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# Everything Is Water and Everything Is River: An Analysis of the Metaphors in Carla Madeira's Novel[1]

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**Abstract**
This article analyzes some of the conceptual metaphors related to liquids found in *Tudo é rio*, a novel written by the Brazilian writer Carla Madeira. The research aims to explore how metaphors were used in the book to enrich its language and enhance the transmission of meanings. Sentences containing liquid-related words were selected through a full reading of the book, and 65 linguistic metaphors, identified with the Metaphor Identification Procedure, were analyzed to infer their underlying conceptual metaphors. Of the 11 conceptual metaphors found, EMOTION IS LIQUID had the highest number of occurrences. The results are consistent with core tenets of Conceptual Metaphor Theory: the linguistic metaphors can be grouped under recurring cross-domain mappings, mostly from a concrete, sensory domain onto abstract domains such as emotion. The study contributes to research on metaphor in literature by tracing a single source domain, LIQUID, across a whole Brazilian novel and showing how its mappings form a metaphorical niche.
**Keywords:** conceptual metaphor theory; cognitive linguistics; metaphor; Carla Madeira; literature.

**Resumen**
**Todo es agua y todo es río: un análisis de las metáforas en la novela de Carla Madeira**
Este artículo analiza algunas de las metáforas conceptuales relacionadas con los líquidos presentes en *Tudo é rio*, novela de la escritora brasileña Carla Madeira. La

[1] Research article


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investigación tiene como objetivo explorar cómo se emplean las metáforas en la obra para enriquecer su lenguaje y potenciar la transmisión de significados. Tras una lectura completa del libro, se seleccionaron oraciones que contenían términos vinculados a los líquidos y se analizaron 65 metáforas lingüísticas identificadas mediante el Procedimiento de Identificación de Metáforas, con el fin de inferir las metáforas conceptuales subyacentes. De las 11 metáforas conceptuales halladas, LA EMOCIÓN ES UN LÍQUIDO fue la que presentó una mayor frecuencia de aparición. Los resultados concuerdan con los principios fundamentales de la Teoría de la Metáfora Conceptual: las metáforas lingüísticas se pueden agrupar en correspondencias recurrentes entre dominios, trasladando elementos de un ámbito concreto y sensorial hacia dominios abstractos, como el de las emociones. El estudio contribuye a la investigación sobre la metáfora en la literatura al rastrear un único dominio fuente, LÍQUIDO, a lo largo de toda la novela brasileña, demostrando cómo sus correspondencias conforman un nicho metafórico.
**Palabras Clave:** teoría de la metáfora conceptual; lingüística cognitiva; metáfora; Carla Madeira; literatura.

**Résumé**

**Tout est eau et tout est fleuve : analyse des métaphores dans le roman de Carla Madeira**



Cet article analyse certaines métaphores conceptuelles liées aux liquides présentes dans *Tudo é rio*, un roman de l'écrivaine brésilienne Carla Madeira. L'étude vise à explorer la manière dont les métaphores sont employées dans l'ouvrage pour enrichir la langue et favoriser la transmission de significations. Des phrases contenant des termes liés aux liquides ont été sélectionnées au fil d'une lecture intégrale du roman ; 65 métaphores linguistiques, identifiées à l'aide de la Procédure d'Identification des Métaphores, ont ensuite été analysées afin de dégager les métaphores conceptuelles qui les sous-tendent. Parmi les 11 métaphores conceptuelles identifiées, celle selon laquelle L'ÉMOTION EST UN LIQUIDE présente la fréquence d'occurrence la plus élevée. Ces résultats concordent avec les principes fondamentaux de la théorie de la métaphore conceptuelle : les métaphores linguistiques peuvent être regroupées au sein de correspondances récurrentes entre domaines, allant principalement d'un domaine concret et sensoriel vers des domaines abstraits, tels que celui des émotions. Cette étude contribue à la recherche sur la métaphore en littérature en examinant un domaine source unique, celui du LIQUIDE, à travers l'ensemble d'un roman brésilien, et en démontrant comment les correspondances qui en découlent constituent une véritable niche métaphorique.
**Mots-clés :** théorie de la métaphore conceptuelle ; linguistique cognitive ; métaphore ; Carla Madeira ; littérature.

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## INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is a linguistic and cognitive phenomenon that goes beyond a mere figure of speech. Powerful and versatile, it is widely used in literature to provide expressiveness and depth to poetic discourse. The presence of metaphors in literary works transcends the rhetorical aspect, serving as an essential tool in the construction of meaning and the representation of complex human experiences. Thus, metaphors allow more concrete domains to be understood and expressed in terms of a more abstract domain, enabling the transfer of meaning between them.

Among the various theoretical approaches to the phenomenon of metaphor, Cognitive Linguistics offers an insightful lens to analyze and uncover the underlying mechanisms of how metaphors function, allowing for a deeper understanding of how they are capable of shaping the structure and meaning of literary works. For instance, "*o tempo voa*" [time flies], a very common metaphor in daily life in both oral and written forms, is a linguistic metaphor that instantiates a conceptual metaphor. This concept was initially proposed in the 1980s by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who understood that metaphors are not just isolated linguistic devices, but rather reflections of an underlying conceptual structuring in our minds. Conceptual metaphors are inherent to language and shape our understanding and experience of the world around us; they influence our perception, thought, and everyday language, often unconsciously.



Drawing on this concept of metaphor proposed by cognitive linguists, this article aims to analyze the conceptual metaphors that underlie liquid-related expressions in *Tudo é rio* (Madeira, 2021), a contemporary novel by Carla Madeira. More specifically, it seeks (1) to identify the liquid-related linguistic metaphors in the novel and classify the conceptual metaphors that underlie them; and (2) to examine how these conceptual metaphors relate to one another and how they contribute to the construction of meaning in the narrative. As a descriptive study of a single novel, this article does not aim to test Conceptual Metaphor Theory, but to illustrate how its analytical tools apply to a contemporary Brazilian literary text.

The approach of Cognitive Linguistics is interdisciplinary, meaning it works in conjunction with various other fields of study, such as philosophy, psychology, and literature itself. For this reason, this study is expected to contribute both to the field of linguistics by analyzing the role of metaphors in the construction of concepts and meanings and to the field of literary studies by inspiring new uses of language in fiction and enriching literary analysis.

The intersection between linguistics and literature allows for a scientific investigation into how linguistic structures and underlying cognitive processes interact to create literary meaning. From the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics, literary language is seen as a reflection of how we perceive and understand reality. Analyzing figures of speech, such as metaphors and metonymies, provides tools to understand how these elements contribute to the atmosphere, aesthetics, and overall meaning of a text.

Within the Brazilian context, this article studies metaphor in literary works. Although some precedents can be found outside Brazil (e.g., Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Semino & Steen, 2008), analyses of this kind applied to contemporary Brazilian fiction remain scarce. What is more, existing studies typically survey metaphors in general, and few follow a single source domain throughout a whole literary work. This article contributes to this line of research in two ways. First, it focuses on one source domain, LIQUID, and shows how it generates a network of related conceptual metaphors (EMOTION IS LIQUID, RELATIONSHIP IS LIQUID, LIFE IS WATER, among others) that forms a metaphorical niche across the narrative. Second, it applies this approach to a contemporary Brazilian novel, *Tudo é rio* (Madeira, 2021), thereby extending to Brazilian Portuguese, a field of study that has been predominantly based on English-language texts.

## COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

For Cognitive Linguistics, language is a manifestation of human cognitive ability and is intertwined with other mental processes, such as perception, memory, reasoning, and emotion. According to this approach, language and linguistic organization should reflect general cognitive principles and not just language-specific principles; in other words, language must be studied together with other aspects of the human mind inherent to cognition. Human cognition comprises some higher functions, such as perception, attention, association, memory, reasoning, language, which is why Cognitive Linguistics entails commitment to interdisciplinarity.



Although some of its fundamental principles were previously found in the work of other linguists, Cognitive Linguistics draws from the source of the development of cognitive psychology in the 1970s. And it was the publication of the work *Metaphors We Live By*, by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980/2008), that provided the starting point for what would become the revolution in metaphor studies, a theme already widely discussed in the field of literature, but which also became relevant to linguistics.

> Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish—a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2008, p. 3)

Challenging the prevailing view that figurativity was only a resource for language ornamentation, Lakoff and Johnson show that speakers organize their thought and express themselves naturally through metaphors. They introduce the

idea of a metaphorical conceptual system and develop a theory that explains and interprets metaphors from a cognitive point of view: the Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

George Lakoff was one of the key figures for the establishment of Cognitive Linguistics as a perspective distinct from the generative paradigm, dominant at that time. In addition to *Metaphors We Live By,* Lakoff also published, in 1987, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things*, in which he argues that the understanding of language depends on the underlying conceptual systems that shape the way we interpret the world. Several theories form the archipelago of Cognitive Linguistics, which is divided into two major areas of investigation—cognitive semantics and grammar, that is—content and structure, respectively—and governed by two central commitments: the generalization commitment and the cognitive commitment. According to George Lakoff (1990):

> The generalization commitment is a commitment to characterizing the general principles governing all aspects of human language. I see this as the commitment to undertake linguistics as a scientific endeavour. The cognitive commitment is a commitment to make one's account of human language accord with what is generally known about the mind and the brain, from other disciplines as well as our own. (p. 40)



The present research falls under the scope of cognitive semantics, more specifically the study of metaphor. One of its central principles is the embodied conceptual structure, which relates directly to the commitments cited above, since the bodily experience associated with a conceptual structure is part of what makes that structure meaningful.

> Metaphor is fundamental to conceptual processing. Abstract concepts are partly created from the metaphorical mapping of embodied source domains onto various target domains. In fact, abstract concepts would not exist in the ways that they do in ordinary cognition without body-based metaphor. (Gibbs, 2005, p. 122)

In other words, we think the way we think and express ourselves the way we do because we have these specific bodies in an environment with specific properties. For example, we express ourselves through metaphors such as "*subir na vida"* [rising in life], which possess the metaphorical mapping GOOD IS UP because our body and our experience condition us to it. We could hardly use a metaphorical mapping like BAD IS UP, since our upright bodies feel the weight of gravity: we are pulled down when we are sad, sick, or when carrying a very heavy object.

Zoltán Kövecses (2002) is one of the authors who emphasize the role of the body in metaphorical mappings associated with our emotions. According to him, metaphor is a primary agent in the conceptual and discursive organization of individuals. His work stands out for examining the role not only of the body but of emotion and culture

in the production of meaning. In our daily lives, we usually interlink what we know about the language we speak with what we experience in the world. When we say that two people have an "*amizade sólida*" [solid friendship], for example, we combine all the knowledge we have about what objects classified as solid are (when we hold a solid object, we normally cannot easily destroy it with our own hands) and interpersonal relationships to describe something present in our daily lives. Therefore, based on our bodily experience, a friendship classified as solid would be an interpersonal relationship difficult to destroy.

In fact, the main contribution of the theories that form the theoretical framework of Cognitive Linguistics is to bring the body to the center of discussions regarding the relationship between language and thought. This perspective emphasizes that the human body and sensory experience play a fundamental role in understanding and producing language. Metaphors, gestures, mental representations, and textual comprehension are strongly influenced by our sensory experiences and the way we interact with the world around us.

## CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY AND PRIMARY METAPHOR THEORY

Sometimes, human experiences can be abstract and subjective. Relationships, feelings, and emotions, for example, are elements that are part of our daily routine, but that can be difficult to express using only everyday words. The organization and interpretation of our experiences and thoughts are fundamental to our coexistence in society. And, according to Zoltán Kövecses (2002), conceptual metaphors help in this task, allowing us to understand and express abstract concepts with terms that refer to more concrete and/or sensory concepts. In Cognitive Linguistics, conceptual metaphor involves the mapping of a source domain (more concrete and familiar) onto a target domain (more abstract and less familiar).



The process of creating conceptual metaphors is due to the imaginative capacity of human reason, in the sense that the most significant structures for human beings derive from their daily bodily experience. The expression "*assim não vamos a lugar nenhum*" [this way, we are not going anywhere], for example, instantiates a metaphorical mapping in which interpersonal relationships are understood through our bodily experiences with journeys; the metaphor is understood through a cultural experience, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2008) state:

> Cultural assumptions, values, and attitudes are not a conceptual overlay which we may or may not place upon experience as we choose. It would be more correct to say that all experience is cultural through and through, that we experience our "world" in such a way that our culture is already present in the very experience itself. (p. 57)

Overall, Conceptual Metaphor Theory offers a deep and comprehensive approach to understanding metaphors as a linguistically, cognitively, and culturally relevant phenomenon. Furthermore, according to Kövecses (2002), if the conceptual

system that governs how we experience the world, how we think, and how we act is partially metaphorical, then (conceptual) metaphors must be realized not only in language but also in many other modes of expression of human experience. Thus, the notion of metaphor is a reflection of the conceptual structures of the human mind and an essential tool for the expression, understanding, and communication of the reality that surrounds us.

Conceptual metaphors such as HAPPINESS IS UP or DIFFICULTY IS WEIGHT arise from innate and bodily associations with universal basic experiences, and for this reason, they are called primary metaphors. Primary Metaphor Theory, proposed by Joseph Grady in his 1997 thesis, is a central part of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and concerns the idea that our understanding of abstract concepts is built from our bodily and perceptual experience with the physical world, indicating that metaphors are not just a matter of language, but rather a fundamental way of structuring human thought.

Grady (1997) describes how certain scenes and events occur daily in our experiences across quite diverse contexts of our daily life, depending on our goals and desires. As these events and scenes occur repeatedly in our daily lives, our cognitive system ends up having a subjective understanding of these events, something Grady calls a "primary scene". According to him, the more discrete and individual dimensions of these experiences, such as intimacy and proximity, are called "subscenes".



Grady further states that one advantage of Primary Metaphor Theory is the ease with which conceptual metaphors are classified. For any metaphorical expression used, instead of invoking a long list of correspondences (as happens with LIFE IS A JOURNEY) its proper correspondence must simply be basic and primary.

In summary, according to this theory, human beings build much of their thought and understanding of the world through metaphors that are based on physical and sensory experiences. Thus, we use these metaphors derived from bodily experiences to better understand abstract and complex concepts, such as our feelings and emotions.

## METAPHORICAL NICHE

In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2008) discuss "entailments". This concept is used to explain the emergence of new metaphors, which are linked in some way to a conceptual metaphor or cognitive idea with conventional mappings. However, there are situations in which the speaker produces metaphors in discourse that may not necessarily be conventionalized, a common practice used in poetic writing.

According to Vereza (2013), the speaker can explore metaphors through these "entailments" or discursive mappings, which play both an argumentative and a cognitive role in discourse, creating a text whose cohesion can be characterized by what she calls a "metaphorical niche": a group of metaphorical expressions, interrelated, that can be seen as cognitive and discursive developments of a

superordinate metaphorical proposition normally present (or inferred) in the co-text itself (Vereza, 2007, p. 496, my translation).

Therefore, new crossings between different domains formed by developments of specific metaphors can occur from a single conceptual metaphor. In other words, the concept of a metaphorical niche refers to networks or cognitive-discursive intersections formed by the developments of specific metaphors. Unlike a conceptual metaphor, a metaphorical niche does not correspond to a single metaphorical instance but rather to an entire network of meaning that is built within a semantic-discursive textual unit, as occurs in *Tudo é rio*.

## METAPHOR IDENTIFICATION IN FICTION

Many scholars seem to agree that metaphorical expressions typically found in literature are quite creative, complex, interesting, and subject to various interpretations, unlike what we find in non-literary texts. According to Semino and Steen (2008), literary writers use metaphors to go beyond common sense and extend our common literary and/or conceptual resources, providing new insights and perspectives on the human experience.

The ability to propose creative linguistic expressions is widely used by fiction writers as a way to guide us beyond the unconscious and automatic uses of metaphors common to our routine, in addition to making the writing more poetic.



In A Method for Linguistic Metaphor Identification (Steen et al., 2010), in the section on identifying metaphors in fiction, the authors discuss the prompt identification of words used metaphorically in this genre and point out that the most interesting questions regarding the subject are related to three specific characteristics of fiction: *directly expressed metaphors, character descriptions, and personification*.

Directly expressed metaphors occur through analogies and literal or non-literal comparisons. They are considered "direct" because the words written in the book that refer to the universe created in the story—that is, the source domains—are used directly at the linguistic level. In the example "*Ouvir Venâncio falando seu nome foi (como) música*" [Hearing Venâncio speaking her name was [like] music] (Madeira, 2021, p. 17), the word *music* is understood as a harmonious combination of sounds, something that pleases the ears. We promptly understand that the sound of Venâncio's voice pronouncing Dalva's name was good to hear. Directly expressed metaphors are commonly signaled by the use of the words *como* ('like') or *parece* ('seems') in their construction.

On the other hand, when the objective of the literary text is to describe the characters (what they look like, how they are, and what they are doing) it is quite likely that many of the words used will appear as metaphors. We can look at the following excerpt:

> sua beleza de brisa vinha aos poucos, era preciso demorar os olhos nela. Tinha um jeito de andar bom de ver, a cabeça erguida e um balanço suave, com

> música no passo [her breeze-like beauty came gradually, it was necessary to linger one's eyes on her. She had a way of walking that was good to see, her head held high and a gentle sway, with music in her step] (Madeira, 2021, p. 17).

With this example, we can see that as soon as the text leaves physical reality and seeks to describe mental and psychological states, or make mental evaluations, the number of metaphors used tends to increase, as we are leaving a concrete world with physical objects and moving into the field of emotions and feelings (abstract concepts). This is what happens with the description of the character Dalva in *Tudo é rio* cited in the excerpt above.

When discussing personification in A Method for Linguistic Metaphor Identification (Steen *et al*., 2010), the authors divide it into two subtopics: *personification and character description,* and *personification and linguistic form.*

A) *Personification and Character Description:*

When the writer of a literary work chooses to describe an action, it is possible to make this description focusing on the character themselves, on a specific body part, or even on an action of that body, as occurs in the following example: "*sentiu o solavanco seco da voz dela cuspindo revoltada: vai embora*" [he felt the dry jolt of her voice spitting out in revolt: go away] (Madeira, 2021, p. 97). It is possible to identify a metonymy in the mentioned phrase at first glance, but that does not mean it cannot also be classified as a metaphor.



Such a combination of metonymy and metaphor is conceptualized by some linguists as "metaphtonymy" or "metaphor from metonymy". Steen (2007) clarifies that finding a metonymy does not exclude the possibility of finding a metaphor, as metaphors and metonymies are not opposing forces, but rather interactive ones. In the example cited in the previous paragraph, we can see a metonymy first, since it is not the voice that usually spits words, but the mouth. Analyzing more deeply, we also perceive a metaphor, generated by the mapping between spitting and harshness. In other words, saying that the voice spat is a metaphorical way of conveying the idea that a sentence was said in a harsh manner.

B) *Personification and Linguistic Form:*

Here, the authors comment on a specific type of personification, the personification of nature, which manifests in discourse and highlights the animation or personality of natural phenomena. In other words, the writer of a literary work chooses to attribute verbs that would be used to describe human actions to actions produced by natural phenomena. A very poetic example frequently used in fiction books is "*a chuva dançava lá fora*" [the rain danced outside]. In this sentence, the verb *to dance*, besides being a metaphor to describe the way the raindrops were moving, is a verb that describes a human action, but which is being used in this context to describe the movement of a natural phenomenon, giving it a human attribute. In this way, we feel closer to the description, and it is possible to visualize the scenario created by the writer in a more animistic way.

Taking into account these three specific characteristics of fiction discussed in the previous paragraphs, we can observe that fiction writers use metaphors to lead their readers beyond everyday thoughts and reflections and the automatic and unconscious use of metaphors.

If, according to Cognitive Linguistics, metaphors are not just decorative elements but an indispensable tool for the study of language and thought, then their use in a fiction text can be seen as a conscious choice by the writer to enrich their text and transmit deeper meanings to their readers. *In Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2008) use the example "he attacked every weak point in my argument" (a linguistic instantiation of the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR) to discuss how everyday metaphors seem to be conventional, while literary metaphors seem to be more creative and innovative explorations of the same mapping. Since these conceptual metaphors structure our perception and behavior, and form an essential part of our culture, the understanding and perception of literary metaphors will vary according to the reader's perspective and their cultural context.

## METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive, qualitative case study of a single literary work, *Tudo é rio* (Madeira, 2021), complemented by frequency counts of the conceptual metaphors identified. The corpus was built through a full manual reading of the printed book (206 pages), in which every sentence containing a word related to liquids was marked.



The first practical stage of the research was the selection of the sentences contained in the book. For this selection, the work was completely read in physical format, and whenever a word related to liquids appeared during the reading, such as *lágrimas* ('tears'), *chuva* ('rain'), *rio* ('river'), *mar* ('sea'), the entire sentence was marked. Words such as *seco* ('dry'), *ressecado* ('parched'), and *deserto* ('desert') were also considered part of the group of words related to liquids, since we can understand *deserto* as the absence of water, just as the words *seco* and *ressecado* are used to define something that at a certain moment was, or should have been, wet or damp.

After being read and manually highlighted, the excerpts were all digitized into a Word document for better visualizing and deciding the best way to arrange these sentences to make them more didactic and visual.

Once the sentences were chosen and digitized, the identification of linguistic metaphors followed MIPVU (Steen *et al*., 2010), an extension of the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP; Pragglejaz Group, 2007). Each lexical unit in the highlighted sentences was analyzed by comparing its contextual meaning with its basic meaning. A unit was considered metaphor-related when its contextual meaning contrasted with, but can be understood in comparison to, a more basic meaning, which is typically more concrete, bodily related, or more precise. Direct metaphors, implicit metaphors, and personification were also considered, as provided for by MIPVU. Once the linguistic metaphors were identified, the underlying conceptual metaphors were inferred by (1) identifying the source and target concepts of each expression, (2)

establishing the cross-domain correspondences, and (3) formulating the conceptual metaphor in the TARGET IS SOURCE format. Sentences instantiating more than one conceptual metaphor were coded under each of them.

In addition to metaphorical sentences related to liquids, the book also contained several other metaphors; for this reason, it is important to remember that, for the purposes of this research, only metaphors from the group containing words related to liquids were used, and the other metaphors were set aside. Then, analyzing the linguistic metaphors related to liquids one by one, it was possible to identify the following underlying conceptual metaphors:

EMOTION IS LIQUID (with 31 occurrences);
RELATIONSHIP IS LIQUID (with 11 occurrences);
LIFE IS WATER (with 11 occurrences);
EMOTION IS HEAT (with four occurrences);
LIFE IS THE SEA (with three occurrences);
LIFE IS A JOURNEY (with two occurrences);
BODY IS A LANDSCAPE (with one occurrence);
PERSON IS LIQUID (with one occurrence);
DIFFICULTY IS LIQUID (with one occurrence);
IMPURITY IS LIQUID/DIRTY (with one occurrence);
EMOTION IS A CONTAINER (with one occurrence).



With these conceptual metaphors in hand, their respective sentences were placed in tables (available at https://osf.io/xecta/files/osfstorage/6967e450076729db38034cea) so they could be visualized more effectively, as many of them instantiate up to two conceptual metaphors. For example, the sentence "*O pai de Dalva, seu Antônio, era mais bravo, mas Aurora sabia abaixar a fervura dele*" [Dalva's father, Mr. Antônio, was angrier, but Aurora knew how to lower his boil] (Madeira, 2021, p. 70) instantiates the conceptual metaphors EMOTION IS LIQUID and also EMOTION IS HEAT.

It is also important to highlight that the analysis performed was not exhaustive; that is, not all sentences initially highlighted as liquid-related metaphorical sentences proceeded to the next stage. This is because repetitions of meaning were excluded: for example, if there were two highlights regarding tears with the same sense, one of them was set aside. This discard criterion was chosen so that we could reduce the number of metaphors to be processed and thus work more effectively within the available time. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the analysis focused only on the metaphors that remained after the exclusion criterion was applied.

In total, 65 linguistic metaphors were selected and (according to the list above). In addition to these 65 linguistic metaphors, four other sentences highlighted from the book were subsequently classified only as metonymies, and for this reason, they did not become part of any table. However, as seen in the section on identifying metaphors in fiction, some authors (e.g., Steen, 2007) work with the existence of "metaphors from metonymy" or "metaphtonymies"; therefore, one highlighted excerpt included in the table is classified as both a metaphor and a metonymy, since the two can be confused.

The hierarchy was created in descending order, starting with the conceptual metaphor that had the most occurrences (EMOTION IS LIQUID) and ending with those that had only one occurrence (BODY IS A LANDSCAPE, PERSON IS LIQUID, DIFFICULTY IS LIQUID, IMPURITY IS LIQUID/DIRTY, and EMOTION IS A CONTAINER).

Readers can refer to the examples and procedures in the following link: https://osf.io/xecta/files/osfstorage/6967e450076729db38034cea; the words referr ing to liquids are in blue—so that it was possible to identify the metaphoricity more quickly—and other tables are highlighted in green—since some of them possessed more than one conceptual metaphor. Let us see one example: *Uma mulher castanha, sem extremos, sem surpresa. Uma água morna e fosca* [A woman of a brown hue, nothing extreme, nothing surprising. Lukewarm, murky water]. (Madeira, 2021, p. 39)

## ANALYSIS

The title of the book already anticipates it: *Tudo é rio* refers to liquids and everything related to them on practically all of its 206 pages. With this, we can perceive that Carla Madeira (2021) build the entire narrative of her story through metaphors about liquids. Another aspect that stands out from the analysis is the fact that, although the linguistic metaphors refer to liquids, their conceptual metaphors are not necessarily restricted to the source domain LIQUID. This occurred in the case of the conceptual metaphors BODY IS A LANDSCAPE, EMOTION IS HEAT, EMOTION IS A CONTAINER, and LIFE IS A JOURNEY.



In the section on identifying metaphors in fiction, we discussed three specific characteristics of this phenomenon in fiction: directly expressed metaphors, character descriptions, and personification. Among the metaphors selected from Carla Madeira's work, it was possible to identify occurrences that fit into these three possibilities.

Here we have an example of a *directly expressed metaphor*, constructed through analogies and comparisons signaled by the word "*como*".

> Agora, cruzar o descampado entre a igreja e a casa de Francisca, depois de tanto correrem os rios, era [como] um voo com asas coloridas [Now, crossing the open field between the church and Francisca's house, after so many rivers had run, was [like] a flight with colored wings] (Madeira, 2021, p. 198).

Taking the context of the story into account, we can understand that after suffering for a long time every time she traveled from the church to Francisca's house, the character finally made that path for a good reason; she was happy at that moment. The flight is precisely the path that Dalva took every day, and the colored wings evoke happiness, since our tendency is to associate bright colors with happy moments and darker colors with sad moments.

In this next sentence, we have an example of *character description*, which are metaphors that occur mainly when we talk about mental evaluations or the description of emotions linked to the characters: "*O pai de Dalva, seu Antônio, era mais bravo, mas Aurora sabia abaixar a fervura dele*" [Dalva's father, Mr. Antônio, was angrier, but Aurora knew how to lower his boil] (Madeira, 2021, p. 41).

In "*Aurora sabia abaixar a fervura dele*" [Aurora knew how to lower his boil], the word *fervura* [boil] describes the most striking feeling of Antônio: the anger that invades him with the same intensity as water boils when it is on the fire.

Finally, we have an example of *personification*: "*Sentiu o solavanco seco da voz dela cuspindo revoltada: Vai embora*" [He felt the dry jolt of her voice spitting out in revolt: Go away] (Madeira, 2021, p. 97).

The mentioned highlight is identified as personification and character description; this is because the novelist chooses to describe an action using metaphors that focus on the character themselves or on a specific body part. Thus, with personification and character description, metaphors and metonymies can be confused, as is the case here, since the word *cuspindo* (spitting) is used metaphorically to describe something that was spoken harshly, and at the same time, it is possible to identify the metonymy PART FOR THE WHOLE.

From this, we can see that the metaphors in Carla Madeira's novel corroborate the central idea of Conceptual Metaphor Theory. That is, they are not limited to figurative linguistic expressions; they are there to fulfill the role of structuring our thoughts and perceptions about abstract domains through the transfer of meanings from a more concrete and sensory domain to a more abstract domain. This point of the work is essential, as the presented conceptual metaphors allow us to understand complex and abstract concepts based on our bodily and sensory experience.



The conceptual metaphor EMOTION IS LIQUID, for example, which was at the top of the list for containing the largest number of occurrences, is used throughout the story to demonstrate all the power that our emotions exert over us. Madeira uses liquids and everything derived from them to create metaphors that bring us closer to each character's emotions; it is precisely this which makes us read *Tudo é rio* and clearly feel the flood of feelings it carries.

An important development of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is Primary Metaphor Theory. Grady (1997) conceptualizes primary metaphors as those created from scenes that occur in our daily experiences in a repetitive manner; that is, they are widely used in our daily lives, even if this often happens unconsciously. Therefore, we can say that the conceptual metaphors selected from *Tudo é rio* to be part of this research derive from primary metaphors.

For example, the conceptual metaphor EMOTION IS A CONTAINER can be considered an instantiation of the primary metaphor EMOTIONS ARE PHYSICAL STATES: "*E então, quando os dois jantavam, como sempre faziam, perdidos em boa conversa e olhares demorados, ela transbordou: Estou grávida, amor*" [And then, when the two were having dinner, as they always did, lost in good conversation and long looks, she overflowed: I'm pregnant, my love] (Madeira, 2021, p. 117). While the primary

metaphor EMOTIONS ARE PHYSICAL STATES refers to the direct association between emotions and physical sensations, the conceptual metaphor EMOTION IS A CONTAINER expands this association by introducing the idea of containers to understand how emotions are stored, released, or controlled within us.

From the moment Madeira (2021) builds the metaphors of *Tudo é rio* based on conceptual metaphors and creates new, non-conventionalized metaphors from them, we can work with the idea that the cohesion of the narrative is characterized by what Solange Vereza (2013) calls a "metaphorical niche".

Of the 11 conceptual metaphors found, seven are related to liquids, whether they are elements or phenomena of nature, or even liquids that are not previously defined. Since the conceptual metaphors with the most occurrences were EMOTION IS LIQUID, RELATIONSHIP IS LIQUID, and LIFE IS WATER, we can say that the narrative and argumentation of *Tudo é rio* are built on various metaphorical niches that instantiate specific conceptual metaphors (such as EMOTION IS LIQUID) which develop from the general conceptual metaphor LIFE IS LIQUID.

What Carla Madeira shows us is that we, as human beings, are surrounded by all these liquids that are part of our existence. Our life is carried by this constant flow of water that cannot be controlled throughout our mundane trajectory. And this interpretation is only possible because the narrative of *Tudo é rio* is made from all these conceptual metaphors, which interlink and form the metaphorical niche mentioned in the previous paragraph.



According to Cognitive Linguistics, metaphors are rooted in our daily experience and in how we interact with the world, and analyzing *Tudo é rio* through this perspective, we can understand why this book is so different from the literature we are used to. Carla Madeira used something inherent to our cognition, capable of shaping our worldview and our social interactions, as a key piece in the construction of her novel: metaphors.

## CONCLUSION

The present article sought to investigate the influence of metaphors within a literary narrative from the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics. By analyzing the role they play in our language and thought, as well as their manifestation in the fictional story written by Carla Madeira, we were able to explore the ways in which metaphors shape our perception of the world around us.

The study of metaphor has always been an important topic in the field of literary research, but Cognitive Linguistics offered a valuable and insightful lens for us to understand the cognitive basis of metaphors, studying them beyond the aesthetic level that figures of speech bestow upon a text. Through the lens of Cognitive Linguistics, we can perceive that *Tudo é rio* uses metaphors beyond textual ornamentation; they play a central role in the construction of the narrative, capturing emotional nuances that would be more difficult to reach if the writer chose to use only literal language. The story is not just composed of random metaphors commonly used

in our daily lives; the metaphors chosen to compose the narrative belong to a specific source domain: LIQUID. From this domain, Madeira creates an entire literary universe based on the liquids that accompany us throughout our lives, from birth to death.

The premise of *Tudo é rio* would not be the same if it were not for the precise choice of metaphors that constitute its story, as it is through the mapping of familiar concepts and domains that we understand more abstract domains. We are able to feel so close to the characters because metaphors allow the transfer of knowledge and the elaboration of connections between our different human experiences. Choosing to write "*a gente não escolhe sentir ciúme ele sobe como um vapor*" [we don't choose to feel jealousy; it rises like a vapor] (Madeira, 2021, p. 157) instead of simply writing *a gente não escolhe sentir ciúme* [we don't choose to feel jealousy] highlights that Madeira did not just want to describe the obviousness of the feeling of jealousy, but rather to make readers experience the exact emotion of the character based on our own bodily experience with that feeling.

In summary, the study of metaphor highlights that literature transcends mere narrative, inviting us to examine how language is capable of influencing the perception of our existence, and showing that metaphors are fundamental elements of our human condition. In that way, the contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that a single source domain can organize a considerable part of the metaphorical structure of a novel, and in describing how its specific mappings are interrelated. By analyzing a Brazilian Portuguese literary work, the article also broadens the empirical basis of research on metaphor in literature, which has relied heavily on English-language data.



These findings are limited to one novel and to the sentences retrieved through liquid-related lexical selection; metaphors with other source domains were left out by design. An exclusion criterion (repetitions of meaning) removed some excerpts, which means the reported frequencies refer to distinct metaphorical uses and may underestimate recurrent mappings.

Finally, the identification and coding were carried out by a single analyst without a second rater, so the choice and formulation of the conceptual metaphors, especially in cases admitting more than one mapping, may reflect interpretive subjectivity. Future studies could involve multiple coders and report inter-rater agreement.

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