

# Gender, Ideology and Conceptual Metaphors: Women and the Source Domain of the Hunt

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**Abstract.** As a cognitive process, metaphorical reasoning is inevitable, but not necessarily innocent or neutral. It is well known that the conceptual domains of love and sex have received substantial attention within cognitive linguistics. However, a source domain that merits further exploration from a gender ideology perspective is that of the hunt. For this reason, following an approach that links cognitive linguistics with critical discourse analysis this article examines the conceptualisation of love, seduction and the search for a partner/husband through hunting metaphors, focusing on the discursive representation of women and the hunt. In the texts studied the conceptual metaphors LOVE/SEDUCTION/THE SEARCH FOR A PARTNER OR HUSBAND IS A HUNT are activated through metaphorical linguistic expressions with terms such as *hunt, chase, pursue, catch, capture, trap* etc. Regarding ideology, metaphors are powerful transmitters of folk beliefs and dominant conceptions of femininity and masculinity. Gender values that show man as the privileged sex as well as sexist ideologies supportive of male dominance and female submissiveness have been found to underlie the texts under consideration. **Keywords:** conceptual metaphors, critical metaphor analysis, CDA, gender, ideology, hunt-based metaphors, love, seduction, the search for a partner/husband.

[es] Género, ideología y metáforas conceptuales: las mujeres y el dominio fuente de la caza

**Resumen.** Como proceso cognitivo, el razonamiento metafórico es inevitable, pero eso no quiere decir que este sea necesariamente inocente o neutral. Como es bien sabido, los dominios conceptuales del amor y el sexo han sido ampliamente estudiados por la lingüística cognitiva. No obstante, un dominio fuente que merece una mayor atención desde una perspectiva ideológica y de género es el dominio de la caza. A través de un enfoque que combina la lingüística cognitiva y el análisis crítico del discurso, este artículo tiene como objetivo examinar el amor, la seducción y la búsqueda de pareja o marido a través de metáforas de caza, haciendo hincapié en la representación discursiva de las mujeres y la caza. En los textos estudiados, todos ellos en lengua inglesa, se ha podido observar cómo las metáforas conceptuales EL AMOR/LA SEDUCCIÓN/LA BÚSQUEDA DE PAREJA O MARIDO ES UNA CAZA se activan por medio de expresiones lingüístico-metafóricas que utilizan términos como *cazar, perseguir, capturar, atrapar (hunt, chase, pursue, catch, capture, trap)*, etc. En relación con la dimensión ideológica de las metáforas, hemos constatado cómo estas constituyen un poderoso instrumento de transmisión de creencias, valores y concepciones dominantes de la masculinidad y la femineidad. En los textos objeto de estudio se han podido detectar ideologías de género que asignan al varón una posición socialmente privilegiada, así como otras ideologías sexistas subyacentes que sustentan y refuerzan el dominio masculino y la sumisión femenina.

**Palabras clave:** metáforas conceptuales, análisis crítico metafórico, ACD, género, ideología, caza, amor, seducción, búsqueda de pareja/esposo.

**Contents:** 1. Introduction. 2. Theoretical framework. 3. Materials and method. 4. Findings and discussion. 4.1 *Hunt, catch and capture*. 4.2 Gender ideologies and the *love-chase*. 5. Conclusion.

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## 1. Introduction

The ideological dimension of metaphor is an area of increasing interest for scholars nowadays (Charteris Black 2004, 2017; Goatly 2007; López Rodríguez 2009; Deignan 2010; Koller 2014; Hart 2017; Musolff 2017; Ng 2018). It is well known that one of the aims of studies in critical discourse analysis (CDA henceforth) is to examine the complex manifestations of power and ideology in discourse. Metaphors are especially revealing in this respect. Very early within this tradition, analysts were well aware of the role of metaphors in the enactment of ideologies and the social implications that the choice of one metaphor over another has in the picture of the world it presents. In 1989 in his seminal work

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*Language and Power*; Fairclough included metaphor within the list of items and strategies to be looked at in his model of CDA (1989: 111, 119-120). The example he gives of the characterisation of the ‘riots’ of 1981 as cancer in a Scottish newspaper is especially illuminating. “Different metaphors imply different ways of dealing with things”, he says, “one does not arrive at a negotiated settlement with cancer, [...]. Cancer has to be eliminated, cut out.” (Fairclough 1989: 120<sup>2</sup>). The representation of immigration as invasion and immigrants and refugees as spongers, highlighted by van Dijk’s influential work on prejudice and racism in discourse (1985a, 1985b, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, etc.), are also classic illustrations of metaphors explored within CDA, equally interesting regarding the ideological values they convey (examples quoted from Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 265). The list would be endless. In one way or another, interest in the potential of metaphor for the transmission of ideological values has been present in works on critical linguistics (Hodge, Kress & Jones 1979: 88-89), and later critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2003: 131-132), from the very beginning of this ‘research perspective’ (van Dijk 1994), or ‘research programme’ as Fairclough & Wodak (1997) describe it.

At approximately the same time as critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis expanded and consolidated as an academic line of research, from a cognitive standpoint Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) theory of conceptual metaphor (CMT) marked a turning point, changing the way we view metaphor forever. Even though metaphor is seen as a ubiquitous mechanism of the mind and cognition, the ideological implications of the use of conceptual metaphors were not ignored by a number of scholars working within this tradition. Lakoff’s work on metaphor and politics is well known (1995, 1996, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2012, etc.). The force of his statement “metaphors can kill” at the beginning of his article on the Gulf War (1991) was—and still is—shocking, and its relevance is inescapable. From a gender perspective, Lakoff and Johnson’s ground-breaking article ‘The metaphorical logic of rape’ presents an insightful consideration of how metaphor shapes the perception and representation of rape in American culture (Lakoff & Johnson 1987: 73-79). They finish their article with a statement as valid then as it is now:

The realm of metaphor research is anything but a safe haven from reality. Metaphor is not a harmless exercise in naming. It is one of the principal means by which we understand our experience and reason on the basis of that understanding. To the extent that we act on our reasoning, metaphor plays a role in the creation of reality. When that created reality is a grim reality, it becomes all the more important to understanding the mode of reasoning that helped create it (Lakoff & Johnson 1987: 78).

Although they have evolved separately, CDA and cognitive linguistics (Cog ling henceforth) share areas of common concern, such as the exploration of the role of metaphor as a cognitive heuristic mechanism. The important role of metaphor in shedding light on social issues is evident in a rapidly growing line of socially cognitive research on such important social and cultural issues as security policy (Chilton 1996, Thornborrow 1993), unemployment (Straehle et al. 1999), racism (Van Teeflen 1994), political discourse (Chilton & Ilyin 1993; Chilton 2004; Charteris-Black 2004, 2006, 2011, 2013, 2017, 2019; Hart 2014, 2017; Musolff 2004, 2016a, 2016b, 2017), gender (Koller 2004, 2014; Semino & Koller 2009; Nuñez Perucha 2011; Benítez-Castro & Hidalgo-Tenorio 2018), immigration (O’Brien 2003; Santa Anna 1999; Charteris-Black 2006; López Maestre, 2009; Hart 2010), religion (Charteris-Black 2017a, 2017b), business and the economy (López Maestre 2000; Dongman & Deignan 2019; Muelas Gil 2019: 223-246), health and illness (Semino et al. 2017; Navarro i Ferrando 2016). These works, and others that deal with the use of metaphor in specific discourse contexts (Semino 2008, Deignan et al. 2013; Navarro i Ferrando 2019), show that “the study of metaphoric reasoning is anything but an irrelevant ivory tower enterprise. Instead, it is at the heart of many social issues of the greatest importance” (Lakoff & Turner 1987).

From a methodological viewpoint, in my opinion, just as CDA can benefit from including metaphors as part of its analytical apparatus, cognitive linguistics and the study of conceptual metaphors can also profit from a discursive approach that incorporates techniques commonly used in CDA (see lists provided by Toolan 2001: 206-242; Jeffries 2010, 2007; or Van Dijk 2016: 213-214, etc.) to bring to light the ideological effects and possible social repercussions deriving from the use of conceptual metaphors. This article takes the latter direction. Following an approach that links Cog ling with CDA, it looks at conceptual metaphors incorporating a critical perspective. The specific aim of the article is to explore the source domain of the hunt in relation to love, seduction and the search for a partner, in order to assess if this source domain is used to represent the experiences of certain women regarding these areas. It is well known that the target domains of love and sex have received substantial attention within cognitive linguistics. However, a source domain that still merits further exploration from a gender perspective is the source domain of the hunt. Further work is needed to explore the interconnection between gender roles, stereotypes and the use of this domain. For this reason, this article examines the conceptual metaphors LOVE/SEDUCTION/THE SEARCH FOR A PARTNER IS A HUNT, focusing on the representation of women and the hunt. In addition, as mentioned above, in the belief that the ideological values and implications of metaphors, both overt and latent (Charteris Black 2004, Goatly 2007), are worth exploring, the gender ideology conveyed by the metaphorical linguistic expressions examined here is also critically explored, where appropriate using tools from CDA, i.e. transitivity analysis from systemic functional linguistics (following the model outlined by Simpson 1993: 86-95, 2002: 22-26), naming, describing and lexical evaluation

<sup>2</sup> “The ideological significance of disease metaphors is that they tend to take dominant interests to be the interests of society as a whole, and construe expressions of non-dominant interests (strikes, demonstrations, ‘riots’) as undermining (the health of) society *per se*” (Fairclough 1989: 120).

(Jeffries 2007: 61-101, 2010: 17-37; Richardson 2007: 47-52) etc. An approach that combines Cognition with CDA can enrich studies on metaphor by yielding fruitful insights into the relation between metaphor, society and culture.

First, the theoretical framework that sustains this study is offered, including a reflection on metaphors and ideology and a brief review on works that deal with the hunt source domain. A section on materials and method follows. Here the questions related to sampling and metaphor identification are dealt with. Next, the findings of this study are presented and discussed from a critical perspective. Finally, the article concludes by reflecting upon the importance of exploring the ideological dimension of conceptual metaphors along the line of studies in critical metaphor analysis (Charteris Black 2004, Goatly 2007).

## 2. Theoretical framework

Deignan (2008) rightly points out that “a central claim in contemporary metaphor theory is that metaphor is ideological” (Deignan 2008: 290). Following Simpson, I take ideology to refer to “the ways in which what we say and think interacts with society. An ideology, therefore, derives from the taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs and value-systems which are shared collectively by social groups” (Simpson 1993: 5). When an ideology is the ideology of a particularly powerful social group, it is said to be dominant. One major channel of transmission of ideologies is language and discourse. The discourses people produce can recreate, perpetuate—or contest— dominant ideologies and the values associated with them. For van Dijk, ideology also has to do with “the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group. This means that ideologies allow people, as group members, to organise the multitude of social beliefs about what is the case, good or bad, right or wrong, for them, and to act accordingly” (van Dijk 1998: 8). Ideologies, therefore, give shape to what, within a community or social group, is commonly thought of as common sense, good or bad, deviant or straight, legitimate or illegitimate, right or wrong, adequate or inadequate, true or false, correct or incorrect etc. As a fundamental element of discourse and cognition, metaphors also have a role to play in the transmission of these values and systems of beliefs, upon which perceptions, social attitudes, actions as well as linguistic choices are based.

When it comes to thinking, it is well known that metaphor is an essential mechanism of the mind. Within conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), it is widely acknowledged that the human conceptual system is heavily metaphorical in nature. Rather than being a question of individual words, or an exclusively literary device, metaphor is considered a matter of cognition, whereby we think and understand one domain of experience in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987, Lakoff & Turner 1989). In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphor “ceases to be considered the sole device of creative literary imagination; it becomes a valuable cognitive tool without which neither poets nor you and I as ordinary people could live” (Kovecses 2002: ix) As a cognitive process, therefore, metaphorical reasoning is inevitable, but is not necessarily innocent or neutral (see Goatly 2007). The analogical mappings and the correspondences generated by conceptual metaphors have the potential to highlight or conceal certain aspects of the conceptualisation of phenomena, which reveal attitudes and ideological positions that carry positive or negative evaluations worth examining from a critical point of view (see Lakoff 1991; Charteris Black 2004, 2006; Goatly 2007 etc.). “When you use a metaphor, you are drawing on a body of thought or background knowledge which might in fact skew your analysis or thinking of that particular object” (Mills 1995: 136). A clear case is the representation of immigration as an invasion (IMMIGRATION IS AN INVASION), mentioned in the introduction, whereby immigration is conceived of in terms of battles and warfare. By foregrounding the notion of conflict, other more productive ways of thinking will sink into the background and be downplayed. Continuing with immigration, the use of other conceptual metaphors related to diseases, natural catastrophes or animals similarly has the effect of casting this phenomenon in a pernicious negative way, with harmful psychological and social consequences for the people who come to a country in search for a better life. Rather than placing the focus on migrants as persons, by means of these metaphors, they are associated with pain and suffering when represented as a disease, objectified as a natural event of disastrous consequences, and ultimately deprived of their human condition and downgraded to the category of subhuman when represented as animals. “Metaphors may influence us to think about certain scenarios in particularly stereotyped ways” (Mills 1995: 137). For this reason, it is essential to examine metaphors critically, paying attention to their linguistic manifestations in context and the source domains resorted to, because this study will give us useful information to understand social and cultural processes better. For obvious reasons, within the political arena, metaphors are of crucial importance (Mussolf 2005, 2016; Charteris-Black 2019). In a recent article Mussolf (2017) shows how the results of the Brexit referendum may have been affected by the metaphors used by the Brexit campaigners. In other areas, perhaps less evident at first sight, the study of metaphors is equally important, for example within the healthcare sector. The ground-breaking work of Semino et al. on metaphors and cancer (Semino et al. 2018, Hendricks et al. 2018, Semino et al. 2017, Demjén et al. 2016, Demmen 2015) has highlighted the importance of metaphors in healthcare. In specific contexts, the use of one metaphor over another may have emotional consequences for patients with cancer, and other conditions, adding more distress and suffering to their *per se* difficult situation. In fact, almost all levels of society and the discourses surrounding them can be affected by the ideological force and evaluative impact of metaphors. Whether used intentionally or not, metaphors can be powerful transmitters of folk beliefs and dominant social ideologies that affect the way people behave and perceive certain social situations.

Among those ideologies are also gender ideologies (Hiraga 1991; Koller 2003, 2004; López Rodríguez 2007, 2009; Lazar 2009; Semino & Koller 2009; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2013; Nuñez Perucha 2011; López Maestre 2015, 2019). Conceptual metaphors contribute to the shaping of those conceptions of femininity and masculinity that are considered adequate and appropriate according to the sexes, establishing an implicit comparison with those that are not. Conventional conceptual metaphors are particularly worthy of attention in this respect. The fact that they are used naturally and effortlessly in ordinary language makes them all the more interesting since they reveal deeply entrenched ways of thinking and reasoning about the world around us, which may pass unnoticed by speakers due to their own conventionality. Take for example the metaphorical linguistic expressions *hen party* and *stag party*. Different animals are used to represent women and men. Their connotations are also different: *hen* connoting stupidity, fussiness and domesticity in contrast with *stag* associated with freedom and wilderness, the king of the forest. These ideologies, which often privilege the male over the female and build a gender hierarchy in which women are discriminated against or are the second sex, through our habits and discursive practices, can be reproduced uncritically by speakers in their everyday interactions. As a result, these ideas are consolidated, reinforced and perpetuated in such a way that they become normal, acceptable and common sense (see the notion of *naturalisation* Fairclough 1989: 91-92, 1995: 42). In this way, conceptual metaphors can transmit negative ideologies supportive of gender discrimination in a more covert, indirect and subtle way than other linguistic resources (López Maestre 2015, 2019) (see *indirect sexism* Mills 2008). “Metaphorical effects are not limited to the conceptual. They also have emotional force, which makes them value-laden and ideologically attitudinal” (Goatly 2006: 16).

Conceptual areas that deserve special attention from the perspective of gender ideology are love and sex. It is well known that studies in cognitive linguistics have identified numerous source domains that are used to conceptualise these areas. Studies show how love is conceptualised as war (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 49, 124), as a bond, a collaborative work of art; a journey; a nutrient; a rapture; a unity; an economic exchange; closeness; fire; hunger; a magnetic force; a natural force; an incurable disease; blindness; magic; an illness (Kövecses 2002), etc. A source domain that can be added to this list is the source domain of the hunt. It has been dealt with in studies such as Emanatian 1996: 226, Goatly 2008: 211-213, Trim 2011: 93, López Maestre 2015, López Maestre & Ramón 2005 but it deserves further exploration regarding gender roles, stereotypes and the representation of women in discourse. For our study Crespo 2017 is of special interest. In his book *Sex in Language* he deals with *SEX IS HUNTING AND RIDING* (150) in the online message boards ‘Female first forum’, ‘Married man sex life forum’, ‘Sexual disorders forum’ and ‘Talk about marriage’. “In accordance with the metaphor that associates humans, especially women, with animals”, he says, “men are conceived of as hunters whose aim is to capture the woman, who is ultimately seen as the prey” (Crespo 2017: 150). Irene López Rodríguez also looks at the *SEX IS HUNTING* metaphor in her article ‘Of women, bitches, chickens and vixens: Animal metaphors for women in English and Spanish’ (2009: 91). In a similar vein she reflects on how with the *SEX IS HUNTING* metaphor man is the hunter who hunts for prey (i.e., the woman): “The man goes hunting whereas the woman waits to be hunted or shot” (López Rodríguez 2009: 91). When relationships are conceptualised in terms of hunting, she says that “most animal terms metaphorically portray the man in the role of the hunter, whereas the woman assumes the passive role of the prey” (López Rodríguez 2009: 92) and further adds that:

In the encoding of animal metaphors, it appears that [...] the female adopts the role of recipient, patient, senser or marginal agent (Halliday, 1985). The transitivity analysis of many metaphorical expressions likening animals with women present the latter as the one to be tamed, domesticated or hunted and, as is well attested, in the different networks of euphemisms that conceal sexual intercourse in terms of hunting, and riding, the woman is traditionally the passive one (*cf* Chamizo & Sánchez 2000) (López Rodríguez 2009: 92)<sup>3</sup>.

In light of these studies one cannot help but wonder whether in metaphorical terms women are really as passive as this seems to imply. More active roles regarding love, seduction and the search for a partner are worth being examined to overcome an androcentric perspective whereby man is mostly hunter and woman prey. This is an interesting side of a metaphor whose usage goes a long way back in time, but which it is still interesting to look at in the contemporary discourses of the present day.

The hunting metaphor is not new. As an experiential field, hunting and humans go together (Cartmill 1993, López Maestre 2015). Although, as Cartmill (1993) shows, attitudes toward the hunt have changed dramatically throughout the centuries, the hunt is an experiential field typically associated with humans and animals. Early human beings knew how to use stones, sticks, spears, bows and arrows as weapons and were familiar with different methods of hunting, which were selectively applied depending on the nature of the terrain and the animal hunted. Greek and Roman societies are known to have hunted (Barringer 2001; Green 1996a, 1996b). For the ancient Greek the hunt provided a didactic paradigm for the teaching of all kinds of subjects, including the training of heroes, the art of rhetoric or how to be a good citizen. This paradigm was also applied to the *ars amatoria*, extending knowledge and reasoning about the hunt to the most intimate sphere of love relations. There is evidence that the *love hunt* metaphor appears in Greek and Latin literature, (Murgatroyd 1984: 362-368; Kenney 1970: 366-393 in Bellido 2008; Green 1996: 221-263; Bellido Díaz 2003, 2008; Harto Trujillo 1992: 155-163), giving rise to the associated literary *topoi venatus*

<sup>3</sup> She makes a concession to the female hunt when she reckons that “when the roles are reversed, that is, the woman takes on the active role of the man, she is portrayed as a menacing animal, as though implying the inappropriateness of such power” (López Rodríguez 2009: 91)



*amoris*. According to Murgatroyd in his article ‘Amatory hunting, fishing and fowling’, “The application to love of terms from hunting, fishing and fowling is not one of the commonest of amatory figures in Greek and Latin literature, but it does occur in most of the major genres of poetry and in several prose authors” (Murgatroyd 1984: 362). This “figure is found in a wide range of genres of poetry and prose, and in Greek literature it was most common in epigram (especially Meleager), while in Latin literature it was most common in Plautus and Ovid” (Murgatroyd 1984: 368).

Rooney (1993) points out that it is with Ovid that the *love-hunt* reached its fullest expression. His *Ars amatoria*, published about 1 BCE, shows interesting hunting resonances (i.e., I. 44-50; I. 89-91; I. 253-254; I. 755-756; II.1-2; see references in Thiébaux 2014). This is a guidebook on erotic or passionate love where he provides instruction to men on the art of seducing women: Book I on how to find a woman and book II on how to keep her. Ovid goes into incredible detail to offer men many tips and tricks he hopes will be of help in their amatory pursuits. But Ovid’s advice on love, sex and dating is not just for men. His little “Art of Love” guide does not ignore women. Claiming that Venus made him do it (1.43-4), he included a third book to show women what to do to be successful in love affairs. This third book is revolutionary in that it provides women with instructions on how to seduce and keep a man in love. Despite the two thousand years that have passed, one has the impression that Ovid’s *ars amatoria* hasn’t changed much and wouldn’t be much out of place in a modern manual on love, sex and dating. Regarding contemporary discourses, one also has the impression that it will be in texts similar to Ovid’s where it will be possible to find the metaphors that are being explored in this article. Let us now move on to the section on materials and method, where questions related to metaphor identification and the sampling procedure are dealt with.

### 3. Materials and method

Regarding the materials and method, it should be made clear that this article presents a pilot exploratory study based on a sample of convenience that is used to show that hunting conceptual metaphors are applied to the discursive representation of the experiences of certain women regarding love, seduction and the search for a partner. Since the metaphorical linguistic expressions commented on here are based on a sample of convenience, no attempt at a generalisation of the results is made. This is left for a more systematic future study, where the findings made here can be put to the test and questions related to the salience of metaphorical usage can also be dealt with.

The model for metaphor chosen is that of Lakoff and Johnson and their view of metaphor as a cross-domain mapping (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2002). Since this paper is focused on a specific source domain, that of the hunt, it was necessary to get general, basic information about hunting and what it entails. For this purpose, several encyclopaedias were consulted (Encarta’95, Britannica 15th Edition 1990). This information was used to prepare an initial lexical list of terms with potential for metaphorical usage. Apart from the obvious: *hunter, hunt, hunting* and *prey, pursue* was added to the list because this term was used in the definition of hunting of the Encyclopaedia Britannica<sup>4</sup>. Other words, related to hunting techniques, were also added on the basis of information provided by the encyclopaedias, i.e., *trap, snare, net* etc. Of the different hunting methods that exist, shooting, archery, falconry etc., trapping was considered particularly interesting from a gender perspective, since it requires less strength and poses less risk to the hunter. Several dictionaries were also consulted to establish the list of metaphorical candidates. In particular, the *Oxford English Dictionary* was found to be especially useful for metaphor identification because it offers the etymology of terms. This was significant for the inclusion of *chase*<sup>5</sup> and its cognate *catch*<sup>6</sup>. These terms were included on the basis of their etymological roots and the meanings provided by the dictionary<sup>7</sup>. It should also be noted that to confirm the metaphorical nature of terms, the reading of whole texts where the metaphorical linguistic expressions were included was considered a necessity, both to identify their contextual meaning and to check whether this could be related to a more basic meaning (concrete, specific, human-oriented etc.) by some form of similarity. An additional advantage of reading texts entirely was that it facilitated the locating of other terms and expressions not considered *a priori*, for instance, the term *capture*<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> “Hunting, sport that involves the seeking, pursuing, and killing of wild animals and birds, called game and game birds, primarily in modern times with firearms but also with bow and arrow”. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, Micropaedia, volume 6, 1990, p. 159.

<sup>5</sup> The case of *chase* was interesting, since *chase* can be related to both LOVE IS A HUNT and LOVE IS WAR. Hunting and war have many things in common, among others the common element of *chasing/pursuing* someone or something with the aim of catching or conquering. In this way chasing connects the hunting metaphor LOVE IS A HUNT (*venatus amoris*) to LOVE IS WAR (*militia amoris*) where the chasing is conducted with the aim of conquest (a term also used for love).

<sup>6</sup> *chase*, v.1.

Etymology: Middle English < Old French *chacie-r*, later *chascie-r*, *chasse-r*. In 11th cent. *cacer* (Old Northern French *cacher*, Provençal *cassar*, Spanish *cazar*, Portuguese *caçar*, Italian *cacciare*) < late Latin *\*captiāre*, used instead of *captāre* (frequentative of *capēre* to take) to seize, catch, in late Latin also ‘to chase, hunt’: see Du Cange. The Old Northern French form *cacher*, gave *CATCH* v., which had at first both senses ‘chase’ and ‘catch,’ but was at length differentiated, and confined to the latter. Retrieved from: <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/30853?rskey=KoU7GF&result=5#eid> [Last accessed 13 August 2019].

<sup>7</sup> See meaning I.1.d of *chase* (v) in OED (2019): “d. trans. To pursue (a member of the opposite sex) amorously; also with after, and intr.”. And meaning 6 of *catch* (n2): colloquial 6a “A person or thing acquired or worth acquiring; something valuable gained or won; a prize. 6b “a person considered desirable as a partner or a spouse, esp. on account of wealth or position”.

<sup>8</sup> See OED meaning (2019) ‘capture’ n “2. The prize, prey, or booty so taken”. Retrieved from: <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/27659?rskey=B-w4Okw&result=1#eid> [Last accessed 20 August 2019].

Once the list of potential candidates was established, mainly *hunter, hunt, chase, pursue, catch, capture, trap, snare, prey*, searches were carried out with Google search engine, primarily in 2013 and 2017 (plus a limited one in 2005)<sup>9</sup>. They were the following: (with and without quotes) “books on husband hunting”, “husband hunting”, “husband hunter”, “hunting for love”, “sex and dating as a hunt”, “how to get/conquer/catch/seduce/attract a man”, “how to get a guy to like you”, “to capture the heart of a man”, “the love chase”, “how to get him chase you”, “the thrill of the chase”, “advise on love/seduction/dating” etc. Apart from the texts obtained from the Internet in this manner, several books whose reference was also obtained from the search mentioned above on “books on husband hunting” were also bought so that possible metaphorical linguistic expressions could be read in context. These were: Lowndes 1996, Kelly 2006, Fein & Schneider 2007, Nichols, 2008. The romance novel *Yellow bird* (1994) by T. Pacter, part of the personal collection of the author, was also used. After the search process was concluded, the selection of metaphorical linguistic expressions to be examined in this article was made. This study, therefore, relies on a synchronic sample of metaphorical linguistic expressions extracted from contemporary texts, mostly from the end of the twentieth and twenty-first century.

A qualitative approach, based on a sample of convenience, has therefore been followed. Since the findings are supported by non-probability sampling (López Roldán & Fachelli 2017) (that is, no margin of error and confidence level are provided), as mentioned above, no attempt at generalisation of the results is made beyond the metaphorical linguistic expressions examined. However, limited though the sample is, I believe it suffices to show that the domain of the hunt is productive and generates metaphorical linguistic expressions which are realisations of the conceptual metaphors LOVE/SEDUCTION/THE SEARCH FOR A PARTNER IS A HUNT. Our work is a qualitative first step. It remains for a future study to examine a significantly wider corpus based on a larger sample of texts.

Concerning methodology, in line with the critical perspective of a CDA approach, it should also be pointed out that, when appropriate, a transitivity analysis (systemic functional linguistics) is added to the discussion of the illustrations given in order to show the ideological potential of metaphors, particularly in terms of active agency. The model followed is Simpson 1993: 86-95, 2002: 22-26, since I think it works extremely well to unveil aspects of metaphors and the ideologies they convey. Following Jeffries 2007: 61-101, 2010: 17-37 and Richardson 2007: 47-52, the evaluative implications of choices regarding naming and describing have also been considered and added to the discussion. Tools commonly used in critical discourse analysis or critical stylistics, i.e. naming, modality, presuppositions etc. (see lists provided by Toolan 2001: 216-242, Jeffries 2010 or Van Dijk 2016: 213-214 to mention but a few), can greatly enrich the study of the discursive and ideological dimension of conceptual metaphors.

#### 4. Findings and discussion

The textual evidence discussed below and in López Maestre 2015 shows how the physical experience of the hunt<sup>10</sup> partially structures and influences the language of love and seduction (including related areas such as dating, flirting, a relationship or marriage), activating the conceptual metaphors LOVE/ SEDUCTION/ THE SEARCH FOR A PARTNER IS A HUNT<sup>11</sup> and the following analogical mappings:

The hunter/huntress is the lover (or the seducer/seductress)

The prey is the loved/desired person (male or female)

The stages or events in a hunt are the stages or events in a love affair:

In a hunt, the hunter/huntress searches for prey. In love, the lover searches for and assesses the suitability of the loved one.

In a hunt, the prey is chased or pursued. In love, there is a chasing stage (courting / flirting / seduction / dating etc.)

In a hunt, the hunter captures the prey/trophy or the prey escapes. In love, the lover attains a relationship or an encounter (sexual or otherwise) or, if not successful, there is a disillusionment stage.

Let us look at some instantiations<sup>12</sup>.

##### 4.1. *Hunt, catch and capture*

Contrary to androcentric stereotypes that depict males as active hunters and women as their object of desire or prey, in matters of the heart, women can be represented as active and determinate hunters. They do not just wait to be

<sup>9</sup> Whenever an Internet text was found to be interesting, a pdf of the whole page was made to keep it intact for further consultation.

<sup>10</sup> The art of the hunt, understood as the art of pursuing the thing desired, is a metaphor capable of different variations (job hunt; house hunt; treasure hunt; witch hunt; man hunt (crime) etc.; one such variation is the art of pursuing the beloved, or the *ars amatoria*.

<sup>11</sup> The search for a partner may be motivated by the desire to find love (“the Love-of-Her-Life” Nichols 2008: 119; “a Potential Love Partner” Lowndes 1996: 1) or by any other reason. To avoid falling into the intentional fallacy the three options, mentioned above, are offered.

<sup>12</sup> Following the conventions of cognitive linguistics italics have been used to indicate metaphorical linguistic expressions in the texts studied.

hunted or pursued but take the predominant role when searching for love and going after their loved one. For this endeavour a modern woman has at her disposal books and webpages whose titles say it all. In *Secrets for the ultimate husband hunter* (2008), Nancy Nichols says that “The ultimate *husband hunter*’s mission in life is simple [...]. Once she has done her personal work, her goal is to meet and “capture” a QM<sup>13</sup> who is worthy of her love, affection and loyalty ... someone she can proudly refer to as the Love-of-Her-Life” (Nichols 2008: 119). In *Smart man hunting: a fast-track dating guide for finding Mr Right* (2006) Liz Kelly claims it is crucial to use new technologies and to adapt to the times. In *How to make anyone fall in love with you: 85 proven techniques<sup>14</sup> for success* (Lowndes 1996)<sup>15</sup> men and women, referred to as *hunters* and *huntresses*, are given advice on the successful hunt for a PLP (Potential Love Partner) with metaphorical linguistic expressions such as:

(2)

*Hunters*, make the first move .... *Fast* p. 43

*Huntresses*, make the fast move ... *First* p. 46

How to awaken primal, unsettling, sexy feelings in your *quarry* p. 38

In a similar vein, A. Levine’s webpage on ‘*Husband Hunting*’<sup>16</sup> resorts to hunting imagery and presents the hunt for a husband as if it was a tiger hunt. He addresses women saying: “No one said this was going to be easy, but if you follow the twenty-four keys to finding a husband I am going to tell you about, you can be successful”. “Look at this as a *tiger hunt*”. Through the use of predatory language, men are equated to tigers, higher order beings within the animal hierarchy of the *Great Chain of Being* (Lakoff & Turner 1989), magnificent creatures, solitary, free, who live in the wild and require a great deal of effort and determination to be hunted down.

Other metaphorical linguistic expressions that can be related to the hunting source domain are *to catch* and *to capture*. *To catch* is used in the title of the ebook *Catch him and keep him* by Christian Carter<sup>17</sup> (2005). In a humorous light-hearted way, cooking, hunting and fishing are linked in *The husband-hunting handbook: advice and recipes for landing the perfect man* by Margaret Agnew and Catherine Hamrick (1996). Similarly, *to capture* is used in the title of the very famous *The Rules: time-tested secrets for capturing the heart of Mr. Right* (2007), originally published in 1995 by Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider. In this hugely popular bestseller, Fein and Schneider present women with a series of rules to be successful in getting a partner or, as the book claims with a venator metonymy, “*to capture* the heart” of a Mr Right. Here Fein and Schneider, refer to men as “*live prey*” (2007: 36) and report that they themselves followed *The Rules* “to ensure that the right man didn’t *get away*” (2007: 123).

Hunting (*ars venatoria*) can be perfected to improve efficiency. Therefore, following the logic of the source domain, it makes sense that techniques and strategies of *ars amatoria* can be perfected as well. Let us see some advice intended to make the *love chase* more effective. First, it is important to locate and select, in hunting terminology, *a good catch*: a Mr. Right (Fein & Schneider 1995, Nichols 2008), the perfect man (Agnew 1996), a Mr Marvelous (Levine), a Quality Man (Nichols 2008) etc. Notice how the *targeted*<sup>18</sup> man is viewed with adoration and is described with terms with very positive connotations: Right, perfect, marvelous, quality man etc. These lexical choices are interesting from an androcentric point of view because they confer on man the privileged position in the equation as the prime object of desire, an idealised creature, a *trophy*<sup>19</sup> worth aiming for. Naming can operate as a powerful vehicle of ideological transmission. Next, to get this valuable *trophy*, equipment is of the utmost importance: “You wouldn’t go hunting a tiger without the right equipment, would you?” asks Levine: “Think of the man you are *hunting for* as your *tiger*, and be sure you are properly *equipped to hunt him down*”. “A woman’s outward appearance is part of the *man-hunting package*” (Nichols 2008: 136). “A Quality Man is not going to be interested in *pursuing* a woman who does not take the time and effort to fix up her physical appearance” (Nichols 2008: 137). “If you are in serious *husband-hunting* mode, don’t leave your apartment unless you look so good that you’d be delighted to run into your ex-boyfriend” (Ridley 2014)<sup>20</sup>. “Whenever you step out of the door, step out *dressed to kill* ... your *Quarry*” (Lowndes 1996: 29). In addition, as happens in hunting, ammunition is necessary. In husband-hunting: “your eyes are your *weapon*”<sup>21</sup> (Ormonde 2012). “When it comes to meeting men, a single woman’s best *ammunition*” is by far a good attitude, a creative mindset, and a tenacious spirit (Nichols 2008: 51). Again as in hunting, the choice of a good hunting ground is also important. Apparently

<sup>13</sup> QM (Quality Man).

<sup>14</sup> According to the author, these techniques are based on studies into the nature of romantic love (Lowndes 1996).

<sup>15</sup> The book cover shows a heart pierced by an arrow, the typical love (Cupid) image taken from archery. The book cover claims to offer a “short cut route to *sure-fire* success in love”.

<sup>16</sup> Retrieved from: [http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Husband\\_Hunting.html](http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Husband_Hunting.html) [Last accessed 16 August 2020].

<sup>17</sup> Title retrieved from <https://www.catchhimandkeephim.com/catalog/ebook.html> [Last accessed 8 May 2019].

<sup>18</sup> A hunting/shooting metaphorical linguistic expression.

<sup>19</sup> Notice the metaphorical linguistic expression (see trophy/sport hunting in [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trophy\\_hunting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trophy_hunting) [Last accessed 22 August 2019].

<sup>20</sup> Retrieved from: <https://nypost.com/2014/03/12/princeton-mom-heres-why-new-york-women-cant-get-a-husband/> (Last accessed 6 February 2019).

<sup>21</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.mamamia.com.au/husband-hunting-the-new-sport-for-women-who-want-to-get-serious/> [Last accessed 16 August 2020].

a good hunting spot is college (Ebony 1982: 76, Patton 2014: 49<sup>22</sup>). Notice the reflections on husband-hunting on the following webpage:

(3)

Getting Your MRS Degree: *Husband-Hunting* in College

[...]

Are we really just joking around about finding a husband in college, or is that really something that we're looking for deep down, and is there anything wrong with that?

[...] *Husband-hunting* might not be everyone's cup of tea, but in my opinion, the basic message of feminism is the same one that our parents told us when we were children: that we can grow up to be anything we want to be (Smith 2010)<sup>23</sup>.

In any case, as Nichols says, "finding new *hunting grounds*" seems to be a good idea. "Go somewhere different" (Nichols 2008: 54), because the most unusual places can offer good opportunities to the husband hunter. In her article "*Husband Hunting*: the new sport for women who want to get serious", in an amusing light-hearted way Ormonde (2012) offers a list of "prime locations for the *husband hunt*". These include:

(4)

"the members' area of a cricket or football match (where collared shirts are ensured by dress code requirements) and Friday night drinks venues well populated with suits. Try ski lodges and ski lifts are great if holiday *hunting*'s your thing"<sup>24</sup>.

Apparently, even such an event as a polo match can provide good hunting opportunities for "wannabe brides". According to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "Polo can be a premier dating opportunity" (Barlass 2012):

(5)

THERE'S a tradition at the polo called stomping of the divots.[...]. Given an interlude in the play, there was what could only be likened to a pitch invasion from wannabe brides anxious to help out [...] Jansen, said: "You get out there on the ground, and get to meet everyone - it's a prime *husband hunting* opportunity" (Barlass 2012)<sup>25</sup>.

These metaphorical linguistic expressions show women as active hunters taking decisions and adopting strategies. Despite seemingly contradictory to prevailing stereotypes that portray women as prey and men as hunters, from an ideological point of view, this metaphorical representation makes sense. In line with patriarchal androcentric visions of a woman's identity as a girlfriend or a wife, it makes sense that a woman becomes a metaphorical hunter in order to find a partner or get married. Hunting imagery, in a very vivid way, makes it possible to represent the eagerness and forceful determination stereotypically associated with the quest for love or a partner. This is a metaphorical representation which reflects the cultural importance that marriage or finding a partner traditionally used to have and perhaps still does in the lives of certain women. Then, in light of the above, are those studies that show women as metaphorical prey to male hunters wrong? No, not necessarily, but it seems that this is only a part of a bigger scenario. Let us now look at some of the complexities of the metaphorical representation of women in hunting terms.

#### 4.2. Gender ideologies and the *love-chase*

Once properly equipped, the hunting ground chosen and a good catch in sight, the next step concerns the best strategy to chase or pursue the loved one, i.e., metonymically speaking the love chase, a necessary and essential part of the LOVE/SEDUCTION IS A HUNT enterprise. Up to this point, advice was quite straight forward. Nevertheless, it is here where the panorama gets more complicated because not any chase will do. In light of gender roles and socio-cultural female expectations of passivity and restraint, it has to be a special chase because as a webpage alerts: "When a man feels *chased*, he usually *runs away*" (Shultz 2017)<sup>26</sup>. She must also know when to "relinquish the reluctant dude" so as not to appear desperate, as the webpage 'Can you make love happen?' (Griffin 2007) warns:

(6)

The catch with *chasing* a guy is that the more you try to *hook* him, the harder it is to see the signs that he's not willing to *be caught*. [...] men aren't blind. [...] "Men have an innate ability to sense desperate vibes a mile away", says Kelly (Griffin 2007)<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Patton, Susan (2014) *Marry by choice, not by chance: Advice for finding the right one at the right time*. New York: Gallery Books. Husband hunting in the real world, 49-54.

<sup>23</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.hercampus.com/sex-relationships/relationships/getting-your-mrs-degree-husband-hunting-college> [Last accessed 18 August 2020].

<sup>24</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.mamamia.com.au/husband-hunting-the-new-sport-for-women-who-want-to-get-serious/> [Last accessed 16 August 2020].

<sup>25</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/polo-a-premier-dating-opportunity-20120331-1w53e.html> [Last accessed 29 August 2020].

<sup>26</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.yourtango.com/experts/lisa-shultz/finding-husband-dating-3-men-same-time> (Last accessed 02/09/2019)

<sup>27</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.cosmopolitan.com/sex-love/advice/a2092/Can-You-Make-Love-Happen> [Last accessed 16 August 2020].



For *The Rules* girl (Fein & Schneider 2007), it seems that the best strategy is not to chase men, because “*chasing* men and calling them don’t work” (quoted from McClusky 1996<sup>28</sup>). According to McClusky (1996), *The Rules* assumes that it is men who are driven by a biological necessity to chase women, to respond to the challenge of the hunt. “In a relationship”, Fein and Schneider write, “the man must take charge. He must propose. We are not making this up—biologically he’s the aggressor” (2007: 11-12). See this passage from Rule 26:

(7)

Don’t initiate sex, even if you want it badly. Let him be the man, the aggressor in the bedroom. Biologically, the man must *pursue* the woman [...] Be coy. Flirt when he tries to kiss you or *bite* your neck. This will turn him into a *tiger* (Fein & Schneider 2007: 119-120).

This passage, apart from implicitly assuming ideologies that may be supportive of gender violence, is also particularly interesting because it is illustrative of the philosophy of playing hard to get. This philosophy is based on the venator idea that hunters prefer difficult and elusive prey because the easy prey is not valued. Thus, once the *prey* has been captured, the excitement and the challenge over, the bringing down of another *prey* is needed to perpetuate the *thrill of the chase*. This metaphorical linguistic expression is used, in a light-hearted way, with reference to male preferences when it comes to the erotic pursuit of a lover (James 2012), in the following article of the *The Huffington Post* published online. In the passage below, see the reference to the *thrill of the chase* and the humorous, and perhaps unsettling, coordination of women and gadgets which puts them on the same level of importance (for the role of humour in the enactment of *indirect sexism* see Mills 2008: 140):

(8)

Men really do prefer the *thrill of the chase*, say scientists

When it comes to women – and gadgets – some men really do prefer the *thrill of the chase*, a study has found. [...] “It’s the same with sex and the classic *chase* - many men find *the chase* exciting and it strikes their ego to feel they’re the one who is finally going to get her attention - and into bed. Add to this the fact that men are very goal focused and an elusive goal can seem all that much more interesting. “I’d never advocate game playing but if you’re interested in a long-term thing it’s only sensible to hold back a little bit”<sup>29</sup>.

This text shows the importance that is given to the idea that a man needs to feel *the thrill of the chase*, and thus be placed in a superior position as a hunter. In turn, this explains why women are advised not to kill the thrill of the chase by being too accessible or having sex too soon because, as the text above says, “it’s only sensible to hold back a little bit” (James 2012). This “little bit part” qualification is important. The female hunter must be careful not to overdo her actions and go too far when going after a guy, because if she spends too much time playing hard to get, she may run the risk of him losing his interest in her, as the following text (Neder 2010) explains:

(9)

What you don’t understand is that by the time we’ve found you, “the hunt” is over! We’re no longer on “the hunt”. We’re on the “kill” portion of our program. [...] If you’re the girl that tries to extend out that *kill* and some other, *easier prey* comes along, guess who’s going to become our new focus? Answer: it’s not you. [...] actually be available and interested and engaging.

No, this DOES NOT make you look desperate! We guys simply don’t think this way! Remember: we’ve already spent all this time and effort *hunting you down*. If you make it difficult (or impossible!) to actually get *the prize* we were looking for, we’ll find other, *easier prey* (Neder 2010)<sup>30</sup>.

Advice based on the hunt can thus be conflicting or even contradictory depending on the text and the counsellor: the woman placed in the prey position must be a true juggler to be *easy*, *elusive* and *hard to get*, or *hard to get* but only a little bit etc. However, despite the complexities and apparent contradictions, what is relevant from a cognitive point of view is that advice on how to get a boyfriend or a husband is partially based on the philosophy of the hunt, which lies behind the thinking and reasoning in the texts examined.

Returning now to the strategies for a successful love-chase, in line with traditional gender roles, for some people the use of subtle and indirect tacks is of particular importance. See how this need for subtlety and indirectness, derived from gender expectations that require women not to be too aggressive, is taken to the extreme in the following piece of advice provided online in ‘*Husband hunting*’ by Levine. Here he suggests that in the context of the love-chase, the female *hunter* can make her prospective partner think that it is his idea to chase her, thus implicitly assuming that such a thing is possible.

<sup>28</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.Salon.Com/1996/10/10/Media961010/> [Last accessed 10 February 2019].

<sup>29</sup> Retrieved from:

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2012/02/23/men-prefer-thrill-of-chase-science-of-attraction\\_n\\_1297059.html?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer\\_us=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xiLmVzLw&guce\\_referrer\\_cs=OXXzvt5plaVAn\\_5G9IVFg](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2012/02/23/men-prefer-thrill-of-chase-science-of-attraction_n_1297059.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer_us=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xiLmVzLw&guce_referrer_cs=OXXzvt5plaVAn_5G9IVFg) [Last accessed 9 February 2019].

<sup>30</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/men-and-the-hunt-explained> [Last accessed 18 August 2020].

(10)

*Men and tigers* by nature don<sup>31</sup> really like to be held prisoner to your or any one else's desires, but you have to make him believe that this is something he really wants to do, needs to do, and that he cannot live without you. Believe me I am a husband, and I have first hand knowledge of how an *animal feels to be tracked and captured* and made to believe that he really likes it. That's what makes me an expert on *husband hunting*. I've lived through the experience<sup>32</sup>.

Regarding transitivity, agency is particularly significant here, since the woman (hunter) is represented as an active agent. It is taken for granted that she can carry out a *material action intention process* ("to make"), which implies active agency, to provoke a *mental process* ("to believe") in her intended lover. This will create the illusion that he is the one who seduces, though in fact she is the driving force behind the chase. The same kind of reasoning can be observed in the following text, extracted from a review of *Capture his heart and make him love you forever* by Casey & Fiore (2013) consulted online<sup>33</sup>. This is one of the proposed steps:

(11)

How to make "*pursuing you*" his idea and have him trying desperately to make you commit [...] Claire introduces an interesting twist on how to change his thinking and have him *chasing* after you and practically begging you to commit to him.

Through some kind of mysterious action, this programme claims to reveal, women are represented as being able to convince a prospective partner that he is the one who wants to pursue her, thus maintaining his predominance and the principle of "*Man as Hunter Principal*"<sup>34</sup> (Casey & Fiore 2013). From an ideological point of view, it is taken for granted that this is a plausible idea, susceptible to being artificially provoked, based on the assumption that any woman can effectively be trained for this purpose in a kind of Machiavellian and calculating manner. In the light of such advice it is inevitable that the socio-cultural stereotype of women as tricksters, artful and cunning creatures, springs to mind here. In cases like this the female love hunt seems to be associated with a certain dose of trickery, which explains the use of *play* as a lexical choice in the metaphorical linguistic expression "*play hard to get*", and justifies the relevance of the recommendation "*do not play hard to get, be hard to get*".

In line with patriarchal androcentric roles and stereotypes of male dominance, in some texts what is of utmost importance for the love chase is not to subvert the hierarchical order of the cultural model of the *Great Chain of Being* (Lakoff & Turner 1989) and to place man in a superior position of power. The following text extracted from 'How to get the guy you want to fall for you' (Tramilton 2017) clearly stresses the importance of letting the guy take the lead so that the woman becomes "the recipient of the affections of [...] number one guy".

(12)

Take matters into your own hands to become the recipient of the affections of your number one guy. Subtly let the guy of your dreams take the lead to *capture* his interest

Step 4

Run into him "by accident." Make him feel like your connection is kismet. It is no secret that men enjoy the *thrill of the chase*, so instead of making it obvious that you are *pursuing* him, find ways to bump into him "by chance." For instance, if you know he likes to spend his weekday afternoons studying at the local coffee shop, consider stopping by there yourself. When you see him, feign genuine surprise and see if you can strike up a conversation. [...]

Tip. Be genuine. Avoid trying to pretend to be someone you are not in order to please a guy. [...]. Not only will you come across as fake, but you will also seem desperate as well (Tramilton 2017)<sup>35</sup>.

Regarding gender roles, this text shows significant ideological tensions: lexical and in terms of agency (e.g., "feign" vs "genuine"). Notice the contrast between the passive and active roles assigned to the lady: passive "let the guy of your dreams take the lead" and active "*to capture* his interest". It is he who pursues, but it is she who captures his interest and, by metonymical extension, his heart. This takes us to an almost oxymoronic representation where the lady becomes a metaphorical hunter in order to capture the heart and interest of her intended lover. This is by no means new. There is a Roman proverb which says: "In courtship a man *pursues* a woman until she *catches* him"<sup>36</sup>. "To *snag* a man let him do the *pursuing*" says a webpage<sup>37</sup>. Regarding metaphorical analogical mappings, this is relevant

<sup>31</sup> Letter 't' missing in the original.

<sup>32</sup> Retrieved from: [http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Husband\\_Hunting.html](http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Husband_Hunting.html) [Last accessed 16 August 2020].

<sup>33</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/baylissuaz/capture-his-heart-and-make-him-love-you-forever-claire-20222770> [Last accessed 10 February 2019].

<sup>34</sup> "The "Hunter Principal" ... why strong, wonderful men actually NEED to feel like they're chasing you and have earned you before they'll even consider committing" Retrieved from Review of *Capture his Heart and Make him Love you for Ever*. In *Language of Desires* (2019) <https://www.languageofdesires.com/capture-his-heart-review/> [Last accessed 17 May 2019].

<sup>35</sup> Retrieved from <https://datingtips.match.com/guy-want-fall-13443432.html> [Last accessed 10 February 2019].

<sup>36</sup> *The Routledge Book of World Proverbs*. Jon R. Stone (2006) London: Routledge, p. 80.

<sup>37</sup> Retrieved from "Today Books" (2016) <https://www.today.com/health/snag-man-let-him-do-chasing-2D80552526> [Last accessed 21 August 2020].

because the dichotomy woman/prey-woman/hunter is blurred. The (male) hunter is captured by the (female) game, who by virtue of this action is not a prey anymore but has turned into a hunter herself, thus yielding the image of the female *prey-hunter*; counterpart of the male *hunter-hunted*. This image of the *hunter-hunted* is used in ‘Conquest’, a rock song covered by *The White Stripes* on their 2007 album *Icky Thump*, which was popularised by Patti Page in the 1950s:

(13)  
 She was just another conquest  
 Didn't care whose heart was broke  
 Love to him was a joke till he looked into her eyes

And then in the strange way things happen  
 Their roles were reversed from that day  
*The hunted became the huntress*  
*The hunter became the prey*

Conquest  
 Now you know who made the conquest  
 She with all her female guile led him helpless down the aisle  
 She had finally made a conquest<sup>38</sup>

Marking this role reversal (*man: the hunted*) as “strange” we have a representation imbued with negativity, whereby the lady is portrayed as a kind of seductress. This contrasts with the representation of the guy, who is depicted as helpless, his actions almost involuntary, a defenceless creature, prey to the artful guile of this woman, who, in transitivity terms, is the Actor, the intentional agent of the *material action intention* process “led”. With the power of her eyes, “she had finally made a *conquest*”, says the song. LOVE IS WAR and LOVE IS A HUNT combine to produce a misogynistic representation of a man as a poor victim in the hands of a woman. This metaphorical conceptualisation can be related to ideologies of women perversity, since it conveys a negative vision of certain women as manipulative creatures of trickery and deception. It is interesting how latent ideologies that convey sexism and, to a certain extent, misogyny underlie metaphorical linguistic expressions such as these.

From a CDA perspective, texts, like the ones we are considering, evidence the importance of taking on board gender and culture in studies of conceptual metaphors. Metaphors are not neutral vehicles for the representation of reality, but are powerful transmitters of ideological values. The choice of a particular source domain over another, as well as the positions of metaphorical terms in analogical mappings, contribute to the shaping and perception of reality and associated social processes. In this respect, conceptual metaphors play a part in the social construction of gender and sexuality (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2013: 178-187). Emotionally laden, metaphors can transmit conceptions of femininity and masculinity based on asymmetrical representations which reinforce the binomial: man/superior-woman/inferior and are supportive of ideologies of male dominance and female submissiveness. Thus, when expected roles are transgressed, i.e. when women are perceived as being too aggressive, then it makes sense that the image of the female hunter acquires negative connotations. See how, in the following illustration from the romance novel *Yellow bird* by Pacter (1994), a character named Caroline who is twenty-nine “and past her sell-by date” shows overtly her intention to catch a husband:

(14)  
 When she broke it off with Ross, she didn't waste her time with any more newspapermen. If she was going *to catch* the sort of husband she was looking for, she had to be more selective (Pacter 1994: 180).

(15)  
 He thought about Caroline. She was the biggest illusion of them all. Pretending she loved him, that she was having his child, when all the time she was just trying *to trap* him (Pacter 1994: 401).

Notice use of *to trap* in this text. Ingrained in the collective cultural consciousness, we have the image of the unscrupulous husband-hunter, a darker side to the female hunt, whereby it is possible to represent women as despicable “man trappers”, ruthlessly intent on catching a husband for his money, status, position or any other reason. Here it is interesting how the hunting method of trapping is productive in relation to the discursive representation of the experiences associated with certain women. When this specific domain is resorted to, metaphorical linguistic expressions with terms like *traps*, *nets*, *snares*, *lures*, *to entrap*, *to ensnare* etc. are produced in connection with love and seduction. However, due to space restrictions, the exploration of the modality of trapping, also fishing, in connection with the female love-chase will have to be left for another article (forthcoming) where they can be examined in more

<sup>38</sup> Lyrics retrieved from: <https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/10614675/The+White+Stripes/Conquest> [Last accessed 7 January 2019].

detail. In this discussion, it must also be noticed that the love-hunt has mainly been looked at as a human activity, characterised by the use of tactics, reason or intellect as well as weapons. It must be borne in mind that the hunt can also be considered an animal activity, in which case it is associated with the wilderness and is primarily based on instincts. This yields the image of the *devouring woman* or *man-eater* along with other metaphorical linguistic expressions where a woman is represented in animal terms like a *spider*, a *she-wolf*, a *tigress*, a *cougar* etc. Again, given space limitations, these very interesting ideologies cannot be dealt with adequately here and will have to be left for a future article.

## 5. Conclusion

From the texts studied, it can be concluded that the conceptual metaphors LOVE/SEDUCTION/THE SEARCH FOR A PARTNER OR HUSBAND IS A HUNT are activated through metaphorical linguistic expressions with terms such as *hunt*, *chase*, *pursue*, *catch*, *capture*, *trap* etc. The source domain of the hunt is applied to the discursive representation of love, seduction and the search for a partner in the texts examined. However, since these observations are based on the rather limited convenience sample studied here, for a future article, a more ambitious corpus study, collected with inferential statistic procedures, would be necessary in order to further this work, examine the use of these metaphors (LOVE/SEDUCTION/ THE SEARCH FOR A PARTNER IS A HUNT) diachronically and, perhaps more importantly, check their salience in modern times. Is this type of language a remnant of the past or is still used by younger generations? Due to greater gender awareness in the *ME TOO* era, will metaphorical linguistic expressions with *husband-hunting* have substantially declined in usage, if not plainly fallen into disuse? Is the use of this source domain restricted to contextual varieties of language such as manuals on love, sex and dating, self-help books on relationships, magazine articles, online blogs or romance novels? What is the role humour plays in deflecting sexism?<sup>39</sup>. This article looks at the metaphors from a heterosexual point of view, is homosexual love and seduction represented in the same manner?

Regarding the findings made in the texts studied, it has been found out that hunting imagery makes it possible to situate women in the huntress position of analogical mappings, thus representing vividly the eagerness and determination certain women are supposed to experience when seeking love or searching for a partner or a husband. Represented in positive terms, man is a valuable catch, desired and desirable, the privileged side of the equation. Ideologically, this is a metaphorical conceptualisation which reinforces the socio-cultural importance that the roles of girlfriend or wife have or used to have for certain women. Regarding the representation of the male as prey, not viewed with adoration but victimised, it has also been found out that hunting imagery makes it possible to represent men as helpless, vulnerable or powerless victims of the metaphorical female hunter. Based on an “unacceptable” transgression of expected gender roles from an androcentric patriarchal point of view, this is a darker representation of the female hunt, which yields the misogynistic vision of the unscrupulous husband hunter. Metaphors are not neutral vehicles for the representation of reality. Metaphors are powerful transmitters of ideological values and play a crucial role in the social construction of gender.

Furthermore, in addition to the representation of a woman as an active hunter, she can also be represented as prey to the male hunter. Reproducing ideologies of male domination and female submission, in metaphorical terms a woman can be placed on the prey position of analogical mappings, which yields complex representations, whereby she is or should be *easy*, *elusive* and *hard to get*, *hard to get* but not too much etc. Especially interesting is the oxymoronic image of the female *prey-hunter*, counterpart of the male *hunter-hunted*, whereby the male hunter can be captured by the female game, turned by this very action into a hunter herself. These representations show how gender ideologies are not simple and direct but complex, indirect and contradictory at times, giving rise to ideological tensions and conflicting messages regarding acceptable attitudes for women. Complex though they are, from a cognitive point of view, what is significant is that these representations are based in part on the source domain of the hunt which lies behind the thinking and reasoning about love and seduction in the texts studied.

Although embodiment is essential and it is undeniable that the hunt is an experiential area relevant for human beings, for cognitive studies on conceptual metaphors, the texts under examination show that a study of love, seduction and hunting conceptual metaphors cannot be separated from a consideration of gender and culture. Only in the light of prevalent acceptable gender roles and conceptions of masculinity and femininity can the complex ideologies enacted by the hunting source domain be fully contemplated and made sense of. Culture is a fundamental component for the understanding of the complex operations of conceptual metaphors (Caballero & Ibaretxe 2009) and their dialectical relation and manifestation in discourse. For this reason, it is worth following a contextual approach that pays attention to the socio-cultural ideologies and values of the communities that use them, in what can be considered a critical metaphorical analysis (Charteris Black 2004, Goatly 2007). It is important to consider critically the metaphors we live by with respect to these and other latent ideologies conveyed by source domains, particularly in those cases that may transmit, reinforce or perpetuate inequality and sexism.

<sup>39</sup> As Mills (2008:140) suggests, often subtle sexism can be transmitted under cover of humour.



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