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Conceptualizing the metaphors of drug abusers

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Abstract

The intention of this article is to demonstrate, within the framework of cognitive linguistics (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980a), how slang words associated with substance abuse are conceptualized via metaphors. This study analyses recreational drug slang terms found in the *Drug Slang Dictionary* in order to reveal categories of metaphors involved in drug users' language. The results of the data analysis effectively reveal that, within a thematic approach, classes of metaphor are coded to enable connections between metaphorical concepts and drug addicts' physiological experiences in order to present their personal meanings and cognitive processes. The study also involves drug addicts' narratives to identify conceptual metaphors in their experiences. Notably, it is argued within this research that figurative language use is also connected to the cultural background of users to a great extent.

Keywords

metaphors, conceptualization, thematic approach, coding, narratives

Introduction

The cognitive paradigm proposed by Langacker (1987), Lakoff (1980a), and Talmy (1983) emphasizes the relationship between experiential and perceptual features in the language. Following a cognitive approach to semantic and pragmatic phenomena (Langacker, 1987; Lakoff, 1980a; Talmy, 1983) the present study is grounded in a cognitive understanding of dependencies and mappings between cognition and perception. In cognitive linguistics (CL), perception is assigned an essential role in the study of prototypicality, schematicity and metaphoricality (Chapman and Routledge, 2009).

The metaphor has been a primary focus of CL theories and in the multidisciplinary field of metaphor studies. CL investigations highlighting metaphor usage usually apply linguistic approaches to reveal the characteristics of metaphoric thought and language. The numerous hypotheses set up

in support of the metaphor often appear to present contradictory findings including alternative theories of the subject. *The comparison school of thought* (Bottini et al., 1994) claims people generally interpret metaphors by converting them into similes. According to *the property matching hypothesis* (Johnson and Malgady, 1979), there are properties of the topic which are identical to those in the vehicle. The topic is the focus of the conversation, while the vehicle is some exemplar we use to comment on the topic. Glucksberg (1998) formulates the *class inclusion hypothesis* in which the subject is a member of the category represented by the vehicle and therefore inherits the properties of members of the group. *The conceptual mapping theory* (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980a; Gibbs, 1994) suggests our understanding of words is based on finding connections between different domains of concepts. In other words, a word is understood because of its

relationship to another word or concept. The conceptual mapping theory (CMT) claims utterances are conceived by starting a fundamental metaphor into action and building connections between the target and source domains. A source domain is a conceptual domain that organizes the unknown in terms of the known. A target domain is a conceptual domain that is understood metaphorically in terms of the source domain. Fundamental metaphors include space, movement, force, agency and duration (Traxler, 2011).

Former approaches in processing metaphors incorporate a commonality in the use of identical properties between concepts to facilitate comprehending unknown concepts when compared to something which is known and clearly understood. This particular idealism is now surpassed by a new approach which focuses primarily on the physical basis of understanding and fully grasping concepts.

Gibbs (2003) firmly claims embodiment plays a significant role in metaphorical interpretations. This idea is based on distinctive expressions which are associated with experience and physical processes that have an effect on the body. Lakoff and Johnson claim (1980a) that metaphorical orientations are not arbitrary. Up-down spatialization of metaphorical concepts arises from physical experience. Consequently, upright positions exhibit positive emotional states and declining positions are linked with depression. According to the abovementioned authors, this claim is reinforced by the experiential gestalt which is a multidimensional structured whole (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980(b): 202) based on experience. This gestalt can be described using the organizational structure of experience, such as scripts (Schank and Abelson, 1977), frames (Filmore, 1976) and schemas (Norman and Rumelhart, 1975). Particular dimensions or frames create the structure of activities and are the basis of our concepts.

However, due to the contradictory findings of cognitive linguists on metaphors, researchers have sought empirical evidence from psycholinguists to support their claims.

Psycholinguistic studies involve two main areas. One emphasizes the sense-making

process of people in their metaphor use. Matheson's (2005) dissertation and Glotova's study (2013) reveal that using metaphors assists people in articulating their thoughts, feelings and responses during interviews. As human thinking occurs in images, metaphors seem to be powerful tools in demonstrating cognitive processes. The objective of the former study was to describe the experience of powerlessness among women in a twelve-step substance abuse recovery programme. The Zaltman metaphor elicitation technique (ZMET, 1995) was employed to reveal experiences using language with metaphorical images. Women in the research personalized the images that expressed their feelings. Metaphors aided subjects to formulate an abstract concept such as powerlessness and place themselves in the picture. In their study, Shinebourne and Smith (2010) demonstrate that hermeneutic options, which unveil the capacity of metaphors, may demonstrate connections between distant ideas of clients disclosing more about their conditions. Redden et al. (2013) made a significant contribution to metaphor analysis in the recovery of substance abusers' sense-making processes. The stages included memory, transition and motivation, recovery, and maintaining recovery phases with related particular metaphor use. The authors were able to provide a picture of the turning points in drug addiction, therapy and recovery by identifying the metaphor use of people in different stages of drug use.

The contradictory findings may warn researchers about accepting their data on metaphors without more profound analysis. Thus, an even greater scientific reflection is needed to demonstrate the physiological basis of figurative language and its usage in the sense-making process of individuals. We argue within this study that drug use as a triggering factor may induce physiological states which may be responsible for the particular use of metaphorical language by subjects. In trying to map and define metaphorical groups, we hope to be able to give insights into the functioning of mental processes using essential aspects of meaning construction. The metaphors in drug users' experience create a system where the affective, cognitive and dynamic dimensions

are interconnected. The dimensions are represented by fundamental metaphors which reflect the positive and negative impressions of the addicts. We find the origin of fundamental metaphors in the physiological state of the subjects. In addition, the choice of metaphor depends on the cultural environment in which it is embedded. This thorough explanation of metaphor use has not been reported previously in linguistic studies.

1. Methods

The method we adopt complies with the central tenets of the grounded theory described by Strauss and Corbin in 1990. Grounded theory is an example of the iterative-thematic approach to data analysis (Hansen, 2006). It identifies themes which can be considered as patterns of interest in a text. Grounded theory uses systematic coding procedures such as open, axial and selective coding to show repeated patterns in texts. First, open coding involves breaking data into categories. Secondly, in axial coding, connections are found between classes, and finally during selective coding the analyst makes an attempt to integrate groups and relationships into a whole. To best represent the interests of neutrality in approaching the polarized issues concerning this paper, genuine samples were carefully selected from various recreational drug discussion forums and excerpts from texts featuring drug users' authentic narratives. These examples include both positive and negative drug experiences to best describe and articulate the bipolar sensations of habitual drug users. We are convinced the thematic approach to data analysis and the representation of the categories of metaphors in drug abusers' narratives will contribute to a deeper understanding of cognitive processes and meaning construction in the analysed excerpts from the texts.

We used an internet source, namely the "Drug Slang Dictionary" (DSD), as a database including drug-related words and expressions from A to Z. The dictionary involved 3,184 words and expressions in total. We used the source domain approach in our investigation to obtain a detailed picture of the character of the metaphors.

Open coding revealed six main themes in the data, such as journey, flying, depression, happiness, transcendence and explosion. Minor themes which could be linked to the major ones were also found in the corpus. They were as follows: colours, sweetness, love and blow. Certainly, several other themes could be derived from the data, such as the origin of the drug (Mexican, Thai), but considering the limits of our analysis we used only five of the above themes; namely happiness, depression, transcendence, flying and journey. These major themes showed salience compared to other ones. Naturally, not all items within a theme are represented in the study, but this fact is not likely to reduce the merit of the analysis.

Two analysts evaluated the data separately. The author read the expressions of the dictionary three times and noted the concepts emerging from the data with the codes relevant to the classes of information. A research assistant coded the data separately to check the coding process of the author. The author and the research assistant then met to compare coding, discuss differences of opinion and detail the collection of codes. As the construction of themes shows similarity with the conceptualization process, we can conclude that the themes in the DSD serve as metaphorical concepts. Thus, the topics in the dictionary appeared as conceptual metaphors, and the narratives served as evidence. As the expressions in the dictionary were only simple examples shorn of context, we felt it necessary to demonstrate their realization in everyday discourse. After finding the primary items in the drug dictionary, excerpts of texts from books and samples from drug discussion forums were sought that could be connected to the themes in order to identify the conceptual metaphors in the experiences of the people's narratives. The narratives served as examples highlighting the use of metaphors in real language, but were not part of the analysis. Two types of texts were used for the analysis. One type described pleasant experiences; the other one highlighted the adverse drug experiences of the drug users. The positive and weak extremities of experience were intended to emphasize the bipolar sensations of the

subjects. In the study, the text featuring pleasant impressions appeared before the narrative excerpt describing wretched feelings. The second part of the analysis aimed to reveal the links between the categories or conceptual metaphors. Finally, the analyst attempted to integrate the conceptual metaphors into meaning construction as a whole within the selective coding process. With the help of a two-level analysis of the numerous aspects and details in metaphorical meaning construction, we are closer in detecting fundamental metaphors from the samples and understand the mental processes in humans.

2. Analysis

2.1 Open coding: Conceptualizing metaphors of affective, cognitive and behavioural-dynamic states of mind in slang

Psychotherapy (McMullen and Conway, 1996) often involves clients' experiences in describing their emotions and thoughts to reveal the underlying meaning in their thinking, attitudes and activities. Clients' language use is a rich context for metaphors where the actual meaning is strengthened by a figurative sense showing a deeper understanding of people's way of thinking.

In our study, we selected metaphors from the "Drug Slang Dictionary" and coded the instances as intrapersonal metaphors. Metaphors for the emotional, cognitive and behavioural-dynamic states of the drug abusers were found. Intrapersonal metaphors were selected, as the subjects described their experiences without explicit references to other people or the external world. Among the fundamental emotions identified in the literature, only two inordinate ones were represented in the examples. "Happiness" as a confident, healthy feeling and "Depression" as an adverse, negative state occurred in the items of the dictionary. The metaphors of "Transcendence" described the cognitive state of drug users. Notably, two behavioural-dynamic metaphors were found among the examples in the dictionary, namely "Journey" and "Flying". They could be categorized as process metaphors, in which the clients' experience was connected to motion and change.

In line with Lakoff's (1987) analysis, the study attempts to reveal the coherence and underlying thought process behind the metaphor use concerning emotions and mental state during drug use.

First, our attention was focused on metaphors concerning the emotional state of drug users. In light of this examination, we can state the fact that the psychological conception of recreational drug use is bipolar in nature.

2.1.1 Metaphors of Happiness

The following words and expressions in the dictionary describe how the drug experience can be a happy, high condition.

Marijuana - joy smoke
Early stages of drug use - honeymoon
PCP - happy sticks
Cocaine - joy powder

Subthemes of Happiness

Colours

Marijuana - red cross, bud
PCP - orange crystal
Depressants - yellow jackets
Marijuana - yellow submarine
Cocaine - golden dust
LSD - golden dragon

Sweetness

MDMA - chocolate chip cookies
Crack - chocolate rock
Heroin - sweet dreams

Love

Marijuana/PCP - love leaf
Marijuana - baby
Amphetamine - Christmas tree

Interestingly, what seems to be clear from these examples is the conception of "Happiness" in reference to the relation between the body's perception and the physical appearance of the substance. To provide a more comprehensive picture of the metaphor "Happiness", we can state that it comes from a substance causing a pleasurable sensation within the body. Thus, the source domain of the metaphor is built up as follows. The excitement results from a substance. It follows from the above that

metaphors of “Happiness” are associated with the physical properties of the drug, emphasizing the physical experience produced by it. The subthemes of “Happiness” are also related to the physical effects of the drug. The vivid colours affect the visual senses and represent a pleasant mental state. The senses of taste indicate sweetness, expressing the enjoyable effect of the subject. The subthemes of “Love” (baby) and “Christmas” can be associated with the major theme of “Happiness”. Albeit, the concept of “Happiness” is not related to any material objects in the narratives; only the sensation is described in the following excerpt.

(1) *“My emotional state was elevated sometimes up to euphoria.”* Alexander Shulgin, TIHKAL (1997).

2.1.2 Metaphors of Depression

In the “Drug Slang Dictionary” (DSD), most of the metaphors of “Depression” subject to analysis are differently construed from those of “Happiness”, as they appear to be less related to the physical appearance of the drug. The only exception is the subtheme of “Colour” which displays a similar metaphor construction to that of “Happiness” (the target domain is constructed by the physical experience caused by the source domain’s object).

Heroin - blue star
 LSD - blue magic, blue moon, blue cheers
 Depressants - blue angels, a devil, or blue Heaven
 Depressants - ups and downs

Subtheme

Colour

Amphetamine - black Cadillacs
 LSD - black acid
 Heroin - brown sugar

The source domain of the metaphor of “Depression” emphasizes the emotional condition of the client, i.e. the deprivation of happiness. On the other hand, it refers to the cognitive-transcendental features of the experience caused by the target domain. They demonstrate the spiritual experience of

the drug abuser and indicate bipolar perceptions at the same time. Metaphoric representations, such as an angel, or heaven, including their spatial positions, are firmly connected to Christian religion and are therefore culturally determined. Our findings on the metaphors of depression confirm those of McMullen and Conway (1998). They provided possible groupings for the metaphors of depression, such as “Depression is descent” and “Depression is darkness”.

Drawing on the findings of the corpus of the “Drug Slang Dictionary” (DSD), it can be postulated that “Depression” represents a negative downward motion from a positive upright position. Angels and Heaven manifest an active vertical while the Devil represents a negative and downward feeling and place. In the narrative excerpts, the metaphors of “Depression” are often associated with polar spatial expressions referring to the simultaneous and bipolar perceptions of descent. Based on this, the metaphor of “Depression” results from an active mental state followed through a downward motion to a depressed state.

(2) *“It was so beautiful that when I came down. Perfect love and unity, as I came down,”* Nick Sand, “A wee bit more about DMT”, The Entheogen Review Vol. X, No.2 (1988).

(3) *“When I came out I heard my friend’s voice in the usual cold, stilted fashion that it sounds like when coming down.”* Terence McKenna, *The Archaic Revival* (1992).

2.1.3 Metaphors of Transcendence

Cognitive metaphors in the DSD are mostly related to the reasoning process; therefore, they can express experiences that are transcendental in nature.

PCP - an angel, or angel dust, angel hair, angel mist
 Cocaine - angel powder
 Cocaine - Heaven dust
 Crack - devil drug
 PCP - devil’s dust
 Heroin - hell dust

Within the metaphor structure of “Transcendence”, it is possible to trace similar relations with that of “Happiness”.

The conceptions of “Transcendence” involve a relationship between the spiritual manifestation of the experience (angel, heaven) and the physical characteristics of the drug (powder, dust, mist) in the source domain. While the conceptions of “Happiness” involve bodily sensations, those of “Transcendence” refer to supernatural entities. The material features in the metaphors of “Happiness” and “Depression” correspond. From these examples, it is apparent that the substance of the drug causes transcendental experiences for the drug user. The narratives add two more features to the metaphor of “Transcendence”: godlike creatures represent the positive side while demons exhibit a negative motif in the experience. As in the case of the metaphors of “Depression”, those of “Transcendence” also express bipolar sensations that can be either good or evil. The active emotions are related to the expressions of “light” and “unity” while the negative ones are connected to the isolation of the individual in the excerpts below. It is not difficult to find clues to the dualistic conception of world-view in the oppositional metaphors of “Transcendence”. Here, the cultural determinants seem to be significant in the construal of metaphors for the drug addicts.

(4) *“Suddenly I opened my eyes and sat up...the room was celestial, glowing with radiant illumination..., light, light, light,...the people present were transfigured...godlike creatures...we were all united as one organism.”* Timothy Leary, *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead* (2000).

(5) *“I packed my own pipe, I saw two demons, the Balinese type, amidst the usual sharp shapes and patterns. They did not seem to be aware of my existence or at least, did not try to reach me in any obvious way.”* (DMT Trip Report#3).

2.1.4 Metaphors of Flying

Behavioural-dynamic metaphors can be described as process metaphors as they are connected to motion and change. We discovered two types in the dictionary; one was associated with the state of being high or flying, the other was connected to the

concept of a trip. The drug experience can be associated with the physical effects the drug causes in the body. Seven physiological phases of the drug experience can be differentiated, which are the following: the rush, the high, the binge, tweaking, the crash, hangover and withdrawal (drugfreeworld.org). In the “rush” and “high” periods the user’s heartbeat races, and their metabolism and blood pressure soar, causing dynamic and positive feelings in the individual. The physical symptoms are due to the increased release of norepinephrine, dopamine and serotonin which cause excitement in the body (Isbister et al., 2013). The linguistic manifestation of this heightened condition corresponds to the metaphor of “Flying” in the source domain. Here follow some typical examples of the metaphors used to describe the heightened state of drug addicts from the DSD.

Under the influence of a drug – Flying
Smoke Marijuana – Get high
Spike drug – Give wings
Smoke Marijuana – Fly Mexican airlines

The narratives of drug abusers also frequently refer to this mental state. Since it is assumed the state of being high reflects positive emotions most of the time for drug users, let us also consider the role of negative feelings of this condition in the last example.

(6) *“Up, up, out, eyes closed, I am at the speed of light, expanding, expanding, expanding, faster and faster until I have become so large that I no longer exist-my speed is so great that everything has come to stop-here I gaze upon the entire universe.”* Ervin Laszlo, “The Akashic Experience: Science and the Cosmic Memory Field” (2010).

(7) *“My absolute worst experience involved pot brownies. We were high for two days straight. Not a good high, mind you but an almost delirious “will never feel normal again???high.”* (www.bluelight.org).

2.1.5 Metaphors of a Journey

Behavioural-dynamic metaphors can be considered as complex phenomena. Therefore, their analysis requires a more

detailed approach to be considered useful. The following expressions relate to drug abuse as a journey in the dictionary.

PCP – taking a cruise
Amphetamine – a train
LSD supplier – a travel agent
Use drug – be on a trip
Inhale cocaine – go on a sleigh ride
Do you use marijuana? – Trippin’?
Amphetamine – truck drivers

Lakoff and Johnson (1980a) claim metaphorical concepts originate from experiential gestalts. Experiential gestalt as a structured phenomenon is based on experience. Such gestalts can be demonstrated using semantic networks, such as scripts (Schank and Abelson, 1977) and frames (Filmore, 1976). The modern theory of language considers metaphors as general mappings across conceptual domains (Lakoff, 1992). Metaphor demonstrates that we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another. As an example of the gestalt for “Drug as a Journey,” the dimensions of the structure are the following: target domain-source domain. It seems to be an analogy to understand the field of drug experience regarding trips. The entities in the target domain are drug addicts, drug, aliens and experience, which correspond to the objects in the source domain, such as travellers, vehicles, strangers and destination. The principle can be described as a scenario or script. The drug users are travellers on a journey, where they can experience different locations, time and aliens. The meaning of the metaphor involves drug experience in a different world where the self is in a state of change.

The “Drug as a Journey” metaphor occurs in the narrative of drug addicts as a condition of being on the move and changing the self.

(8) *“Here I am on the same rough piece of road. It was the same road, but my attitude and intention had almost totally undergone some subtle and unconscious change, and on the road I had the first touch of the whisper of creation that underlies all things.”* Nick Sand, “A wee bit more about DMT”, *The Entheogen Review* Vol. X, No.2 (1988).

2.2. Axial coding: associations between metaphors

Lakoff and Johnson (1980a, p.455) claim that “The essence of metaphor is understanding or experiencing one kind of thing or experience in terms of another.” The examples taken from the dictionary and the narratives followed the source-domain approach in the interpretation. Thus, the target domain can be understood using the source domain, where the latter explains the former. The source domain appears as the literal meaning in the structure that can describe the similar aspects of the target domain.

As regarding the actual findings, it should be noted there are also links between different metaphorical concepts based on our examples. This conclusion can be demonstrated by the fact in which a superordinate concept as a fundamental metaphor (Traxler, 2011) can be observed among the conceptual metaphors of drug users in the following examples.

The drug is Euphoria. (excerpt 1)
The drug is Heaven. (excerpt 2)
The drug is Flying. (excerpt 6)

Polar oppositions in spatialization metaphors originate from a physical experience in which erect positions are associated with positive mental states and reclining positions are connected to negative ones. The common element in the three examples involves the perception of the “Up” concept resulting in the intense experience of the drug abuser. In conclusion, the drug causes “high spirits” leading to happiness. Therefore, it is not surprising that dynamic-motion metaphors are associated with both the positive emotional and the cognitive-transcendental categories of the metaphorical system. As can be seen from the examples written above, the different dimensions of the conceptual metaphors correlate with each other to combine in a superordinate or fundamental metaphor.

However, dynamic-motion metaphors are also connected to negative experiences. In this case, the metaphor of descent is linked to a negative emotional state.

The drug is descent. (excerpt 3)
Depressant is a devil. (excerpt 5, and DSD examples)

Negative emotional (the drug is descent) and transcendental (the drug is the devil) metaphors are interconnected in the above examples. Depressive mood and the location of the transcendent figure, the “devil”, can be associated with a falling position and a downward movement. This conclusion can be demonstrated by the findings of the experiential Gestalt in the first case and cultural reference in the second one. As a consequence, the common element in the two examples involves the metaphor of “Descent” leading to unpleasant emotions in drug users. Thus, the process metaphor of descent is related to unfavourable emotional and transcendental images. Therefore, the dimensions of the metaphor are associated with each other to be able to express a superordinate-fundamental metaphor “The Drug is Descent or Down”. These findings agree with the results drawn from the previous examples showing positive emotions. The abovementioned fundamental metaphors are associated with the concept of movement that is characteristic of the physiological and mental state of drug addicts.

2.3 Selective coding: interpretation of meaning

The preliminary coding revealed intrapersonal metaphors in the DSD. These metaphors could be categorized as those of the emotional, cognitive and behavioural-dynamic states of drug users. Two emotional-conceptual metaphors were identified in the data, namely “Happiness” and “Depression”. The conceptual metaphor of “Transcendence” described the cognitive state of people. Two conceptual metaphors in the behavioural-dynamic dimensions were found in the examples, namely “Journey” and “Flying”. The affective and cognitive metaphors appeared as a fundamental metaphor emphasizing the “Movement” feature in the source domain. They referred to either the positive sensation of an upward direction or the negative feeling of a downward movement the drug causes in the body. The behavioural-dynamic metaphors,

such as “Journey” and “Flying”, also highlighted the “Movement” property in the source domain. The thematic-iterative analysis revealed the fundamental metaphor in drug addicts’ metaphors is Movement.

As Matheson (2005), Mould et al. (2010), Shinebourne and Smith (2010), Redden et al. (2013), and Glotova (2013) revealed, metaphors are powerful tools to show cognitive processes; the thematic-iterative approach in our analysis demonstrated not only the above finding, but emphasized the connections between metaphorical concepts in a specific group of people. Our findings reinforced those of Shinebourne and Smith (2010) in which metaphors as vehicles between distant ideas were able to reveal essential information about people’s thought processes.

However, our results were closer to those of Isbister et al. (2013). The experimental basis of the metaphors above lies not only in body postures as Lakoff and Johnson (1980a) formulated, but in the physiological condition of the person experiencing the phenomenon. The taking of a drug causes the release of dopamine and serotonin in the body of the drug addict. It results in high blood pressure, excitement and hallucinations in the initial stage, but the decreased level of serotonin leads to lower blood pressure and withdrawal symptoms in the final phase of the experience. The linguistic expressions include metaphors of an upward motion such as, “high”, “flying”, “heaven” and “trip”, which express positive feelings in the initial stage. The final phase of the drug experience is characterized by reduced vital parameters which may cause a less enhanced mental state expressed by negative metaphors. The metaphors of this stage involve those of a downward direction, such as “depressants are ups and downs”. In conclusion, we can claim that the physiological states of the phases in the drug experience, such as high and low levels of serotonin, induce particular cognition in the motor regions of the brain which may be expressed by fundamental metaphorical conception, such as “Movement” (Isbister, 2013).

Figurative language use is also connected to the cultural background of its users to a great extent. Assessment of identities is

determined by the Christian religion where God is placed up in heaven, and the Devil is situated down in hell. Accordingly, emotions, behaviour and cognition, as well as their linguistic expressions, also run parallel with these directions. The vertical-upward direction of thoughts and feelings is a culturally bound phenomenon in Christianity and consequently the Western way of thinking, including the up-down spatialization in physical experiences. Ontologically, the first phenomenon may result from the second one. As a conclusion, cultural images embody the affective, cognitive and behavioural attitudes of people supported by the physical and physiological experiences of the subject. We wish to emphasize precisely how verbal images cannot come into being without physiological and physical triggering factors in certain circumstances, such as drug use.

Conclusion

Theories of metaphor constitute a significant contribution in the representation of internalized thoughts and emotions (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980a). It seems to be indisputable that people embed metaphors into their lived experience. The concepts emerging from the corpus of this study provide insight into the controversial experiences of drug addicts. Metaphors demonstrate people's distress as well as joy during their drug use. The character and type of metaphors in certain phases of drug use can be a guideline for clinicians for further treatment and research potential.

The present inquiry into the conceptualization of the metaphors in drug users' language use and narratives has revealed several interesting facts, out of which the following are worth mentioning. A significant number of meanings can be considered as metaphorical in nature in recreational drug abuse. According to previous research, the study has demonstrated in which conceptualizing ways metaphors originate from experience (experiential gestalt). Moreover, the physiological state of drug addicts affects

their mental state, which is expressed by their metaphor use. The metaphors in drug experience create a system where the affective, cognitive and dynamic dimensions are mutually interconnected. The iterative-thematic approach to analysis revealed the fundamental metaphorical system in the positive and negative experiences of drug users. The analysis justified cultural background as a significant determiner of metaphor choice. Conceptual metaphors from the "Drug Slang Dictionary" and the narratives of drug addicts demonstrate that thought is interwoven with the extensive use of figurative language in such contexts where meaning needs interpretation. Metaphorical language use is always connected to the expression of novelty. Novel phrases and figures can express contents which open new dimensions in meaning for people.

The findings of the investigation have shown that conceptualization of metaphors among drug addicts comes from their social and physiological experiences. Moreover, it can be claimed that the choice of metaphors is dependent on the cultural environment in which they live. As a conclusion, it should be remarked that while this study hoped to give insight into the metaphorical system on the affective, cognitive and dynamic behavioural dimensions among drug addicts, it has failed to provide a more profound analysis between the physiological phases of drug effects on the metaphor use of drug users. The present study had its constraints, which mainly included a limited number of examples of the conceptual metaphors in the corpora and focused on a single text genre – narrative. Despite these limitations, the outcomes of the analysis appear to suggest physical effects, social-cultural determinants and language use are interrelated phenomena in human life. However, further studies are required towards investigating the interplay between the physiological state, cultural background and the metaphorical choice of the speakers in drug use thoroughly. Distinctively, this is where we intend to pursue our research in the near future.

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