice to have almost uniformly negative connotations. The Catalan study found more metaphors that structure depression as an illness with psychosocial roots and consequently, the metaphorical descriptions of psychiatric practice also focused on the social realities of it and discussed the stigma and prejudice that even medical professionals are not immune to. In the Catalan corpus, medicine and diagnosis are conceptualised as a repressive force, with doctors being compared to CAPTORS, PROSECUTORS and JAILERS, the institutions themselves to BOUNDED SPACES, the overall experience of diagnosis to CAPTIVITY (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 14). In the present corpus of English-language depression blogs, since the conceptualization of the disorder itself was already shown to be sharply split between the "disease like any other" model and the explicit disavowal of such a conceptualization in favour of emphasising complex social factors and the sufferer's own agency, it follows that the accounts of the recovery process are also imbued with contrasting emotions and the question of what effective treatment and recovery should look like is one that many depressed people have a different understanding of.

When psychiatric practice is understood as a fitting and successful treatment option, keywords related to biogenetic causes - brain chemistry, chemical imbalance, serotonin - will often be mentioned close by in the same passage. Following general literature on the biogenetic explanation, SSRI medicine and other medical treatments are seen as the natural solution to a biogenetic medical problem (35).

> *(35) If you're reading this, here is your reminder to take your meds. (...) If you had a sore throat, you wouldn't be making excuses, would you? It's just your brain that is sore this time.*

In contrast to captivity and boundedness metaphors, in metaphors in which medicine and treatment are conceptualised as positive experiences, the source domains are words associated with openness and freedom, such as WILDERNESS (36), or words denoting closed spaces that nevertheless offer safety and comfort, rather than repression, such as SHELTER (37).

> *(36) After what felt like forever being cooped up inside my room, my doctor took me by the hand and led me into a great big wilderness. All of a sudden, the world was open and full of sound and color.*
>
> *(37) In that office I was sheltered from the storm that had been raging all around me*

In (36), not only is medical practice not conceptualised as captivity, but it is life with depression that is described in terms of bounded space, while medical practice is what offers escape from it. What is also notable in these examples is the passive role the patients place themselves in. They are being *led* or *sheltered* by the representatives of medical practice who possess the agency and freedom to act. Other examples, while still highly positive about the experience of medical treatment, inadvertently express the power imbalance even more explicitly, by deliberately contrasting the passive role of the patient with the active role of the doctor.

> *(38) Listen peeps, this will hurt y'alls [sic] egos but you need some tough love. When a mechanic is fixing up your car, you do not argue that you know better than him. (...) When your brain needs an oil change or to have its breaks [sic] adjusted, you sit down and let the professional do the talking.*
>
> *(39) I tried to carry myself forward and I fell down so many times until I was lying down in the gutter. I needed a qualified person to come carry me.*

In (38), a medical professional is compared to someone who is commonly agreed to be a professional in their field, in order to show that just likewise, they are the authority when it comes

to medicine, and thus depression. Having been established as an authority, the medical professional is contrasted to the patient, an ordinary person without qualifications, to stifle any potential debates or disagreements. In (39) a contrast is created between the depressed person's failed attempts to bring themselves to recovery and the successful recovery propelled by medical professionals. The optimal recovery and the ideal doctor-patient relationship are understood as a process in which the doctor is the one performing the treatment and curing the patient, while the patient is the subject of the treatment and is the one being cured.

In one example of heightened emotion, a blog author compares the exchange between the doctor and the patient throughout the course of recovery to bringing a lost sheep back into the flock - a common religious metaphor used to describe Jesus converting a believer who lost faith or sinned (40). The hierarchy that is understood as being conducive to a successful recovery is structured in terms of relationship between a god and a believer - the medical practice offers unconditional acceptance and an almost heavenly reward in the form of recovery, yet it also means that the patient is placed in an entirely subservient, powerless position of gratitude and awe.

> *(40) I kept crying and crying, I could not believe someone still had faith in me. I was a sinner who self-sabotaged a million times, I fucked up every opportunity. (...) But there was no punishment, [the doctors] welcomed me back into the flock.*

Naturally, the hierarchical nature of the doctor-patient relationship is not always understood as leading to a greater good in the form of recovery, but it can also produce conceptualizations of medical practice as an overall negative experience. Examples of the captivity and boundedness conceptualizations have also been found in the present corpus, much like in the Catalan corpus, these are often rooted in the patient's lived experience of judgement and discrimination within the medical practice as well as physical restraint or other measures considered demeaning to the patient's dignity. Accordingly, the metaphors of medical practice as a negative experience can be divided into two kind, based on the event that inspired them: THE DOCTOR IS A PROSECUTOR/INTERROGATOR (41 a, b) who judges, discriminates, disbelieves and therefore refuses to take action to help the patient and THE DOCTOR IS A CAPTOR/JAILER (42 a, b) who takes action that the patient considers too extreme and ill-fitting.

(41) a. As soon as I mentioned I used online blogging to cope, the interrogation started (...) It felt like I was considered 'one of those faker girls' no matter what. Suddenly, they judged my every move.

b. I'm a dumb girl in my teen years and I must want attention. (...) I know they can't diagnose every person out there but maybe don't torture them KGB-style either?

(42) a. If you're too honest with your psych, next thing you know you will be a locked up zoo animal

b. Just checking, has anyone stopped being suicidal because they got imprisoned?

Given that we have already seen depressed people define themselves as a social group, similar to other socially marginalised groups, it is also notable that in examples 41a and 41b the authors suggest that their social identity, including gender, age and choice of coping mechanisms, can make medical professionals doubt their identification as a depressed person. It suggests an experience of discrimination within the medical establishment and explains why some depressed people might want to move away from other identity markers and identify more closely with the label of depressed person - the label can afford a sense of unity and belonging that the patient may feel they were denied by the medical practice. Examples 42a and 42b might also further explain the reasons behind such in-group identification - having experienced institutional dehumanisation as a patient with depression, people might wish to reclaim the label of 'depressed person' and imbue the label with a sense of humanity and agency once again.

In contrast to the metaphors that conceptualise depression as a physical illness that must be treated with physical medicine, some of the negative experience metaphors of medicine can also posit medicine and treatment as either perpetuations of social stigma (43), either ineffective precisely because they do not target the stigma and other social factors (44).

(43) You're a dog when you're around regular people and make no mistake, you're a dog when you're around therapists and nurses too

(44) It's crazy that the answer to being a depressed queer trans person in the south is supposed to be more meds (...) Dignity is the diagnosis I need and a supportive, safe environment is the meds

Example (44) appears to suggest social reasons as the basis for depression - depression as the outcome of living in an environment one finds unsafe and discriminatory. Based on the metaphor analysis, that seems to be the reason why in some examples in this corpus, treatment and medicine

are conceptualised as a positive experience while in others it is conveyed as a negative one. As mentioned at the beginning of this analysis, people who trace their depression to biogenetic reasons appear to be more likely to benefit from psychiatric practice and have a positive view of it. On the other hand, those who feel that their depression is rooted in psychosocial factors are likely to find psychiatric practice dehumanising in the sense that in their eyes, psychiatric practice currently focuses on biogenetic factors to an extent that can feel like a denial of one's social reality and very real personal concerns. Another reason for this polarisation could be the different natures of the blogs the findings come from. As detailed in section 3.2. On the present corpus, some of the blogs included in the corpus are written by people who self-identify as mental health activists. They tend to use their full, real names, write longer entries and are more focused on recovery. Their aim is often stated to be educating the public and providing inspiration to other depressed people. In contrast, many other blogs are referred to as 'vent blogs' - they are often anonymous or penned under a pseudonym, the entries are much shorter and informal, comparable to bursts of negative energy. These blogs tend to serve as an emotional release for the authors themselves and can contain a more pessimistic look, focusing more on the difficulties of depression than hope of recovery. Based on a purely qualitative analysis, it would seem that the recovery blogs are the ones in which medicine and treatment are conceptualised as positive experiences while the opposite is true for vent blogs. One may hypothesise that the nature of activist blogs could require them to keep up a certain image - if the authors seek to correct societal stigma around depression, it would make sense that they might wish to portray the depressed person as one who eagerly complies with all treatment and has no desire to resist it. Additionally, if the aim is to motivate depressed people to seek recovery, it would make sense to accentuate the positive aspects of recovery and de-emphasize the potential negative outcomes. On the other hand, the vent blogs might not necessarily offer a more authentic and realistic insight - there is a risk that their negative nature is self-reinforcing and infectious. If the prevailing mood in these blogging spaces is one of negativity, it might be difficult for the people participating in them to see the positive sides of treatment and their stories might serve as evidence to each other that there are no such positive sides. The polarising nature of these findings makes anonymity in online mental health blogs another interesting avenue for future research.

4.3 Metaphors of love

The metaphors of love found in the present corpus largely correspond to types of love metaphors, by source domain, found in previous research. The same love metaphors that have been deemed to be deeply-entrenched models of love in the Western world - LOVE IS AN ECONOMIC EXCHANGE, LOVE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS A FORCE - also seem to be the metaphors that dominate in the mental health blogging discourse.

Metaphor type/source domains	**Metaphorical expressions**	**Percentage share, %**
An economic exchange	28	25.7
Force	22	20.2
Journey	15	13.8
Illness	11	10
Insanity	9	8.3
Unity	8	7.3
War	6	5.5
Other/blurry or novel categorization	6	5.5
Game	4	3.7
Rapture	0	0
Total	109	

Table 3: All of the metaphorical expressions related to love identified in the corpus, categorised in accordance to previous research on love metaphors

The variation in love metaphors takes form not as emergence of entirely new source domains, but is rather observed in the *kind* of already established source domains that is being invoked - *what*

kind of journey love is, *what kind of* exchange love is. Because in most examples it is not love on a general level that is being conceptualised, but specifically, they are first-hand accounts of the love of a depressed person, it follows that the kind of journey or the kind of exchange it is understood as are also narrowed down and specified, with certain features of a journey or of an economic exchange backgrounded and others foregrounded. Most commonly, it is the challenging, time and energy-consuming aspects of the source domain that are foregrounded. The love of a depressed person is not just any kind of journey, but it is A DIFFICULT JOURNEY. According to depressed people themselves, it is a journey that can be very slow, can involve having to go backwards to begin anew and letting them travel at their own pace (45). A non-depressed partner might have to extend their hand and act as a guide, which ends up upsetting the balance of power in the relationship and making the depressed person feel as a burden (46). If love is structured in terms of a journey because life itself is often understood as a journey and a loving relationship is the joinery of two individual journeys, then depressed people feel as if their own journey of life is too difficult for another person to join and that allowing a passenger in would only slow that person down in their own journey of life (47).

> *(45) I'm scared that being with me means walking in circles. You know how they say progress is non-linear? I feel like I will always need to go back to square one (...) How in the world can I ask someone I love to wander around with me?*
>
> *(46) She basically had to lead me and handhold me through any rocky patch. That's not what an equal partner is like.*
>
> *(47) Sometimes I just can't move forward anymore and I hate the idea of forcing another person to stop and carry me.*

Notably, all of these examples could be theoretically considered metaphors of depression as well, as they also tell us something about the way life with depression is understood - LIFE WITH DEPRESSION IS A DIFFICULT JOURNEY, which means the love of a depressed person one too.

Likewise, the love of a depressed person is also a complex kind of exchange. The economic exchange metaphor was found to be the leading love metaphor in the corpus of the present study which aligns with the idea suggested by previous metaphor research that ECONOMIC EXCHANGE is overtaking JOURNEY as the main source domain to structure romantic relationships through in the Western world. The economic exchange metaphor, as mentioned, is

not as cynical as it appears on the surface - in fact, the metaphor posits that love carries a transformative power, however, this power can only be realised if the partners are on equal footing. In the EXCHANGE structure, a harmonious relationship is a relationship in which both partners are bringing something and contributing to the relationship. By sharing their efforts, the parties transform each other, learn from each other and make each other stronger. Examples of this sort of BALANCED EXCHANGE metaphor were found in the current corpus as well, specifically, to discuss what is supposed to be an idealised, perfect version of love (48). The perfect love of the BALANCED EXCHANGE metaphor was often found to be invoked explicitly for the purpose of contrasting it with the love of a depressed person, which is supposed to lack equality and mutualism and is therefore conceptualised as AN UNEVEN EXCHANGE. The depressed person sees themselves as unable to contribute to the relationship and positively transform their loved one (49). Being the recipient of their loved one's efforts without being able to participate in the exchange in return creates feelings of guilt and shame, therefore intensifying the depressed person's self-loathing (50).

> *(48) In a real adult relationship, you both bring something to the table. (...) I have nothing to bring, I have nothing, I am nothing.*
>
> *(49) Why the fuck would someone spend their love on me ever again? (...) Might as well invest energy into a rock (...) There are millions of people out there who will return your efforts tenfold*
>
> *(50) I was leeching off of her love and that's why I had to end it. (...) Sucking the lifeblood from the only person who has ever or will ever love you, that's enough to make you feel like crap for eternity*

The examples too can double as depression metaphors by showing how a depressed person sees themselves - DEPRESSED PERSON IS NOTHING, DEPRESSED PERSON IS AN OBJECT, DEPRESSED PERSON IS AN ANIMAL/PARASITE. By conceptualising themselves as less than human, depressed persons create a fundamental opposition between themselves and other people which makes it impossible to comprehend their relationships as even and balanced. Whether this conceptualization is born out of unsuccessful past relationships, whether it leads to them or whether the conceptualization of the self as unequal and unbalanced relationships continuously self-reinforce is another question that future research in cognitive science and psychology could ponder.

However, conceptualising oneself as lesser to other people or even a non-person does not always lead to feeling undeserving of love. In other cases, the depressed person might feel like their lack of ability and self-sufficiency makes them someone who is both more deserving of love and more receptive to being transformed by it. This sentiment is most commonly expressed through the LOVE IS A FORCE metaphor, which could be called the single example of a positive metaphor of love found in the corpus. While in most other examples, love, as experienced by a depressed person, is bound to cause more pain that is either equal to or even intensifies the pain of depression, in this metaphor, the happiness of love eases or ends the pain of depression The kind of force love can be to a depressed person is a magic force (51), a life-saving natural force (52) or a physical force that defeats the enemy of depression (53).

(51) Love could snap me out of my curse, I know it

(52) Even a single drop of affection would get me back on my feet.

(53) You need love to stomp out the worm in your brain that tells you you're worthless

The metaphorical expressions above imply the necessity and value of love in a depressed person's life. The force of love can be further explicitly contrasted with the power of medical practice. Assuming the psychosocial view of mental illness, some depressed people express the belief that their depression is the natural outcome of a lack of love in their lives. Traditional medicine, SSRIs and therapy are then inefficient because they do not address this lack. What can really lead to recovery from depression is love - hence the metaphor LOVE IS A HEALING FORCE/LOVE IS MEDICINE (54a, b).

(54) a. The pills might cheer me up but I know it deep in my heart that only being loved can fill the hole there

b. Nurses and therapists all get paid to do their stuff, they don't give a single shit (...) If someone truly cared and not because they were paid to care. Because they loved me. That is what would mend me.

Because the influence of depression is felt so deeply in the experience of love, love itself may be structured in terms of depression. In conventional metaphors of love LOVE IS AN ILLNESS and LOVE IS INSANITY, used by depressed people, depression can be the kind of illness or the kind of insanity that love is. The depressed person might feel unsure if the disorder is not affecting their

perception of love (55), love can be understood to be an insanity equal to depression (56) and love can be felt as intensifying to the symptoms of the illness that is depression (57).

(55) The thought of him itches and tingles in my head (...) I'm not sure if a crush is supposed to make you feverish or if I'm being manic again

(56) I don't think I 'like' the idea of love. Love makes you lose your head (...) Years of clinical depression already made me lose my head, if I lose any more it's gonna kill me.

(57) Normal people feel butterflies in their stomach (...) Me, day in day out I just think what's gonna happen when he finally has enough and leaves and (...) I feel the weight that was already there growing even heavier

LOVE IS DEPRESSION - in the colloquial sense, meaning that it can cause great sadness, but also in the sense that the experiences of depression and love overlap until a depressed person might find them to be inseparable parts of the same experience.

The above examples are all ultimately variations of already established metaphors of love. Only one source domain, that was not on the list of source domains for love which was crystallised from previous research, was discovered among the metaphorical expressions of love in the present study - that is, A SERIES OF CHALLENGES. This source domain was also not used uniquely to refer to the love of a depressed person - a couple of examples were found in which the authors discussed the experience of love on a general, universal level and structured it in terms of the same metaphor (58a, b).

(58) a. Dating is all about filtering people

b. Someone can sniff out all the red flags in the dating stage (...) They think they finally scouted someone worthwhile and six months later, bam! That person is not who they thought they were

The SERIES OF CHALLENGES metaphor could be considered emblematic of a more modern attitude to love and relationships. In this view, instead of there being one perfect person, so-called *the One*, there are many people with whom you are more or less compatible with. The purpose of dating is then for people to discuss their views of topics that matter to them and overall to get to know each other in a way that allows them to find the most suitable of all possible matches. However, the challenges do not end once the relationship forms. Moving further away from a more idolised conception of love, in which life after marriage is seen as static and idyllic, the SERIES OF CHALLENGES structure presumes that the partners continue to face life difficulties together

and grow as individuals. Throughout the course of these challenges, the couple might become stronger and more united, they might fail to successfully overcome one of the challenges or they might eventually grow too different to stay together. When used to describe the love of a depressed person specifically, the SERIES OF CHALLENGES metaphor becomes specific in the sense that it presumes that love will ultimately fail the challenge (59). Life with depression itself is also conceptualised as a series of challenges - it is assumed that the usual challenges of love and the unique challenges of loving a depressed person will eventually become too much to handle, for the non-depressed partner more so than the depressed person themselves (60).

> *(59) This is the real world and sooner or later even the most beautiful love will meet its match and get bested (...) When a loser like me is involved, it just means it hits the wall sooner*
>
> *(60) I can own up to the fact that a relationship with me is too taxing for most well-adjusted people (...) If your love and patience are measured every day, eventually even the most saintly person opts for a failing grade*

The vast majority of examples above can be interpreted as discussing a relationship between a depressed person and a person without depression - some do so overtly, like (60), via keywords such as *well-adjusted*, while others do so implicitly, by describing a perceived power imbalance and feelings of inadequacy. Only one example was found to explicitly discuss a relationship between depressed people and this one expression was also an example of a novel source domain of EXPLOSION (61).

> (61) *Both of us were such unstable particles that when we collided, we made sparks fly. And NOT in the good way*

Thus, a relationship with a person perceived as more stable leads to feelings of inadequacy and shame. The depressed person might feel that they are being treated as if they are a burden or they might themselves feel as a burden, leading to the end of the relationship. On the other hand, a relationship with a person perceived as equally unstable might feel unbalanced in a different way - like too much instability in one place, with the parties enabling each other's bad tendencies in a way that is destructive like an explosion.

4.4 Metaphors of time

Just as metaphors of love, metaphors of time identified in the present corpus can be largely sorted by source domains into the same metaphor types that have been described as established ways to describe time in our culture in previous research. Even less metaphorical creativity was observed in time metaphors as the research ultimately did not arrive at any examples that could be labelled as belonging to an entirely new category of time metaphors. This is to be expected as time, unlike depression and love, is a far less subjective experience and existing literature on time metaphors has already noted that time is understood in well-ingrained models that show little deviation and only a few exceptional cases across cultures and languages. What is interesting, however, is that although time metaphors are said to be so deeply entrenched in our conceptual and linguistic systems, that some metaphorical expressions of time have become almost conventional and staples of everyday language, such as, for example, *I am looking forward to the future.* Yet, time metaphors were the smallest category found in the corpus, with 97 metaphorical expressions representing it, compared to 406 metaphors of depression and 109 metaphors of love. While it has to be acknowledged that metaphor identification, especially when conducted by a single researcher, can be fallible and the near-conventional nature of many metaphorical expressions of time could make them more difficult to always successfully identify, this seems like too big of a difference to ignore. Generally, it can be said that online depression discourse seems to be more focused on subjective experiences and discussions of how things are felt in one's inner world. Life with depression and relationships could be favoured as topics of discussion because they are the kind of deeply personal topics that are easier to discuss under the guise of anonymity or in written form, in the informal format of blogging. Perhaps for the same reasons, creative language usage with many extended comparisons and non-literal utterances seem to be favoured over more established, conventional expressions. Atypical experiences inspire atypical language use.

Metaphor type/source domains	**Metaphorical expressions**	**Percentage share, %**
Resource	24	24.7
Substance	20	20.6

Orientation	19	19.7
Changer	12	12.4
Landscape	11	11.3
Moving time	11	11.3
Other/novel categorization	0	0

Table 4: All of the metaphorical expressions related to time identified in the corpus, categorised in accordance to previous research on time metaphors

Out of the established types of metaphors of time, the most frequent type in the corpus was TIME IS A RESOURCE. In almost all of these examples, the resource is perceived through its lack - it either *was lost* (62), with no active agent but with the implication that the cause of the loss is depression, or the depressed person feels that they have actively *lost* it (63).

> *(62) Years spent crying in bed, stagnating, daydreaming of a better life… So much time was lost (...) I can't help but mourn the lost time*
>
> *(63) While everybody else was building their lives and starting families, I lost so much time (...) So much time I let slip that will always be a black mark on my person*

The agency contrast in examples 62 and 63 - between *time was lost (because of depression)* and *I lost time* is stark. With the resource schema mapping worth and value onto the concept of time, the act of losing time is also seen as a loss of value and worth for the owner of the resource. If the resource is lost through no fault of the owner, the loss is a tragedy and an example of the destructive power of depression. If the loss of the resource is felt as a direct result of the owner's actions, the loss of a valuable resource detracts from the value of the owner - in other words, feeling as if they have mismanaged and misused their time while dealing with depression is a cause of low self-esteem and self-hatred for the depressed person.

As is typical in the Western world, the kind of resource time was often conceptualised as was MONEY. This schema presupposes prioritisation of productivity and using one's time in the most optimal way to maximise activity and value. For depressed people, who often feel like they struggle to stay active and make the best use of their time, the dominant culture of productivity is

felt very strongly and as a source of great shame (64). Furthermore, actual money is often a cause of anxiety as some depressed people may find themselves struggling to work and survive or having to rely on government assistance. When time is conceptualised by a depressed person in terms of money - the anxiety and uncertainty can be mapped onto both (65).

(64) If you want to have any sort of future, you have to make sure you invest your time wisely from when you're a little kid (...) I wasted too much time already to have a future

(65) I wasted so much time that I could have spent developing marketable skills and building a network, connections, all that (...) Hard not to feel like my life is already wasted at this point tbh [sic]

Time is valuable in the same sense that money is, as our time is often measured through the work we have done to make money during it. Not being able to manage one's time often leads to being unable to manage money which leads to further stress and worse time-management and so on. Loss of time and loss of money are comparable to each other in significance and further perpetuate each other.

Another metaphor that mostly follows established metaphor models in literature yet with a focus on feelings of inadequacy and loss is the TIME IS A CHANGER metaphors. In almost all the examples found, the change brought by time had a negative impact - time being an important resource that the depressed person feels they are mismanaging makes it seem as a fearsome thing that DESTROYS (66) or DEVOURS (67) their personhood and potential.

(66) I don't see myself growing and learning like people do (...) more like, with time, there is less and less left of me

(67) Time will devour failed people like us until we are less than a footnote in history

However, following the conceptualization that depression is a negative experience that can nevertheless lead to positive growth in the form of recovery, a few expressions in which time causes positive change, namely heals, were also found (68).

(68) I know that all this pain will be fixed by time

What is further notable is that although there was little to none metaphor creativity found in the sense of novel source domains or metaphor categories for time, variation from general metaphors of time does exist within the established categories, in a similar way it was found to be when analysing metaphors of love. In the metaphorical expressions found in the present corpus, time

was found to be a moving entity or a landscape through which the travelling subject moves, as in previous literature, however, what is clear is that in these expressions, the sense of directionality or movement has been upset or interrupted. In time metaphors which specify movement, it can be that the movement has stopped. Time has stopped moving - for everyone (69) or only for the depressed person (70) - or the traveller, the depressed person, has ceased to move forward through the landscape of time (71).

> *(69) I can't pinpoint the exact moment when it happened, but I feel like the world stopped turning (...) Comparing the past to now it's like time hasn't even moved forward*
>
> *(70) Best way to describe it is kinda as if time froze for me in that year when I found out my brain did not work the same as everyone else's*
>
> *(71) I failed to cope with everything so badly that now I've been stuck in a rut. Just stuck in the same stage of life for ages*

While more examples than these would be needed to further explore this, it is interesting to compare examples 70 and 71. Example 70 invoked the biogenetic model of mental illness that was discussed before and makes use of the MOVING TIME metaphor. Meanwhile, example 71 makes no reference to the biogenetic explanation and puts more agency and responsibility on the depressed person for their lack of action and movement forward. It is then a difference in metaphors between TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY THAT HAS STOPPED MOVING - the depressed person is distanced from their actions and their state - and TIME IS A LANDSCAPE THROUGH WHICH THE TRAVELLER HAS STOPPED MOVING - the distance is decreased between the depressed person and their actions. A hypothesis for further research could be that the former metaphor is used to express the feelings of stagnation that can accompany depression when the cause of the disorder is considered to be biogenetic while the latter kind of metaphor might be used more when the cause of the depression is traced to social environment or personal actions.

In time metaphors which specify orientation, meanwhile, the direction that the observer is facing might have shifted. Rather than standing in a space that is signifying the present, with their back to the past and looking at the future in front of them, the observer in this metaphor might instead be positioned to look back at the space that is the past. The space behind them that is the future might be impossible to see and imagine (72) or non-existent (73).

(72) I miss who I used to be so much, I really can't help but look back at it always (...) I can't see what's over there in my future (...) but I know the hopeful girl from before isn't gonna be there anymore

(73) I painted myself into a corner (...) That's why I prefer to look back to when things were good. (...) there's no future, only a dead end

Guilt over mismanaged time and over the disorder itself leads to a preoccupation with the past to the exclusion of the future. The depressed person might ruminate over mistakes made throughout the course of their experience of depression or over an idealised version of their past before their experience with depression. The rumination takes up their time in the present and prevents them from taking steps to improve their future. Time becomes a circle encompassing the spaces of the past and the present.

If the Aymara language is unique for placing the future at the back of the observer and the past in front of the observer in time orientation metaphor, then some of the metaphors found during the present study could almost be considered comparable. Both the Aymara time orientation metaphors and the DISORIENTED TIME metaphors (74 a, b) used by depressed people are ultimately rooted in the idea that a person's future is the sum of their past actions - the past is the future in as much that the future is shaped by the past.

(74) a. All I can see in front of me is the mistakes that led me here

b. Can't even have silly daydreams about the future anymore(...) My past stupidity gets reflected back at me like it's mocking me

However, one has to assume that Aymara culture sees the totality of the past, both the good and the bad, as having an influence on the future. As variation in the conceptual system among depressed people is often influenced by feelings of self-hatred and a lack of hope, naturally this conceptualization of time posits that it is negative actions from the past that, like a ghost, continue to haunt the observer when looking forward.

Finally, the kind of future a depressed person might see themselves as looking and moving towards might be entirely defined by its sameness to the past or the present. The apathy and lethargy that many sufferers describe as accompanying the experience of depression, inability to take action and keep up with meaningful activities and relationships can lead to the feeling that every day is similar

to one another. The resemblance between the spaces of the past, present and future, causes the observer to see them as extensions of each other or even as the same space. The directionality and sense of motion of time metaphors is disturbed by the experience of depression as, even if the observer is, as usual, standing in the present with their back to the past and looking towards the future, in a sense, THE PRESENT IS THE PAST (75) because of their mutual resemblance and, in the same way, even if the traveller is moving through the time towards the future, THE FUTURE IS THE PAST (76).

> *(75) I'm looking forward to yet another day that is yesterday is last week is last month is last year*
>
> *(76) People keep telling me I should be proud of myself for trudging on. (...) What's the point of making it to tomorrow if tomorrow is a day I have already lived a hundred times?*

Chapter 5. Conclusions

To summarise the findings on depression metaphors, the English language blogging discourse on the topic of depression is deeply divided. Some patients find that the biogenetic model works for them - by foregoing personal agency to the disorder, they find that it offers a reprieve from personal shame and self-blame. Likewise, foregoing personal agency to the medical practice allows these patients to feel professionally taken care of and helped along the path of recovery. Others, on the other hand, find that such a model of depression feels dehumanising to them. To reclaim their humanity, they attempt to closely identify with the label of *depressed person.* In this label, they find companionship and belonging, away from the perceived judgement and stigma of the medical establishment and the rest of society. A novel finding in the present study has been that the aforementioned grouping might eventually come to be expressed as an outright hostile sentiment towards the rest of society and even valorization of depression as a positive marker of identity. Such division in the conceptual systems of the patients as well as the fact that negative conceptualizations of medicine and treatment have been to some degree found since one of the earliest studies of depression metaphors by McMullen & Conway (2002), however, the present study has shown that this has not only persisted across time, mediums of expression and languages, but has intensified to a significant degree. This may suggest a need to move away from the hierarchical model of doctor-patient relationship and towards a more collaborative, dialogue process. Perhaps the doctor could come to be conceptualised not as one who *carries* a helpless patient but one who *provides support* by hearing the patient out when they propose alternative causes and treatments for their ailments as well as allowing the patient to make their first steps at their own pace and comfort. Regarding the ultimate polarisation between biogenetic and psychosocial models of mental illness, this is a debate that extends far beyond the scope of metaphor studies and is likely to only unravel further. However, with many researchers now seeking a middle ground model that unites the differing explanations, an embodied cognition view could potentially offer a way forward. The nature of our human bodies, including the chemistry of our brain, influences the way we interact with the world and our social surroundings. However, the social and cultural context within which these interactions take place also affect our embodied experience. A chemical imbalance in the brain and the social stigma surrounding it can both

reinforce each other and ultimately both shape the experience of depression - same way as our bodies and the experiences they give us the access to shape each other as well as, ultimately, our conceptual system.

From a metaphor research perspective, it is also interesting that metaphors of biological disease were not discussed much in the study on Catalan language depression metaphors - in fact, the latter study found more metaphors focusing on social and contextual factors, than biological ones, and a larger focus on the depressed person as an active agent. The authors have hypothesised that the blogging genre and the ability to provide a first-person account that it affords may have an empowering effect on the depressed person. It allows authors to go beyond the "simple" biological explanation and delve into the complex social nuances of living with a mental illness (Coll-Florit et al, 2021, p. 3, 17). That the blogging genre inherently allows people with certain conditions to assume more agency could be contested by the present English language corpus. Studies on the biogenetic model have found it to be mainly prevalent in Anglophone countries, often heavily supported by the pharmaceutical industry and its advertising (Deacon & Baird, 2009, p. 416-417). Ultimately, the movement to dismantle mental health-related stigma is a relatively new phenomenon and one that is still very much in progress all over the world. What exactly does "stigma" entail, how prevalent it is, what strategies are employed to dismantle it and how wide they are used can depend on the region and the culture. In English language discourse on depression, the current question seems to be one of striking the right balance between the extremes of shaming and blaming on the one hand and individual agency and responsibility on the other.

What can serve as a summary for the discussion of metaphors of love is that the passages in which love is described in terms of difficult journey, an uneven exchange, illness, insanity, a series of challenges ultimately set to be failed or an explosion largely feature references to real relationships that the author has experienced throughout the course of their depression. Meanwhile, examples in which love is understood as a healing or saving force appear to discuss hypothetical scenarios and dreams of love. This is another hypothesis that would require further examples to support it but based purely on the present corpus, one could say that love is idealised by depressed people as a powerful positive force, however, the real experience of love can end up being felt as a difficult and unbalanced effort.

Finally, as mentioned, the fact that metaphors of time were generally found to follow conventional models of metaphorical meaning-making shows that experiences that are deeply ingrained into our bodies, much like the passage of time is ingrained into us via the process of ageing, are also deeply ingrained into our metaphorical language. However much like no experience of ageing is the same, it is notable to observe even slight variation of metaphorical creativity among the metaphors of time. The uniqueness of metaphors used to conceptualise time by depressed people, meanwhile, lies in whether time and/or the traveller moving through time are currently moving, whether they are moving backwards and forth and what lies backwards and forth. The stagnation many depressed people feel is expressed in metaphorical terms as being unable to move through time, being unable to feel time moving or as the inability to see a clearly defined past, present and future. The psychological implications of such metaphors are that an inability to work in the present results in a lack of a belief in the future and a valorization of a romanticised past before depression. The future becomes a space that is fearsome to imagine - an amalgam of past mistakes, something that destroys - or a space that is impossible to imagine - something that is destroyed. The fact that in our culture, time is considered a precious resource in so far as it is used to produce things, acquire and increase capital alienates the members of society who, due to certain conditions, struggle with productivity. Rather than motivating them, this sort of way of structuring the concept of time further hinders any productive potential as the increased shame, guilt and self-hatred only intensify the stagnation felt by the experiencing subject. The comparison to Native American tribes, which also see time as a resource but without highlighting the features of *rush* and *productivity,* shows that another understanding of time is possible. However, in the end, as much as metaphors shape our culture, they are also a reflection of it. Shifting our conceptual structure of time to a new understanding, that sees time as a precious resource to be celebrated when it is presented but not seen as *wasted* when it is lacking, and that does not marginalise those who are suffering from mental and physical disorders and therefore might not be able to conform to societal standards of productivity, will also require shifting our actual material relationship to time and money - something that will take a great effort by mental health and disability advocates and something that, hopefully, works such as the present research project can contribute to in even a small way.

Even such seemingly universal notions as the passage of time can be conceptualised in ways that show some degree of variation and metaphorical creativity, negative experiences may be contextualised positively via metaphor, metaphors can be used to form and express new identities, create and differentiate social groups - these are all findings that exemplify how conceptual metaphors are born and shaped out of unique experiences in our human bodies. Going back to the question of metaphors, one might consider that any unifying theory of metaphors could eventually face accusations of vagueness simply due to the challenging nature of attempting to generalise an experience so deeply personal and context-specific. In the end, each metaphorical structure can be seen as a completely unique cognitive structure that is further differentiated by its specific medium of communication, societal and cultural context as well as personal interpretation. As much as it is possible to try to systemize it, a complete study of metaphors would, in the end, amount to a study of the lives they take place in and the world around them.

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Appendix A

Lists of conventional metaphors of depression, time and love that were used for comparison in the analysis.

DEPRESSION IS:

- A DARKNESS
- A BURDEN/NUISANCE/WEIGHT
- A PHYSICAL ENTITY/LIVING ORGANISM/CAPTOR/BEAST/MONSTER
- DESCENT
- BOUNDED SPACE/ENCLOSED SPACE/CONTAINMENT/PHYSICAL CONTAINER/CONSTRAINT
- A DETERIORATION
- A PROCESS OF STAGES/A JOURNEY
- AN ENEMY/WAR/ATTACK/VIOLENCE/STRUGGLE
- A FORCE
- UNBALANCE
- A PLACE
- DIRECTIONALITY (DOWN/IN/AWAY)
- ANNIHILATION
- DEATH
- DROWNING
- SUFFOCATION
- AN ABYSS
- HORROR
- CHAOS
- (PHYSICAL) PAIN
- MYSTERY
- VISUAL DIFFICULTY
- DANGER

- ISOLATION
- MADNESS
- SEIZURE

PEOPLE WITH DEPRESSION ARE:

- CONTAINERS
- SPLIT INTO SEVERAL DISTINCT ENTITIES/SPLIT INTO PHYSICAL PIECES
- (FRAGILE, NON-VALUABLE) THINGS
- MACHINES
- ZOMBIES
- MARTYRS
- FIGHTERS
- VICTIMS

LIFE WITH DEPRESSION IS:

- A JOURNEY
- A WAR

PREJUDICE IS:

- AN ENEMY
- A WAR
- A WEIGHT
- A MARK

LACK OF COMMUNICATION IS:

- (PHYSICAL) DISTANCE

SOCIETY IS:

- A CONTAINER

FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE:

- (PHYSICAL) SUPPORTS
- ALLIES (IN A WAR)
- TRAITORS
- TRICKSTERS

THE MEDICAL PRACTICE IS:

- A REPRESSIVE POWER

- A CAPTOR
- A PROSECUTOR
- DARKNESS
- DESOLATION
- STARKNESS

THE MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS IS:

- A CONTAINER

SUICIDAL IDEATION IS:

- DEATH
- DEVASTATION
- DESTRUCTION
- AN ATTACK/VIOLENCE
- A DRAMA
- A JOURNEY

RECOVERY IS:

- DIRECTIONALITY (UP/OUT/THROUGH)
- SEQUENTIAL PROCESS
- A RETURN/EMERGENCE/EXIT
- RESTORATION
- A LIGHT, PEACE
- HEALTH
- SURVIVAL
- SAFETY

THE MIND AND THE BRAIN ARE:

- CONTAINERS
- MACHINES
- SPONGES
- POINTING DEVICES
- SWITCHBOARDS
- FORTRESSES

TIME IS:

- ORIENTATION
- MOTION/A MOVING ENTITY
- A LANDSCAPE
- A SUBSTANCE
- A RESOURCE
- CHANGER
  (THIEF/DEVOURER/HEALER/REAPER/DESTROYER/EVALUATOR/PURSUER)

LOVE IS:

- A FORCE (NATURAL FORCE/PHYSICAL FORCE/ OPPONENT/STRUGGLE)
- A UNITY (OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY PARTS)
- A JOURNEY
- AN ECONOMIC EXCHANGE
- INSANITY
- A GAME
- A WAR
- A RAPTURE
- AN ILLNESS