



The Metaphor of *Light* – Perspectives on Conceptual Metaphors

Case Study on Anthony Doerr’s *All the Light We Cannot See*

Mihaela Marieta DAMIAN

Transilvania University, Faculty of Letters
Department of Applied and Theoretical Linguistics
mihaela.damian@unitbv.ro
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5386-0122>

Abstract. The language of perception, regarded from the perspective of the sensory modality principle, is common to all humans within similar cultural backgrounds. Its conceptualization, from a semantic standpoint is, however, language-specific. With this view in mind, the prime objective of this study is to investigate, from a cognitive linguistic perspective, various kinds of visual properties experienced in connection with the perceptual metaphor of LIGHT. Its cultural and emotional dimensions will be approached as an integrative part of the context provided by Anthony Doerr’s novel *All the Light We Cannot See* (2014). The present investigation attempts to shed “light” upon the potential embodiment of meaning assigned to the metaphors of perception in a twofold, intrafield (Matisoff 1978, Evans & Wilkins 2000) and transfield standpoint. The conceptualization of the metaphor of light is observed in a contextualized approach of a single language (English), its secondary objective being that of providing the basis for a larger cross-linguistic investigation of similar matters on English–Romanian corpora.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor, cognitive linguistics, light, perception, emotional meaning

1. Aim and objectives of the research

This study broadly aims at investigating the perception metaphor of *light*, focusing on contextualized examples from Anthony Doerr’s novel *All the Light We Cannot See* with the scope of providing insight into the implications that semantic analysis might offer in regard to intrafield (within the perceptual domain mappings, from one sensory modality onto another) and transfield

(mappings outside the boundaries of the perceptual domain into such areas as mental, emotional, or physical domains) metaphorical conceptualizations through the use of visual perception metaphors. The study seeks to provide a better understanding of the contribution that perception metaphors have in the transfer of sensory experience towards abstract domains, appealing to the cultural and emotional dimension of metaphorical conceptualization, as such facilitating the development of further studies on similar or adjacent subject-matters.

The focus is laid on the visual metaphor of *light*, exploring the polysemic characteristic of the word in English, more precisely its use from the perspective of cognitive linguistics, corroborated with the recent advancements stemmed from scholarly investigations on matters of perception metaphors.

First, general theoretical considerations are presented. A subsequent step includes a detailed portrayal of metaphorical transfers associated with the domain of vision, with particular insight into the nuances implied by the use of the word LIGHT as part of a metaphorical construction. The study continues with an analysis of the abstract dimensions related to the aforementioned metaphor, showing its elaborate conceptual structure, along with its positive or negative polarity. Aspects of how light is linguistically coded into abstract domains reveal small-scale evidence that can constitute a departure point for further, more conclusive results.

Against the background of these remarks, this paper makes a contribution to the various possibilities in which the study of conceptual metaphors can be explored, building fruitful grounds for a broader study on cross-linguistic parallel corpora.

2. Background to the study

This section outlines some of the most relevant scholarly considerations that stand as pillars of the current study. It includes references to literature and studies on perceptual linguistic investigations addressing the cultural and emotional facets of literal perceptual language. It is this twofold subdivision embedded in perceptual language that will be the bedrock for the interpretation of the metaphor of light against the background of the profusion provided by the conflictual, strained, warlike atmosphere presented in Doerr's novel.

2.1. Theoretical considerations

The profusion of scholarly input on the intrinsic relationship established between the world and its linguistic representation commands reflection upon the new vistas of conceptualization related to the study of perceptual language. The two concepts, language and perception, stand as a primary function of language, being associated with our ability of communicating about perceptual content. However,

there are numerous instances in which words linked to perception are used in order to metaphorically refer to sensory experiences that do not invoke their initial meaning. In this vein, a definition of the term metaphor is convenient. The Cambridge Dictionary defines it as “an expression, often found in literature, that describes a person or object by referring to something that is considered to have similar characteristics to that person or object” (Cambridge Dictionary, n. d.).

In recent years, several studies have focused on human beings’ ability to conceptualize perceptual experiences through metaphorical constructs. A growing body of literature has centred on studies concerning *linguistic synaesthesia* (Shen 1997), a term implying a conceptual mapping of two domains and a cross-modal usage of their meaning. Metaphorical mappings of *sensory information across domains*, for instance, sound into colour as in *loud colour* (Caballero 2019: 130), illustrate the rationale behind the concept of *synaesthetic metaphor*, a concept derived from the neurological phenomenon known as synaesthesia. However, studies conducted on perceptual content have reached conclusions that go beyond a *synaesthetic metaphor*’s mere characteristic of crossing the senses. Bodo Winter (2019) even ruled out the synaesthetic or metaphorical layers altogether, grounding his research in the evaluative function of sensory lexeme, the key in his argumentation being the cultural construction and the potential emotional encoding assigned to perception metaphors.

It is the *concept of embodiment* originally referred to by Johnson (1980) that alerts us to the importance of discovering the complementarity between the sensorimotor and sociocultural experience, implying sensory underpinnings of our culture or emotions. This inclusive perspective, reflecting on issues of the external world, as well as on the mental and social ones – although not embraced by all CMT researchers –, will be addressed in the subsequent parts of the present paper.

Decoding the cultural and emotional dimension of metaphorical language has its grounds in philosophical writings (Wittgenstein 1922, Kant 1781, Nietzsche 1889), considerations on accessing abstract concepts through logical or pure theoretical reasoning providing insight into language as source for deciphering sensory domains, a means of portraying reality through the felt world, much like the *concept of embodiment*. Another argument in favour of the interaction among language, thought processes, and reality is the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, also known as the linguistic relativity hypothesis. Linguistic relativity stands in close relation to semiotic-level concerns with the general relation of language and thought, as well as to discourse-level concerns with how patterns of language used in cultural context can affect mental processes.

Our thought is governed by conceptual structures that play a significant role in how we perceive everyday realities, as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson claim (1980, 1999) in one of the first systemic studies covering the matter under debate. Their Conceptual Metaphor Theory links metaphor to the realm

of collective imagination and philosophy, providing an even closer linkage among metaphorical usage, perceptual meaning implied, and culture in general. Transferring the “ARGUMENT OF WAR” into an imaginative cultural realm where the terms of winning or losing a battle have no conceptual meaning and exchanging them with the unconventional “ARGUMENT OF DANCE” provides a reconceptualization of reality in and through metaphorical usage. Cognitive linguistics at large states that figurative schemas which may include metaphor, metonymy, simile, etc. stand at the basis of the way in which we construct and perceive the world, metaphors being considered a matter of thought inasmuch as they are regarded as an integrative part of language. The term which emerged from studies conducted in the area of cognitive linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Sweetser 1990, Kovecses 2002, Johansson Falk & Gibbs 2012) is that of *conceptual metaphor*, a construction through which “semantic relationships that exist in the source domain are carried over to the target domain” (Julich 2019: 170), being inextricably linked to abstract thought reasoning. Our physical experiences are grounded in figurative language, governing our thoughts and being transposed into metaphorical conceptualizations through the fusion of two unrelated conceptual domains. The most recurrent exemplified juxtaposition is that of Life (target domain) and Journey (source domain), part of the “Life is a Journey” construct, where the source domain is conceptualized into the target domain.

Other complementary approaches to CMT are the Primary Metaphor Theory (Grady 1997) and the Theory of Objectification Framework (Szwedek 2011), both approaching the controversial points of the initial Conceptual Metaphor Theory, constituting an important advancement for the hypothesised reasoning of Lakoff and Johnson. The former acknowledges that the nature of conceptual metaphors resides in the recurrent correlation with a particular environment. The cognitive operation is exemplified by Lima (2006) who adverts to the simultaneous feeling of hunger and desire for food. The recurrence of the events of hunger, having direct implications in the experience brought about by the source domain of hunger, generates the metaphor DESIRE IS HUNGER. The latter theory addresses the issue of transposing meaning from a concrete conceptual domain into another, more abstract, conceptual domain (for example, thought, love, time, etc.). This concrete-to-abstract metamorphosis catalyses the emergence of impalpable abstract entities, as Szwedek himself claims, on account of the physical object image schema.

Directionality is yet another recurrent and complementary pattern of investigation in the study of metaphors. Ullman’s (1945, 1957) hierarchy of sensory modality, where the five senses: touch, taste, smell, sound, and sight are ranked from lower to higher, has been used as methodology in sensory modality, while, on the other hand, it provided the grounds for the emergence of opposing perspectives as to the foundation of such a ranking or the overall number of the senses at large. Assumed to be a Western cultural construction, the encoding of

sensory modality was challenged by Viberg (1983), who observed that languages differ in their number of basic perception verbs.

What the previous works failed to cohesively analyse and cover were the evaluative subdomains implied in the use of metaphorical mappings, namely cultural factors, emotional or mental layers. Although still scarce, recent research on matters of metaphor and perception has focused on interdisciplinary studies, such as mappings of the brain, going a step forward from previous assumptions towards theories supported by neuroimaging studies. “Transfield” and “intrafield” metaphorical patterns have been investigated in relation to their ability to transpose meaning from the perceptual domain to the conceptual one and, in doing so, proved that they provide stimulus for the brain, activating specific perceptual processing systems. Metaphorical language used to describe wine has provided fruitful grounds for investigation, studies such as those conducted by Rosario Cabarello (2019) explaining the implications of cultural constructs and emotional meaning in the context of wine evaluation. Sight- and sound-related terms concurrently demonstrate the validity of sensory metaphorical usage insofar as the acquisition of knowledge through sensory experience is concerned. In an analysis of five studies on the cultural success of sensory metaphors, Ezgi Akpinar and Jonah Berger (2015) suggest that associative cues contribute to a wider usage of sensory metaphors, making them more likely to be retrieved from memory. Extrapolations among moral beliefs and the cleanness paradigm or investigations concerning the opposition of dark and light in relation to the concepts of depression versus optimism are analogies used to connect metaphorical usage and thought, judgement, or social life. Salience, situatedness, and frequency, especially as part of collocations involving perception metaphors, are also distribution markers approached in the study of CMT in order to identify cross-linguistic data. Such analysis corroborated with corpus investigation methods reveals the sophisticated variations and perspectives falling within the scope of the metaphors of perception. It is based on the evidence provided by this recent research that this paper explores *light* as a perception metaphor, focusing on its transfield potential and outlining the possibilities of exploring it on a larger scale from a cross-linguistic perspective and with the use of corpus methods.

2.2. The metaphor of vision – The particular case of light

Sight, along with its object, light, falls under the category of universal metaphors of language, being placed at the top of the directionality of metaphorical mapping principle. Its extension into the domain of emotions can lead to both intrafield and extrafield mappings, attesting to its versatile semantic potential. Its meaning can be decoded in perceptual terms, as a synaesthetic metaphor, but approached in terms of its evaluative expression is linked to the emotional and affective dimension

that goes beyond the range of reason, encapsulating an abstract meaning. Its usage as a perceptual verb or as an adjective related to perceptual experience reveals a plethora of variations far beyond its monosensory interpretation. Hence, a fundamental characteristic of the conceptual structure of *light*, interpreted in emotional terms, allows instances of the unconscious to be decoded into utterance.

Previous studies exploring vision and collocations related to vision in association with the metaphors of perception have proved that its interpretation extends to abstract domains, as well as to feelings or mental thought processes. Mappings among visual senses and the domain of knowledge, for instance, have suggested the usage of light having the meaning of mental enlightenment. Proos (2019) regarded Estonian verbs of vision, with focus on the verb *nägema*, providing insight into its transfer of meaning towards the domains of intellect and knowledge, along with its possible interpretation as ‘experience’, thus extending its abstract potential towards the emotional domain. Other studies have focused on its intrafield valences as applied to auditory terms. One of the most accessible exemplification is that of *bright sound*, a perception metaphor encompassing a positive meaning. In fact, most of the thought processes related to its usage in connection to other senses, such as smell, taste, or touch, have a positive nuance. Its correspondence in meaning is, in many instances, associated with the equivalent of soft, slight, or not intense. Such sensory mappings can be exemplified through its relation to the sense of touch – “I can’t take my eyes off her” (Kövecses 2019: 328) – or that of taste in the case of wine: “it shines bright” (Caballero 2019: 137). The intensity climb of wine acidity constitutes the figurative schema “ACIDITY IS LIGHT”, as shown by Caballero, who lists other sight-related words that function in a synaesthetic manner (bright, flare, glow, shine, spark, etc.). Manifestations of the *negative* are less commonly related to the perceptual metaphor of light, this attribute being ascribed to its antonym, *darkness*.

Its transgression into the tactile sensation domain requires an allusion to the polysemic characteristic of the word. As such, the semantics of light is perceived in terms of lightness/heaviness of an object. As a result of searching for verbs and adjectives referring to the visual properties of light and its polysemic use, understood as the linguistic phenomenon that implies the coexistence of many possible meanings of a word, some of its dictionary meanings, as listed in the Online Oxford Collocation Dictionary, are listed below.

Table 1. *Meaning of the word “light”*

Light – verb	Light – adjective	Light – noun
– make something begin to burn	– soft	– brightness
– give light to something	– slight	– something that
	– not intense	produces light
	– not dark	
	– not weighting much	

3. Methodology

In order to ground the investigation of visual properties as derived from the studies testing the different theories and approaches to the conceptual mappings of light as a perception metaphor, along with its polysemy, the following part of the current paper will focus on its literary usage in Doerr's novel. The analysis is to be regarded as complementary to the studies that have dealt with the abstract dimension of perception metaphors, being a *contextualized linguistic approach* and focusing on the *conceptualization of the metaphor of light in a single language – English*.

3.1. Literary discourse and metaphorical conceptualization

Literary discourse is a rich ground for investigation in relation to perception metaphors. The nuances implied in a literary work exploring the inhumanity and profusion of experiences linked to war emphasize the potential of the visual perceptual metaphor. It is with this view in mind that the present paper examines the metaphor of light in the novel written by Doerr. Titled *All the Light We Cannot See*, the novel tells the story of a blind girl and a German orphan boy during World War II, placing light in the foreground of his work, purposely conveying an aura of ambiguous dimension. Light captures a value of hope and is linked to the idea of survival against the turmoil triggered by the misfortunes of war, while on the other hand it receives the attribute of darkness being associated with the flares shot in order to illuminate possible targets for snipers. Hope and fear, as connected to war, have been transposed in an antagonistic relationship, as far as the retrieval of meaning is concerned, with the concepts of lightness and darkness. Light can be observed as a means of obtaining insight into repressed memories, but also “constructing new meaning from a past traumatic event” (Stumm 2015: 47). The perception of sight, especially used as a metaphor by the blind character, in the case of Doerr's work, reveals a potential far beyond its regular sense.

Preceding the cognitive process of metaphor conceptualization, meaning finds its ground in both the physical and social/cultural experience. This claim poses difficulties when exploring the process of metaphorical conceptualization in the case of loss or malfunction of senses. Studies on sign language have provided in-depth understanding of how signs, articulated to perception expressions and assigned to a particular body part, are understood through conceptual metaphors. This way, the conceptualization of the metaphor of LIGHT is a case to be explored in relation to blindness, where the dichotomy exposed by the concept of embodiment lacks its complete sensorimotor implications, the cultural and behavioural factors, thus outweighing in the evaluative scope of conceptualization.

Besides this particularity pertaining to the perceptual conceptualization of light, overlapped with a physical state of blindness, there is the emotional component that is to be considered. To give just one example, plenty of literary works explore the idea of love, referred to as “falling in love”, not rising in love. The metaphor of movement is in this case employed with the meaning of surrendering, of letting go and losing control. A physical sense of *falling* extends to an abstract domain of emotionality, the meaning to be decoded being that of an act of faith, a gamble in search of a deeply rooted, purely subjective state. Similarly, a parallel with the metaphorical construction involving the concept of *light* and its affective meaning is convenient as a key component of a perception metaphorical construction. Kövecses (2010) goes so far as to address the conceptual metaphor of EMOTION IS PERCEPTION, pinpointing to the concordance among external factors and internal, emotional, or cognitive states.

4. Examples and analysis

Light, along with its polysemic usage, decoded in the lines set as aim for the current study, is addressed in the following section from three standpoints:

1. *Contextual* – as part of the narrative of the novel *All the Light We Cannot See*;
2. *Conceptual* – analysing the connection between the domain of vision and other abstract domains, as part of conceptual metaphorical constructions;
3. *Emotional valences* – connected to its usage as part of metaphorical constructions.

4.1. Feel the *light* (cross-modal conceptual metaphor)

Conceptual metaphor involving the mapping of the source domain of touch onto the target domain of vision

Contextualization

“A trio of airborne ducks threads toward them, flapping their wings in synchrony, making for the Seine, and as the birds rush overhead, she imagines she can *feel the light* settling over their wings, striking each individual feather.” (Doerr 2014: 42)

Conceptualization – LIGHT IS HOPE

An apparently simple cross-modal metaphor, but one that requires perceptibility in order to capture its meaning. Correlation with the background of the Second World War set by the novel acquires meaning pertaining to cultural and historical

factors, playing a central role in defining reality for the blind character. Western civilization has associated light with a positive meaning, especially in connection to the institution of war. Blindness, set in contrast with the vivid perceptual representation of light, creates a device of poetic imagination that transcends the physical domain, its conceptualization being connected not only to matters of the intellect and thought processes. The sensation of warmth created by light integrates perception in order to render a degree of emotionality that involves a general feeling of hope.

4.2. Muted lights (cross-modal conceptual metaphor)

Conceptual metaphor involving the mapping of specific source auditory content (silence) onto the target domain of vision

Contextualization

“He tries to imagine their descent, sporadic and *muted lights* passing and receding, cables rattling, everyone quiet, sinking down to that permanent darkness where men claw at the earth with a half mile of rock hunched on top of them.” (Doerr 2014: 63)

Conceptualization – LIGHT IS DARKNESS

An emotional state expressed metaphorically through the use of salience encompassing a general state of progression towards a sunless horizon. When light is muted, you “sink into permanent darkness”. Here, light captures the antithesis of its previous interpretation of HOPE. It unfolds as a device that transposes the reader into the dark circumstances and emotional states brought about by conflict. The conceptual metaphor of light highlights and amplifies the dark implications of being silenced, exposing the consequence of having everything reduced to a quiet state – death unfolds.

4.3. Light is soft (cross-modal conceptual metaphor)

Conceptual metaphor involving the mapping of specific source touch content onto the target domain of vision

Contextualization

“No other sounds; no motors, no airplanes, no distant pop of gunfire or howling of wounded men or yapping of dogs. He takes her hand to help her over the piles.

No shells fall and no rifles crack and the *light is soft and shot through* with ash.” (Doerr 2014: 344)

Conceptualization – LIGHT IS LIFE

The conflictual states and emotional turmoil generated by warlike surroundings are purposely expressed in the language of the narrative. The cycle of violence, the impact of war, and famine are accounted for but cease through the inference to silence. Light comes as a rebirth, a phoenix announcing the rise of a new dawn out of the ashes. The softness of light generates a type of detachment from reality, it reinterprets the utterances of the tempestuous, lifeless present into a breath of much-needed oxygen.

4.4. Boots spark against the pebbles

Conceptual metaphor involving the mapping of the source domain of vision onto the target auditory domain

Contextualization

“A brass pin weighs lightly on each of their lapels; one hundred and fourteen hobnailed boots *spark against pebbles* on the trail.” (Doerr 2014: 141)

Conceptualization – LIGHT IS WAR

Cultural and situational underpinnings derive from the abovementioned conceptual metaphor. Taken out of context, the sound of numerous boots against the hard surface of the rocks might trigger inferences to a bustling day, numerous people rushing to and from work, but the background of the narrative, the gravity of the sound, which is mapped onto sight through the sparks produced in the process of stamping, takes you to a different, much grim scenery. Grounded in figurative language, the conceptualization through re-experiencing, inasmuch as through imagining, settles language as a key element in the processes of thought and emotionality. Similarly important is its usage as an attribute of darkness. “Western thought systems are not exclusively products of ‘light’, but ‘seem to be built upon negotiations between clarity and obscurity, or light and darkness, rather than any absolute preference for only one aspect of the continuum’” (Italiano 2020: 11) – it is this line of thought that seems to be rendered in the conceptualization, or rather reconceptualization, of light as an attribute of obscurity.

4.5. Shoot the “*very lights*”

Conceptual metaphor involving the mapping of the source domain of auditory onto the target domains of vision, implying the use of movement as well; fear and war

Contextualization

“Most nights the enemy would *shoot* pistol flares called ‘very lights’ over the trenches, short-lived stars suspended in the air from parachutes, meant to *illuminate possible targets for snipers.*” (Doerr 2014: 123)

Conceptualization – THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF SOMETHING IS A VISUAL PERSPECTIVE / LIGHT IS DEATH

This particular conceptual metaphor makes use of an intensifier in order to augment the discrepancy between the conceptual domain of light, associated with a positive emotional state, and the conceptual domain of war, whose immediate mental construction transfers the reader into a negative emotional state. Light loses its functionality as a purely visual concept, being transposed as part of the narrative in a trigger of death. Associating a cultural concept that prototypically renders positivity and hope with a macabre consequence that unfolds after a sniper attack creates a state of confusion for the reader. Light is dissociated from its positive meaning and inverted into an opposing state, emphasized by the adverb “very”.

4.6. The fizzling of the flares

Conceptual metaphor involving the mapping of the source domain of auditory onto the target domains of vision, implying the use of movement as well

Contextualization

“It would be so quiet, *the only sound the fizzling of the flares*, and then you’d hear the whistle of a sniper’s bullet streak out of the darkness and bury itself in the mud.” (Doerr 2014: 123)

Conceptualization – LIGHT IS DEATH

Once more, context derived, light shifts its interpretation away from a constructive cultural attribute. Synaesthetic transfers from sound onto vision accentuate its

mapping into an opposite meaning. It alerts to a dangerous, life-threatening situation, raising questions regarding the universality and limits of the dichotomy between light and darkness. Thought processes encapsulate continuous shifts of mapping physical or psychic experiences, being reflected into conceptual, metaphorical language.

5. Findings

The findings suggest that different cognitive processes may lead to the perception and conception of trauma (expressed culturally and emotionally) in terms of other sensory domains, creating a recontextualized view of *light* as part of the conceptual domain of vision.

Privilege is given to visual words in cross-modal use, its dominance over the five senses being supported by the directionality principle. However, there are plenty of investigatory endeavours that can be conducted which might lead to revelatory findings. LIGHT decoded not only in terms of positive meaning but also in regard to the negative emotional valences brought about by the use of visual imagery unfolds a novel interpretation of the word as part of a metaphorical construction. The study reveals usage of light as having a negative connotation, in contrast with what we might have initially regarded as an “up orientational metaphor” (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 462) – light is up, dark is down. Regular uses of light, in accordance with Western fundamental cultural values (light my way / his face lit with pleasure), imply a positive usage of this visual sense in a metaphorical construction, while two exemplifications from Doerr’s work place it in the abstract domains of darkness, respectively death. As such, the dichotomy between light and darkness triggers connections to both the rational and the emotional hemisphere. Doerr’s literary work purposely reveals the embodiment of meaning connected to war triggering the affective side, using light as part of a conceptual metaphor that involves the physical domain of vision with reference to other abstract, sometimes opposing domains.

Deriving from their initial intrafield characteristics, the conceptual metaphors mentioned above and analysed reveal transfield characteristics along with their semantic shifts within the domain of perception. The sensory concept of vision attributed to light is mapped onto abstract domains, thus rendering conceptual structures such as the ones comprised in the following table.

Table 2. *The conceptual structure of light*

Light EXTENDED MEANING	
- Opposition to darkness/hope	- Negative connotation
- Spirituality	- Salience
- Understanding	- War
- Seeing	- Obscurity
- Knowing	- Death
- Life	

As such, the study testifies to the emotional and cultural valences of the perception metaphor of light, a causal relationship enhanced by the context of Doerr’s narrative, together with the characteristics defining the two main characters. Extrapolating from this specific case, similar instances can be looked into from similar perspectives in other literary texts; however, the larger impact yields cues to its significance for the area of conceptual thought processes at large, attesting to the vital bond between language and thought processes.

6. Future developments

Literature as a domain context is not governed by the same terminological boundaries and domain-specific ontologies as other restricted domain contexts might be. It offers room for proper investigation of new meaning areas, as it includes a full portrayal of context for perceptual metaphorical mappings. Besides the focus of analysis of the current study, there is still plenty of room for future development. Cross-linguistic investigations based on methodologies implying the use of parallel corpora, for instance, seem to favour new discoveries as to the scope of perception metaphors in different languages, as well as to the differences in perception brought about by trauma against an ideological context.

Other studies might favour extrapolations into the systematic relations among the particularities of correspondence across languages, hence encouraging further examinations in order to determine the strategies of expressing conceptual metaphors in various languages. Additionally, reliable future research for the analysis of lexical units can apply the MIPVU method (Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit – Amsterdam), involving a complementary perspective among the contextual and basic meaning of a metaphor.

7. Conclusions

This study is an incipient step towards enabling insight into how metaphorical structures, via a cognitive linguistics perspective, are reflected at the linguistic level. *Light* as part of a conceptual metaphorical construction was examined, revealing its potential as a metaphorical embodiment of different abstract domains. Tracing the various extended meanings of *light* promises feasible results as to its potential as a conceptual structure that transcends a purely visual meaning, encapsulating nuances that have cultural and affective implications. As such, further investigations, especially on large-scale corpora and from a cross-linguistic perspective, are needed in order to certify the validity of these initial deductions.

The approach of the current study complements rather than supplements the findings of previous studies that have focused on semantic level concerns in relation to the meaning of conceptual metaphors and patterns of language connected to perception, making a contribution to the understanding that future research carried out in this field of study ought to consider an understanding of cultural, historical, anthropological, cognitive, and linguistic features and their significance, along with a multi-methodological analytical process. More importantly, it paves the way for further analysis of metaphorical concepts and the equivalence of their deep nuances in translated texts.

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